



**Cocoa  
Origins**  
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MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# COCOA ORIGINS PROGRAM

LONG TERM TRADE RELATIONSHIPS AND  
INVESTMENTS IN COCOA ORIGINS

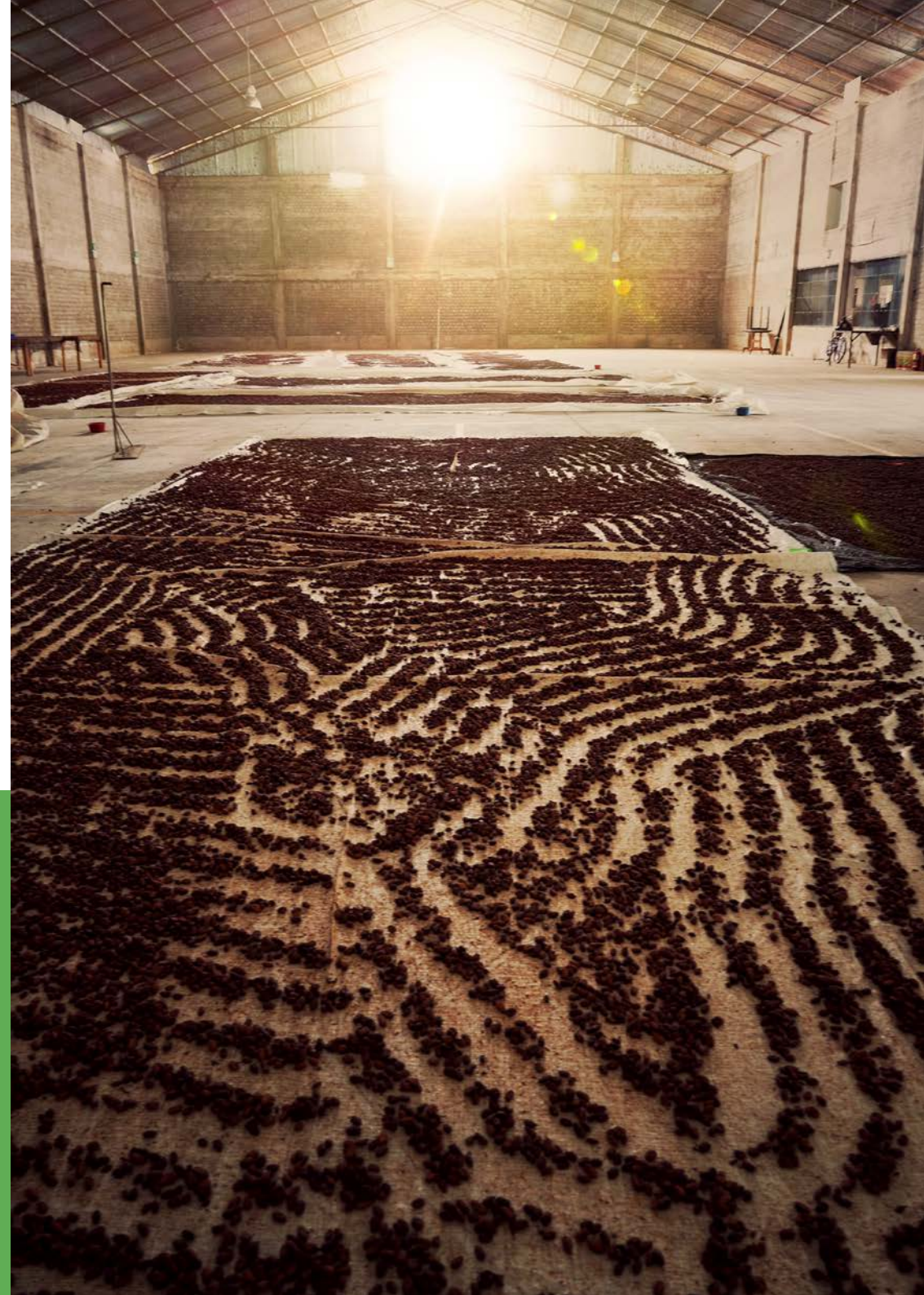


**The continuity of the cocoa supply chain is at stake. The Dutch government and cocoa and chocolate sector are committed to reach 100% sustainable cocoa consumption on the Dutch market by 2025.**

The Cocoa Origins Program supported companies that use small volumes of cocoa and supplied the Dutch consumer market that contributed to 8 projects improving sustainable cocoa production in origin countries. The program is based on public-private partnerships to establish stable commercial relations between cocoa producers and cocoa users and to improve sustainability at the farm and farmer community level.

This report is written and produced by:

**IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative  
and Equipoise Markets in Balance**





# THE APPROACH

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Linking sustainable production to an economically viable supply chain creates a cycle of lasting impact at origin and increases the volume and market share of sustainable cocoa. The program supported a variety of projects that have helped the **smaller cocoa users** develop projects that have a **positive impact upon the economic, environmental, and social conditions** of cocoa production and, through the supply chain that is linked to the projects, on the sustainability level in the Dutch consumer market.

Cooperation throughout the supply chain is promoted, contributing **to closer and more stable, long-term trade relations**. The program pursued to limit the risks, by providing funding for initial investments in creating, re-arranging, or expanding **cocoa supply chains** from the cocoa origin to the final cocoa product.



DESIGN & TEST SUPPLY CHAIN  
INNOVATIONS



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**“As we add value into the chain of production,  
we add value into our personal lives as producers”**

Zouzou N'Guessan Helene (Farmer Côte d'Ivoire)

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# ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COCOA ORIGINS PROGRAM

COP provided support to eight projects which use relatively small volumes of cocoa, to build a business case for and contribute to the overall sustainability of cocoa products linked to the Dutch consumer market, creating long-term trade relationships.



# REFLECTIONS

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**The Cocoa Origins Program is the first of its kind to support users of relatively small volumes of cocoa to develop sustainability projects at the origin of their supply chains. The Program selected eight projects that were implemented in six countries in Latin America and West Africa.**

The projects delivered on the Program and project specific KPI targets and in many cases, have exceeded them. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions had a negative impact on implementing COP projects. They all faced delays, but with a 12-month Program extension, the implementing partners were able to execute most of the planned activities and meet the project targets. Business cases are positive for many of the farmers and the project partners. COP contributed to improved entrepreneurship with participating farmers in all origins, which allows them to produce better quality, access to new markets and attain a higher income. This demonstrates that the factor of quality could potentially play a larger role in living income projects

The lessons learned offer a wide variety of interesting experiences, such as the focus on cocoa quality through post-harvest training next to GAP and introducing new products, like cocoa juice, that contribute to income diversification and gender equity. In a saturated chocolate market where quality is one of the few growth factors, this offers possibilities for scaling and replication. Indeed, most projects have met their targets on scalable and replicable cases.

1

COP successfully attracted new stakeholders in the cocoa sector to implement sustainability projects at the origin of their supply chains. Many are active in the specialty cocoa sector that pays better prices for cocoa than the bulk sector. Success in triggering projects that relate sustainability projects in cocoa origins to viable supply chains and positive business cases, ensuring continuity and lasting impact after the Program has ended. They have more impact per farmer but reach fewer farmers due to their small volumes. By taking COP to a European level, or to the collaborating national platforms for sustainable cocoa, it will translate into a greater impact, as bulk does not produce for national markets.

2

If stakeholders don't feel pressure from governments, NGOs, or consumers, they may not actively consider sustainability activities. COP helps to reduce risks of sustainability investments by supporting startup costs and high overhead on initially low volumes, coupled with a positive mid- or long-term business case. It can be an instrument to extend sustainability in markets that would otherwise not be interested. COP has contributed to the growth of the volume of sustainable cocoa products in the Dutch consumer market. As there are no statistics on this market, it is unclear if stakeholders are on track to achieve the objective of 100% sustainability in 2025. However, it seems unlikely that the gap of 'unsustainable cocoa products' has been closed. Further research must show which cocoa products and stakeholders are involved in the gap, as a basis for a policy designed to target this group.



**The variety of approaches and project designs led to a very rich program with many learnings on different aspects. In the final program report we are sharing these learnings on scalability and replicability of successful cases. Innovations have been tested and can be implemented in other areas. These lessons will be valuable both for fine cocoa and mainstream cocoa production.**

Thanks to the implementing partners and their associates contribution to the Cocoa Origins Program:



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Ministerie van Landbouw,  
Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit



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