



The Resilience Journey

Viability (Phase 2)

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June 2022



KIT Royal
Tropical
Institute



Mars Foreword

The future of chocolate depends on building an inclusive, modern and sustainable supply chain.

Through the Resilience Journey we have come to acknowledge that gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment are critical to achieve the sustainability ambitions in the cocoa sector.

However, gender is often not identified as a cross-cutting issue that should be embedded in sustainability strategies.

A sustainable cocoa supply chain cannot be fully achieved while excluding half of the population. Without a gender lens, the underlying causes for gender inequality and disempowerment are not well understood and are actually reinforced, which might cause harm,

reduce the impact of sustainability programs and make it difficult to identify the right solutions.

This Viability Report uncovers a number of key insights that are not necessarily new, but that somehow aren't being clearly acknowledged or given the visibility they deserve. By publishing these findings we hope to inspire everyone to engage in a conversation and trigger the debate on these important conclusions.

At Mars, we believe that it is only by acknowledging the gender inequalities and more importantly by taking action to address them – at all levels of the

cocoa supply chain – that we will eventually drive the needed change.

Finally, as we have been preparing for the publication of this Viability Report, we have used the findings of both the Empathy and the Viability phases to guide us and sharpen our focus and approach on gender in our cocoa supply chain.

As a conclusion to the Resilience Journey, we will also publish a 'position paper', in which we will share a number of key actions that we aim to take as Mars to contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive cocoa supply chain and hopefully inspire others to do the same.

What is the sector waiting for?

The prevailing gender inequality has been known for 10+ years

Research has found that women engaged in activities that enhance cocoa yields and quality including early plant care and post-harvest fermentation and drying. However they face specific challenges and their role in family farm labor is unrecognized. Promoting a cultural shift to ensure gender equality in the cocoa chocolate value chain is central to guaranteeing future resilience of supply and ensuring generations find the occupation.

Dr Stephanie Barrientos – Mapping sustainable production in Ghanaian Cocoa, 2008

Worldwide it is estimated that women only receive 5 percent of extension services and technical training, and just 15 percent of the world's staff providing agricultural technical training are women.

Oxfam, 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction to The Resilience Journey

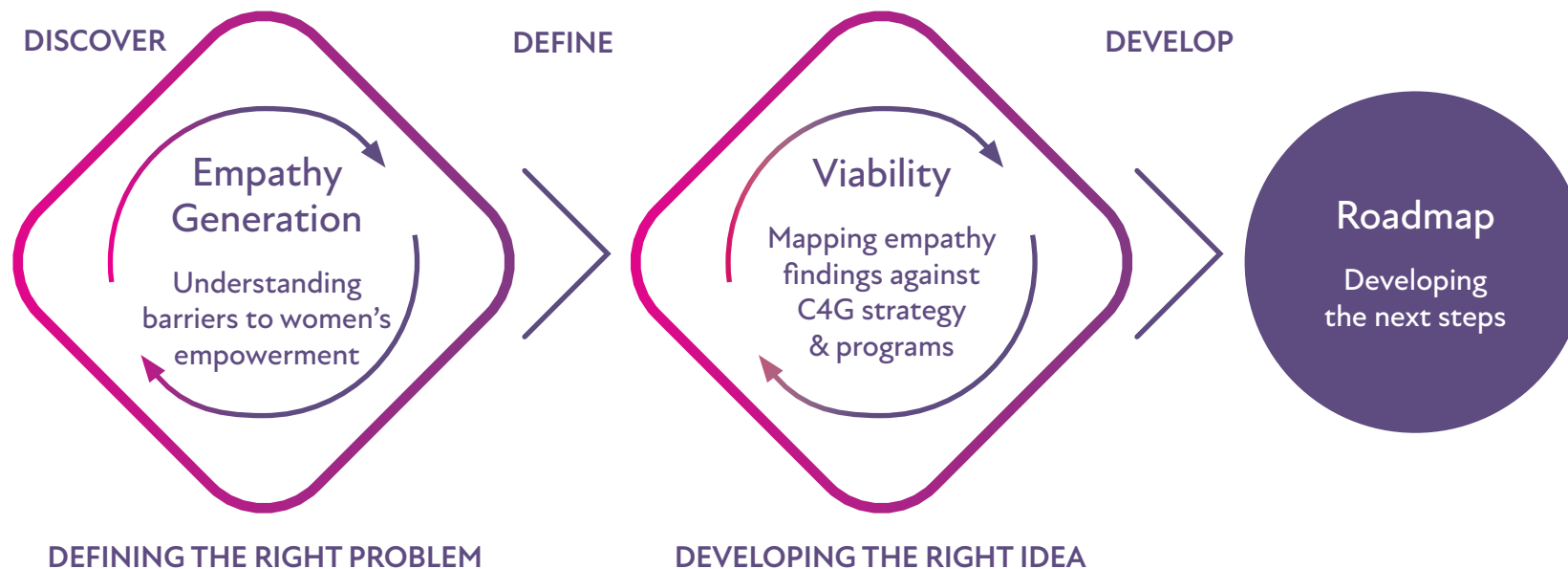
As part of its Cocoa for Generations (C4G) strategy, Mars is seeking to address the barriers faced by women in their supply chain and communities from which they source cocoa to reach their full potential.

Since 2019, Mars has partnered with KIT Royal Tropical Institute, Anna Laven and Pabla van Heck (independent consultants) to develop insight-driven recommendations for potential future investments in women's empowerment and gender equality, otherwise known as **The Resilience Journey**.

The Resilience Journey takes a design-thinking approach, which is human-centered and iterative. It contains three phases:

1. **Empathy:** generating an in-depth understanding of women's daily lives (in different life-stages), their behaviours and attitudes through a gender equality lens to identify key barriers to empowerment. ([Empathy Research Report and Executive Summary](#)).
2. **Viability:** mapping Empathy findings against cocoa's sustainability priorities, the C4G strategy and existing programs / partnerships.
3. **Roadmap:** developing conclusions and actionable recommendations.

This report contains the findings and conclusions from the Viability phase.





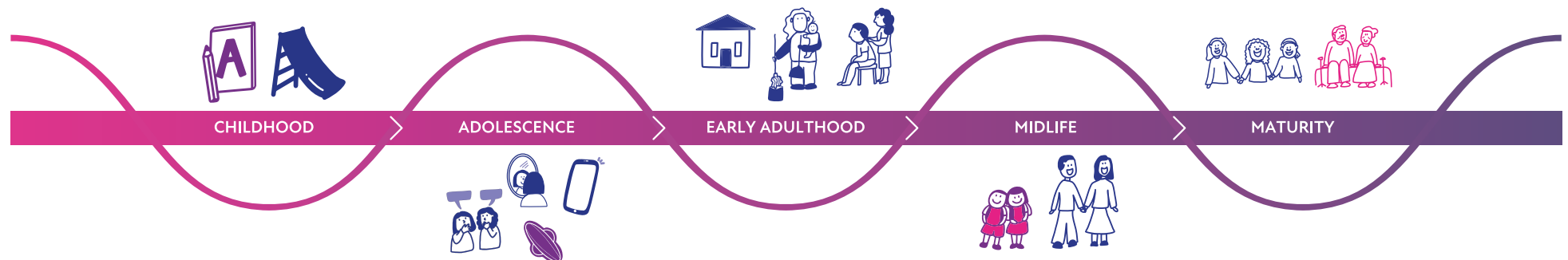
Understanding barriers to women's empowerment & gender equality

Original scope

- › Understand the daily lives and rich realities of women of all ages in the community, at home and in their workplace.
- › The research was centred around 'women in cocoa-growing communities', rather than 'women in cocoa'.
- › On-farm activities and women's role in cocoa production were not the (original) focus.
- › The local cocoa value chain, or cocoa's first mile, was explored as an institutional structure with its own role in influencing gender norms.

Initial areas of inquiry

- › Who are 'the women' and how do they evolve throughout their lifecycle?
- › Who are their key influencers and stakeholders?
- › What are the key institutional structures that influence their daily lives?
- › How is their access to and control over resources?
- › Are they able to exercise agency in their lives?
- › Do they have choice and voice in power relations?





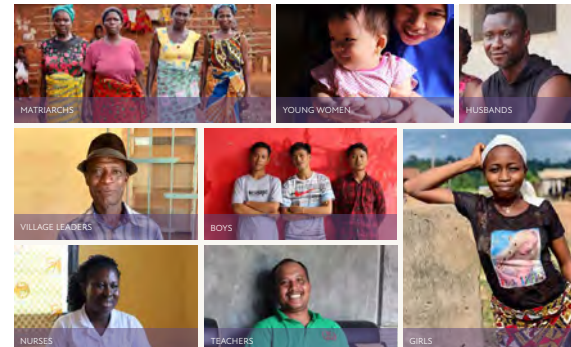
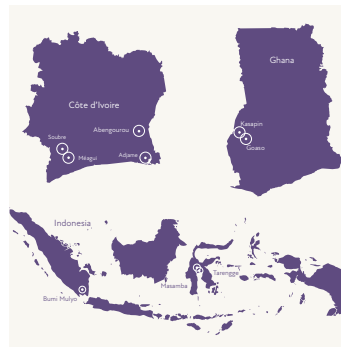
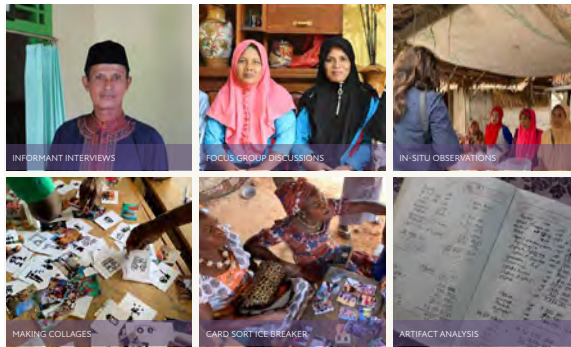
Our approach

Open and creative research...

...in Indonesia, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

...with 200+ respondents

...iterative and in-depth data analysis and synthesis





Summary outcomes



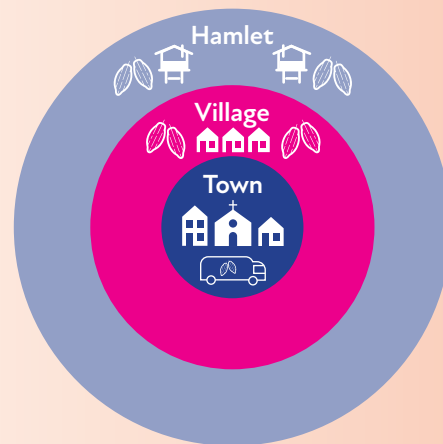
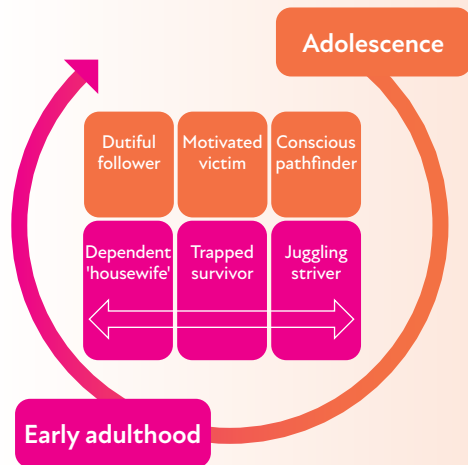
ADOLESCENCE & EARLY ADULTHOOD ARE CRITICAL LIFE STAGES

FOCUS ON THOSE LIVING IN THE VILLAGE (CLOSE TO COCOA TREES)

GENDER EQUALITY IS NEEDED FOR EMPOWERMENT, WHICH REQUIRES NORMS CHANGE

PRIORITIZED 4 'INEQUITIES' TO BE ADDRESSED

IDENTIFIED 3 DIRECTIONS FOR INTERVENTION DEVELOPMENT



5 Gender equality

Being 'just a teenage girl' ends too soon

Young women generate insufficient income and are financially dependent

Gender norms

Gender bias is entrenched in community & household expectations for M / F

Cocoa's 'first mile' is male-dominated

Extend girlhood / life decisions (me & myself)

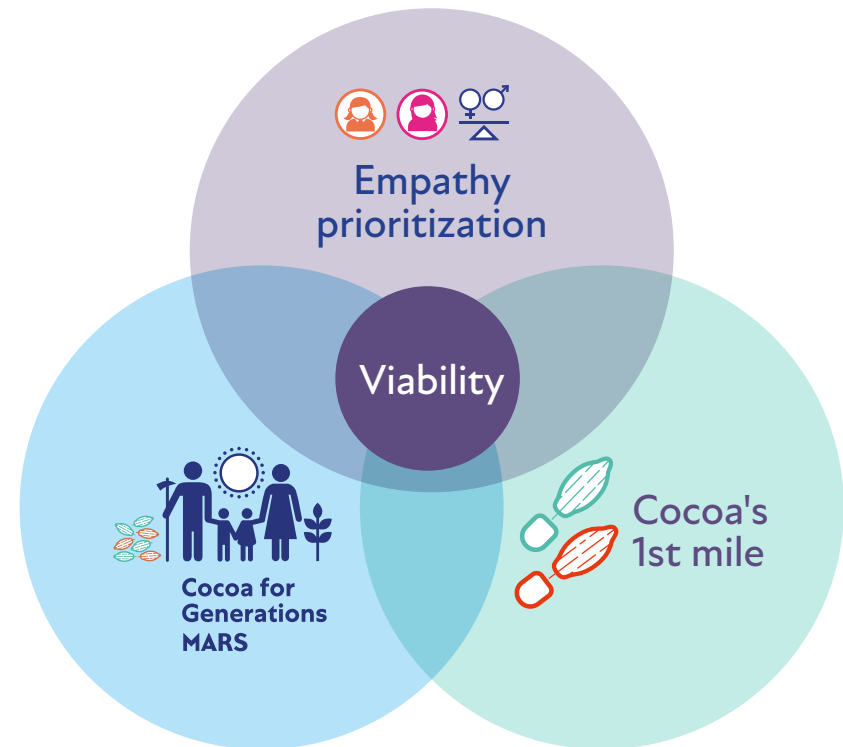
Address gender bias in M / F roles (me & my family / community)

Improve participation in & benefits from rural livelihoods (me & my job)



Mapping Empathy findings against C4G strategy & programs

- › Explore further synergies between the Empathy priorities and their relevance for the Mars Cocoa for Generation (C4G) commitments and on-going programs.
- › Understand further if and how the Empathy priorities might be embedded in cocoa's first mile footprint to ensure it is not reinforcing unequal gender norms, but rather acting as a force for change.
- › Map if current C4G partners have relevant expertise to be leveraged and / or face gaps in relation to the Empathy priorities.
- › Identify potential interventions that address the needs of adolescent girls and young women, strengthen C4G and / or can be delivered through cocoa's 1st mile.





Our approach

30+ interviews with key stakeholders

Mars

Cocoa Academy
Dove
Farmer Income Lab
Full Potential
Mars Cocoa team

Mars Suppliers

Ecom
Olam
Touton

Mars Partners

CARE
Cocoa & Forests Initiative
International Cocoa Initiative
Oxfam
Pur projet
Save the Children
Shareability
Sustainable Food Lab / LICOP
Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH)

Expert Organizations

Girl Effect
KIT Gender & Health
Meridia
Plan International
Population Services International (PSI)
Rutgers WFP
Solidaridad
Technoserve
Unicef
UN Women
Women Win

Certifiers

Rainforest Alliance
Fairtrade

Peers

Nespresso
Rabobank Advisory Services

Literature review





Viability

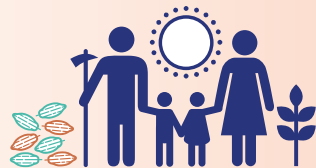
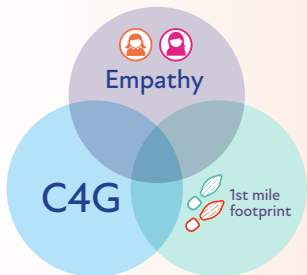
Summary outcomes

GENDER EQUALITY AND TARGETING OF FEMALE YOUTH SHOULD BE MORE EXPLICITLY EMBEDDED IN C4G STRATEGY. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT SHOULD NOT BE SILOED THROUGH SPECIFIC PARTNERSHIPS

THE C4G PILLARS DO NOT SYSTEMATICALLY APPLY A GENDER LENS THEREBY MISSING GENDER RELATED RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

GENDER AND AGE BIAS IN THE MALE-DOMINATED 1st MILE REFLECTS ON C4G PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION & SOURCING

ENSURE THE GENDER EXPERTISE OF PARTNERS IS UTILIZED TO THE FULLEST



Cocoa for Generations MARS



Child protection cannot be achieved without addressing the unique challenges that girls face

Forest preservation requires the participation of women

Improving farmer income requires the acknowledgement of women's work on the farm & in the household

Communities are accessed & addressed through cocoa / community leaders (elite and mature men)

C4G & sourcing jobs should be filled more by women & female youth

C4G service provision tends to be gender-blind, thereby not benefiting farmer's 'wives' or independent female farmers





2. GENDER DEFINITIONS & THEORY

Key definitions and gender theory

Empowerment of women & girls

The expansion of choice and strengthening of voice through the transformation of power relations, so women and girls have more control over their lives and futures.

Gender

A social construct that refers to roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women.

Gender equality

The concept that both men and women are free to develop their abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviors, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favored equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender equity

Fairness of treatment for women and men according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment, but often women and men need to receive different treatment in order to receive the same benefits and to experience their rights. It is the process to reach gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a way to make women's, as well as men's, concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Gender transformative

Gender transformative change is about changing power relations and addressing the underlying causes of gender inequality. It actively examines, challenges and changes gender norms that currently advantage boys and men over girls and women.

Sex

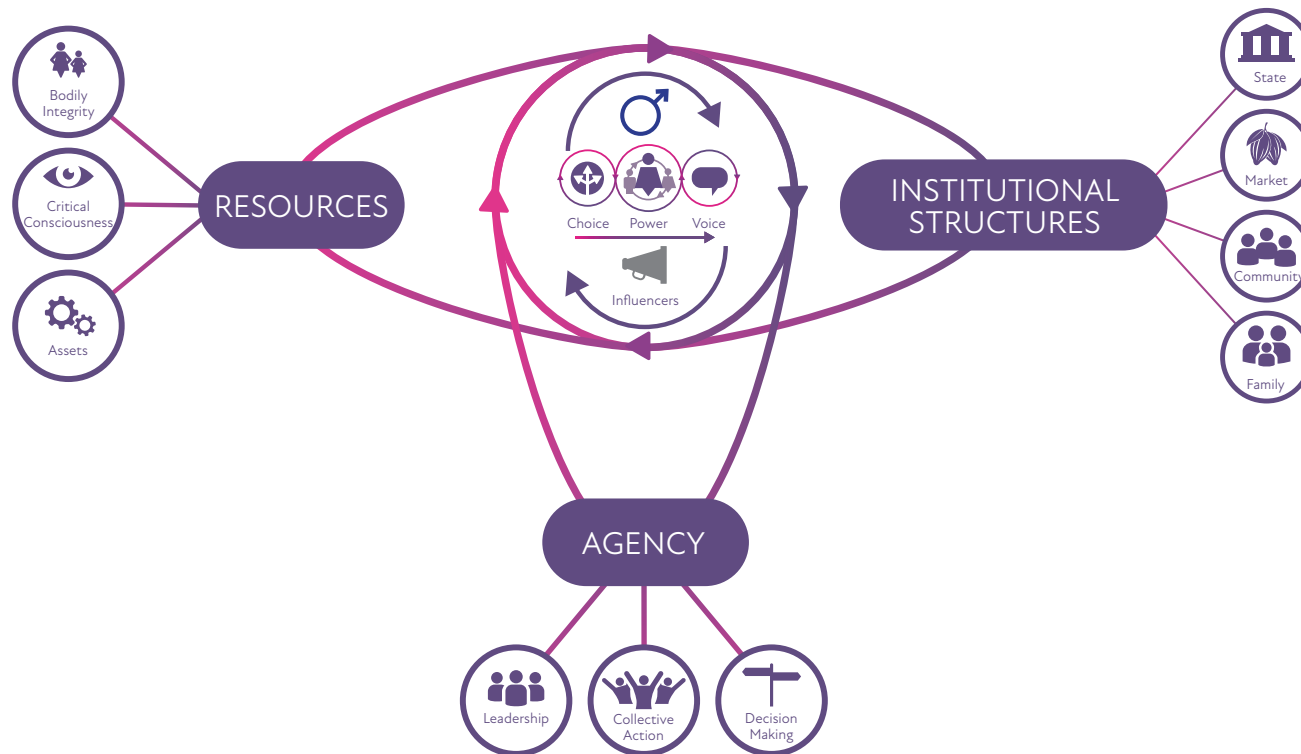
The physical and biological characteristics that distinguish males and females.

Youth

Persons between the age of 15 and 24.

Sources: Eerdewijk et al 2017; UNOPS 2018; UNStatistics

There is no silver bullet for gender equality; it requires transformative change across all the touch points of daily life



Transformative change occurs through women and girls exercising agency and taking action, through the redistribution of resources towards women and girls and through shifting the institutional structures that shape women and girls' choice and voice, and ultimately their lives and futures.

Gender equality requires a change in social norms and institutions. Such structural changes require gender transformative approaches. These are different from those that aim to (only) reach or benefit women or to empower them.

Gender transformative change is about changing power relations and addressing the underlying causes of gender equality. It is a dynamic, multilevel and multidimensional process and cannot be achieved without engaging with existing power holders including male community leaders, local authorities and governments (WCF 2019a).

So, gender transformative approaches involve both women and men and start from the understanding that these are heterogeneous groups, with differences in social status based on age, ethnicity, class, etc. (Wong et al 2019).

OCIATE
019
28 May - 14 June
today

The world
we want
tomorrow
starts with
how we do
business

lay
RS

Your potential
MARS

3. GENDER EQUALITY & MARS C4G



An overarching ambition that explicitly embeds a gender lens into every aspect of C4G is needed

"Some think that providing a project that is gender focused is enough, therefore other projects are not focusing on gender... The interplay between strategy and programs is really important."

Mars Partner (Protecting Children)

"So far we have not been intentional, our [C4G] program has not built in anything around gender yet, there currently isn't a gender lens."

Mars

"Gender should be included in all activities. But this is a struggle because it is added on last minute. 'And what about gender...?' So you start designing your interventions with gender as add on."

Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

"The general program is more focused on men, women are not really involved. Only small, short-term programs are for women, and usually donor-funded. After the program finishes there is no coaching."

Mars



We need intentional embedding [of gender]. Mars


The C4G strategy articulates Mars ambitions towards the sustainability priorities in the cocoa sector. It defines three priorities in so-called pillars: **Protecting Children, Preserve Forests and Improve Farmer Income.**

While the Protecting Children Action Plan (PCAP) describes an explicit commitment to women's social and economic empowerment, this is siloed from the other C4G pillars, and from the interventions dedicated to protecting children.

The CARE partnership is the key investment that C4G / PCAP currently makes towards empowering women. However, its intention is focused on empowering women in cocoa communities and its implementation is not embedded in cocoa's first mile operations nor in the other C4G activities on the ground.

Therefore, the pursuit of empowering women is currently a parallel 'community' activity, instead of (also) being fully mainstreamed into C4G programs.

Without an intentional and overarching commitment to gender equality and 'walking the talk' through all operational C4G activities and investments, gender will continue to be an 'add on'. Potentially transformative synergies will remain unutilized and C4G will not reach its full potential.



Child protection cannot be achieved without addressing the unique challenges that girls face

CLMRS is seen as the foundation for child protection programs, but its application lacks gender sensitivity (1)

"CLMRS is an operational platform and an important pillar in cocoa. Has been scaled up and will continue to be over the next 5yrs. The platform could be leveraged for other topics. Child labor is the most material issue in cocoa and we are interested in expanding."

Mars Partner (Protecting Children)

"The focus of CLMRS is on identifying children performing hazardous tasks & implementing remediation activities. Monitoring consists of a series of regular household visits from an agent who interviews the (self-identified) 'head of household' and talks to each child."

Mars Partner (Protecting Children)

The Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) is seen as a crucial tool to reduce the risk of child labor among children covered by the CLMRS but it is not gender-sensitive. It is, however, an existing channel into communities that is likely to be expanded further over the next few years.

While it is recognized that (grand)mothers have a crucial role to play in the fight against child labor, CLMRS is deployed through the male-dominated first mile.

As a result, local CLMRS agents are predominantly men and they will likely do their job through their male perspective, while it is women who are primarily responsible for child caretaking.

They are not trained to be gender aware and their room to interact freely with girls and mothers might be restricted by cultural norms, potentially missing issues specific to girls.



CLMRS is seen as the foundation for child protection programs, but its application lacks gender sensitivity (2)

"There is room to add more gender sensitive questions in CLMRS. Because when looking at the data there are some things that stand out. We could have questions being phrased that help to understand more gender sensitive issues to understand school drop out, for example teenage pregnancies."

Mars Supplier

~70%

of the total volumes of cocoa sourced by Mars Wrigley from Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana came from farmer groups that have a CLMRS in place

~2,800

community based child labor monitors deployed in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

Mars human rights report: Respecting Human Rights in the Cocoa Supply Chain

Even though (some of) the data collected and reported through CLMRS is sex-disaggregated, this is not systematically analyzed through a gender lens. Potential gender-differences are therefore not considered in remediation strategies. In addition, questions are not explicit enough to capture potential (other) gendered dimensions of child labor. Boys and girls are assumed to be 'equals' as children, even though socialization with gender norms already starts at a young age.

Self-reported 'heads of households' are asked to report on the activities of their children. These are usually male. It is likely that these (grand)fathers know less about the time-involvement of their (grand)daughters in household activities (in which most men are not involved) than the involvement of their (grand)sons in farming. A subsequent risk is that girls' work is under-reported.

CLMRS does not cater to the unique contexts of (adolescent) girls, who do more work in the household and face girl-specific human rights risks, such as child marriage and denial of access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH).

A first glance at sex-disaggregated child labor data confirms differences between boys and girls

The recent NORC study (2020) reports that a higher proportion of boys is engaged in child labor (around 57%), compared to girls (around 43%) in agriculture in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. A higher proportion of boys is also involved in hazardous work in cocoa production. However, in the NORC study the data does not specify the sex of the children involved in the various tasks.

A sex-disaggregated snapshot of data provided by a Mars supplier confirms that girls are much less exposed to hazardous tasks than boys. However, girls were found to be carrying heavy loads more often than boys. While the difference appears to be small, compared to girls' involvement with other tasks it is a significant jump. At the same time carrying heavy loads is one of the hazardous tasks that children are most frequently exposed to.

The higher involvement of boys in farm work embodies the expectation that sons will take-over the family farm, while daughters are not considered in the succession planning. This excludes girls from (future) cocoa benefits, such as a financial safety net if other aspirations fail or capital to pursue other income generating aspirations. The example data also shows a bias for boys to do more 'STEM-like' activities, such as working with motorized equipment.

In addition, girls' (unpaid care) work in the household is likely under-reported as CLMRS focuses on on-farm activities. Therefore, the number of girls involved in carrying heavy loads is likely to go up if data collection would involve household activities, such as carrying firewood and clean water for consumption, cooking and washing.

Data provided by a supplier for Ghana	Boys	Girls
(HAZARDOUS) LABOR TASKS		
Clearing / weeding etc with a machete	65%	35%
Breaking cocoa pods with machete / sharp tool	74%	35%
Harvesting with machete / sharp tool	74%	26%
Carrying heavy loads	47%	53%
Cutting / felling trees	64%	36%
Burning plots	60%	40%
Handling agrochemicals / spraying etc	82%	18%
Removing tree roots	95%	5%
Working with motorized equipment	100%	0%
Digging holes	85%	15%
Charcoal production	57%	43%

"Naturally in child labor data we see strong differences between girls and boys, in terms of doing different tasks (boys do more hazardous work on farm, while women do more tasks in the household)." Mars Supplier

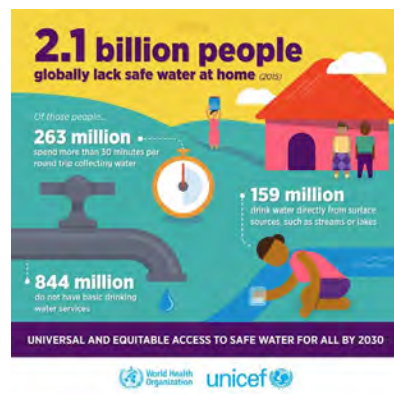
The collection of water and wood by girls for household use appear to be key drivers for their carrying of heavy loads

From an analysis by Nestlé* it appears that only 1/3 of heavy loads are actually cocoa, the other 2/3 are water, wood or food. While the industry standard is to train CLMRS monitors to ask about carrying wood and water, the answer is not reported on explicitly but rather captured under the generic heading of 'heavy loads'. Nor is it captured whether these loads are related to on or off-farm activities.

Combined with the impression that carrying heavy loads, such as water and wood, is found to be more done by girls this division of labor between boys and girls likely stems from deeply rooted norms related to the distribution of household responsibilities. Loads are often quite heavy and collection is time-intensive due to (long) travel distances, which might keep girls away from education and income generation.

In addition, women and girls are the main users of water and wood, for example, for laundry, charcoal production and cooking, and carry some of the harmful effects associated with it, such as inhaling smoke. Solving these 'women's issues' do not tend to be prioritized by male community leaders.

This further perpetuates the problem that is causing the need to carry heavy loads: the lack of access to clean water and the continued use of solid fuels (e.g. wood / charcoal) for cooking. Without further detailed sex-disaggregated reporting and understanding of the problem, remediation will not be able to challenge the norm that accepts heavy load carrying by children (ie girls) and the negative impacts caused by the lack of water and energy infrastructure in cocoa communities.

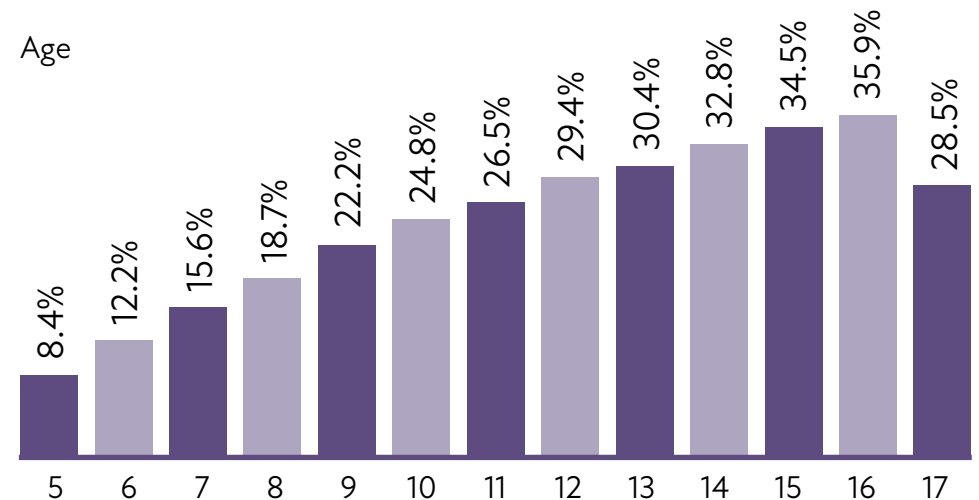


* Nestlé 2019

The needs of adolescent children are insufficiently considered by child protection strategies

CLMRS enables age-disaggregated reporting along two age groups: 6-12 years and 13-17 years old. However, child protection and child labor remediation strategies tend to focus on children with primary-school going age, even though the incidence of child labor increases as children grow older.

Yet, adolescents (10-19 year olds) are children too and this is a critical transition time that often defines a person's further development. This group of children is currently under served, and supporting them is perceived to be 'challenging' by the sector. Initiatives encouraging primary school education are apparently more appealing, and likely prioritized as more pressing. The data we have seen shows that boys make-up a significant proportion of the older children found to be working as they are prepared for cocoa farming.



Source: Nestlé Tackling Child Labor Report 2019

"The focus of CLMRS is on keeping / getting children in primary school. Secondary school issues are too complex to control or address, they are often far away." Mars Supplier

"Youth and adolescents are missing from the Mars perspective, but it makes sense to invest in this. You are hitting on something powerful." Mars Supplier

"It is true that adolescents are 'in between' if you look at child labor. They are a vague category, they are not focused. There should be more done in relation with adolescents. We had a Good Parenting program with IRC... they needed the most help with their adolescents, so we recognize this. We looked at pre-marital development." Mars Supplier

"Incidences of child labor tend to increase with age. However, it is easier to come up with remediation activities for young children. More difficult to find effective solutions for older children..., especially if they missed going to (primary) school – this is already a missed opportunity for them." Mars Supplier

Adolescent girls need protection from (the consequences of) unplanned early pregnancies and child marriage

Adolescent girls face unique (human rights) risks that their male peers are not exposed to. They enter (dependent) relationships at a much younger age than boys do. Poverty, large family sizes and cultural norms may lead to girls being married by their families when they are still children (<18 years old), which is detrimental to a girl's development and agency.

Girls are also likely to engage in sexual relations at a younger age than boys. At the same time they are often denied access to sexual and reproductive health services due to cultural norms, especially if they are unmarried and / or have not had children yet. This places them at risk for unplanned pregnancies, which could lead to school drop-out, forced marriage, and / or health complications during delivery. Early marriage and / or motherhood will impact a girl's ability and agency to care for herself, her children and her family – perpetuating the cycle of poverty and dependency. However, these girl-specific risks are currently not addressed by CLMRS or child protection programs, despite their long-term effects.

"In Côte d'Ivoire teenage pregnancies are often seen as the fault of the young girls. They are pushed aside. We do a TRECC programme, on parenting (women and men), it is the only time that we heard from these ladies whose lives were put on pause. It is difficult to have access to them." Mars Supplier

PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH COMPLICATIONS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG 15 TO 19 YEARS OLD GIRLS

Take action now!

- Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and rights
- Stop child, early and forced marriage
- Provide comprehensive sexuality education
- Information, counselling and services for the full range of safe, effective, accessible and affordable contraceptive methods
- Pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, birth, post-pregnancy, safe abortion (where legal), and post-abortion care

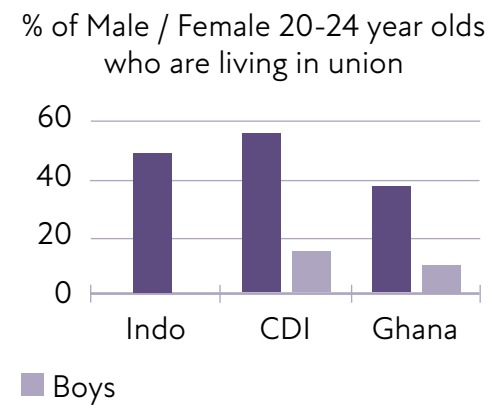
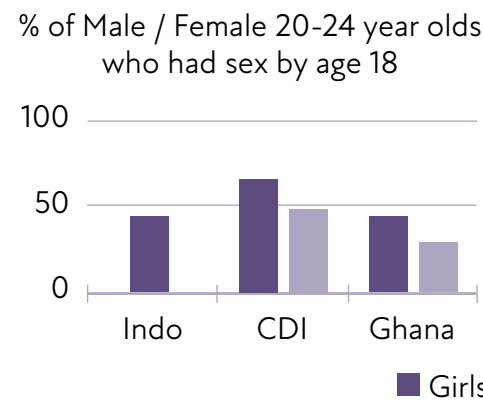
World Health Organization

Early marriage and early pregnancy can result in interrupted schooling, social isolation, and girls' limited access to job and training opportunities.

Pregnancy and Family Responsibilities

Having children serves as a push factor towards employment for male youth but has the opposite impact for female youth. Less than one in two (46 per cent) young mothers aged 15-29 in the SWTS countries work compared to more than four in five (84 per cent) young fathers of the same age.

In many societies, female youth are also vulnerable to early marriage and early pregnancy, which can result in interrupted schooling, social isolation, and limited access to job and training opportunities. Socio-cultural bias about female roles, both at home and in the workplace, can impede girls' access to learning and training, preventing them from gaining necessary skills for future employability.



Source: Demographic Health Survey (DHS)

Transitioning into (STEM) work is key for (rural) adolescent girls who are out of school and unemployed

The rate of school drop-out increases in higher classes and the difference between the number of boys and girls attending school is most present in upper secondary grades.

Once girls drop out of school or fall behind their age peers, it becomes harder for them to successfully transition into the labor force and earn an income. This will also affect their potential of contributing to their future household income and create financial dependency, which is normalized by the notion that they will be taken care of by their future husbands.

For NEET* girls who live in rural areas where labor opportunities are dominated by masculine stereotypes it is even more challenging. In school they are already less likely to participate in technical or agricultural classes, which reduces their prospects to benefit from rural labor opportunities. This is further exacerbated by their limited (perceived) opportunities in cocoa.

There is a need to invest in the transition of (older) girls into income generation through safe and age-appropriate work while challenging the gender bias in the labor market and the expectation that women are fully responsible for unpaid caretaking work.

* NEET = Neither in Education, Employment, not Training

"Apprenticeships and vocational training provide youth with options for a career path, which is particularly benefiting girls." NORC 2020

"A lot is done on women's economic empowerment, but there is huge gap on adolescents and their transition to work [...] skills, readiness and norms and look at more systemic change is needed. Gender transformative approach towards economic empowerment to gender and youth. This asks to work on different level: skill set and systemic change." Mars Partner (Protecting Children)

"Looking at 16-18 year olds could be an opening – this is not currently used. There is some flexibility for 16-18 year olds if work is done with supervision, training and equipment etc. Having some 'work' experience may make the transition into adulthood easier."

Mars Partner (Protecting Children)

Female youth aged 15-29

3X

more likely than male youth to be outside the labor force and not participating in education

A generation of girls risk being left outside the labor force or trapped in vulnerable or low quality employment, due to a lack of skills, absence of quality jobs and gendered expectations of their roles as caregivers

Source: GirlForce: Skills, Education and Training for Girls Now, ILO and UNICEF, 2018

Modernization and mechanization of agriculture may further widen the gender gap in rural economic opportunities for (young) women



"Long-standing traditions and practices relating to gender stereotypes and cultural acquiescence have a particular impact on the livelihoods and career opportunities for women in these communities where farming is often the biggest employer. In many traditional farming communities, women handle most of the manual work in addition to having responsibilities for home and family management, as many of them have never driven a car. [...] Conversely, men usually take responsibility for operating technology tools, such as tractors and other devices, which also earn higher wages than manual work, and those wages are paid to the men and not always immediately or wholly shared with their families." Elizabeth Nnoko, Olam International (2021)

Modernization of agriculture, mechanization and rehabilitation are expected to transform cocoa farming with modern (motorized) equipment and technology, new varieties, modernization of traditional land tenure systems and digital / mobile service delivery. This development will require technical skills and entrepreneurial mindsets for the delivery of services to farmers, and provides job opportunities for rural youth.

However, it is likely that female youth will not benefit from these developments, due to the bias against girls being interested in technology and / or in working in agriculture (services). The assumption is that girls have other interests and responsibilities, and prefer to stay close to their homes or they don't consider it safe.

Without intentionally challenging of these stereotypes and mindsets, girls will remain excluded from acquiring relevant and future-proof skills that would allow them to benefit from these (higher-value) economic opportunities.

To prepare girls to become female breadwinners requires a shift in mindset

'What a boy can do, a girl can do too'

Offering girls and young women skills and job opportunities that would help them to fully participate in the rural economy would help to overcome the gendered conditioning of boys as future breadwinners and girls as caretakers.

The transformative power of acquiring useful skills

Recent lessons from the [Next Generation Cocoa Youth Program \(MASO\)](#) in Ghana show that for girls, after participating in the MASO program, the employment opportunities increased, and girls / young women have become more financially independent (Kodom et al 2020). This has helped them to acquire land and contribute to household expenditure, such as education and food consumption. Women's economic engagement also led to a change in gender relations. There were also changes observed among men that benefited from the MASO program. They increased their participation in household chores and also in child care.

Male and female role models are important

For girls and young women to fully participate in the rural economy, besides a wider and suitable offering of skills, they would benefit from female role models in STEM related jobs, time-saving devices, affordable childcare and / or more teamwork in the household.



Improving farmer income requires the acknowledgement of women's work on-farm & in the household

While income strategies target households, they lack sensitivity for decision-making and trust dynamics

Current strategies to increase income appear to pay insufficient attention to the intra-household dynamics that surround the ‘income management’ within families. Addressing the household as a unit assumes financial transparency, a pooling of income and joint decision-making between household members.

However, norms often dictate the roles that husbands and wives have within their relationship, resulting in unbalanced decision-making. Financial trust may therefore be lacking, especially amongst young couples who do not know each other well. Men are often seen as the ‘head of the household’ and the main breadwinner, giving them more agency, while their (often) younger wives are financially dependent on them.

Usually it is the male farmer who sells the cocoa and receives the cash (or mobile payment), by default taking control over the family’s income from cocoa. This means that co-farming ‘wives’ are often dependent on their husband’s goodwill to have access to and influence over the cocoa income they generated together. In addition, women (laborers) often earn less than their male counterparts (for similar work), thereby further enhancing the gender pay gap.

Evidence shows that women prioritize their families’ health, nutrition and education when spending their own income. However, husbands are currently seen as responsible for large expenses, such as education and healthcare. This implies that if married they would have more influence over cocoa’s income, they would likely advocate for those expenses that improve the well-being of families.

Recognition / acknowledgment of the gendered dynamics that influence household decision making around income and expenditures – is a necessary first step to design policies that strive to elevate women’s control over spending decisions.

"To what extent should we push for more transparency? It can be a survival mechanism for girls / women [to hide]." Industry peer

"Most farmer couples rarely communicate as husband and wife, each is concerned only with their own activities. Tools can push them to have that conversation, then they get to know each other and talk about their dreams for the next 5 years. The more united that a family is, the more that they prosper." Mars

"If interventions to increase living income do not explicitly recognize and reward the role that women play in cocoa production, they may unintentionally reinforce gendered norms of women as caregivers and men as breadwinners, thereby sustaining the bias which underpins unsustainable cocoa value chains." (WCF 2019a)

"It's really hard being a female cocoa farmer. Before women were doing a lot of tasks, women do everything, right until the cocoa dries. But when the cocoa has dried, the men take the cocoa, sell it at the co-operative and are never accountable towards women."
Multi-stakeholder organization

Source: The Invisible Women Behind Our Chocolate, Fairtrade Foundation

Prevailing gender norms affect agricultural productivity, especially amongst smallholder / family farms



Cocoa productivity will not reach its full potential if agri-services do not include 'co-farming wives'*

Improving cocoa productivity through agricultural services is seen as one of the main levers to increase income from cocoa. However, those services are not reaching 'co-farming wives', despite their significant contribution to the family farm.

- › Land titles, which are usually a prerequisite to being administered as a farmer, are often in the husbands' name. 'Co-farming wives' are therefore not registered by the first mile system, and therefore not 'on the list'.
- › In addition, it is often assumed that the 'head of the household', ie the male landowners, will share the information and training they receive with their wives. However, this feeds into his position of power and / or may overestimate his capacity to transfer knowledge.
- › With the increase in urban-rural migration, often by men, wives' roles on the family farm are likely to increase further.

Even though (according to male farmers) 'having a wife' is seen as indispensable for being a successful cocoa farmer, the contributions of (co-farming) wives, both on and off farm, are not acknowledged, not by the women themselves, their husbands, or first mile service providers.

If agri-service providers do not recognize cocoa farming as a couple's business and adjust their service provision, the full potential of family farms will never be achieved, and the norm of the 'head of the household' as the main information bearer and (on-farm) decision maker will be reinforced.

* Using the term 'co-farming wives' in itself is biased, but it captures the current perception

"From the gender action learning pilot we see that if you involve the women in the household with the farmer development plan, then there is also better adoption on farms. We are waiting on the final report, but the couple vision map could be a new entry point for the farmer development plan." Mars

"When you become a sharecropper you need a wife to help you. If you go to the farm and you are drying cocoa, somebody must be at home to attend the cocoa. You also need someone at home to be turning it in the sun... There must be somebody around cooking for you, maintaining the house... You need a wife. And even the farm owners, if you don't have a wife, they will not give you [their land]. It's one of the characteristics farm owners lookout for."

Fair Trade Invisible Women

"Extension workers' believe that when they train a husband information will cascade to their wives and families. This is too simplistic and overlooks the fact that intra-household information exchange, although important, is underpinned by power dynamics. Men do not always fit the characteristics of a benevolent male head of household who seeks to fulfil the interest of the household." Malawi / Sweet Potato



WOMEN CARRY OUT 68 PERCENT OF THE LABOUR IN COCOA FARMING, BUT EARN AROUND 21 PERCENT OF THE INCOME

Female farmers require targeted and gender-sensitive services and technologies to increase their income

In addition to female farmers who contribute to their 'husband's farm', there are also female farmers who own their own land. While there are significantly less female land-owning farmers than men, they still represent at least ¼ of cocoa farmers (in Côte d'Ivoire). However, they (also) do not receive their justifiable proportion of the available first mile services and their income is significantly less than their male counterparts.

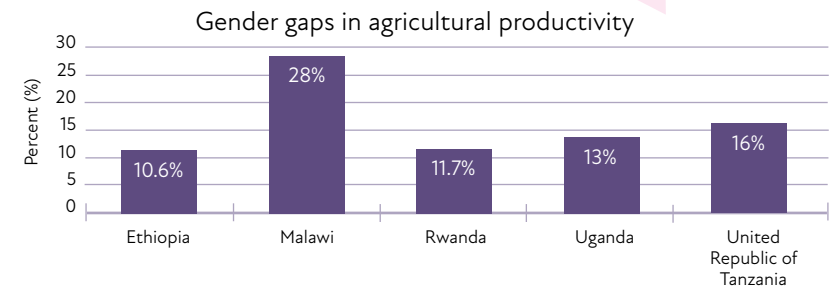
- › Cultural norms may inhibit male first mile service providers to interact with female farmers. They might consider it inappropriate for themselves to speak with women / women might not be comfortable to engage with the men.
- › Land-owning female farmers have less access to (male) family labor. They might be divorced, widowed or have a husband with his own land or other business that he prioritizes over her land. This creates a high burden of labor for them and a reliance on hired labor, and / or lower returns.
- › In addition, female farmers have less access to finance and inputs than male farmers. This places them at a further disadvantage to male farmers and perpetuates the notion of farming 'not being for women'. Women often have relatively smaller plots of land, which makes their need for higher productivity even more essential.
- › In addition to being farmers, women also carry the burden of caring for their household, whether single or in partnership. They have less time available to actively participate in farmer organizations, attend training or travel to urban areas to access better finance and input options.

"Female headed households in Ghana earn 1/3 less than male headed households."

Bymolt, Laven and Tyszler 2018

"Speaking to the farmer's wife can only be done by female field staff. They immediately go to the kitchen, We can never do such thing [as men]!"

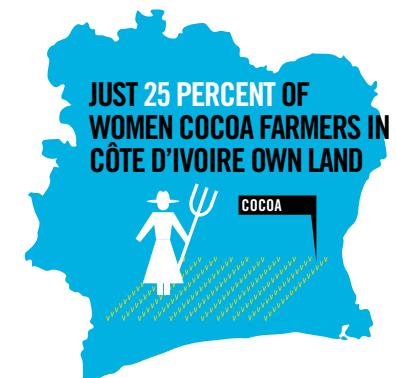
Mars



Sources: UN Women et al. 2015; UN Women and UNDP-UNEP PEI 2016; Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources et al. 2018.



Source: Farmingfirst.org / FAO



Source: The Invisible Women Behind Our Chocolate, Fairtrade Foundation

Women are 'side-tracked' into the pursuit of alternative income opportunities, while men are not



"What I miss in cocoa projects: gender is seen as a stand-alone project, and create some additional alternative income. This is often not feasible as they already work and they don't have enough time."

Mars Partner

Diversifying income and stimulating women to generate an income are other approaches that are pursued to increase household income.

These are often 'combined' and result in encouraging women in farming households to grow food crops (not cash crops) or other (micro) 'alternative' activities, which are often gendered. This appears to push women away from cocoa, instead of providing this as a choice too, and excludes them from a key (cash) crop.

There is little emphasis on professionalizing and scaling women's businesses or on unlocking (leadership) opportunities for women in the first mile or cocoa production.

This further reinforces the notion that women (only) need an 'extra' income to cover personal needs and household expenses, instead of (also) becoming a breadwinner in her own right. Her role in the household continues to be her main responsibility and income generation is something to be done on the side, and combined with her unpaid care duties.

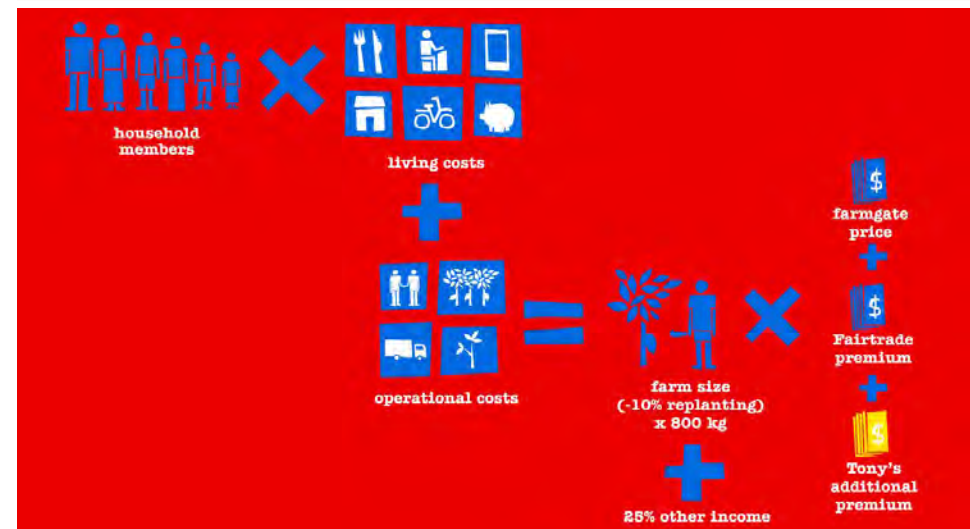
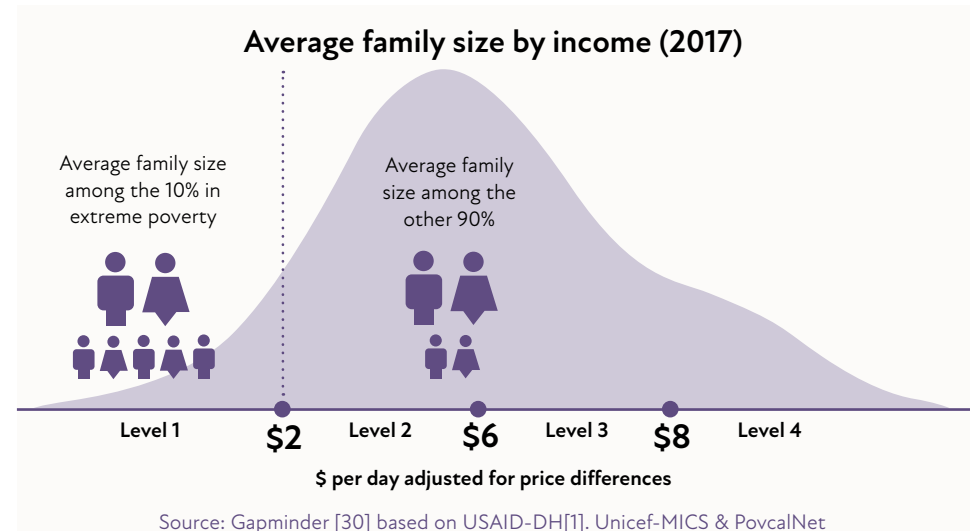
Raising the bar for women as breadwinners should go hand in hand with making men receptive for sharing tasks in the household and affordable child care facilities. Moreover, it should be accompanied by strategies that improve women's ability to make decisions or participate in joint decision-making with their spouse.

Family planning is an unidentified but high-potential lever for (long-term) income increase

Family size is a key determinant for the expenses of a household, especially if many family members do not contribute with an income. Larger families have higher costs of care, and the total income needs to be divided by more household members. On the other hand, large households might have more adult income earners.

Healthcare and education are seen as costly expenses. The burden of care is particularly high with rapid subsequent pregnancies, which is also risky for the health of the mother and child. In case of early pregnancies girls often leave school and are expected to marry and take care of the child and family, reducing their future career options.

"Adding family planning would be quite new to the activities but could have a huge potential if we do it in a sensitive way. We have not done that yet. If we could work together on what resonates well [with communities], we have a huge network of community agents to help spread key messages... really interesting! But need to treat this topic carefully, make the argument in relation to household income. The drop-out rate for high school daughter could also be reduced."
Mars Supplier



Living Income Model; our standards – Tony's Chocolonely (tonyschocolonely.com)



Forest preservation would be strengthened by the inclusion of women

Forestry initiatives are about behavioral change, everyone needs to be on board

"A lot in our work is on changing norms & beliefs – for example we have to change the perspective that trees are bad for cocoa. If we want to change the way people behave we have to include everyone, cannot include only half of the population."

Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

"In Côte d'Ivoire [...] cooking is done with charcoal. It is a big issue; there is a high demand for charcoal 'to consume'. Also because there is little forest left. There is a need for replanting also for ensuring that people meet their food habits... So it is a big driver for deforestation. It is also a priority of government."

Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

"If you enter the community through the officials at village level you encounter only men."

Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

Picture from last years' Annual Report Cocoa & Forests Initiative (CFI) illustrating sensitization of authorities in the Guémon region, Côte d'Ivoire, with male officials as main participants.



To preserve forests the whole community needs to be consulted, sensitized and represented, with emphasis on more vulnerable groups, including women and female youth. Women are involved in cocoa farming and are key users of the forests. In absence of modern cooking methods, women and girls are usually the ones with the task to collect wood for cooking fuel, which is an important driver for deforestation.

However, community approaches are not automatically inclusive, as community access usually goes through traditional male leaders, women and youth are under-represented. If you miss out the voice of half of your population in community outreach it will be difficult to achieve behavioral change.

Reaching women, who are often less educated, might require adapting strategies and materials for effective consultation and sensitization (e.g. ensure that materials reflect women's perspectives, that information is user-friendly and tools are participatory).

Forestry interventions downplay women's (potential) role in cocoa production and forestry

"Gender seems to be more cross-cutting. But not addressed as much in CFI initiatives. There is no focus. This is a missed opportunity., a lot of focus on all the other interventions, like shade trees etc. Of course people want to include women. But unless we do community activities there is passive attitude."

Mars Supplier

"In 2017, seven VLSAs were formally identified for the creation of economic shade tree nurseries in the region. Women's associations were trained as nursery workers, on the techniques of shade tree production. These associations now maintain and manage three nursery sites with a production capacity exceeding 100,000 seedlings. These plants are sold to Mondelēz for distribution to the farmers, and are used for two PES methods: reforestation and agro-forestry. They contribute to increasing the resilience of the communities to climate change, rehabilitating cocoa territories whilst providing an additional source of income to the women and the farmers."

Mondelēz, Impactum, Redd+ Côte d'Ivoire, TFT 2018

It has become standard that predominantly established male cocoa farmers are selected for forestry related opportunities, both for sustainable intensification and agro-forestry. This includes more innovative pilots, such as Payment for Environmental Services (PES) and insurances. However, it cannot be assumed that the benefits received by the male farmer will impact the whole family, as women are known to have little say about 'husbands' income'.

The role of women in cocoa farming and as users and (potential) protectors of the forests is usually downplayed and women are targeted separately with alternative income generating opportunities and as participants of VSLAs. Although these opportunities can be impactful, they will have to be combined with women's already full schedules and opportunity costs should be considered. A risk is that women are more sidetracked towards more marginal economic opportunities and remain financially dependent on their partner.

Forestry interventions do not aim to address the underlying reasons for women not being able to participate and benefit more from cocoa production and agro-forestry opportunities and there is little sensitivity for household dynamics.

FIVE MYTHS ABOUT WOOD FUEL IN AFRICA

Most of sub-Saharan Africa remains off-the-grid. As such, wood fuel is the main source of energy for cooking for over 60 percent of families¹, who rely on charcoal or firewood to prepare their meals and meet their nutritional needs.

However, prevailing unsustainable practices make of wood fuel a major driver of forest degradation across the continent, calling for innovative solutions to mitigate environmental impacts.



In this infographic, the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) debunks the most common misconceptions about wood fuel production, trade and consumption in Sub-Saharan Africa.

1 WOOD FUEL CAN'T BE PRODUCED SUSTAINABLY

From the tree to the kitchen, there are options to mitigate the negative environmental effects of unsustainable wood fuel harvesting and minimize its contributions to forest degradation. These improved practices are: assisted natural regeneration and agroforestry systems, use of invasive species or sawmill waste, by improved carbonization practices, and more efficient end-use technologies. Combined with appropriate policy solutions and incentives, these options transform the sector to ensure **positive contributions** to livelihoods, by increasing both families' income and supplying much-needed cooking fuel.



In Kenya, World Agroforestry (ICRAF) and CIFOR are testing the use of *Prosopis juliflora*, an invasive tree species, to produce sustainable charcoal.



In DR Congo, CIFOR is promoting agroforestry systems to give farmers a sustainable source of wood fuel and increase their incomes.



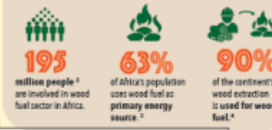
In Cameroon, CIFOR and the University of Douala are developing more effective fish smoking technologies to reduce consumption of mangrove wood.

2 WOOD FUEL CONTRIBUTES LITTLE TO NATIONAL ECONOMIES

The sector provides **income to millions of people**, including small-scale producers and collectors, traders, transporters and sellers, who rely on wood fuel revenues for their livelihoods.

It also provides seasonal or ad hoc revenues to subsistence farmers, who use the extra cash to pay for basic needs such as food, health care or education, or to buy necessary farming supplies such as seeds, fertilizers and tools.

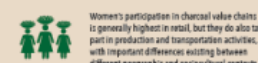
Despite its socioeconomic importance, wood fuel production and trade remain mostly an informal sector that is not officially organized, has weak or inadequate legal frameworks that are often not enforced, provides limited revenues to governments, and lacks much-needed reinvestments.



3 THIS IS A MALE-DOMINATED SECTOR

While women are often recognized as the main gatherers of firewood in rural areas, conventional wisdom still holds that charcoal is a business for men.

Yet in reality, **women are present throughout the value chain** - from production to transport, sale and retail - and their involvement plays a vital role in sustaining rural livelihoods, especially in times of duress. While gender analyses of charcoal value chains are scarce, existing studies suggest that women's participation and benefits are often influenced by gender differences and inequalities, which in turn often interact with other aspects such as wealth and social class, marital status and age.



Women tend to get involved in charcoal production in the absence of alternative livelihood opportunities. However, due to unequal gender roles and relations, women often don't compete on equal footing with men.³

5 THIS IS ONLY A DOMESTIC ISSUE

A country's domestic policies have an impact on other countries in the region. When governments prohibit production, trade or consumption of wood fuel but do not offer viable alternatives, there is a risk that the problem will simply be transferred to neighboring countries. Porous borders enable cross-border movement of wood fuel, particularly of charcoal as it is easier to transport.

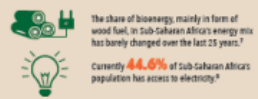


In Zambia charcoal exports are not allowed, yet regional cross-border movements have been observed including on borders with DR Congo, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.⁴ CIFOR and partners are engaging with stakeholders at a regional level to discuss a common approach on sustainable woodfuel and trade.



4 WOOD FUEL WILL SOON BE REPLACED BY OTHER ENERGY SOURCES

Africa's population is rapidly growing and becoming more urban, a phenomenon likely to further drive a **soaring demand** for wood fuel in the upcoming years, particularly for charcoal. In absence of other reliable or affordable energy sources, wood fuel supplies an affordable and much-needed energy source for cooking for millions of households and businesses.



SOURCES:
¹FAO (2014), State of the World's Forests.
²ibid.
³ibid.
⁴FAO (2015), Energy Production and Trade, ICCOP 2015, 2015.
⁵FAO (2015), Energy Production and Trade, ICCOP 2015, 2015.
⁶Worrell, M., Johnson, J., & Cole, J. (2012). Where is the energy? Review and conceptual framework for a preliminary global energy assessment. In: Sub-Saharan Africa: Energy for Sustainable Development, 15, 112.
 Note:
⁷FAO (2010), Africa Energy Outlook 2010.
 The World Bank (2020), The World Bank Data Bank, Access to electricity, 2017 Report.
 Petersen, D. J., Mwanuzi, J. S., Gumbira, M. M., Kibwe, G., Ojima, M., Mwanuzi, J., & Sankhulani, T. C. (2018). Dynamics of the charcoal and indigenous timber trade in Zambia: A gender study in Eastern, Northern and Northwestern provinces (DfID, CIFOR).



Forestry initiatives could benefit from taking a gender-sensitive household approach

A gender-sensitive household approach allows for capturing the specific knowledge, skills and experiences of women as primary forestry users, and the different roles, rights and responsibilities of men and women, as well as their particular access to forests, how they use it and the knowledge they have of forests.



Land tenure security helps to protect forests and gives landowners a bigger say in their households

"Land security is key to incentivize farmers to adopt better practices and care for their land rather than expanding to forests. In deforestation-tackling programs, for example, land documentation provided along payment for ecosystem services (PES) in communities nearby protected areas or in 'working landscapes' leads to a 20% reduction of forest loss." [Meridian Institute](#)

"Land tenure security is not only a driver for productivity – it is a catalyst for farmer prosperity, community empowerment and forest protection and restoration."

ICF Annual Report 2020

"Giving women land and tree tenure rights makes for better protection of forests and preservation of existing ecosystems."

Cacao barometer 2020

"The formalization of land into title deeds gives men, who are often household heads, more influence than other less empowered members of their household."

Farmer Income Lab 2018

Insecure land tenure reduces the incentives of households to invest in their land, therefore there is a need for continued land tenure reform to strengthen farmers' land and property rights. This recognition led to several initiatives to assist cocoa farmers in securing land ownership documents. However, women are often excluded from land ownership, as inheritance norms and practices often dictate that land be given to male family members.

Land tenure interventions should pay explicit attention to women's land rights (e.g. joint titling and joint land certification). There is evidence that giving women land rights gives them more decision-making power and autonomy, stimulates financial inclusion, better protection of the forest, increases farmer productivity and can give a boost to household income.

Without targeting women explicitly and / or households, secure land tenure for male farmers will give men an even stronger voice in their household.

Digitalization is seen as a game changer in the protection of forests, and is potentially (but not automatically) more inclusive



GPS mapping is used to achieve deforestation-free cocoa supply chains. GPS mapping allows to gather data accurately and rapidly, particularly in remote rural environments. It provides the data collector with detailed information about the farmers they work with, the activities they do and the choices they make. It can also be used to collect information about farming families and communities.

Data aggregation and analysis can be used for traceability and to improve service delivery and increase outreach. However, to avoid gender-biases in data collection, analysis, interpretation and impact it is important to ensure that a sufficient number of female farmers and farmers' wives participate in the mapping. For the same reason it is important to have diverse teams collecting the data.

Cocoa companies and NGOs increasingly use digital apps / tools for service delivery, such as Farmerline, CocoaLink, Farming solution app, etc. With their software they collect data for farmer profiling, land mapping, certification, traceability, messaging, training and digital payments. With special features they train

farmers on for example climate smart agriculture and can attract women and youth by providing them with relevant interactive content and a network.

Although it can be expected that outreach to (young) women will increase thanks to digital tools there is still a significant gender gap in mobile ownership, which can hinder them in accessing relevant apps. Another known social barrier is that some husbands don't want their wives to have their own phones as they fear that they may have contact with other men.

Some digital tools have been developed to effectively advocate for increased gender equality and access to information for women, such as the Women Advancing Agriculture (WAA) Initiative, which builds on Farmerline's existing technology and business model for women in Northern Ghana.

The extent to which digital solutions will work for gender equality will depend on potential gender biases in their programming and from efforts to systematically learn about gender related impacts from digitalization.



4. COCOA'S FIRST MILE

Cocoa's first mile 'human footprint' is significant and intertwined with the social fabric



"Field Trainers are residents of the communities they serve and they are the primary contact point of suppliers with the farmers. They conduct field visits, training, and other activities for cocoa farmers in the program." Mars Supplier

In rural areas where cocoa is the predominant crop, cocoa's first mile is a key economic structure and socially entrenched in the community. It also (indirectly) employs thousands of people as trainers, agronomists, monitors, collectors, etc.

Educated field and training staff may be children of cocoa farmers who have 'returned' home, while local roles are selected from the community and existing cocoa farmer networks. Therefore, they have all been personally (in)formed by the local social norms, which inevitably permeate their first mile service provision.

Cocoa farmers themselves are also chiefs, husbands, fathers, sons, brothers and (boy)friends, with wives, children, parents, (girl)friends and sisters. In those roles they are household members, and part of the community.

The first mile, which delivers the C4G strategy, is therefore strongly intertwined with its surrounding social fabric, and vice-versa. Those with roles such as lead farmers, purchasing clerks or agronomists are seen as role models, making them influential in the community.

"Purchasing clerks often have a 'double role', it's a crucial role in the community, they are always involved in the interventions." Mars Supplier

Community access and mobilization for C4G is facilitated through ('elite') male leadership

"In Côte d'Ivoire teenage pregnancies are often pushed as the fault of the young girls. They are pushed aside. It is difficult to have access to them [teenage mothers]. The systems in place are community generated. If communities are not comfortable, then they will not be involved." Mars Supplier

"Sometimes we have to specify to include women, it's difficult to ensure their participation. We have to insist and anticipate. We have our technicians on the ground to help with this. In the team we have a lot of men working but trying to hire more women." Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

"To access the community we go through existing power structures." Mars

"If you see a picture of a community event, it's almost always men. That's what happens when all the 'officials' and village chiefs are men. How can we integrate when all the positions are male dominated? When there is more funding and NGO involvement then women are designed in for the sensitization. Unless you design programs targeting women its super difficult to reach them with 'mainstream' programs."

Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

Community governance structures and the leadership of farmer groups / cooperatives are almost always led by men, who are often larger landholders. They represent the local (male) 'elite', with certain social and economic standing, and their direct network will consist of similar people. In their role they are likely to be an influential gatekeeper of unequal social and gender norms.

First mile extension service providers often organize their access to cocoa communities through those 'elite' coop or community leadership structures. This likely leads to biased outreach that favors (mature) men and those in the social and farming networks of more established (organized) farmers.

As gatekeepers they might seek to 'keep up appearances' to outsiders, excluding those farmers and community members which they might deem less socially acceptable or economically relevant. On the other hand, established leadership systems are also key mobilizers and local communicators, whose buy-in is key.

This cascade model of mobilizing communities results in (young) women, migrants and more vulnerable, or 'socially less accepted' community members to be excluded from outreach by the first mile. Instead, cocoa services mostly reach and benefit those who are connected to the existing (patriarchal) power structures.

The male dominance in the first mile perpetuates gender blindness in cocoa and reinforces inequality

"Of the 91 field staff that we have working on the Mars' program in Ghana, 8 are female. [<7%]."

Mars Supplier

"Currently it is not the norm to have a female PC. [Purchasing clerk] I am not sure we can reduce the gap. Commercial positions are more undertaken by men. Women are more appointed on community work. There sometimes is a limitation for women to go deeper in the field." Mars Supplier

"In the past it was a completely separate thing: sustainability and commercial team were interacting with farmers in silo's, but since a few years we are in the process of integrating these two worlds. This is a whole shift of mindset."

Mars Supplier

"Most CLRMS agents / data collectors are male. These agents are people nominated from within the supply chain." Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

"We just repeat the 'head of household' terminology without questioning it. Our intention is to identify who has decision-making power."

Mars Partner (Preserving Forests)

With commercial and sustainability service provision being so male-dominated there is:

- 1. A blind spot towards female farmers, including female farmers who contribute to their 'husband's farm**
- 2. A gap in local female leadership**

Because the first mile is so intertwined with the social fabric, having (only) a male perspective reinforces the prevailing bias that 'cocoa is not for women'. The contribution to production by female farmers (female land-owners as well as female family members) is (wrongly) seen as minimal, and first mile jobs are perceived to be unappealing or even inappropriate for women, further perpetuating the male exclusivity for opportunities in cocoa.

The design of training and outreach to female farmers by the first mile is gender-blind and does not consider the unique needs and considerations of female farmers. These might include (il)literacy, child care, safety (at night), confidence, work / household care balancing, lack of finance and access to informal networks. The contribution of 'co-farming wives' to cocoa production is often not recognized, and they tend to be excluded from training and agri-services.

Jobs in the first mile also bypass women, they are assumed to not be interested, and candidates are often nominated by (male) peers within the supply chain. Requirements, such as literacy, coop registration, driving a motorcycle, or start-up capital, are (perceived) barriers for women. With only men holding coveted roles in the first mile, it exemplifies the norm that leadership is not meant for women. Without examples to inspire young women, it is hard for them to imagine and pursue a future in cocoa. This excludes them from a significant opportunity in their local economy and perpetuates the cycle of inequality.

Laborers and unorganized farmers are a blindspot for the first mile, which makes their families extra vulnerable for gender inequalities

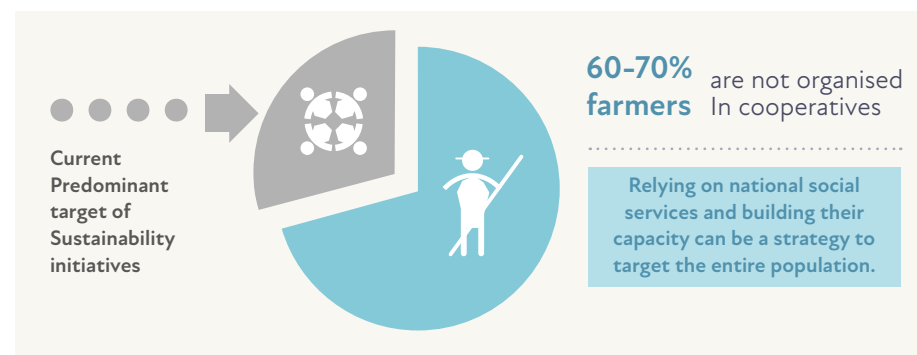
"99% of children that are surveyed are family of farmers, only 1% are related to workers." Mars Supplier

Definition of a 'farmer' according to one of Mars' suppliers:

- > A person who owns an agricultural land and it is cultivated directly or indirectly by himself or herself, or:
- > A person that manages a cultivated agricultural land.

"Campements are not registered, and there are no services in these communities. Campements are largely made up of migrants. Children are more at risk of child labor in these campements."

Côte d'Ivoire Cocoa Report. UNICEF 2018



Côte d'Ivoire Cocoa Report, UNICEF, 2018

First mile service provision and data collection / monitoring initiatives target 'farmers'. However, the definition of 'farmer' often means landowner / land manager, thereby excluding not only many women but also other landless farmers (caretakers / sharecroppers) and laborers.

Extension (and other) services tend to be distributed to organized farmers, through cooperatives and farmer groups, who are often located in more central and productive areas. However, in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana 50- 89% of farmers (up to 1.7 million farmers) are not organized in cooperatives (Capillo and Somerville-Large, 2020) and therefore likely not reached by services.

As a result, migrant farmers, young farmers and farmers in more remote / informal areas, or hamlets, are often overlooked, even though they are probably doing most of the hands-on labor, and likely to be living in poverty. Instead, it is likely that the landowners, who might be living in urbanized areas and away from the land, are receiving a significant proportion of the outreach.

This also means that their wives and daughters are more invisible to the first mile, if even their fathers and husbands are not being reached. Due to their presumably reduced access to external information and potentially more conservative norms it is likely that these women and girls face significant inequality barriers.

Without a deliberate intention, this vulnerable group of men, women and children will not be reached.

The need for more synergy between community gender norms and agricultural extension services is well documented

Identifying gender-responsive approaches in rural advisory services that contribute to the institutionalisation of gender in Pakistan

- › Women's access to extension services does not become a priority for a predominantly male extension workforce.
- › Men and women's views reflect the socio-cultural norms they adhere to, and the conscious bias in accessing specific information sources at convenient locations.
- › Future rural advisory service initiatives can suggest concrete approaches to align gender-specific responses, improving gender awareness in public sector activities, and leading to overall women's empowerment.

[Full details and author references may be found here](#)

The role of gender norms in access to agricultural training in Chukwawa and Phalombe, Malawi

- › Institutional biases within extension systems reproduce gender inequality by reinforcing stereotypical gender norms. Extension officers do not always have the tools and knowledge they need to equitably involve men and women.
- › There is a need to emphasise social engagement and exchange with community members in order to gain greater understanding of the gender dynamics at work so that extension workers can use more informed strategies.
- › In some instances, women are regarded, and may regard themselves, as helpers not as farmers, thus diminishing the perceived significance of their role as well as their authority and decision-making power in agricultural processes. The devaluing of women's work and women's role in agriculture may negatively impact the ability of women to access information at the same level as men. This is because male extension officers may regard training as unnecessary for women if they do not consider them as farmers.
- › The trickle down approach does not ask a pertinent question regarding who has the power and privilege to access what sort of training information.

[Full details and author references may be found here](#)

Gender and agricultural extension: Why a gender focus matters

- › Understanding the social context of communities when practicing development work is of the utmost importance; however, while gender is essential to understanding the context in which development is being implemented, it is often not adequately integrated.
- › A gender focus is crucial for achieving and maintaining effective agricultural extension programming. Although men have typically been the assumed targets of, and tend to benefit most from extension services, women play a vital role in agriculture throughout the developing world, often contributing the bulk of agricultural labor.
- › Women's labor is often misunderstood, undervalued and deeply informed by the gender roles in their homes and communities. It is precisely because gender underpins every aspect of daily life that extension services must be attentive to gender, or risk exacerbating existing inequality.

[Full details and author references may be found here](#)

Cocoa's first mile needs to 'walk the talk' and use its sphere of influence to challenge gender norms



"It starts with my team already, 90% are male. We need to start somewhere and that means starting with our team. Where and why are we inadvertently excluding women because its just the way we have always done it." Mars

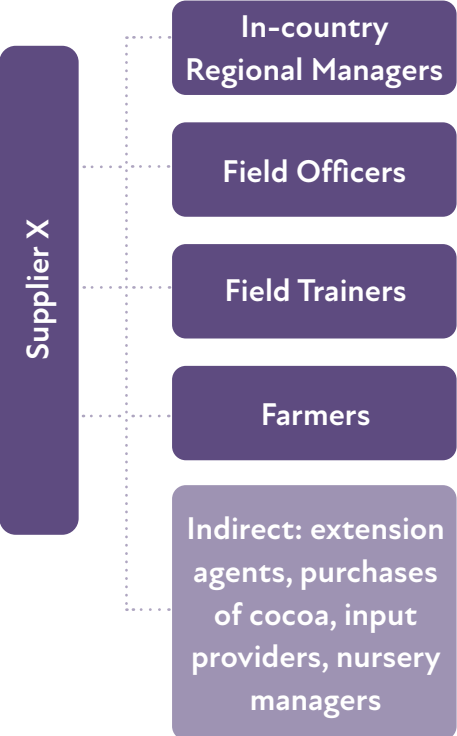
"Can women be field agents? Should we address those barriers? This discussion is not being had... Resistance comes from women 'don't want to do it'. This might be a bias – we don't actually know our own assumptions." Mars

"Many suppliers use the lead farmer approach to reach the first mile. If you don't develop / train them into community champions, then we will have a bias towards status quo – I am skeptical about the change they will be able to bring." Mars

"We are very new in the space of gender, lots to still do – gap is having a clear and practical understanding of roles. First batch of training is our own staff – 70-80% still male." Mars Supplier

"We have a target of 30% but it fluctuates. We had 38% female field staff in Ghana, but now 28%. The main thing we keep hearing is the logistics of travelling. To travel from one farm to another and riding motorcycle is still a hindrance. There are a lot of women not excited about that role." Mars Supplier

Example of a Mars suppliers' first mile footprint in Ghana



Ghana Mars program	Total	Male	Female
Total Field Staff	91	83	8
Field Officers	18	16	2
Field Trainers	73	67	6
Gender policy / strategy for Field Staff	NO		
Gender training for Field Staff	YES	All staff have been trained.	
Farmers (= agri Landowner or Manager)	14,665	62,4%	35,8%* (94% Landowners**)
Community footprint	Field trainers are residents of the communities they serve. Primary contact between Supplier X & Farmers		
VSLAS	Implemented directly by supplier X Field Staff		

* For Ghana the average percentage of registered female farmers is 25% and in Côte d'Ivoire even lower (10%).
 ** Profile is low / uneducated. Confirming learning cocoa farming is important for school leavers, incl. girls.

Developing a quality gender curriculum and training for the first mile could be an essential first step

"The team will have to change its capabilities. They are the daily contact, They have to learn how to do a deep dive conversation." Mars

"Gender is a gap in the training curriculum. Could improve the curriculum to talk about M / F roles, household division, etc. The methodology is being changed coming year." Mars Supplier

"We have all these training manuals etc to work with front-line service providers, to work with them on different topics. I am sure we have some sessions on gender equality and social inclusion. I would say that content into wider training is important, but it cannot be divorced from community wide intervention." Mars Partner (Protecting Children)

"We can do all kinds of gender projects but if our own agronomists are not gender aware, then what is the point?" Industry Peer

Suppliers and other C4G implementing partners have an extensive, albeit male-dominated, human resources footprint in cocoa's first mile. Even though many are 'indirect' staff, they are an extension of the cocoa sector and within Mars' direct sphere of influence as a brand, buyer and funder. Without transforming their perspectives into being gender-aware and responsive, they will continue to reinforce pre-existing unequal norms. As a result, other investments towards advancing gender equality in cocoa-growing communities might be undermined.

The (indirect) staff are gathered regularly to receive training and other support (tools) to maintain and improve the quality of their responsibilities in the field. There is an opportunity to use this operational capacity for the distribution of gender equality training and capacity building.

The content development for a gender curriculum, sensitization materials and training activities would require a dedicated effort. While suppliers and C4G partners might lack the expertise, organizations such as CARE and Save the Children have significant experience in this space, as may other service providers. Developing an appealing, tailored, relevant and impactful curriculum for the first mile could ensure a high-quality standard, which includes facilitation skills and self-reflection.

Such a training should be seen as part of a holistic approach, and not a standalone initiative. Experience also learns that gender training is most effective when it is direct training (no training of trainers) and when it has a certain level of intensity / depth.

There is an opportunity to make gender (refresher) training part of the training offer to their staff and assess existing training materials from a gender lens.



5. SUMMARY OF VIABILITY CONCLUSIONS

The time to act is now

At Mars, within the sector and across the world, gender equality is gaining momentum. As a global leader in sustainability, and an important funder of cocoa sustainability programs, Mars is in the driver seat and has an opportunity to drive transformative change through its first mile sourcing and in cocoa communities.

Becoming a thought leader will require an insight-driven and long-term gender strategy and ambition.

- › In the cocoa sector it is recognized that gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment are important to achieve the sustainability ambitions, but many interventions are community based and / or 'on the side'. Mainstreaming the application of a gender lens with and through first mile operations and all (sustainability) interventions would further encourage transformative change.
- › For Mars Cocoa to be a bold and credible leader for gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment, a gender transformative approach is needed that is mainstreamed in the workplace, communities and marketplace. It will be necessary to create critical consciousness at all levels to challenge institutions that pose barriers for the next generation in reaching their full potential.

Gender equality remains an 'afterthought' in sector-wide sustainable cocoa priority areas

Cocoa operations and sustainability programs and strategies are channeled through cocoa's first mile, which is male-dominated and gender blind. Consequently, women and female youth tend to be excluded from potential benefits and existing inequalities and gender stereotyping are reinforced.

- › A sustainable cocoa supply chain cannot be fully achieved while excluding half of the population.
- › Without a gender lens the underlying causes for gender inequality and disempowerment are not well understood, which makes it difficult to identify the right solutions.
- › Although different stakeholders in the cocoa sector have an interest to be more gender sensitive, gender is often not integrated as a cross-cutting issue and a deliberate gender focus is lacking.
- › Gender sensitive data collection and analysis is ad hoc, which prevents the identification of any gender-based differences, which hampers measuring impact and defining lasting solutions.

Addressing the underlying causes of gender equality requires gender transformative change

A significant shift in social norms and institutions is required to ultimately achieve gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment in cocoa growing communities. Transformative change, including shifting norms and changing behaviors, requires a multi-dimensional approach and interventions at multiple touch points.

- › Changing gender-related norms, behavior and attitudes is not easy, and will not happen over-night. External interventions are needed to create gender awareness.
- › There is no silver bullet, and a multi-level approach will be needed that seeks to deliberately mainstream a gender-lens into all C4G activities and operations, while also empowering female youth through targeted interventions.
- › Pursuing gender equality will strengthen and help to achieve the (other) cocoa sustainability priority areas. Cocoa's male dominated sector also provides a unique channel to create gender allies, and challenge norms, instead of reinforcing them.

Child protection cannot be achieved without addressing the challenges that girls face

The Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS) is seen as the foundation for child protection programs, but its application lacks gender sensitivity. CLMRS agents are predominantly men and they are to target the 'head of the household', thereby excluding mothers and reinforcing men as the decision maker.

Adolescent girls face unique human rights risks which are currently not recognized by child protection policies (child marriage, exclusion of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights).

- › The data collected and reported through CLMRS is not systematically analyzed through a gender lens. Potential gender-differences are therefore not considered in remediation strategies.
- › Girls' (unpaid care) work in the household is likely under-reported as CLMRS focuses on on-farm activities. Yet, carrying heavy loads is one of the most reported hazardous tasks, presumed to often be water & wood by girls. Current data collection and reporting is not explicit enough.
- › Remediation strategies tend to focus on young children (primary school age) while adolescents are children too, yet they are in transition to adulthood / labor. Adolescent boys are at higher risk to be involved in hazardous works as they are prepared for the family farm.

Improving farmer income requires the acknowledgement of women's work

Living Income is defined by the income and expenses of the household, yet most interventions are farm-based. Even though income strategies target households, they lack sensitivity for decision-making and trust dynamics.

Cocoa productivity will not reach its full potential if agri-services do not include 'farmer's wives', which are often not recognized as co-farmers. Female farmers require targeted and gender-sensitive services and technologies to increase their income.

- › Income interventions downplay the role of women as contributors to cocoa production. Instead, women are sidetracked towards alternative (often marginal) income generating opportunities and as participants of VSLAs. Yet, (young) men are targeted with cocoa related interventions, including access to new (digital) technologies, innovations and jobs.
- › Cocoa is not the only crop where women's work on the family farm is invisible and undervalued. It starts with adjusting the definition of 'farmers' and how they are administered, accessed by the first mile.
- › Closing the gender gap in cocoa farming and within households will increase productivity and incomes.
- › Family planning is an unidentified but high-potential lever for (long-term) income increase.

Forest preservation would be strengthened through the inclusion of women

Forestry initiatives could benefit from taking a gender-sensitive household and community approach. This would allow capturing of the specific knowledge, skills and experiences of women as primary forestry users, and the different roles, rights and responsibilities of men and women, as well as their particular access to forests, how they use it and the knowledge they have of forests.

- › Forestry initiatives are about behavioral change, everyone needs to be on board. However, women are under represented in community decision-making structures and farmers' wives are not administered as farmers in their own right, and therefore overlooked.
- › Land tenure security helps to protect forests and gives landowners a bigger say in their households. However, women are often excluded from land ownership, as inheritance norms and practices often dictate that land be given to male family members. Land tenure interventions should pay explicit attention to women's land rights (e.g. joint titling and joint land certification).
- › Digitalization is seen as a game changer in the protection of forests and is potentially (but not automatically) more inclusive. Although it can be expected that outreach to (young) women will increase thanks to digital tools there is still a significant gender gap in mobile ownership.



Cocoa's first mile is a key local institution, intertwined with the social fabric

In rural areas where cocoa is the predominant crop, cocoa's first mile is a key economic structure and socially entrenched in the community.

Community access for cocoa-related outreach is often channelled through leadership structures, which leads to the inclusion of the 'elite', who are often male, and exclusion of the voiceless.

Transforming cocoa's first mile into an inclusive institution will leverage its influential status as a change maker for gender equality.

- › Cocoa farmers themselves are also chiefs, husbands, fathers, sons, brothers and (boy)friends, with wives, children, parents, (girl)friends and sisters. In those roles they are household members, and part of the community.
- › Lead farmers, purchasing clerks, community agents, agronomists, etc are seen as role models, making them influential in the community. Educated field and training staff may be children of cocoa farmers who have 'returned' home, while local roles are selected from the community and existing cocoa farmer networks.
- › The first mile is in the direct sphere of influence of the sector. Without a deliberate policy and strategy the first mile will remain male-dominated, thereby reinforcing prevailing unequal norms and being blind to the needs of female farmers.

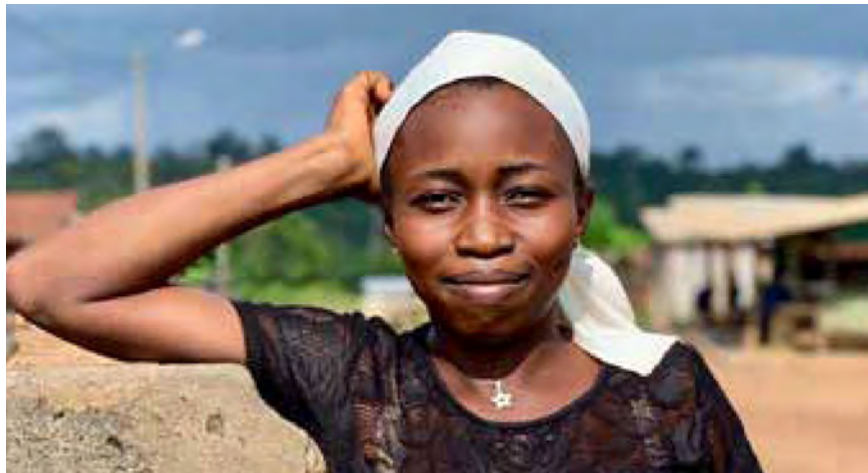
Female youth are under the radar of the sector

Female youth are not (often) explicitly addressed in cocoa sustainability strategies.

Due to the (mature) male profile of the cocoa sector they will not be reached, nor will their needs be apparent.

However, adolescence and early adulthood are defining periods during a woman's life, and they face more risks during this time than their male counterparts.

Poor choices and limited opportunities will perpetuate their cycle of poverty and lack of well-being, both for themselves and their future families.



- › Cocoa is an 'old men's crop', 'children' who inherit land are often fathers of teenagers or already 'young' grandfathers.
- › Creating impact for the next generation requires deliberate action, as (female) youth are not directly reached by in farmer-centered strategies.
- › Adolescents are children too, yet they are in transition to adulthood / labor. They are at higher risk to be involved in hazardous work. For adolescent girls there is a need for 'extra' protection against early pregnancy and child marriage.
- › Particularly adolescent girls and young wives are under the radar as many see cocoa as a men's crop, and there is a lack of opportunities and role models.
- › Provision of vocational training to children is an important intervention for reducing child labor and having some 'work' experience may make the transition into adulthood easier. Particularly adolescent girls benefit from support in transition to paid work and career options in rural communities.
- › To avoid that girls opt only for stereotype jobs, such as hairdressing, tailoring and catering, they should be encouraged to learn more technical or agricultural skills that they can apply in the rural environment where they live and where more economic opportunities can be found.
- › To reach and benefit more vulnerable girls and young mothers, the offer of training and apprenticeship should be tailored to their needs, in terms of distance, available time, costs and access to start-up capital for graduates.



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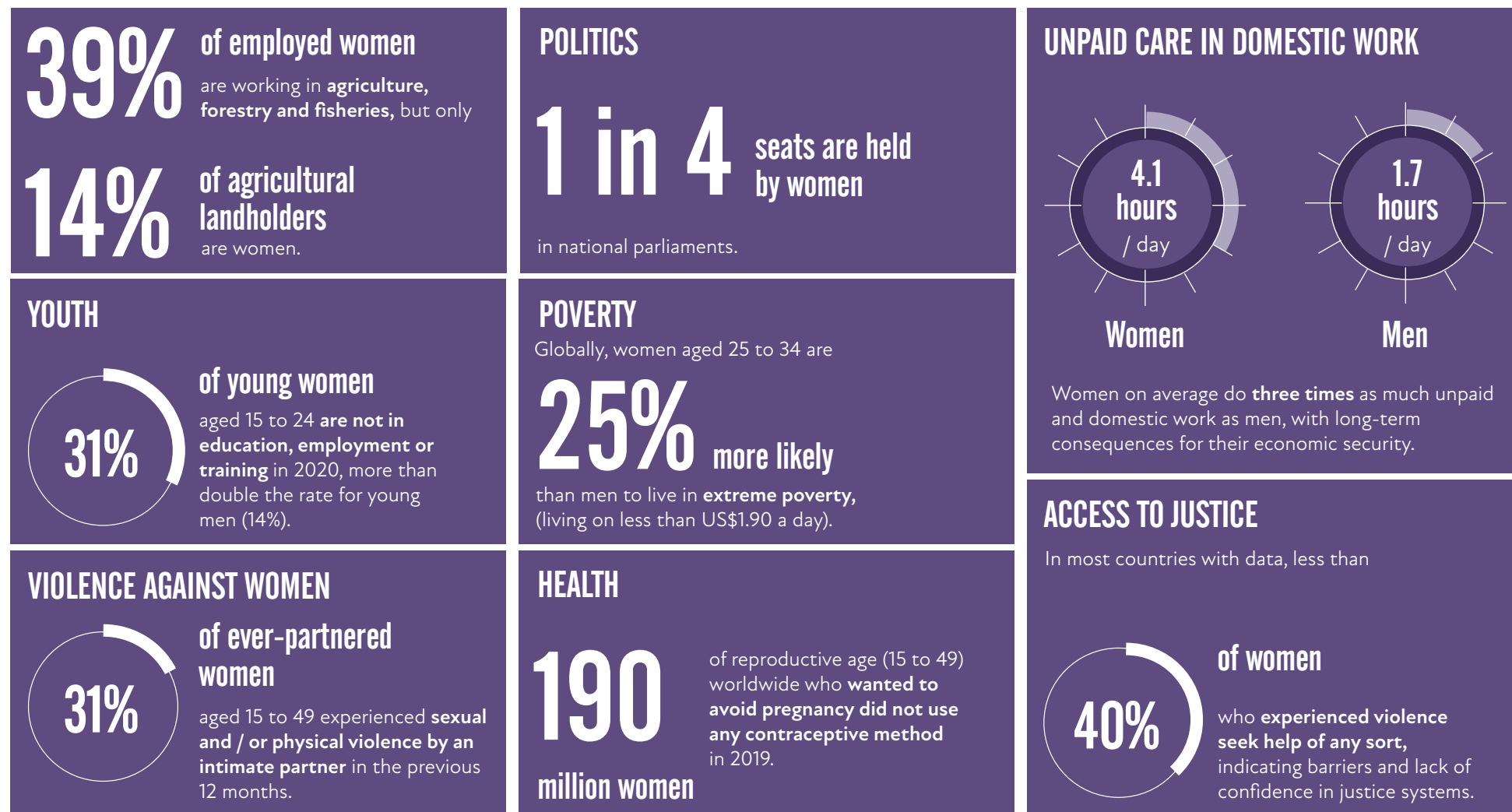
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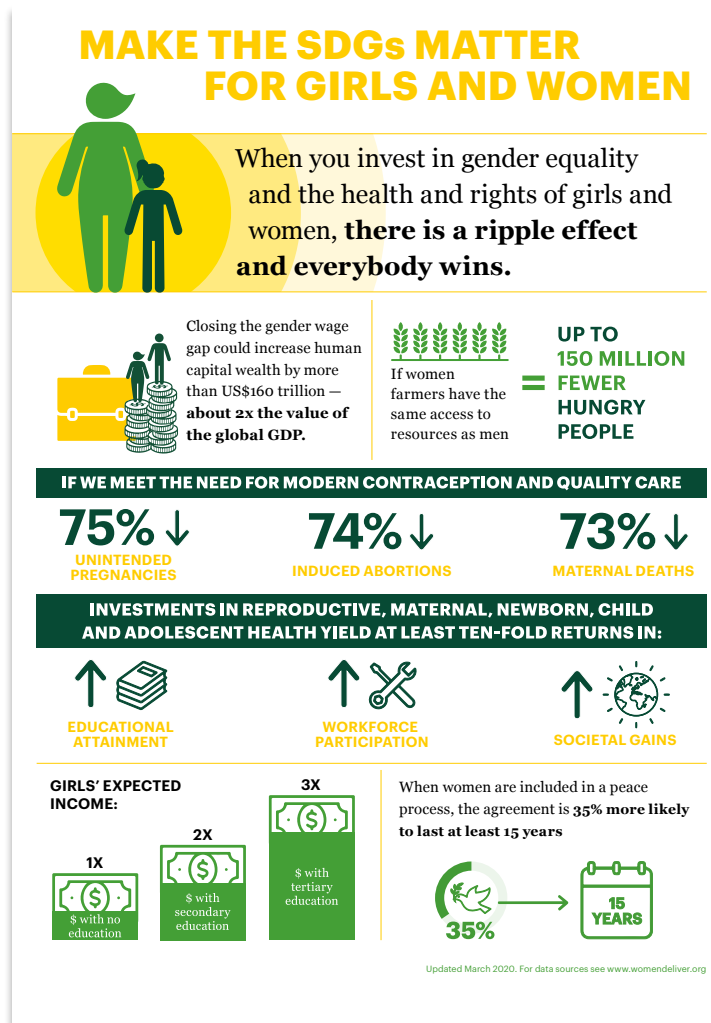
7. APPENDIX

Women around the world continue to have less access, ownership, bodily integrity, representation, etc, than men



GRAPHICS SOURCE: UN WOMEN

Even though we know that investing in gender equality and in girls & women pays off



"When women work, they invest 90 percent of their income back into their families, compared with 35 percent for men. By focusing on girls and women, innovative businesses and organizations can spur economic progress, expand markets, and improve health and education outcomes for everyone."

Clinton Global Initiative

"When women influence household budgets, children benefit directly from increased expenditure on essential items such as food and education."

WCF 2019a

No country has achieved gender parity, and key cocoa sourcing countries are lagging behind

Country	GI Rank	GI Score
Denmark	1	89.3
United States	28	77.6
Indonesia	69	65.2
Ghana	94	56.6
Côte d'Ivoire	111	48.9
Niger (last)	125	44.9

SDG Gender Index (GI) 2019



(World Economic Forum)

As calculated by the World Economic Forum after taking into account the effects of Covid-19

Indeed, research shows that gender norms and biases around the world continue to work against women



Nearly 90% hold some sort of bias against women



Almost 50% feel that men make better political leaders



Over 40% think that men make better business executives



28% think it is justified for a husband to beat his wife

2020 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

TACKLING SOCIAL NORMS:
a game changer for gender inequalities

Findings from the 2020 Gender Social Norms Index by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This index measures how social beliefs obstruct gender equality in areas like politics, work and education. It contains data from men and women from 75 countries which represent 80+% of the global population.

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