



**KIT** Royal  
Tropical  
Institute



# **Evaluation of the multi-stakeholder initiative ‘Beyond Chocolate’**

**Final report**

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# 1 Executive summary

Beyond Chocolate is a multi-stakeholder partnership for a sustainable Belgian chocolate industry launched in December 2018. The overall objective of the initiative is to make long-lasting improvements to the living conditions of cocoa farmers and their families in the cocoa growing regions that are important for the Belgian industry. Beyond Chocolate has brought together numerous and diverse partners: the companies of the chocolate sector (i.e. traders, processors and brands), the distribution and department store chains (retail), government institutions, civil society, certifiers, impact investors, trade unions, and knowledge institutions.

The initiative is funded Belgian government (through the DGD), which appointed IDH to coordinate the initiative. Nearing the end of the first phase of the Beyond Chocolate (February 2022). DGD commissioned an evaluation to KIT Royal Tropical Institute to conduct an evaluation from mid-December 2021 to mid-February 2022.

The objective of the evaluation is to review the evolution of the Beyond Chocolate partnership since its launch and assess to what extent the partnership supports signatories have achieved common objectives (compliance with relevant certification standards, achieving a living income and end deforestation in cocoa value chains linked to the Belgian market). The evaluation will also assess the effectiveness of IDH in facilitating and coordinating the multi-stakeholder initiative.

The KIT conducted a desk review analysing publicly available information (annual reports, the website, program documents and social media) as well as internal documents of IDH. Via semi-structured interviews with 20 stakeholders, KIT gathered qualitative and in-depth data providing context and insights in achieving common objectives. Lastly, KIT conducted an online survey sent out to all members of the partnership and several other related stakeholders (e.g. secretariat of other ISCOs).

## *Outcomes: Reaching the defined objectives and impact*

KIT assessed whether the results and outcomes outlined at the start of Beyond Chocolate have been met. Based on the findings (see table next page), KIT concludes that Beyond Chocolate and IDH have been successful in reaching the majority of the results and outcomes and the first phase of Beyond Chocolate can therefore be seen as a general success.

Outcome 10 and 11 have only partially been reached. In the case of outcome 10 this is because the CFI agreements are not adapted to smaller chocolate makers who are unable to become signatories. Setting up equivalent plans of actions is currently underway and IDH has outlined the steps it will take to still reach the target set for outcome 10. For outcome 11 the calculation is difficult to make as the exact data is not available. Based on an estimation using averages and general data, around 70.000 additional farmers are currently reached by Beyond Chocolate projects and other sustainability initiatives related to the Belgian cocoa sector.

Results	Outcomes	Target reached?
<b>Result 1: Uniting and supporting the Belgian cocoa industry</b>	1: the steering committee of the Beyond Chocolate partnership has been formed and is giving direction to the program in accordance with its mandate and the required timetable.	Yes
	2: The number of signatory partners of the Beyond Chocolate Partnership has remained stable or increased compared to the number on 5 December 2018.	Yes
	3: The progress of the Beyond Chocolate partnership in terms of sustainability and operational is monitored annually and communicated to the public.	Yes
	4: At least two annual Beyond Chocolate working groups are organized and attended by a majority of Beyond Chocolate partner organizations.	Yes
<b>Result 2: Improving the effectiveness/efficiency of sustainability initiatives within the Belgian chocolate sector</b>	5: A first call for proposals has been successfully implemented and the project partners of 3 to 5 co-financed projects have signed a contract.	Yes
	6: 67% of the co-financing is taken up by project partners.	Yes
	7: The objective of a living income for cocoa producers is included in the projects.	Yes
	8: The projects are adequately monitored. There will also be a report on the progress of the projects and the first lessons will be shared within Beyond Chocolate.	Yes
<b>Achievement at impact level</b>	9: The volume of chocolate produced and/or sold in Belgium and covered by a sustainability programme or certification standard has increased from 46% (2018) to more than 60% (2021).	On track <sup>1</sup>
	10: Beyond Chocolate partners (in particular the cocoa traders and cocoa processing companies) are fully aware of the agreements made within the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) and have drawn up an equivalent plan of action	Partially
	11: More than 75,000 small-scale cocoa producers are reached through the Beyond Chocolate co-financed projects and other sustainability initiatives within the market.	On track
	12: Beyond Chocolate's partners have launched new chocolate products that raise the bar in terms of sustainability and create a new dynamic in the market	Yes

### *Relevance in scope and activities*

At the start of Beyond Chocolate, the initiative focused on bringing together partners, setting goals, organizing workshops, (learning) events and launching projects. Over the two years of implementing Beyond Chocolate, the initiative has implemented activities as planned and generated constructive

<sup>1</sup> Data from 2021 is not yet available, but IDH and the SteerCO expressed that the target is expected to have been reached.

and relevant discussions. The initiative also evolved leading to new insights and learnings regarding relevance of the activities and conversations.

Many new conversations have emerged since the beginning of the initiative, although further in-depth conversations on complex and sensitive matters are to be held (pricing, value chain distribution). There is some ambiguity between the need for trust, openness and transparency, and the limits of the law (competition law and pricing information) and possibly protection of business secrets.

Harmonization with ISCOs is critical in terms of one aligned approach, KPIs, accountability system and roadmaps towards the higher-level objectives. IDH has gone beyond the expected outcome by facilitating this trans-ISCO dialogue and coordination amongst Member States.

Projects helped partners to better grasp the reality on the ground. Partners of the projects developed approaches to achieve the living income objective. A next step could be to develop a common/overall approaches towards living income. This could include a systematic set of indicators at various levels to measure output, intermediate outcomes and ultimate impact on the ground.

More involvement of southern partners (cooperatives, farmers) could be explored. At present, an overall and national cocoa development plan is being developed, including policies, priorities, strategies, and approaches. The idea is that all projects and initiatives conform with this plan, including Beyond Chocolate.

#### *IDH's role and functioning in managing Beyond Chocolate*

KIT concludes that it was a viable choice to engage IDH to manage the initiative. IDH is well positioned to coordinate multi-stakeholder initiatives and has in-house expertise on cocoa related matters, particularly on living income. Most partners find that IDH did a good job in mobilizing and onboarding the partners and convening the partnership.

Regarding communication, IDH established constructive and direct communications lines with all partners. IDH is open to hearing feedback and is engaged with the concerns of IDH. Due to COVID-19, there have been no physical meetings organized, which hampered networking among partners. IDH put effort in 'reinventing' how to facilitate meetings and moderate conversations, requiring different techniques and skills.

IDH successfully facilitated the launch of 8 cocoa sustainability project, complemented with DGD funding (2 million Euro). The secretariat seems somewhat bureaucratic. Over time, IDH has improved and streamlined the systems and procedures, making it easier for partners.

A multi-stakeholder partnership comes with various positions and viewpoints, and sometimes conflicting interests. IDH's intention has been to act as a neutral convener and to gather a representation of the sector and stakeholders to join the conversations and acknowledge responsibility accordingly.

#### *Recommendations*

Overall theory of change (roadmap/strategy): there is a need to strengthen Beyond Chocolate's approach with regard to scope and depth of change needed for the goals that had been set.

- Develop a more elaborate and explicit theory of change (including output, intermediate outcomes, and impact logic).
- Living income could be at the center of the theory of change (child labor and ending deforestation are integrated).
- Involve 'complex' topic explicitly (pricing, level playing field, distribution of value, power relations in the chain) in the theory of change.
- Coordinate and align the development of the theory of change at ISCO level, and possibly beyond at European level.

Measurement of progress: The current AME system and project monitoring provide insights and evidence. This could become more structured and comprehensive (enabling attribution analysis) if the measurement of progress is systematically integrated in the theory of change involving key performance indicators at output, intermediate outcomes, and impact level:

- IDH could develop an integrated progress measurement system and a robust evaluation designs involving attribution analysis of Beyond Chocolate activities to outcome and impact.
- For the design of measurement systems and data collection, the partnership could involve Involving academic and knowledge institutions from Belgium and from the producing countries.
- Such an in-depth study could provide a more robust foundation for the conversation and reflections at steering committee level or in a working group more.

Accountability of individual members: The evaluation findings suggest a continuous further development of the AME system with regard to the fulfillment of commitments/realization of ambitions.

- Signatories could set more explicit commitment/ambitions and develop individual road maps towards the end goals of 2030, with clear instruments/interventions, intermediary goals, clear KPIs and monitoring.
- These commitments within the Belgian market should be viewed against EU legislation and the fact that international market dynamics also affect the extent to which the 2030 targets can be reached and how.
- Accountability should specify traceability of the chain and transparency of the distribution of value within the chains.
- The partnership could consider negative consequences if commitment are not fulfilled.

Projects: Partners find the projects successful for understanding the realities on the ground and stimulating conversations. However, there are not yet clear insights in scalability and impact.

- IDH could facilitate the learning from current projects by comparing how they address living income, employment issues and deforestation in an effective way, and how those learnings are useful for a theory of change and scalability.
- For a next round of projects, IDH and the partnership should consider the balance the coordination time input for multi-stakeholder convening and project management. More projects given the current capacity of IDH will be at the expense of convening the multi-stakeholder platform.

Multi-stakeholder approach: There is a need for more conversations among partners on difficult topics.

- IDH could launch 'sensitive' conversations in the SteerCo and working groups involving neutral facilitators. These conversations could include power relations, pricing, profit margins and distribution of supply chain value, and what falls within the scope of influence of each actor (responsibility).

- All Beyond Chocolate partners could propose topics they want to discuss and continue to push for a real dialogue and sharing of views/strategies and best practices.

Involvement of southern partners: Many partners see the need to include more southern partners in the partnership.

- Farmers and their households are the focal point of Beyond Chocolate and its goals. IDH and the steering committee should explore ways to have farmers more closely involved. This can also be through cooperatives.
- Partnership could further explore the involvement of local governments of producing countries in Beyond Chocolate. In what form they should be involved and what their role should be is an important matter as local governments may slow down progress (e.g. through administrative debates). We therefore recommend that IDH and the SteerCo explore how local government can be involved (with input from each stakeholder group).
- Management from local cooperatives, local NGOs and local knowledge institutions can play an advisory role by being invited to provide feedback on plans and projects developed through Beyond Chocolate.

Involvement of Belgian government: The government could play an active role in discussions and working groups, as representative of the public sector group on Beyond chocolate, and share insights on thematic discussions (living income) and national and EU level and legislation issues.

- The government could facilitate exchanges between Beyond Chocolate project and other government funded programs, projects and organisations (e.g. Enabel) with a view to learn about lowering the burden of projects administration.
- The government could play a role as intermediary between the EU and the partnership regarding diligence legislation, exchanging views from stakeholders and supporting informed decision making. This would create an opportunity for the partnership to provide input on due diligence and to stay up to date with the latest developments.

Capacity administrative burden and bureaucracy: stimulating more (complex) conversations on the platform and further refine AME and projects. However, the current capacity will not allow to do so.

- An expansion of IDH staff. Different staff for convening the multi-stakeholder approach, project management and analytical work (policy development).
- Source the administration of projects to another organization (e.g. Enabel) to free up time and budget for IDH to focus more on the facilitation of discussions within Beyond Chocolates and with other ISCOs, the EU and southern stakeholders.



## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Explanation of the Beyond Chocolate initiative

In 2018, IDH was appointed by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation ("DGD") to coordinate the "Beyond Chocolate" program. Beyond Chocolate is a partnership for a sustainable Belgian chocolate industry. The partners of the initiative are jointly committed to ending deforestation, educating future generations and provide small cocoa producers with a living income. Beyond Chocolate brings together numerous and diverse partners: the companies of the chocolate sector (i.e. traders, processors and brands), the distribution and department store chains (retail), government institutions, civil society, certifiers, impact investors, trade unions, and knowledge institutions. In total, more than 60 organizations and companies have joined Beyond Chocolate, or 90% of the market.

The key purpose of "Beyond Chocolate" is to make long-lasting improvements to the living conditions of cocoa farmers and their families in the cocoa growing regions that are important for the Belgian industry. Belgian chocolate consumers in Belgium and abroad need to be certain that, just like other quality criteria, the sustainability of Belgian chocolate is guaranteed as much as possible. Specifically, Beyond Chocolate is committed to the following:

- A. The partners jointly commit to ensure that by 2025,
  - all chocolate produced and/or sold in Belgium meets a relevant certification standard or is produced with cocoa products from company-owned sustainability programs
  - Beyond Chocolate's partners respect the agreements between governments and private partners that fall within the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI).
- B. The partners jointly commit to ensure that by 2030,
  - cocoa farmers supplying to the Belgian market earn at least a living income
  - deforestation due to cocoa production for the Belgian chocolate sector has ended.

The first phase of the Beyond Chocolate program will end on February 28, 2022.

Beyond Chocolate is financed by Belgian government (through the DGD), which appointed IDH per royal decree to coordinate the initiative<sup>2</sup>. The roles and responsibilities of IDH are as follows:

- Coordinate and bring together - the success of the program depends upon all stakeholders living up to their commitments as expressed in the letter of engagement, and working together in an aligned, effective, and efficient manner. IDH must then also play an active mobilizing and coordinating role, in close collaboration with the Belgian government, the private sector organized within Choprabisco and the Belgian distributors, NGOs, knowledge institutions, the governments of the producing countries and other stakeholders. As coordinating and driving force of the program, IDH is also responsible for the identification, co-financing and monitoring of innovative sustainability projects in the production areas of the small cocoa farmers. The main objective of co-financing the projects carried out by the partners in the selected production regions is to innovate to promote and improve the effectiveness of the sustainability programs of cocoa companies and certification bodies.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://etaamb.openjustice.be/nl/koninklijk-besluit-van-22-april-2019\\_n2019012012.html](https://etaamb.openjustice.be/nl/koninklijk-besluit-van-22-april-2019_n2019012012.html)

Thus these projects, based on the principle of co-financing, will contribute to the intended impact on the income and working conditions of the small cocoa producers as well as on forest conservation.

- Monitoring, evaluation and learning - The aim is to keep the partnership up to date on progress and the impact of the contributions of its partners through their interventions. Another role is to remind partners of their responsibilities and their commitments. In addition, it is important to learn from implementation problems, analyze and inform on new trends and, where necessary, adapt existing strategies to ensure sustainable impact.
- Communication - the purpose of the communication is twofold: (a) to align the different initiatives and streamline contributions from the various partners; and (b) to inform the Belgian inform consumers about the sustainability aspects of Belgian chocolate products.

## 2.2 Objectives of the evaluation

The objective of this assignment is to follow the evolution of the Beyond Chocolate partnership since its launch on December 5, 2018, so as to assess to what extent the partnership supports signatories to achieve common objectives.

- A. By 2025 : compliance with relevant certification standards or sustainability programs and the agreements made within CFI.
- B. By 2030 : achieve a living income and end deforestation in cocoa value chains linked to the Belgian market.

The evaluation will also assess the effectiveness of IDH in facilitating and coordinating this multi-stakeholder initiative, and verify whether the program follows the logic of the original theory of change.

Based on this analysis, recommendation and points for improvement will be formulated for IDH and Beyond Chocolate. The recommendations will help IDH in review and/or reform its procedures and working methods in Beyond Chocolate. Furthermore, the evaluation will provide strong evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of the program relative to expected results (see table below).

Results	Outcomes
Result 1: Uniting and supporting the Belgian cocoa industry	1: The steering committee of the Beyond Chocolate partnership has been formed and is giving direction to the programme in accordance with its mandate and the required timetable.
	2: The number of signatory partners of the Beyond Chocolate Partnership has remained stable or increased compared to the number on 5 December 2018.
	3: The progress of the Beyond Chocolate partnership in terms of sustainability and operationality is monitored annually and communicated to the public.
	4: At least two annual Beyond Chocolate working groups are organized and attended by a majority of Beyond Chocolate partner organizations.
Result 2: Improving the effectiveness/efficiency of sustainability	5: A first call for proposals has been successfully implemented and the project partners of 3 to 5 co-financed projects have signed a contract.
	6: 67% of the co-financing is taken up by project partners.
	7: The objective of a living income for cocoa producers is included in the projects.

initiatives within the Belgian chocolate sector	8: The projects are adequately monitored. There will also be a report on the progress of the projects and the first lessons will be shared within Beyond Chocolate.
Achievement at impact level	9: The volume of chocolate produced and/or sold in Belgium and covered by a sustainability programme or certification standard has increased from 46% (2018) to more than 60% (2021).
	10: Beyond Chocolate partners (in particular the cocoa traders and cocoa processing companies) are fully aware of the agreements made within the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) and have drawn up an equivalent plan of action
	11: More than 75,000 small-scale cocoa producers are reached through the Beyond Chocolate co-financed projects and other sustainability initiatives within the market.
	12: Beyond Chocolate's partners have launched new chocolate products that raise the bar in terms of sustainability and create a new dynamic in the market

## 2.3 Research methodology

This evaluation employs several methodologies in order to reach the objective as outlined in section 1.2. These are a literature review, qualitative semi-structured interviews, and a survey with closed and open questions. The research team also opted for close cooperation with IDH during the evaluation to facilitate access to documents, communication (e.g. email exchange), and respondents for the interviews and survey. Furthermore, the research team met with IDH on a weekly basis to discuss progress and ask for clarification on preliminary findings.

### *Desk review*

The literature review consists of two parts. In the first part, publicly available information, such as annual reports, the website, program documents and social media were used to evaluate results 1-4 and 8 (see table in section 1.2), with a focus on the performance of IDH. In the second part, internal documents of IDH were used. This concerns contracts, financial reports and monitoring data). These documents were used to obtain evidence for the evaluation of outcomes 5-7 and 9-11 evaluation, again with a focus on the performance of IDH.

### *Interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather qualitative and in-depth data from a variety of stakeholders. A total of 20 interviews of around an hour have taken place with members of the steering committee, reporting partners, project partners, local cooperatives, and involved stakeholders outside the partnership. The selection for interviewees was done in consultation with IDH and in line with the requirements outlined in the Terms of Reference. In addition to the persons identified therein, the research team also interviewed the Ambassador of Ivory Coast to Belgium and the Belgian Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire. Attention was paid to the stakeholder group to which an interviewee (and their organisation) belonged and the size and type of their organisation (e.g. small vs large companies). This was done to get a broad range of perspectives on Beyond Chocolate. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews are a good tool because it allows the respondent to go in depth on the subjects they find important and provide their (detailed) opinions. A survey does not allow for such rich data to be collected.

The questions during the interviews focused mainly on how stakeholders rate Beyond Chocolate's progress and IDH's role in facilitating the partnership, why they think this way and how they think

elements of the program could be improved. Specific subjects include the motivation to join Beyond Chocolate, the onboarding process, the role of the steering committee, working groups and learning events, projects (and the related processes), monitoring & evaluation, the role of IDH, the role of the government, accountability, and communication.

### Survey

A survey has been developed and sent to all Beyond Chocolate partners and several other related stakeholders (e.g. secretariat of other ISCOs). The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine whether the Beyond Chocolate has added value for partners and whether the partners are confident that Beyond Chocolate will enable them to fulfil the commitments (goals) of the program. In addition, questions were asked regarding the quality of the governance structure. The survey mainly consisted of Likert Scales in which respondents are asked to evaluate a certain aspect of Beyond Chocolate with a grade (for example, 1 to 5). Likert scales 1-5 are a standard and scientifically validated method for survey based research and useful because they allow for a graduation of the answer but explain right away also that the limitation of surveys stems from low number of respondents.<sup>3</sup>

Respondents are also asked to elaborate on the grade provided in an open question. In this way, we examine how partners value each element of Beyond Chocolate (e.g. progress on results, facilitation by IDH), and why. This gives respondents an opportunity to explain themselves and better get their opinion across and provides context to better interpret the grades. A limitation of the survey was that with a maximum of only 50 participants total respondents, one cannot reach statistical significance. Therefore KIT took the surveys more as a source of information rather than findings. The survey was used to reach out to a wider audience and ask for their input, to use the data as illustration and to triangulate with findings from the desk review and the interviews. The survey was developed in SurveyMonkey.

The link to the survey was sent to all partners and a number of stakeholder external stakeholder on 17 January 2022 (with a reminder on 31 January). At the time of writing the report, the respondent rate was 47, amongst others representing the partner groups as listed below:

<i>Partner groups of the survey respondents</i>	<i>(# of respondents)</i>
Chocolate industry/producer	14
Retailer	3
NGO	7
Trade Union	1
Public sector	6
Certification/standards organization	0
Knowledge institution	3
Social impact investor	5
Other (please specify) <sup>4</sup>	8
Total	47

(Source: Beyond Chocolate evaluation survey KIT, 2022)

<sup>3</sup> The bigger the class of possible respondents and the bigger the number of actual respondents the less the weight of error, bias, other intervening factors etc in the responses. The smaller the class of potential respondents, the greater the challenge inherently to have valid results.

<sup>4</sup> Other multi-stakeholder initiatives, externs consultants, international non-profit organizations

Although the total number of respondents is quite reasonable, respondents often skipped questions as from the beginning from the survey (it is not clear why). Often only half of the respondents responded. Only 13 respondents participated in working groups and 14 represented organization involved in projects. This provides an insufficient basis to draw conclusion based on a quantitative assessment of how the working groups were organized. Only the data with a minimum number of 25 (half of the total number of Beyond Chocolate members) were used to illustrate and/or triangulate the findings in the report.

## 3 Results and outcomes (Prestaties)

This chapter presents findings from the literature review with additions from personal communication from IDH and interviews where needed.

### 3.1 Result 1: Uniting and supporting the Belgian cocoa industry

Result 1 concerns uniting and supporting the Belgian cocoa industry in the implementation of its sustainability commitments.

***Outcome (prestatie) 1: the steering committee of the Beyond Chocolate partnership has been formed and is giving direction to the programme in accordance with its mandate and the required timetable.***

The Steering committee has been formed and its mandate, i.e. role and responsibilities, has been outlined in a document. The various elements of the mandate are described below. If and how the steering committee has fulfilled its mandate will be described for each element separately. Additional information on the functioning of the steering committee can be found in section 3.5. The data used in that section comes from interviews, while the data in this section comes mainly from documentation and other written communication.

- Role of the Steering Committee : The main role of the Steering Committee is to give direction to the IDH Secretariat on strategic programme development and implementation issues within the context of the "Beyond Chocolate" partnership agreement of December 2018.

The steering committee continuously discusses several issues related to the development and implementation of the Beyond Chocolate partnership. New implemented activities, such as the start of the AME working group, and the design and development of events and reports are discussed during the meetings. Moreover, the steering committee commits itself to guide the strategic programme development. For example, during the steering committee meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2019, the steering committee agreed to take the lead in the development of intermediate targets towards 2025 and 2030.

The main responsibilities of the Steering Committee is to:

- Approve strategic proposals prepared by IDH related to the design and implementation of the Belgian Sustainable Chocolate Programme, which includes amongst others:
  - the selection of priority regions;
  - criteria for co-funding innovative projects;
  - indicators for monitoring & evaluation

#### *Selection of regions*

During the steering committee meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2019, the steering committee agreed on the focus of the first call for proposals for sustainability projects in cocoa. A proposal of the geographical scope for the first call would be made to the steering committee in a later stage, and the steering committee would give its approval. However, in the notes of the next steering committee meetings, the agreement on the geographical scope for the first call for proposals is not mentioned (only that there will be a proposition to the SteerCo). Minutes on the final decision are missing, although the SteerCo did approve the prospectus for the call for proposals which includes the

geographical scope (Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire). In the meeting notes of the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2020, the geographical scope of the second call for proposals is discussed. The SteerCo discusses whether countries of Belgian development cooperation (e.g. Nigeria and Cameroon) can be included if they show a clear link to the Beyond Chocolate targets. In the end, the SteerCo decided not to include these countries because M&E would be difficult in these countries at the moment. The countries could still be included at a later date.

The SteerCo has selected the priority regions for the implementation of Beyond Chocolate in accordance to their mandate.

#### *Criteria for co-funding of projects*

During the steering committee meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2019, the procedure of the criteria for the call for proposals for projects is outlined. It is decided that the projects will have to contribute to the achievement of the general ambition of the partnership and its intermediary targets. The SteerCo also decided that the focus of the first call was to be on living income. The criteria for the call for proposals then have to be submitted to an external panel of independent experts (the Project Review Committee), have to be validated by the IDH impact committee, and have to be validated by the inspector of finance at the DGD. The discussion about the approval of the exact criteria is not outlined in the meeting notes. In the documents: "Beyond Chocolate Prospectus Call for Proposals" & "2020 Beyond Chocolate Prospectus 2" the criteria are listed, but it is not clear who developed the criteria (the Project Review Committee or the SteerCo).

The SteerCo decides on the procedure and the scope of the co-funded projects. It is unclear from the meeting minutes who developed the exact criteria for selection.

#### *Indicators for monitoring and evaluation*

During different steering committee meetings, the development of a monitoring tool is discussed. The SteerCo assigned C-lever to support IDH with the development of the monitoring tool. Furthermore, an AME working group is organised to further develop the tool. During the steering committee meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2020, the steering committee agrees to provide anonymized feedback on the AME and agrees to go for four indicators. In a later meeting, the SteerCo members agree that the monitoring tool should not be too technical and difficult as it this would make reporting hard for partners (especially companies). Instead, the monitoring tool should be easy and manageable. IDH invited reporting partners to provide feedback on the tool and next steps in the development of the AME framework are discussed in depths with input from SteerCo members. The idea is then put forward to go for an online monitoring tool which should make the reporting easier and actor specific. The SteerCo also underlines the importance of harmonisation in reporting between ISCOs and flags this as a top priority.

Based on the meeting notes, the SteerCo is highly involved in providing input and assigning consultants to develop monitoring tools for Beyond Chocolate.

- Review the annual progress report prepared by IDH and provide strategic advice on strengthening interventions and partnership arrangements;

During the steering committee of the 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, the annual report was discussed and recommendations for improvements are suggested. The feedback contains amongst others suggestions to link with local actors in the implementing countries as well as connecting to the Minister to reconfirm her commitment. During the Steering Committee of the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2021, the members validated the table of content of the annual report, as well as first results and limitations of the data. The secretariat also sent the full annual report to all SteerCo members for their validation and autograph via mail.

The SteerCo provides their input on the form and content of the annual progress reports and if and how this should be communicated outside the partnership. However, it is not clear how the findings from annual reports translate into strategic advice on strengthening interventions and partnership arrangements.

- Advise on the strategic focus / orientation of the calls for proposals of the Belgian Sustainable Chocolate Programme developed by IDH;

The steering committee meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 outlines a discussion in which it is decided that the projects will have to contribute to the achievement of the general ambition of the partnership and its intermediary targets. The steering committee agreed on setting the intermediary targets towards 2025 and to develop these further. Furthermore, the SteerCo decided that the focus of the first call for proposals should be on Living Income, with deforestation, gender and child labour as secondary objectives. The SteerCo also decided to make the sustainability projects a recurring agenda point for each meeting.

- Participate at the annual progress meetings / workshops of the "Beyond Chocolate" partnership;

During the steering committee meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2020, concerns are shared about the turn up of steering committee members at meetings of the steering committee. This issue has since been resolved. All members (or their replacement) were present at the following meetings.

However, this section of the mandate is not about steerco meetings, but rather about progress meetings and workshops. Based on available attendance lists of these events, not all steerco members attend these meetings and most are not members of the working groups. However, not all attendance lists of each event was available (especially the annual meetings). In some cases another representative from the organisation of SteerCo member is present. It should also be noted that SteerCo members have other responsibilities outside of Beyond Chocolate and can therefore not always be available to join working groups, meetings or events. The exact role of SteerCo members in these sessions does not become apparent from available documents.

- Mobilise external support to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Belgian Sustainable Chocolate Programme.

The SteerCo has mobilised external support for Beyond Chocolate on multiple occasions. One clear example is the involvement of C-Lever in the development of the AME tool. Although the tool was not perfect, C-Levers involvement was useful in supporting the first steps.

Another example of mobilisation of external support is the harmonisation between the various ISCOs and collaboration between the ISCOs for a more sustainable European cocoa sector. One outcome of this collaboration is the development of a Living Income roadmap for Beyond Chocolate based on the roadmap developed by DISCO, which will contribute to reaching the 2030 goal. Another outcome is increased efficiency in the monitoring of reporting partners. The harmonisation makes it easier for signatories of multiple ISCOs to report as they no longer have to use different tools. Furthermore, collaboration between ISCOs allowed for involvement in the EU cocoa talks through one representative from the ISCOs.

During the steering committee meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2021, the member representing the civil society in the steering committee highlighted the effort to get more support on the objective of a



living income from the Minister of Cooperation and Development via a letter and a call. It is unclear what the outcome of this was.

The steering committee also plays a role in meeting other strategic partners as was the case during their visit to Côte d'Ivoire. Representatives of the other ISCOs were also present during this trip and informal meetings took place. The goal of the trip to Côte d'Ivoire was to meet with important partners, including those with a large presence, such as trader/processors Barry Callebaut, Cargill and Puratos. Furthermore, strategic meetings took place with the World Cocoa Foundation, the ICCO, high ranking Ivorian government officials (including the management of the Conseil Café Cacao). And representatives of an important cooperative union (ECCO). One of the concrete outcomes (next to teambuilding, capacity building of SteerCo members, and increase understanding of challenges on the field) is the participation of Beyond Chocolate in ICCO strategic meetings (Beyond Chocolate's program manager is part of ICCO's consultative board).

Finally, the SteerCo is in charge of organising working groups. These mostly consist of signatories but outside organisations with relevant expertise are also included. For example, Unicef was involved in the working group on child labour.

Based on available documents and the examples listed above, the SteerCo plays a pro-active role in reaching out to external organisations to the overall benefit of the Beyond Chocolate program. Especially the cooperation and harmonisation between the ISCOs has been an important step towards more efficiency and higher level discussions towards increase the effectiveness of the ISCOs as a whole as well as Beyond Chocolate itself.

#### **Additional responsibilities for the chair of the Steering Committee:**

- Approving the agendas of Steering Committee meetings and meetings and workshops of the "Beyond Chocolate" partnership developed by the IDH Senior Programme Manager;

The agenda for each meeting is first developed by the IDH and then discussed with the chair. It is then sent out to the other members. In different meeting notes of the steering committee meetings it is stated that the agenda is discussed and approved by the SteerCo members as well. Based on the above, the chair operates according to its mandate.

- Convening the Steering Committee meetings;

Based on the different meeting notes of the steering committee meetings, it can be concluded that the steering committee members schedule new meetings during the meetings or even plan several meetings ahead of time. All 4 SteerCo meetings have been scheduled for 2022. It is not clear from documents whether this is done by the chair, IDH or discussed during meetings by the members themselves.

- Ensuring the meetings are effectively conducted

The meeting minutes provide an outline of the topics to be discussed and the results of the discussions summarised in bullet points. Based on the meeting minutes, the meetings appear to be effectively conducted.

- Representing the Steering Committee towards the stakeholders within the "Beyond Chocolate" partnership and others interested in the Belgian chocolate sector.

Based on interview data, it is not always easy for the members of the SteerCo to gather input from their stakeholder group. The industry meets frequently through CHOPRABISCO and CSO actors schedule meetings as well. The retail sector appears to have more difficulty in convening and gathering feedback. It is unclear how this is for the knowledge institutes and impact investors. The role of these latter organisations is also different than that of retailers and the industry and their strategic input is therefore also different (more focused on development in the cocoa sector than gathering input from their fellow stakeholders).

**The IDH Senior Programme Manager is secretary to the Steering Committee, and is responsible for:**

- Supporting the chair in ensuring the meetings are organized effectively and background documents are timely prepared and distributed;

Before each Steering Committee, the secretariat prepares a draft agenda based on discussions and developments within the partnership (partners are at any time welcome to send IDH agenda points for the SteerCo). IDH then discusses the agenda in a call with the SteerCo chair. The chair reviews the agenda and gives input after which IDH shares it with the rest of the SteerCo. The chair moderates the meetings and takes the lead on some agenda points, depending on the subject. The chair also reviews the minutes of the SteerCo and makes adjustments in case needed.

- planning, coordinating and monitoring the Steering Committee related activities;

Dates for meetings are planned at the end of each meeting or further in advance.

- distributing the agenda;

As indicated above, this is done via email.

- preparing minutes;

The secretariat takes notes during the meetings and shares there with the chair.

- providing follow-up and reporting on recommendations / decisions made by the Steering Committee.

IDH shares the minutes of meetings and asks SteerCo members to give feedback. Using the minutes, IDH then plans the next activities. If the SteerCo makes a certain decision, IDH follows-up on it and updates the SteerCo via mail and more extensively in the next meeting. For example, when the SteerCo agreed to develop a Living Income roadmap, IDH set-up a TOR for a living income working group (which will co-develop this roadmap). The TOR was shared with the SteerCo and commented on. IDH will now plan this working group and keep the SteerCo informed on discussions and progress. This suggests that IDH is currently fulfilling its role in following up and reporting on decision made by the SteerCo.

The Steering Committee shall consist out of signatories of the 'Beyond Chocolate' partnership and will include:

- a representative of the DGD private sector unit; (currently Filip Vandenbroeke, DGD)
- a representative of the Choprabisco Board; (currently Philippe de Selliers, Choprabisco/Leonidas, Chair of the Steering Committee)
- a representative of the Belgian civil society; (currently Koen van Troos, Fairtrade Belgium)

- a representative of the Belgian supermarket chains; (currently Mieke Vercaeren, Colruyt group)
- a representative of the Belgian knowledge institutions; (currently Patrick van Damme, UGent)
- a representative of one of the social impact funds. (currently Wouter Vandersypen, Kampani)

Each member of the Steering Committee is appointed for an undefined period of time. It is expected, but not mandatory, to be a member for at least two years to keep consistency in the Steering Committee. When a member decides to end his/her membership, he/she can propose another representative from the same sector.

There have been some changes in the steering committee in recent years. According to the annual reports, three members changed since the inception of the SteerCo. Reasons for leaving were in all cases related to a change the working position of the member (either to a different organisation or to a different location). Not every member that left was in the position for the full 2 years, but since this is not mandatory it is less important. The composition in regards of the background of the SteerCo members has remained the same.

- The Steering Committee shall meet at least three times a year. During the earlier stages of the programme (in 2019) it is expected that the Steering Committee will meet more frequently.

Based on meeting minutes provided by IDH, the Steering Committee has met three times in 2019, five times in 2020 and four times in 2021.

- Business will be conducted by careful and considered deliberation leading to recommendations. Recommendations shall be decided by consensus where possible. Consensus means that after deliberation all members support a particular point of view. Where consensus is not achieved recommendations shall be decided by a simple majority vote of members voting on the question. In the case of a tied vote the person acting as chair shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.

Reaching consensus can be difficult, this was also mentioned during the interviews. However, so far this has not appeared to hamper the functioning of the steerco.

- The agenda, minutes and reports from the Steering Committee are accessible to any signatory of the "Beyond Chocolate" partnership.

Minutes of the SteerCo are available to all partners on demand. Furthermore, the SteerCo representatives often share minutes with their stakeholder group and collect feedback (eg civil society).

Overall assessment: The SteerCo has a broad mandate which is clearly outlined. Based on the consulted documents, communication with IDH and some interview data, the SteerCo appears to function well and in respect to its mandate. Certain elements of the mandate are not explicitly followed, for example the role of the SteerCo in annual meetings and workshops. However, this could also be due to a lack of sources surrounding these elements of the mandate. It should be noted that the sources used for this section do not always provide a clear picture, especially meeting minutes are difficult to draw firm conclusions from because the outcomes and follow up on these discussions is not always clearly outlined. IDH provided support by providing additional information in the form of email exchanges and other documents. Interview data was also use, but the questions

asked in interviews usually did not go into detail on separate elements of the SteerCo mandate. The findings from the interview on the SteerCo can be found in section 4.5.

***Outcome (prestatie) 2: The number of signatory partners of the Beyond Chocolate Partnership has remained stable or increased compared to the number on 5 December 2018.***

The number of signatories evolved as follows:

Year:	Number of signatories:
2018	46
2019	50
2020	55
2021	60

Overall assessment: Beyond Chocolate has been successful in increasing the number of signatories since its inception.

***Outcome (prestatie) 3: The progress of the Beyond Chocolate partnership in terms of sustainability and operationality is monitored annually and communicated to the public.***

*Annual reports*

IDH publishes annual reports on the sustainability and operational progress of Beyond Chocolate. The data for these reports comes from the signatories themselves who use a reporting template (Excel) that is filled out and sent to IDH for analysis and compilation. The template has since been replaced by an online tool reporting tool that has been harmonised with GISCO. NDA's have been signed with reporting partners in 2019. The analysis and interpretation of aggregated data is discussed and validated in the M&E working group. The SteerCo gives final validation on the report. The reporting data is then shared on an aggregated level only due to confidentiality and competition law.

*The AME Framework*

For consistency in data collection and reporting between signatories, the so called Accountability, Monitoring and Evaluation (AME) Framework was developed in 2019 for the monitoring the progress of the individual signatories and Beyond Chocolate as a whole. The AME framework consists of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and data components. A distinction is made between signatories in terms of what they need to report on. Certain targeted signatories are requested to report on all KPIs and data components of the AME Framework. These targeted signatories consist of the larger chocolate makers and processors, retailers and private labels. Other signatories, consisting mostly of CSO actors and impact investors, are only required to report on individual targets in the AME Framework.

*The ISCO Online Monitoring Tool*

In 2020, Beyond Chocolate, GISCO and SWISSCO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), documenting the ambition to harmonize their monitoring frameworks. Previously, stakeholders that were part of multiple initiatives needed to report at different moments in time for each platform on different sets of indicators. This improvement to the previous tool was introduced in 2021. The goal of the new monitoring tool was to reduce the reporting burden for partners and to be highly flexible by generating specific questionnaires for each stakeholder group and ISCO.

Overall assessment: The monitoring of and communication on Beyond Chocolate has been an important subject of conversation. Competition law is a limiting factor when it comes to sharing data and IDH needs to work around this for the publication of annual reports. Aggregating the data appears to be a good choice to communicate as much as possible to a wider audience and involving the SteerCo and the M&E working group in validating the data before publication ensures the information shared is supported by the broader group of signatories.

The design of the monitoring tool for the programme has received a lot of attention with the involvement of C-Lever and the formation of a specific working group. These efforts have led to the use of a tool that is endorsed by the signatories of Beyond Chocolates and of other ISCOs and provides adequate data for monitoring.

***Outcome (prestatie) 4: At least two annual Beyond Chocolate working groups are organized and attended by a majority of Beyond Chocolate partner organizations.***

The steering committee formed a total of three working groups based on the overarching themes: Living Income (10 members), Ending Deforestation (12 members) and Youth and Decent work (7 members). Each working group met 3 times in 2019. The working groups' main task was to mobilise and map state-of-the-art knowledge, first-hand experiences, and best practices around the specific themes. Besides these thematic working groups, another working group was created in 2019 for the development of the AME Framework (see above). This working group consisted of 6 members, each from a different stakeholder group. Assuming every member attended each working group, a total of 29 out of 50 signatories joined the thematic working groups in 2019 and at least 6 joined the AME working group. This means that in 2019, the majority of the signatories joined the working groups (35/50).

In 2020, the thematic working groups on Ending Deforestation and Youth and Employment each met once. The working group on Living Income met twice. It is assumed that the number of attendees of these working groups is the same as in 2019 (i.e. each working group member joined). In addition to the thematic working groups, the AME working group convened twice and the first working group meeting on the ISCO monitoring took place. 18 different organisations attended at least one of these sessions. There is some overlap in organisations joining the M&E sessions and the thematic sessions, but what is certain is that more than half of 55 signatories joined at least one session.

In 2021, the thematic working groups did not convene at the level of Beyond Chocolate but have been pushed back to 2022 and will take place at the ISCO level. All thematic working groups are scheduled to take place at the ISCO level starting again from February 2022. Other working group meetings at the Beyond Chocolate level did take place in 2021, namely the ISCO monitoring (M&E) group (3x), the traceability working group (ISCO) (twice) and the project working group (BC level) (once). According to attendance lists provided by IDH, 27 people from 19 organisations attended the M&E working group sessions, the traceability working group sessions were attended by 8 people from as many

organisations, and the project working group<sup>5</sup> on was attended by 12 people from 9 different organisations. This means that a total of 36 organisations joined working group sessions in 2021. This is more than half of the 60 signatories. However, it should be noted that it is often the same organisations that join the working groups.

Overall assessment: More working groups have been formed than formulated in the outcome. Each theme had its own working group and other important subjects, such as monitoring and traceability also had working groups. These working groups appear to reflect the importance attached to these subjects by the SteerCo and the secretariat.

The attendance of signatories of these working groups was more difficult to evaluate as this is done based on attendance lists for each sessions where multiple persons from one organisations have joined or the same organisations joined multiple groups. In the end, who attends the working groups is likely based on the interest and availability of an organisation in joining these groups. Who joins the sessions should not be of great importance as long as the learnings from the groups benefit the signatories and Beyond Chocolate as a whole. Unfortunately, this is not always the case according to interviewees (see section 4.2).

### 3.2 Result 2: Improving the effectiveness/efficiency of sustainability initiatives within the Belgian chocolate sector

***Outcome (prestatie) 5: A first call for proposals has been successfully implemented and the project partners of 3 to 5 co-financed projects have signed a contract.***

The objective of the call for proposals is to work with partners from the Beyond Chocolate partnership on sustainability projects that improve, innovate, scale or accelerate the effectiveness and efficiency of sustainability initiatives in the Belgian chocolate sector, and therefore contribute to the achievement of both the general and respective individual ambitions in the Beyond Chocolate partnership. The co-funded project should entail sustainability innovations, the scaling of activities within the project should be scalable, and contribute to acceleration of activities and improvements for the cocoa sector in relation the 2030 Beyond Chocolate ambitions on living income, child labour, forced labour, and deforestation. Furthermore, projects must be traceable, have a clear link with the Belgian market and have additionality. The best practices and lessons learned from these projects should therefore lead to an increased effectiveness and efficiency of sustainability initiatives from the Belgian chocolate sector.

The Call for Proposals is addressed to all signatories of the Beyond chocolate partnership and the projects should have a demonstrated link with the Belgian cocoa and chocolate sector to be able to contribute to the Beyond Chocolate partnerships commitments. Process: the projects were selected by the project review committee in two steps: first step concept note and second step project proposal.

The first call for proposals was launched on the 5th of December 2019. 2 million euros of funding was made available by the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In total, 7 projects were approved (1.441.428 euros). In 2020, a second call for proposals was launched with the objective to spend the remainder of the original fund (around 560.000€). it was expected this would fund around 3 projects. So far, 1 project has been contracted during the second call as. A second project is currently awaiting

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<sup>5</sup> Only representatives from organisations with a project were invited for this session.

approval. According to the website, there are currently 8 projects running and 1 project is still awaiting approval.

Overall assessment: The minimum of 3 to 5 co-financed projects with signed contracts has been achieved and even surpassed. All available funding has been committed and has led to around €4 million in investments from the private sector.

**Outcome (prestatie) 6: 67% of the co-financing is taken up by project partners.**

The table below presents an overview of the Beyond Chocolate projects and the % of funding that is provided by project partners. All the percentages have been calculated on what is reported in the Annual report (2020), except for the projects by ZOTO and Puratos for which figures from the contracts have been used.

As can be seen in the table, 7/8 of projects have co-funded 67% or more of the project budget. The only exception is the project financed by ZOTO, that has been co-financed for only 52%. ZOTO was exempted from the 67% rule due to level of innovation and the fact that the project is managed by relatively small players. This is in accordance with the concept note agreed upon by the Minister. In the end, when all privately funded amounts for each project are aggregated and calculated as a percentage of the combined total project budgets, the total percentage co-funded by private partners is **68,83%**.

Overall assessment: The threshold of a minimum 67% of project budgets being provided project partners has been met.

Project name	Project partners	% funded by project partners
Beyond Trees, Towards Better Incomes for Cocoa Farmers	Cargill	66,8%
A Living Income for cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire	Colruyt, Puratos	67,3%
Changing the Norm in the Cocoa Sector	Tony's Chocolonely	67%
Sustainable organic and high-quality cocoa production for the cooperative Yeyasso in Ivory Coast	Galler	71,4%
Landscape for cocoa livelihoods	Mondelez, CIAT	70,3%
Cocoa Household Income Diversification Project	Barry Callebaut	72,1%
Direct market access for Ituri smallholder farmers producing deforestation-free premium cocoa	ZOTO	52,6%
Farmers-Chocolatiers Sustainable Partnership	Puratos	79,2%
	Total % co-funded:	68,83%

***Outcome (prestatie) 7: The objective of a living income for cocoa producers is included in the projects.***

The 2020 Annual Report provides an overview of the 8 projects that are currently running and what goals are included in the projects. The goal of living income for cocoa producers is to be included in all projects, through a combination of different means. The Annual report identifies 4 main strategies in the projects through which a living income is to be achieved: productivity increase, pricing, diversification and reducing production costs. In all cases, the projects combine 2 or more of these strategies in their projects. This is because Beyond Chocolate acknowledges that a holistic approach is needed in order to achieve a living income.

The second call for proposals evolved further and focuses on so-called 'income driver models'. This allowed to categorize and evaluate the potential of different intervention strategies.<sup>6</sup>

Overall assessment: Living income has been included in all projects in a holistic way by combining multiple income raising strategies.

***Outcome (prestatie) 8: The projects are adequately monitored. There will also be a report on the progress of the projects and the first lessons will be shared within Beyond Chocolate.***

The Beyond Chocolate co-financed projects report to IDH twice a year. In March, they hand in an annual report of the year before and in September a midyear report of the period Jan-June. The narrative reporting includes an overview of activities that were executed and under which Key Performance Indicator (KPI) these activities fall. The reports also provides information on risk mitigation, lessons learned, KPIs and activities for the next year. Each report follows the same set up and the projects are monitored in the same matter based on their KPIs. During the interviews, some respondents had complaints about the reporting tool, namely that it was too much focused on facts and figures and not enough on the qualitative results of projects. Gathering all data needed for the reports was also mentioned as difficult and time consuming.

It is not clear from the documentation whether the progress and narrative reports, and the lessons learned from these reports, are made public to all Beyond Chocolate signatories. It appears that this is not the case. Signatories have access to shortened progress reports on each project published in the annual report and on the website, but these do not contain the lessons learned as described in the narrative reports. Learnings from projects are currently mostly shared between project partners and signatories involved in projects.

IDH mentions that in the first phase of the implementation of projects, learnings were limited and therefore difficult to share. However, the projects' theory of change were showcased and shared during the 2019 General Assembly and the Beyond Chocolate 2 year event to provide more information the projects to the wider Beyond Chocolate signatories.

In 2021, IDH started sharing learnings more actively. As such, a project working group was organised in May during which project partners could share learnings and challenges. In November 2021, a big learning event on living income was held featuring the projects. Here, lessons were actively shared with Beyond Chocolate partners and a wider ISCO audience. Information on these events can be

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/step-4-take-action-to-close-the-gap-and-track-results/>



found on IDH website and through a short social media campaign on LinkedIn.<sup>7</sup> More lessons learned on the Galler project were also shared on the website.<sup>8</sup>

Overall assessment: The projects are adequately monitored in terms of quantifiable data. The narrative reports are clearly structured and provide a good overview of the KPIs and the progress made.

Sharing lessons learned on the projects currently happens mostly between project partners and between all signatories that have projects. A few events have been organised in which more information on the projects is shared and information is shared on the website and through annual reports. However, these are not as detailed as the narrative reports submitted to IDH. The pandemic negatively affects progress of the projects, also limiting the lessons that can be learned and shared. When more lessons can be learned from the projects, these should be shared within Beyond Chocolate either through reports or through (learning) events.

### 3.3 Achievement at impact level

***Outcome (prestatie) 9: The volume of chocolate produced and/or sold in Belgium and covered by a sustainability programme or certification standard has increased from 46% (2018) to more than 60% (2021).***

At the start of Beyond Chocolate, the volume of chocolate produced and/or sold in Belgium that was covered by a certification standard or sustainability programme was 46%. According to the 2020 Annual report, 57.32% of the chocolate produced in Belgium was certified and/or covered by a corporate sustainability program, which is a 7% increase compared to last year (i.e. the sustainable volume was around 50% in 2019). Another interesting development reported here is that compared to 2019, in 2020 the share of sustainable cocoa sourced through company was larger than that of the share sourced through Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance (though both are reported to have increased). For 2021 the projection is to have 72% sustainably sourced, but data on the true figure is not yet available.<sup>9</sup> However, with the current trend, IDH and the Steering Committee expect this goal to be met based on a projection graph that has been validated by the M&E working group in the summer of 2021. The goal is to reach 100% in 2025.

Overall assessment: It is unclear whether the goal has been met, but according to the projection it has been. The projection has been validated.

***Outcome (prestatie) 10: Beyond Chocolate partners (in particular the cocoa traders and cocoa processing companies) are fully aware of the agreements made within the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) and have drawn up an equivalent plan of action.***

According to the 2020 Annual Report, Beyond Chocolate is building on existing initiatives to reach its goal of ending deforestation due to cocoa growing for the Belgian chocolate sector by 2030. As an intermediary step to reach the 2030 goal, partners have committed to meet the applicable agreements between governments and companies as outlined in the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI).

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/learning-events-beyond-chocolate/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/news/gender-empowerment-in-the-project-sustainable-and-high-quality-cocoa-production-for-the-cooperative-yeyasso/>

<sup>9</sup> Collection of individual data for 2021 starts in April 2022

This initiative is a commitment of top cocoa-producing countries and leading chocolate and cocoa companies to end deforestation and restore forest areas.

On the production side, all Beyond Chocolate partners are CFI signatories and are committed to the CFI obligations. On the consumption side, most partners are not CFI signatories. Smaller companies have indicated not to have the capacity to become CFI signatories. It is still unclear for these partners how they can comply with the 2025 commitment.

Based on the above, it is likely that Beyond Chocolate partners are aware of the CFI agreements and what they entail. However, the problem lies in the fact that it is currently not possible for certain partners to comply with CFI. The partners for which becoming a CFI is not possible currently do not appear to have an equivalent plan of action. To address this, the Program Management plans to develop a trajectory for partners to still comply with the zero-deforestation commitment. To this end, a deforestation working group has met for the first time on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 2022. This working group will also review the set of indicators and definitions used to monitor progress against the ISCO commitments and other company zero-deforestation commitments (including CFI and the Roadmap to Deforestation-free Cocoa in Cameroon and Liberia), and identify opportunities for joint reporting that could support improved understanding of on-the-ground impact.

Overall assessment: The goal has not yet been met, but the actions have been taken to meet this goal as soon as possible.

***Outcome (prestatie) 11: More than 75,000 small-scale cocoa producers are reached through the Beyond Chocolate co-financed projects and other sustainability initiatives within the market.***

The 2020 Annual report states that over 12.000 small scale producers are currently impacted by projects initiated through the Beyond Chocolate program. However, the 75.000 includes producers who are impacted through other sustainability initiatives within the market. This includes, for example, the increase in certified cocoa or cocoa covered by a corporate sustainability scheme sourced by Beyond Chocolate partners, and of new chocolate products made from sustainable cocoa launched as a result of Beyond Chocolate. These more indirectly reached farmers is different calculate, but IDH has made an effort to estimate the number of farmers that are currently being reached. The calculations and considerations are outlined below.

**Extract UGent Baseline report for Beyond Chocolate (2020), published in 2019 Annual Report.**

Desktop research revealed that the Belgian cocoa sector; i.e. all economic actors who produce (semi-finished) chocolate products in Belgium, yearly produce **590,000 tons of industrial chocolate (= chocolate couverture)**. Using the international conversion factor of 0.4 (i.e. 400 g of cocoa beans required to produce 1 kg of finished chocolate product) proposed by ICCO, it implies the annual Belgian chocolate production is produced from **236,000 tons of cocoa beans** (round number). Using import and export statistics of cocoa beans and cocoa liquor, butter and cake (or powder), we found a **net bean equivalent<sup>10</sup> import of 320,000 tons of cocoa beans** (round number) (of which we assume they have all been processed into chocolate products in Belgium). Differences between these two figures can be linked to stocks, volumes not accounted for in the different statistics, or statistical data errors.

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<sup>10</sup> For conversion, we used the factors proposed by ICCO, i.e. 1.33 kg of cocoa beans needed to produce 1 kg of cocoa butter, 1.25 kg of cocoa beans linked to the production of 1 kg of cocoa liquor and 1.18 kg of cocoa beans linked to the production of 1 kg of cocoa powder/cake (taking into account that butter and powder are the joint output of a certain mass of cocoa liquor).

According to FAO ([www.fao.org/faostat](http://www.fao.org/faostat)), cocoa bean yield per ha in 2018 was 444 kg globally, but with much variation between cocoa producing countries: 489 kg in Côte d'Ivoire, 530 in Ghana, 281 kg in Nigeria, 410 kg in Cameroon, 556 kg in the Dominican Republic, 469 kg in Ecuador and 840 kg in Peru. In order to obtain a reliable yield figure for the cocoa beans that are eventually processed in Belgium, we summed the above yield data multiplied by the respective countries of cocoa origin shares in the Belgian chocolate sector (53 % from Côte d'Ivoire, 15 % from Ghana, 9 % from Nigeria, 5 % from Cameroon, 3 % from Ecuador, 3 % from Peru, 2 % from the Dominican Republic, and 10 % from the rest of the world (for which we used the average global yield figure of 444 kg of dry cocoa beans per ha). Using the latter method, we estimate that average yield of cocoa beans produced for the Belgian cocoa sector is **479 kg per ha**.

This means that the agricultural surface area required to produce these cocoa beans is between 492,693 ha and 668,059 ha.

More than 90 % of cocoa produced globally is produced by smallholders. In West Africa, this is almost the case for 100 % of cocoa production. No clear figures exist on the precise size of a cocoa smallholder size. Ranges vary from 0.25 to 5 ha (Ameya et al., 2018; ECA, 2011; ICCO, 2012; Kongor et al., 2018; Vaast & Somarriba, 2014; Wessel et al., 2015). Averaging the averages of all ranges found in literature, we found an **average cocoa smallholder farm size of 3.5 ha**.

**As a result, the Belgian cocoa sector is supplied by between 140,769 and 190,874 cocoa farming families.**

#### **Average farm sizes and productivity levels according to [VOICE Cocoa Barometer \(2020\)](#)**

##### **Cote d'Ivoire**

Avg farm size – 3.4 ha, 2.72 productive ha

Avg productivity level – between 400 and 550kg/ha

##### **Ghana**

Avg farm size – 2.1ha, 1.68 productive ha

Avg productivity level – between 400 and 500kg/ha

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Since Barry Callebaut, Cargill and Puratos together account for over 90% of all chocolate produced in Belgium, the above analysis is representative of the Belgian production market. The 7% increase (in certification and/or coverage by a sustainability program) marks a valuable first step and shows Beyond Chocolate has positively influenced the supply of chocolate that is certified and/or covered by a corporate sustainability program. In 2020, 304,377 metric tons of beans were processed to produce chocolate in Belgium. This implies that in 2020, **174,469 metric tons of beans were covered by certification and/or a corporate sustainability program**.

Using an average farm size of 2.5 productive ha and an average productivity level of 450kg/ha, and a similar methodology to translate volumes of beans into roughly estimated number of cocoa producers:

➔ Estimated number of ha needed for Belgian chocolate production (total production for Belgian chocolate/average productivity (kg/ha)).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Data for 2019 and 2020 comes from Beyond Chocolate partners.

In 2018:  $236.000/0,45 = 524.444$  ha  
in 2019:  $262.000/0,45 = 582.222$  ha  
in 2020:  $304.377/0,45 = 676.393$  ha

→ Estimated number of farmers needed for Belgian chocolate production (total land size needed for Belgian chocolate/average farm size):

In 2018:  $524.444/2.5 = 209.778$  farmers  
in 2019:  $582.222/2.5 = 232.888$  farmers  
in 2020:  $676.393/2.5 = 270.557$  farmers

→ Estimated number of farms reached through programs (total production needed for Belgium\*%certified/average productivity)/average land size):

In 2018:  $((236.000*0,46)/0,45)/2,5 = 96.497$  farmers  
In 2019:  $((262.000*0,5)/0,45)/2,5 = 116.444$  farmers  
in 2020:  $((304.377*0,57)/0,45)/2,5 = 155.083$  farmers

The total number of farmers (or farms) reached by a Belgian sustainability program is 155.083 (certification or verification, excluding Beyond Chocolate projects). If you look at what changed since the beginning of Beyond Chocolate then:  $155.083$  farmers -  $96.497$  farms =  $58.586$  farmers (excluding projects). Add 12.000 farmers directly influenced by the Beyond Chocolate projects:  $58.586 + 12.000 = 70.586$  farmers. This is the increase between 2018 and 2020. Data from 2021 is not yet available so it is possible that the goal of 75.000 has been reached.

Overall assessment: It is currently not possible to know exactly how many (additional) farmers are reached as a result of Beyond Chocolate. However, if the goal of 75.000 farmer was set for 2021, then it is likely the goal has been met as around 70.000 were reached in 2020 as the % sustainably sourced cocoa is projected to have increased as well (to 72%, see outcome 9). Future improvements in traceability of cocoa used in the Belgian market can improve the accuracy of the calculation provided here.

### ***Outcome (prestatie) 12: Beyond Chocolate's partners have launched new chocolate products that raise the bar in terms of sustainability and create a new dynamic in the market***

Since its launch in 2018, four retailers operating in the Belgian market have made their private label 100% certified and several smaller industry players have also vastly increased their certified sourced cocoa (usually up to 100%). These developments can be attributed to Beyond Chocolate. Furthermore, several new products have launched on the Belgian market as a result of Beyond Chocolate. These include products that further build on certification towards realizing LI ambitions, implementing holistic intervention strategies including the payment of additional premiums to farmers and cooperatives. Today, at least 7 'living income chocolates' are available on the Belgian market - Tony's open chain (Tony's, Delhaize, Aldi), Belvas, Oxfam Bite to Fight, Way to Go Lidl, and Galler and Colruyt source 'living income chocolates' via their pilot projects.

Overall assessment: Beyond Chocolate has had an impact on sustainability in the Belgian chocolate market and does seem to have created a new dynamic in which signatories put sustainability higher on the agenda. This is based on the fact that the volume of sustainably produced cocoa (i.e. certified) has increased as a result of Beyond Chocolate. Furthermore, several new products have entered the Belgian market. Overall, sustainability appears to have become a more important theme in the Belgian market.

## 4 Implementation process

This chapter presents findings from interviews and the survey.

### 4.1 Coordination and bringing together

Beyond Chocolate agreement was signed in December 2018 (the contract with Belgian government was concluded in June 2019). According to most partners interviewed, the involvement of government was crucial at the beginning to bring the partner groups around the table. The minister call the sector to get 'organized'. The sector subsequently defined the long term targets, thereby ensuring ownership of the program by its partners. The explicit long-term targets set by the minister, such as closing the living income gap, has been considered as constructive and guiding. Many partners felt that the time was right to bring the Belgian cocoa actors together on one platform and work towards harmonization.

Moreover, all partners agree that it was a good choice to engage IDH to manage the initiative. IDH is well positioned to coordinate multi-stakeholder initiatives and has in-house expertise on cocoa related challenges, particularly on living income. Most partners find that IDH performed well in mobilizing and onboarding the partners and convening the partnership. A particularly strong point is the involvement of retailers as partner groups (this is considered important because retailers have direct contact with consumers, as discussed below).

Most partners had already set ambitions about promoting sustainability, both to a higher and lesser extent. As a result of Beyond Chocolate, the partners feel more urgency. The interviews show that that initiative has enabled the partners to be more explicit and aware about their ambitions.

#### *Managing the initiative*

The secretariat started from scratch with onboarding and reporting systems and procedures, setting up the steering committee while launching a broad array of activities including working groups, learning events and projects. Over time, partners have started to work more together, which involves more coordination. The interviewees mentioned that the secretariat is somewhat bureaucratic, especially in the beginning. Over time IDH has improved and streamlined the systems and procedures.

*Has IDH been doing a good job for the past 2 years in mobilizing and bringing together partners to participate in projects, working groups, workshops and other activities (n=28)?*

	Not at all	Not very good	Quite good	Very good
# respondents	2	3	16	7

(Source: Beyond Chocolate evaluation survey KIT, 2022)

### 4.2 Working groups and events

At the start of the initiative, IDH set up a number working groups as listed in paragraph 3.1. Interviewees who participated in the working groups learned from the informative discussions. Some reported misunderstanding about basic concepts enabling them to learn further about the issues at play. Although the conversation all working groups were framed with ToRs, a better clarification of

the internal rules for working group discussions was suggested. For 2022, all dates of working groups are set and communicated to partners.

Over the two years, the working groups discussed and clarified the concepts in the Belgian context. Levelling up the discussions to ISCO level is the logic next step address the issues. Recently, IDH has launched efforts to organize the working groups at the ISCO level. This harmonization is very much encouraged by partners.

#### *Learning events*

IDH organized a series of events on a regular basis as mentioned in chapter 2. The learning events were particularly informative to learn what other commitments had been made for living income in other sectors. The information sessions are always carried out in a professional and interesting way.

Regarding the effectiveness of the events and the practical application, interviewees and survey participants mentioned that it requires more time than can be reached at a one-time event. The events would have been more useful if companies felt the pressure of applying the learnings. Also, for the learning events it was suggested that they should be organized ISCO's platforms.

### 4.3 Accountability, Monitoring and Evaluation (AME)

The AME framework was co-developed by partners and IDH in the Beyond Chocolate AME working group. It is a result of mutual efforts and continuous consultation. Each year, the framework is reviewed by partners in the working group and via mail. At first Partners had much difficulty completing the expected reports accordingly. The system included an extensive list of questions and required data.. There were two reporting rounds in 2020 (on 2019 data) and in 2021 (on 2020 data). The first involved a complex Excel, for the second IDH made many changes to increase user friendliness (eg monitoring tool). Today, most partners agree that the tool is much user friendly and are satisfied with the improvements. The outcomes of the survey suggest a similar trend.

Interviewees suggest that further development remains desired. AME reports should be understandable for a broader audience. Not necessary to report on every detail within the AME, just a clear (non-expert) presentation of data. However, there is a trade-off between accurate evaluation and intelligibility for non-expert audiences. Against that background, two separate frameworks could be developed: one that is accurate and evaluative, another one that is communicative and simplifies things but is backed up by robust evaluative evidence. This promotes the transparency.

#### *Individual fulfillment of commitments*

The system provides an overall insight into the performance of the sector. Some interviewees feel that the AME system should provide better insight into how each partner is fulfilling the commitments, which allows the partnership to address the individual partner's weaknesses. As the AME reporting today is anonymous without individual targets (for legal reasons), it is only possible to monitor the general evolution (and as such hold the full group accountable). In addition, there is no third-party verification of the data and lack of control capacity by certifications. They suggest a stronger mandate for the initiative (including enforcement).

Several interviewees mentioned that there should be much more transparency about the partner's own specific commitments. Openly sharing confidential information is a precarious matter and

should be handled with care to build further trust (for instance, it is problematic to share pricing information, which is crucial to understanding whether farmers obtain living incomes, without risking formation of a cartel). Lastly, the harmonizing of the AME KPIs with other ISCOs is very much welcomed.

#### AME reports

Most interviewees and survey respondents believe that AME figures and reports are useful and give an indication of where the sector is going. However, often the data provided by companies cannot be compared or are insufficient to arrive at (aggregated) clear conclusions. The issue with the aggregation is that different companies and actors are reporting differently (national level/ global level/ EU level/ suppliers reporting and companies sourcing through suppliers reporting).

In the survey it was mentioned not rely too much on self-reporting of partners. At present, discussion in the M&E WG focus on the possibility of a mix of individual data reported by the partners and additional impact research (that could be co-funded by the ISCOs).

## 4.4 Internal communication

Most interviewees agree that the internal communication of Beyond Chocolate is well in order. IDH established constructive and direct communications lines with all partners. IDH is open to hearing feedback and is engaged with the concerns of IDH. Most of the survey respondents consider the organization and quality of internal communication such as the website, the newsletter and sharing reports (very) useful. Some feel that communication is a bit a good news show.

Most partners are interested in meeting up with new stakeholders and partners. The fact that participants could not meet in person during online events is considered a major obstacle to getting to know each other. Survey respondents see additional networking opportunities in which participation could be facilitated by IDH such as Salon du Chocolate and Biofach Berlin.

*How would you score the IDH's role and the usefulness of the website, the newsletters and other information for internal communication purposes (such as informing your organization about activities of other partners or sharing overall insights about Beyond Chocolate)? (n=26)?*

	Not useful	A little useful	Useful	Very useful
<b># of respondents</b>	1	9	9	7

(Source: Beyond Chocolate evaluation survey KIT, 2022)

Survey results about IDH reminding partners about responsibilities and commitments in the framework of Beyond Chocolate.

*How do you rate IDH's efforts (in terms of effectiveness) to remind your organization about the Beyond Chocolate responsibilities and commitments (n=27)?*

	Not effective	A little effective	Quite effective	Very effective
<b># of respondents</b>	4	8	7	8

(Source: Beyond Chocolate evaluation survey KIT, 2022)

### *Belgian consumers*

Under its mandate, Beyond Chocolate did not implement external communication activities to inform Belgian consumers about the sustainability aspects of Belgian chocolate products. The assumption was the partners themselves would intensify public information campaign activities on sustainability issues. The survey suggests that this is the case to a considerable extent, but not always as result of Beyond Chocolate.

Beyond Chocolate participated in numerous organised by partners, government institutions and Belgian embassies. In addition, IDH uses own channels to communicate - website, LinkedIn, newsletters - in a way that is accessible to external partners. With each annual report, a press release is published. Beyond Chocolate has been mentioned in the press a number of times (was even mentioned as one of the hopeful moments of 2021).

Both interviewees and survey respondents consider it crucial to further intensify external communication for the Belgian public, streamlining the communication initiatives and contributions of the different partners. It would be good that the underlying story of Belgian chocolate, for instance on living income, is clearly communicated on the products (QR code linking to a website for instance)<sup>12</sup>. This could further facilitate demand-driven implementation of living income approaches involving emotional and cognitive relevance at the moment of purchase by consumers.

### *Involvement of Belgian consumers*

Beyond Chocolate currently does not inform consumers direct. However, partners see the importance of intensifying public information campaign activities on sustainability issues.

Recommendations:

- More focus should be put to empower partners to inform consumer on what sustainability entails and what Beyond Chocolate and its partners are doing in this field.
- DGD could consider a more active role in communication to consumers.
- Alternatively, this role could be played by CSO actors. ]

## 4.5 Steering committee

The setup of the SteerCo and members was well conceptualized according to the interviewees. Overall, the members seek cooperation and understanding during the regular meetings facilitated by IDH. The yearly priorities are well set but the overall direction of the steerCo is sometimes not clear, now more ISCOs will be involved (and EU-wide harmonization legislation on deforestation and human rights due diligence). There is a tendency to avoid difficult conversations/topics in the SteerCo.

One issue is that the constituencies of the SteerCo members are not always aligned with their constituencies. A few interviewees mentioned between the partner groups there is lively discussion, whereas within other partner groups there seems to be less discussion and agreement. Possible competing business interests are mentioned within some constituencies of the representatives in the steering committee. These may hamper open conversations (see also paragraph 5.2: Sensitive conversations, creating trust and transparency).

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<sup>12</sup> Part of the initial discussions in Beyond Chocolate was that this initiative would not lead to a new label of on pack claims, amongst other things to avoid greenwashing.



It is accepted that a representative of Choprabisco is acting as chair. It is flagged, however, that the industry is not always well represented due to this dual role of chair (must be neutral, but also represent his constituencies). Some partners feel that there could be more representation from the industry. Similarly, the CSOs feel that their voice is not always heard.

## 4.6 Implications of the COVID-19 crisis

In the last 2 years, there were no physical meetings organized as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. IDH put effort in 'reinventing' how to facilitate meetings and moderate conversations, requiring different techniques and skills. All interviewees signal lack of richness in human contact and absence of the collateral effects of partners getting to know each other. The interviewees and comments of survey respondents suggest that COVID-19 crisis hindered the realization of ambitions and fulfillment of commitments of Beyond Chocolate. The partners felt that COVID-19 restrictions hampered networking and getting to know each other better.

## 5 Cocoa sustainability projects

### 5.1 Organization and coordination

Within the Beyond Chocolate framework, the Belgian government has made available an amount of 2 million Euro to co-finance the launch of a series of projects within the themes: (1) living Income; (2) youth, employment, and child labor, and (3) deforestation. To date, [8 projects](#) have been initiated and implemented by coalitions of different partner groups, including chocolatiers, retailers, NGOs, and knowledge institutions.

Beyond Chocolate handles a co-financing principle in which the partners' fund 67% of the project budgets. During the interviews, project partners reported that the co-financing structure enabled them to implement more innovative projects (or project elements) that would normally have been seen as too risky.

As regular procedure, IDH has issued calls for project proposals. The requirements and co-financing arrangement were sufficient and well explained in the call according to interviewees, which was confirmed in the survey. Initially, several partner coalitions did not do prepare the project proposal well (the theory of change was not well defined). In collaboration with project partners, it took the time develop detailed intervention proposals more ambitious and impactful. The contracting of the projects was professionally managed by IDH. According to project partners and the secretariat, the knowledge and skills to prepare project proposals has increased between the first and second call.

IDH succeeded well in bringing parties together and further facilitating them to work together. During the project preparations and launch, the trust level between partners in the project has achieved satisfactory levels.

The co-financing leads in all project partner coalitions are from the industry (Cargill, Barry Callebaut, Tony's Chocolonely, Galler, Mondelez and Colruyt). One of the objectives of this fund is to leverage private investments directed to sustainable value chains, this could be considered a consequence of a conscious choice. In fact, NGOs and knowledge institutions are not in the position to co-finance the project because they depend on external funding sources not allowing to do so. The CSOs and knowledge institutions feel that their voice is not always well represented in the project implementation.

IDH spends a lot of time and effort in initiating, organizing, and administering the pilot projects, while these are small. There is a certain tradeoff; the project administration is at the expense of convening conversations, given the limited resources available. There is a deeper trade-off between convening but without immediate impact on the ground and difficulties in verifying impact and quantifying and verifiable, results-based projects. Some partners wonder whether a multi-stakeholder platform is the best way to implement projects, because platforms are typically more focused on convening debates and seeking consensus. Some interviewees suggested to link up with other initiatives engaged in sustainable cacao projects financed by the Belgian government, or an extension of the human resources within the Beyond Chocolate secretariat to balance the projects' administration workload.

Some interviewees indicated that IDH is not very flexible modifying project planning and budgets along the way; IDH is too procedural and does not sufficiently take the realities on the ground into

account. These interviewees wish more IDH consultation with project partners, preferably on a regular basis. Some projects require additional funding as budgeting project costs is difficult.

The reporting format and expectations are clear, although a bit rigid involving demanding work, requiring additional assistance from the secretariat. The reports report a lot on facts and figures. Qualitative narratives could provide much more information about what is happening on the ground.

## 5.2 Outcomes and impact within the project themes

Overall, the interviewed partners are positive about the projects and particularly find the newly gained insights and understanding on the ground relevant and useful to stimulate and facilitate conversations in the multi-stakeholder context. The Beyond Chocolate projects provide insights on what works and what does not work (and why). Project partners also see emerging challenges in the field, which related to the project themes living Income, deforestation, youth, employment, and child labor. As an illustration, land titles of cocoa fields related to living income involving local government and traditional leader- and ownership. The project empowers the stakeholders of the partnership to assume the responsibilities under the partnership.

Interviewees believe that projects provide way to measure impact and prove scalability on the ground. However, little impact (was expected and) and scaling has been realized within the 2 years' period (see prestaties 12 and 13). It is important to be realistic about expectations when it comes to the co-financing of projects (within a 100 billion industry, 2 million Euro is a relatively small amount). Moreover, virtually all interviewees report that COVID-19 hampered the implementation of the projects.

### *Living Income*

The projects help partners to understand the complex living income issue against the ambitions towards 2030. The theme is challenging because it requires an integrated approach, only raising the cocoa price is not sufficient to close the gap towards achieving a living income. Indeed, most projects involve various activities (income generating activities, women, good agricultural practices, child labor). It is also flagged that projects sometimes involve too many different activities, which limits effectiveness and efficiency.

The projects resulted in learning and project partners were challenged by the complexity of the theme. The partners are interested to understand the complexity and the approach (roadmap/theory of change) to promote incomes of cocoa producers towards a living income. IDH has started to generate more insight into the matter by reviewing the different drivers of income based on the existing body of knowledge, drawing on IDH 'Roadmap on Living Incomes'<sup>13</sup> (not commodity specific), adding to the evidence and insights of the projects. The challenges and emerging questions regarding the living income the theme, generated by the combined multi-stakeholder and project initiatives, confirm the need for a continuation of these Beyond Chocolate activities.

Some realism is also essential as key factors of the low incomes may be out of the sphere of influence of the projects. There is overproduction of cocoa, which resulted in lowering the prices and weakening the bargaining position of cooperatives. They may seek outlets at other markets.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/roadmap-on-living-income>

### *Youth, employment, and child labor*

Partners did not discuss the topic a lot. There is a need to put child labor more explicitly on the agenda, it has moved to the background.

### *Ending deforestation*

Some partners feel that deforestation does not have a high priority in the projects. Moreover, it is a conscious choice within Beyond Chocolate of putting the focus on living incomes. Resolving (extreme) poverty first allows for developing solution in an integrated way for the other themes.

Moreover, realizing the targets within this theme is less challenging because of the upcoming European legislation. Cocoa and chocolate products must be 'deforestation free' from 31/12/2020. There remain implementation challenges and definition uncertainties in the proposed EU legislation. Issues as risk assessment definition and country benchmarking and the living income challenge remain. Eventually, the focus may shift from convincing the sector to end deforestation goal to implementation related issues.

## 6 Multi-stakeholder platform

### 6.1 Novel approach

The interviewed partners observe that Beyond Chocolate, adopting a multi-stakeholder platform approach, has been innovative w the Belgian chocolate context. All partners valued the approach to gather the different partner groups reflecting a broad representation of private, public and CSO actors (one interviewee suggested bringing in the banking/financial sector as well). They all understand that the approach goes step by step in initiating new conversations and building trust and openness. Partners are aware that younger generations of consumers are much more aware of sustainability issues and their responsibilities/actions. Most interviewed partners are enthusiastic about the new multi-stakeholder approach and see the importance of its continuation.

Although the long-term objectives are clear of the multi-stakeholder initiative, the way to get there in terms of a detailed roadmap or theory of change (via multi-stakeholder approach and projects) remains unclear for quite some partners. Some interviewees believe that this was the result of the initial rush of starting the initiative focusing on elevated level and visionary commitments, rather than practical operationalization. The unforeseen COVID-19 crisis complicated practical implementation even further.

A multi-stakeholder initiative comes with various positions and viewpoints, and sometimes conflicting interests. IDH's intention has been to act as a neutral convener and to gather a representation of the sector and stakeholders to join the conversations and acknowledge responsibility accordingly. IDH seeks for sector transformation and impact at scale, which implies having many actors on board. The idea is to create a trustful environment in the pre-competitive sphere, where every partner can be empowered to take additional steps. IDH views the more ambitious partners as equally useful, since they bring new business models and approaches that deliver. The potential for impact at scale indeed lies with the larger group.

Many interviewees see that since the start of Beyond Chocolate, new open conversations have evolved. The survey answers suggest the same, but the respondents indicate that this is not solely attributable to IDH. Within some companies, it is observed that conversations are not yet sufficiently held at the commercial level, but it certainly facilitates conversations within sustainability departments.

Many interviewees believe that the conversations have fundamentally changed, generating more understanding among actors in the sector. Several interviewees see transformation in the market as a result, in terms of more certification and more certified products on the shelf. Some respondents in the survey comments observe that now there are still industry vs NGO contradictions on several topics. A true collaboration and open sharing of visions is still lacking.

### 6.2 Sensitive conversations, creating trust and transparency

Despite much progress had been made and new conversations have started since the launch of Beyond Chocolate, several interviewees feel that Beyond Chocolate conversations focus much on positive outcomes, and too less so on fundamental problems, difficulties, and power structures in de value chain. For example, conversations on procurement practices, pricing, margins, distribution of

value creation and usefulness and role of certification remain underexposed. Some partners expressed concern about the higher prices of raw materials, which does not facilitate the conversations about margins and pricing.

Beyond Chocolate is not yet a platform where companies can openly express all issues in this regard (the question is whether deep trust is realistic to expect at the beginning of an intervention). There is a wish to see that sensitive discussions are put more openly on the table, and to express frustrations. Multi-stakeholder initiatives mediated in a neutral way can be particularly useful to address these issues.

There still exists a lack of trust and transparency among partners. IDH could explore safer ways to allow more information sharing and explore way in showing that collaboration and trust are key to achieve the goals.

### 6.3 Collaboration and alignment with ISCOs

IDH has gone beyond the expected outcome by facilitating this trans-ISCO dialogue and coordination amongst Member States. More uniform approaches mean less market fragmentation and less cost for sustainable chocolate and cocoa plus possibly becoming front runners who can reap first mover competitive advantages.

All interviewees agree that harmonization with other national initiatives for sustainable cocoa (ISCOs)<sup>14</sup> is critically required in terms of one aligned approach, KPIs, AME system and roadmaps towards the higher-level objectives, which could in turn frame the national initiatives. Interviewees support IDHs efforts to intensify cooperation at ISCO level. The alignment with ISCOs is critical to address the more complex issues such as pricing and level playing field regulation at European level. IDH has started to harmonize the monitoring frameworks. In April 2020, GISCO and Beyond Chocolate held first joint reporting exercise. The idea is to work on common indicators at the EU level which would oblige the actors to be accountable in a harmonized way. Survey respondents applaud the alignment (and urge for France to step in as soon as possible). It was suggested to pool expertise and learnings from the different ISCO's including capturing critical voice of actors on the ground.

IDH initiated the organization of working groups at ISCO level on Living Income, deforestation, traceability, and forced/child labor. It is essential to define governance of cross-ISCO working groups and how the recommendations and outputs of these working groups will be implemented within the national platforms.

The four ISCO secretariats share the work, which runs smoothly at present. However, one should be aware of the additional coordination time and efforts for the secretariat to align with the four different governance structures (of the ISCOs). The process of moving from ISCO level to national level can be complex and more difficult. Efficiency, therefore, is a risk to be aware of in further harmonization.

### 6.4 Involvement of southern partners (West Africa)

Interviewees and survey respondents observe that the initiative is centered in Belgium, which a much lesser involvement of actors in cocoa producing countries in west Africa. Some suggest more

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<sup>14</sup> including the Netherlands (DISCO), Germany (GISCO) and Switzerland (SWISSCO)

involvement of cooperatives, farmers, and local governments with a view to verifying the fulfillment of commitments of partners on the ground. It is also acknowledged that more different actors on the ground (local institutions, NGOs etc.) could make the conversations within the multi-stakeholder context even more complex.

In Cote d'Ivoire, the government-initiated efforts to coordinate many cocoa initiatives. At present, an overall and national cocoa development plan is being developed, including policies, priorities, strategies, and approaches. The idea is that international projects and initiatives conform with this plan, including Beyond Chocolate. For the Embassy of Cote d'Ivoire, it would be interesting to explore ways to collaborate with Beyond Chocolate (membership or MoU between ISCO's and producing country governments). Local governments and Conseil Café Cacao sometimes wish to get involved in the projects implementation approach which currently takes place outside the regular bilateral cooperation channels.

#### *Disputes and complaint mechanism*

There was a suggestion to create a more explicit complaint mechanism through which cooperatives and farmers can deposit complaints against actors higher up in the chain (e.g. traders). A complaint mechanism for cooperatives could provide more insight into trade relations and more structural problems at the bottom of the chain.

However, further thought is required how to structure and organize such mechanism, because they are adversarial and may erode trust between the stakeholders. Questions to explore include: Who should administer such grievance mechanism? Who has the resources to do so? Is this complaint mechanism to operate at the level of the projects? Or at the level of company actions, their sustainability programs? How likely is it that such mechanism can be made accessible to local stakeholders formally speaking but also in substance? Would they need intermediaries and knowledge brokers to be able to make use of such complaint mechanism and participation in Beyond Chocolate? A working group could be initiated to explore the design of such a complaint mechanism.

## 6.5 Involvement of the Belgian government

The interviewees shared various observations of the government's involvement and reflected on probable future scenarios accordingly. Several partners feel that the government could have played a more active and visible role over the past 2 years. Most partners see a vital role for government where it concerns the translation of Beyond Chocolate conversations and agreements into contributions for legislation at the national or European level (interviewees often referred to legislation towards a level playing field). By combining the different views and the insight from projects, the Beyond Chocolate Platform could act and contribute to evidence informed policy making etc. If certain complex topics (due diligence, pricing certification) are already discussed in depth, sorted, and agreed among the Beyond Chocolate stakeholders, it is likely that the further validation for legislation is a less time-consuming process.

The initiative was launched jointly by partners. The government is a signatory (thus partner) and donor of the program. The ownership regarding funding of the initiative is not solely with the partners. Several interviewees suggested (and preferred) that the partners eventually fund and own the initiative. There are similar multi-stakeholder initiatives in Belgium (palm oil), and the German GISCO where this is the case. The role of the government remains essential, however, regarding the

link to policy making and legislation. Informing the government about the need for a level playing field was often mentioned.

For the government active in the SteerCo meetings and events, Beyond Chocolate was particularly informative about understanding and getting a better grip on complex matters such as living income within the supply chain, the management of multi-stakeholders, learning about the realities on the ground in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

Some interviewees suggest Beyond Chocolate could act as a platform for lobbying at the national and European level. However, there is no agreement observed as that does not combine well with the idea of a multi-stakeholder initiative and role of a broker that IDH also has.



# 7 Conclusions and recommendations

## 7.1 Summary of findings

*Has the partnership been successful in reaching the defined objectives?*

Chapter 2 provided an overview of findings desk review on whether the results and outcomes outlined at the start of Beyond Chocolate have been met, partially met or not at all. The table below summarises the findings from chapter 2. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Beyond Chocolate and IDH have been successful in reaching the majority of the results and outcomes and the first phase of Beyond Chocolate can therefore be seen as a general success.

Results	Outcomes	Target reached?
<b>Result 1: Uniting and supporting the Belgian cocoa industry</b>	1: the steering committee of the Beyond Chocolate partnership has been formed and is giving direction to the programme in accordance with its mandate and the required timetable.	Yes
	2: The number of signatory partners of the Beyond Chocolate Partnership has remained stable or increased compared to the number on 5 December 2018.	Yes
	3: The progress of the Beyond Chocolate partnership in terms of sustainability and operational is monitored annually and communicated to the public.	Yes
	4: At least two annual Beyond Chocolate working groups are organized and attended by a majority of Beyond Chocolate partner organizations.	Yes
<b>Result 2: Improving the effectiveness/efficiency of sustainability initiatives within the Belgian chocolate sector</b>	5: A first call for proposals has been successfully implemented and the project partners of 3 to 5 co-financed projects have signed a contract.	Yes
	6: 67% of the co-financing is taken up by project partners.	Yes
	7: The objective of a living income for cocoa producers is included in the projects.	Yes
	8: The projects are adequately monitored. There will also be a report on the progress of the projects and the first lessons will be shared within Beyond Chocolate.	Yes
	9: The volume of chocolate produced and/or sold in Belgium and covered by a sustainability programme or certification standard has increased from 46% (2018) to more than 60% (2021).	On track <sup>15</sup>
	10: Beyond Chocolate partners (in particular the cocoa traders and cocoa processing companies) are fully aware of the agreements made	Partially

<sup>15</sup> Data from 2021 is not yet available, but IDH and the SteerCO expressed that the target is expected to have been reached.

<b>Achievement at impact level</b>	within the Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) and have drawn up an equivalent plan of action	
	11: More than 75,000 small-scale cocoa producers are reached through the Beyond Chocolate co-financed projects and other sustainability initiatives within the market.	On track
	12: Beyond Chocolate's partners have launched new chocolate products that raise the bar in terms of sustainability and create a new dynamic in the market	Yes

Outcome 10 and 11 have only partially been reached. In the case of outcome 10 this is because the CFI agreements are not adapted to smaller chocolate makers who are unable to become signatories. Setting up equivalent plans of actions is currently underway and IDH has outlined the steps it will take to still reach the target set for outcome 10. For outcome 11 the calculation is difficult to make as the exact data is not available. Based on an estimation using averages and general data, around 70.000 additional farmers are currently reached by Beyond Chocolate projects and other sustainability initiatives related to the Belgian cocoa sector.

*Is Beyond Chocolate still relevant in scope and activities?*

At the start of Beyond Chocolate, the initiative focused on bringing together partners, setting goals, organizing workshops, (learning) events and launching projects. Partners felt that the time was right to bring the Belgian cocoa actors together on one platform. Over the two years of implementing Beyond Chocolate, the initiative has implemented activities as planned and generated constructive discussions. The initiative also evolved leading to new insights and learnings regarding relevance of the activities and conversations. These new insights and learning suggest some 'updates' in scope and activities.

Updating scope:

- Although the long-term objectives of Beyond Chocolate are clear, there is a need to better define how to reach the objectives, for example by developing detailed roadmap and overarching theory of change, including limitations (sphere of influence). This could be linked to the ToR recently validated by the SteerCo for the establishment of a living income roadmap through a working group to be organized in 2022.
- Many new conversations have started since the beginning of the initiative. Partners see the new emerging conversations on complex and sensitive issues (pricing, value chain distribution). There is some friction between the need for trust, openness and transparency and the limits of the law (competition law and pricing information) and possibly protection of business secrets.
- In the theory of change, living income could be one central feature. Given the complexity it requires further understanding how the matter relates to pricing but also to a more integrated project support approach at household level.
- Harmonization with ISCOs is critical in terms of one aligned approach, KPIs, AME system and roadmaps towards the higher-level objectives. IDH has gone beyond the expected outcome by facilitating this trans-ISCO dialogue and coordination amongst Member States.
- More involvement of southern partners (cooperatives, farmers) could be considered. At present, an overall and national cocoa development plan is being developed, including policies, priorities, strategies, and approaches. The idea is that all projects and initiatives conform with this plan, including Beyond Chocolate.

Updating activities:

- Further internal alignment within constituencies of SteerCo member partner groups seems necessary.
- Projects helped partners to better grasp the reality on the ground. However, more detailed insight is required regarding actual impact on the ground and scalability.
- Partners of the projects developed approaches to achieve the living income objective. A next step could be to develop a common/overall approaches towards living income. This could include indicators at various levels to measure output, intermediate outcomes and ultimate impact on the ground. Qualitative insights could be added to complement the facts and figures in reporting.
- Further strengthen the working groups and series of learning events with defined objectives and facilitation rules, coordinated in ISCO context (and possibly EU context).

*Has IDH's role been effective and efficient?*

Partners agree that it was a viable choice to engage IDH to manage the initiative and the Beyond Chocolate secretariat, in collaboration with the private sector IDH is well positioned to coordinate multi-stakeholder initiatives and has in-house expertise on cocoa related issues, particularly on living income. Most partners find that IDH did a good job in mobilizing and onboarding the partners and convening the partnership.

Regarding communication, IDH established constructive and direct communications lines with all partners. IDH is open to hearing feedback and is engaged with the concerns of IDH. Due to COVID-19, there have been no physical meetings organized, which hampered networking among partners. IDH put effort in 'reinventing' how to facilitate meetings and moderate conversations, requiring different techniques and skills.

IDH successfully facilitated the launch of 8 cocoa sustainability project, complemented with DGD funding (2 million Euro). The secretariat seems somewhat bureaucratic and procedural. Over time, IDH has improved and streamlined the systems and procedures, making it easier for partners.

A multi-stakeholder partnership comes with various positions and viewpoints, and sometimes conflicting interests. IDH's intention has been to act as a neutral convener and to gather a representation of the sector and stakeholders to join the conversations and acknowledge responsibility accordingly.

## 7.2 Recommendations to consider a follow-up

*Overall theory of change (roadmap/strategy)*

Recommendations:

- Develop an explicit theory of change (including output, intermediate outcomes, and impact logic).
- Assign a special working group or advisory group involving academic institutions to develop the Theory of Change and the indicators.
- Living income could be at the center of the theory of change. Child labor and ending deforestation are integrated.

- Involve 'sensitive' topic explicitly (pricing, level playing field, distribution of value, sphere of influence, power relations in the chain) in the theory of change. These topics need to be included as they are key components in reaching the Living Income goal.
- Coordinate and align the development of the theory of change at ISCO level, and possibly beyond at European level.

#### *Measurement of progress*

The current AME system and project monitoring provide insights and evidence in progress with regard to certification, traceability and within the thematic issues amongst others. This could become more structured and comprehensive (enabling attribution analysis) if the measurement of progress is systematically integrated in the theory of change involving key performance indicators at output, intermediate outcomes, and impact level.

#### Recommendations:

- IDH could develop an integrated progress measurement system and a robust evaluation designs involving attribution analysis of Beyond Chocolate activities to outcome and impact.
- The systems could involve baseline/endline, test and control scenarios.
- Many actors in cocoa collect data on living income and other thematic issues from households and local supply chain. Coordinating data collection (and processing) with other research organizations will promote cost-effectiveness.
- For the design of measurement systems and data collection, the partnership could involve Involving academic and knowledge institutions from Belgium and from the producing countries. It could be to test the theories change, further assisting IDH and the partnership to identify drivers of living income (due diligence legislation, consumer demand and consumer information, productivity gains).
- Such an in-depth study could provide a more robust foundation for the conversation and reflections at SteerCo level or in a working group more.

#### *Accountability of individual members*

Further development of the AME system with regard to the fulfillment of commitments/realization of ambitions.

#### Recommendations:

- Signatories could set more explicit commitment/ambitions and develop individual road maps towards the end goals of 2030, with clear instruments/interventions, intermediary goals, clear KPIs and monitoring. These commitments within the Belgian market should be viewed against EU legislation and the fact that international market dynamics also affect the extent to which the 2030 targets can be reached and how.
- Signatories with similar roadmaps and in similar positions could exchange on how they try to reach their targets (methods/instruments) and exchange on lessons learned (what works well and what does not).
- Accountability could specify traceability of the chain and transparency of the distribution of value within the chains.
- The partnership could consider negative consequences if signatories fail to work towards fulfilling the commitments.

## *Projects*

Partners find the projects successful for understanding the realities on the ground and stimulating conversations. However, there are not yet clear insights in scalability and impact.

### Recommendations:

- IDH could be less bureaucratic by organizing more regular exchanges to understand the overall problems and questions of the projects.
- IDH could facilitate the learning from current projects by comparing how they address living income, employment issues and deforestation in an effective way, and how those learnings are useful for a theory of change and scalability.
- For a next round of projects, IDH and the partnership should consider the balance the coordination time input for multi-stakeholder convening and project management. More projects given the current capacity of IDH will be at the expense of convening the multi-stakeholder platform.

## *Multi-stakeholder approach*

There is a need for more conversations among partners on difficult topics. This could be an important component of the second phase of Beyond Chocolate.

### Recommendations:

- IDH could launch 'sensitive' conversations in the SteerCo, working groups or roundtable discussions involving neutral facilitators. These conversations could include power relations, pricing, profit margins and distribution of supply chain value, and what falls within the scope of influence of each actor (responsibility). Viewpoints from local actors, including farmers/cooperatives can be useful here as well.
- All Beyond Chocolate partners could propose topics they want to discuss and continue to push for a real dialogue and sharing of views/strategies and best practices.

## *Involvement of southern partners*

Initially, the initiative has a focus on actors in the Belgian market. Many partners see the need to include southern partners in the partnership as well. This is partly because local governments have a large sphere of influence when it comes to reaching the 2030 goals. Furthermore, Beyond Chocolate should not become a top-down (North to South) program that involves southern stakeholders (e.g. farmers, cooperatives, government) what to do without involving them in the discussions and decision making process.

### Recommendations:

- Partnership could further explore the involvement of local governments of producing countries in Beyond Chocolate. In what form they should be involved and what their role should be is an important matter as local governments may slow down progress (e.g. through administrative debates). We therefore recommend that IDH and the SteerCo explore how local government can be involved (with input from each stakeholder group).
- Farmers and their households are the focal point of Beyond Chocolate and its goals. IDH and the SteerCo should explore ways to have farmers more closely involved. This can also be through cooperatives.

- Management from local cooperatives, local NGOs and local knowledge institutions can play an advisory role by being invited to provide feedback on plans and projects developed through Beyond Chocolate.

#### *Involvement of Belgian government*

##### Recommendations:

- The government could play a more active role in discussions and working groups, as representative of the public sector group on Beyond chocolate, and share insights on thematic discussions (living income) and national and EU level and legislation issues.
- The government could facilitate exchanges between Beyond Chocolate project and other government funded programs, projects and organisations (e.g. Enabel) with a view to learn about lowering the burden of projects administration.
- The government could play a role as intermediary between the EU and the partnership regarding diligence legislation, exchanging views from stakeholders and supporting informed decision making. This would create an opportunity for the partnership to provide input on due diligence and to stay up to date with the latest developments.

#### *Capacity administrative burden and bureaucracy*

Most of the recommendations involve more work, stimulating more (complex) conversations on the platform and further refine AME and projects. However, the current capacity will not allow to do so.

##### Recommendations:

- An expansion of IDH staff. Different staff for convening the multi-stakeholder approach, project management and analytical work (policy development).
- Source the administration of projects to another organization (e.g. Enabel) to free up time and budget for IDH to focus more on the facilitation of discussions within Beyond Chocolates and with other ISCOs, the EU and southern stakeholders.