

# Empowering Women FOR MORE SUSTAINABLE COCOA COMMUNITIES

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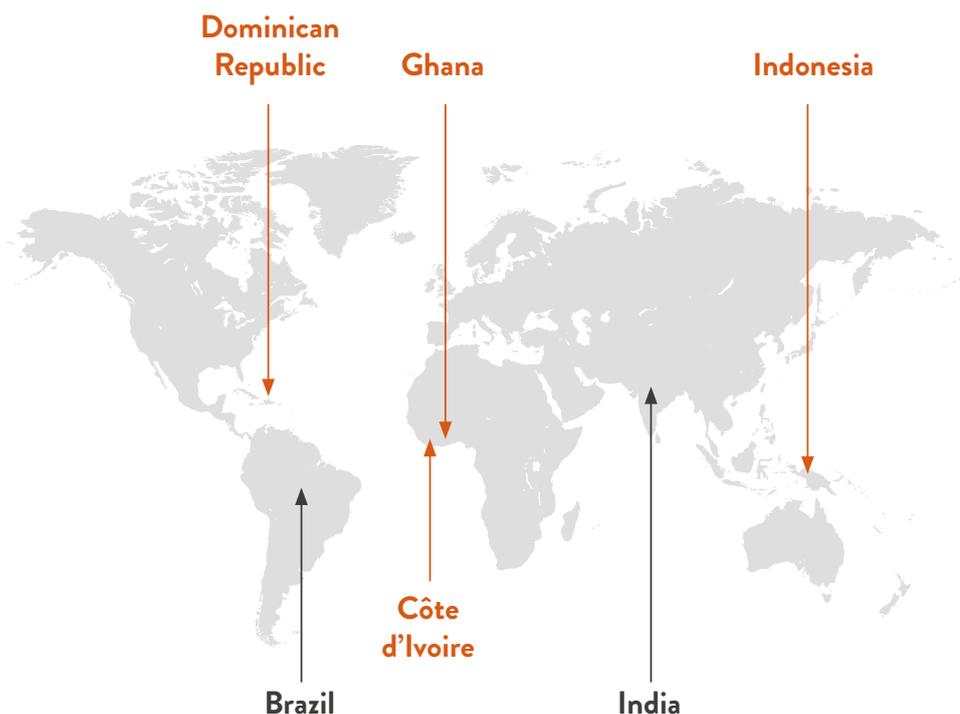
# Introduction

**Mondelēz International's Cocoa Life Program, a holistic cocoa sustainability program, embeds women's empowerment across its activities to address the challenges faced by women in cocoa growing communities, and to amplify the sustainability and development impacts of the program more broadly by engaging women in its implementation.**

Cocoa Life has emphasized the importance of women's role in cocoa farming communities since the inception of the program. While Cocoa Life data is disaggregated by gender and key indicators related to women in cocoa have been identified and tracked, Cocoa Life was still missing important information on exactly why certain activities were successful and others were not.

In 2018, Ipsos and Mondelēz International worked together to build a new approach to understanding women's role in Cocoa Life into Ipsos' Cocoa Life program impact assessments in four cocoa origins – Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Indonesia and Dominican Republic.

We will soon follow in two additional origin countries, India and Brazil. The purpose of this report is to share the evolution of our thinking on how to understand Cocoa Life's empowering effects on women, and how women help Mondelēz International to achieve the goals of the Cocoa Life program. The first steps in this process were the development of a revised program theory of change (TOC), the application of Ipsos' multi-dimensional women's empowerment framework within current program impact assessments, and the collection of preliminary baseline data to understand the empowerment profile of women in cocoa growing communities participating in the Cocoa Life program.



## Cocoa Sustainability, Community Development, and Women

**Cocoa faces multiple challenges, and therefore sustainability in cocoa is a key focal area for all chocolate companies. Interventions are attempting to address challenges such as low yield, inadequate livelihoods for cocoa farming families, child labor present in the cocoa supply chain, environmental degradation, and limited overall development progress in cocoa farming communities.**

To accelerate sustainable development, women have untapped potential to improve economies, raise living conditions in households and communities, and be a catalyst for reducing the gendered effects of inequality and poverty. There are several opportunities to improve development outcomes through the deliberate strengthening of women in the context of cocoa:



Women lack decision-making power at household, community, district and national level.



Women often struggle to access the training and education that will help them understand how to improve their own situation.



Women typically face greater barriers around accessing finance, farm inputs, ownership of their own land, and participating in farming collectives and cooperatives.

For Mondelēz International's Cocoa Life program, women's empowerment is built explicitly into the program theory of change and implementation. For example, women are purposely included in the Community Action Planning (CAP) process, ensuring their voices are heard in community development; women are specifically targeted for livelihoods training where they learn new skills that can help them to generate additional income for their households; women's groups such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and governance groups such as GIF NET are facilitated; and women are at the center of training in Good Environmental Practices (GEPs).



### VSLAs and Livelihoods Training for Women

Women in Cocoa Life communities in West Africa recognize that a path to increasing their influence in decision making within their households and communities is to create their own income generating activities. Cocoa Life has supported women in this endeavor through two primary mechanisms – VSLAs and training on livelihoods.

The VSLAs allow women unprecedented access to credit and savings. Many women members reported to Ipsos evaluators that the VSLA has allowed them to start or expand their own income generating sources. Livelihoods training has allowed women to learn new skills, such as soap-making and bee-keeping, which they have leveraged into new income generating sources managed by the group.

For both VSLAs and livelihoods training, impact is limited by the membership capacity of the groups, but women members report that these interventions have provided them with a new means to earn their own income, and work towards financial independence and increased influence.

## Cocoa Life's Journey: Understanding how Cocoa Life Empowers Women, and How Empowering Women Can Lead to Sustainable Cocoa Outcomes

**Initially Cocoa Life measured progress on its women specific program objectives by observing quantitative change in formal roles within cocoa farming communities (such as participation in the CAP development process).**

However, this feedback, which showed limited progress, was frequently different to qualitative information that we received from cocoa farming communities, which suggested that the program actually has the potential for a powerful effect on women.

To understand this disconnect, we wanted to explore the ways in which women may have been empowered by the program, while understanding the barriers that have prevented formal participation in the community. These barriers, which include traditional expectations of women as care givers, can limit their availability to participate Cocoa Life program and wider community activities, given the timings.

“Women’s empowerment” is a complex concept. Empowerment operates in multiple dimensions: a woman’s objective reality (her education, her skills, her legal status), her self-perception (self-efficacy and confidence), and how she – and her role – is perceived by others (cultural norms). Simultaneously, a women’s level of empowerment [depends on the arena in which she is operating](#) – as an individual, within the household, and in the community.

Because of this multi-dimensional complexity, simple key performance indicators (KPIs) like “involvement in the development of the CAP” and “participation in farmer organizations” do not offer enough in helping us to understand the conditions of women in the communities in which they live and work, the interventions that will best address their needs, and the impact of interventions on their ability to exercise agency.

Furthermore, women’s empowerment is not linear: the provision of training does not necessarily lead to learning, implementation, income-generation, decision-making power, household and community development, in that order. Nor can empowerment be understood solely by observing women: the attitudes of men in the community are an equally important consideration.

Since the empowerment of women depends on multiple dimensions, interventions that aim to empower women should factor these multiple dimensions into program design, ensuring that the end goal (usually changing “objective realities” such as women bringing income into the household, or women having power over household spending) is understood in the context of barriers and/or enablers that may be found in cultural context or a woman’s self-perception and self-efficacy.

## AREAS OF EMPOWERMENT



### INDIVIDUAL



### HOUSEHOLD



### COMMUNITY

#### HER OBJECTIVE REALITY

##### A woman's individual circumstances

Her education, skills, and work status, her access to technology and financial services, and her individual legal rights.

##### A woman's role within her household

Her influence over financial and non-financial decisions and assets, how she is regarded and treated, her ability to move freely and safely.

##### A woman's role in her community?

Her participation in community activities, how she is regarded and treated, her ability to move freely and safely.

#### HER SELF-PERCEPTION

##### How does she feel about herself

Does she believe in herself? Does she have confidence in her abilities? Is she satisfied with her circumstances and the possibilities for the future?

##### How does she feel about her role and responsibilities?

Does she feel confident in her ability to make decisions on behalf of her household? Does she feel heard and respected? Are her rights taken seriously?

##### How does she feel about her role and responsibilities?

Does she feel confident that she is able to participate in community activities? Does she feel heard and respected? Are her rights taken seriously?

#### THE CULTURAL NORMS OF HER COMMUNITY

##### How should women be treated as individuals?

Should women be educated and have access to employment? Should women have equal access to technology and financial services? Should women be treated equally by law?

##### What should be the role of women in the household?

Should women be an equal participant in household decision-making? Should she be safe from harm, and able to express her opinions freely?

##### What should be the role of women in the community?

Should women participate in community decision-making? Should she be respected and able to move freely without harassment?

## A Measurement Framework for Understanding the Impact of Cocoa Life on Women, and Women on Cocoa Life

### 1. Developing a women-specific theory of change (TOC)

As Cocoa Life is rapidly scaled, it is important that the gender-proactive aspects of programming are a continual area of focus and that the program TOC is periodically revisited. In 2018, Ipsos and Mondelez International took a fresh look at the program TOC with a particular focus on two areas:

1. How women are proactively targeted and impacted by activities in each program area.
2. How women are expected to experience differential impacts of activities in each program area that target the broader community.

This process has been helpful in understanding where there are logical missteps or gaps in addressing the specific needs - or impacts of - women in the program plan and implementation, and where it isn't clear how women's empowerment objectives will be achieved. Referring to the multi-dimensional women's empowerment framework is of assistance in understanding some of the barriers and constraints to achieving stated objectives in a particular area.



### 2. Collecting a baseline to build a profile of women in cocoa farming communities

Based on the Cocoa Life program TOC and the multi-dimensional WE framework, we built a set of indicators for women cocoa farmers, women in cocoa farming households and communities, and for the wider community, with attached metrics that were included in impact study baselines in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Indonesia in mid-2018.

The women's empowerment baseline was integrated into the broader Cocoa Life impact study, which not only created efficiencies for data collection, but tied women's empowerment metrics to the assessment of Cocoa Life impact overall. This means that, over time, links between the condition of women in cocoa farming communities and broader changes within the community and cocoa sustainability outcomes (the overarching hypothesis) can be assessed.

### 3. An analytic model to understand how the dimensions of women's empowerment interact

While the study of women's empowerment within Cocoa Life is still in the early stages, the analytical model that will be used to understand how the dimensions are interlinked and drive each other is an important consideration.

Since we have only one time-point (baseline) and no change data, we are limited in the analysis that can be done at this time. However, the current dataset allows us to paint a picture of the current empowerment profile of women in cocoa farming communities in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Indonesia, and it is possible to conduct statistical testing to understand how variables are linked. For example, we can now assess whether income generating capacity is connected with having a role in household decision-making. With more time-points, we will be able to conduct more sophisticated analysis using change data to establish which interventions work and which do not.

# Women's empowerment profile for 2018 constructed from data from Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

## AREAS OF EMPOWERMENT

Côte d'Ivoire%  
Ghana%



### INDIVIDUAL



### HOUSEHOLD



### COMMUNITY

#### HER OBJECTIVE REALITY

No Formal Education	65%	30%	Has joint responsibility for decisions about children's education	44%	50%	Able to move around without harassment	67%	89%
Contributes to household income	91%	76%	Has joint responsibility for making major purchases	26%	49%	Involved in a Community Action Plan	58%	55%
Have a Bank Account	9%	36%	Has joint or total control over own income	86%	88%	Has influence over community decisions	51%	89%

#### HER SELF-PERCEPTION

Feels she is able to do things as well as others	89%	98%	Is confident that she can influence household decisions	78%	97%	Feels able to express her opinion in the community	73%	97%
Optimistic about the future	93%	98%	Feels her role in the household is valued and respected	94%	98%	Feels like leaders in community listen to people like her	60%	91%
Feels she is a person of worth	93%	96%	Is confident in expressing her opinion even if her spouse disagrees with her	65%	95%	Feels respected by community	87%	97%

#### THE CULTURAL NORMS OF HER COMMUNITY

"When girls are done with primary school they are not able to further their schooling and they do not have anything to do. The next thing you realize they are pregnant."  
Woman in community, Ghana

"Women must prepare for her husband, help him in the field work, and then come back at night to take care of the children, and to make food for her husband. This is their role and they are respected."  
Male farmer, Côte d'Ivoire

"There are certain decisions where women are entitled to participate, like planning festivals and celebrations, but for many decisions, they are men's decisions and women are not allowed to participate."  
Woman in community, Côte d'Ivoire

## Empowerment Profile for Women in Cocoa Farming Communities: What We Know So Far

The end goal of the exercise in tracking women's empowerment progress in cocoa growing communities is for Cocoa Life to develop targeted interventions that directly address local empowerment challenges. These have been identified by Cocoa Life and the cocoa growing communities it serves, as well as to understand the impact of targeting women's empowerment objectives on cocoa sustainability more broadly over time.

Based on the data collection for 2018, we are able to build an initial empowerment profile for women in cocoa farming communities in West Africa based on the nine-dimension framework.

**Objective reality:** women in cocoa farming communities in West Africa have limited education, with just one-third of women in Côte d'Ivoire reporting that they have any formal education at all. While most women contribute to household income, and report that they have control over how that income is spent, only half of women in Ghana and one-quarter of women in Côte d'Ivoire have at least partial responsibility for decisions over major household purchases. In Ghana, a large majority reported that they can influence decisions in the community, while only half of women in Côte d'Ivoire reported that they can do so.

**Self-perception:** women's perception of their own abilities, self-worth, and optimism about the future are very high across West Africa cocoa farming communities. In Ghana, women also feel highly respected within their household, with almost all women feeling valued and respected, having confidence that they can influence household decisions, and feeling that they can express their opinion even if their spouse disagrees with them. For women in Côte d'Ivoire, while almost all feel that their opinion is valued and respected, fewer feel that they can influence decisions or disagree with their spouse. Similarly, women in Ghana have more confidence than women in Côte d'Ivoire that they can influence the decisions of their community.



**Cultural norms:** motherhood and taking care of the husband and household are prioritized over education and a formal role in the household economy. In the community, women's community participation is generally confined to more traditional roles such as festivals and entertainment. Women are not expected to be part of decision-making and leadership in the community outside of these traditional roles.

Based on this preliminary profile of women's empowerment in cocoa farming communities in three key Cocoa Life origins, the program is now able to revise its theory of change (TOC) and adapt its activities to more effectively create a positive impact for women in cocoa farming communities, and enable women to create a positive impact on cocoa sustainability.

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