

## ***2022 Progress Report and 2.0 Action Plan***

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In 2017, General Mills became one of only two non-confectionary manufacturer signatories to the Cocoa and Forests Initiative (CFI) to address deforestation in the cocoa supply chain, to reinforce our sustainable sourcing commitment for cocoa, and to help drive progress towards our Science-Based Target (SBT) for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction.

At General Mills, our business is rooted in the earth and has the power to help restore it. Threats to natural resources impact our business, the livelihoods of farmers and communities, and our ability to feed a growing population. To drive growth and increase resilience, we need to not only focus on sustaining our planet but work toward regenerating it. We believe that our commitment to the Cocoa and Forests Initiative is a strong enabler of our regenerative approach. Beyond 2022, this includes strengthening current activities and applying past lessons to work towards a more forest-positive, climate-positive and people-positive future.

This report serves to reflect both General Mills' progress to date since joining the Cocoa & Forests Initiative as a signatory in 2017, as well as our forward-looking ambitions for continued collaboration in CFI through 2025. The below includes our 2022 Progress Report and CFI 2.0 Action Plan.

### **2. THE COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE: COLLECTIVE ACTION TO END COCOA-RELATED DEFORESTATION**

The governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana and 35 leading cocoa and chocolate companies, representing 85% of global cocoa usage, joined together in the [Cocoa & Forests Initiative](#) to end deforestation and restore forest areas. Their combined actions play a crucial role in protecting and restoring biodiversity, sequestering carbon stocks in West African forests, and addressing climate change in line with the Paris Climate Agreement. The Cocoa & Forests Initiative delivers on Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land).

The Cocoa & Forests Initiative is a public private partnership based on frameworks for action ([Côte d'Ivoire](#) and [Ghana](#)) and action plans for the private sector ([Côte d'Ivoire](#) and [Ghana](#)) and public sector ([Côte d'Ivoire](#) and [Ghana](#)) that spell out commitments to:

- protect and restore forests,
- promote sustainable cocoa production and farmers' livelihoods,
- engage communities and boost social inclusion.
- 

To learn more, follow #CocoaAndForests on social media, or visit [CocoaAndForests.org](#) and [WorldCocoaFoundation.org](#).

The [World Cocoa Foundation](#) (WCF); [IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative](#); and the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana drive the Cocoa & Forests Initiative. King Charles III (then known as The Prince of Wales) launched the Initiative in March 2017 and reviewed implementation progress in November 2018.

Deforestation of tropical rainforests is a major issue in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, which together produce nearly two-thirds of the world's supply of cocoa, the main ingredient in chocolate. [Côte d'Ivoire](#) and [Ghana](#) respectively lost 26% and 9.3% of their humid primary forest between 2002 and 2020, with a significant portion of deforestation attributable to cocoa farming expansion.

Cocoa provides crucial income to communities in rural West Africa, but farmers are too often faced with poverty. Poverty is one of the causes of deforestation. Accelerating a transition to sustainable livelihoods is essential for farmers' economic security and a healthy planet.

The Cocoa and Forests Initiative is an example of successful collaboration between cocoa origin governments and cocoa supply chain companies working together with cocoa producing communities to strengthen the sustainability of the cocoa sector by ending deforestation, promoting reforestation and improving sustainable livelihoods for cocoa farmers and their communities.

### **3. WHAT ARE THE KEY COMMITMENTS IN THE COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE?**

**The first priority is the protection and restoration of forests that have been degraded.** To this end, the signatory governments and companies have pledged no further conversion of forest land for cocoa production and have committed to the phased elimination of illegal cocoa production and sourcing in protected areas.

Both countries are introducing a differentiated approach for improved management of forest reserves, based on the level of degradation of forests. In 2019, the government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted and published a new forest code which, among other things, put forth policies for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry to restore degraded land, improve forest cover, and promote sustainable livelihoods and agriculture in the classified forests and rural zones. Both governments have shared maps on forest cover and land-use, and continue to update the maps, including socio-economic data on cocoa farmers, to inform private sector investments. Companies have made significant investments in the promotion of cocoa agroforestry and the restoration of degraded forests.

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring of these commitments, companies have pledged to develop traceability from farm to the first purchase point for their own purchases of cocoa. They also work with governments to ensure an effective national framework for traceability encompassing all traders in the supply chain and to anticipate forthcoming due diligence legislation. The companies will similarly share information with the national satellite monitoring platforms to effectively monitor progress on CFI, as well as proactively address threats of new deforestation.

**The next critical priority is sustainable agricultural production and increased farmer incomes.** These are essential pre-requisites for reducing pressure for agricultural encroachment into forests and strengthening the resilience of cocoa farmers to climate change.

The participating governments and CFI signatory companies are accelerating investment in long-term productivity of cocoa in order to grow "more cocoa on less land." Key actions include provision of planting materials for the promotion of cocoa agroforestry, training in good agricultural practices, soil fertility, land tenure reform, and capacity building of farmers' organizations. Sustainable livelihoods and income diversification for cocoa farmers are being

accelerated through food crop diversification, agricultural inter-cropping, and development of mixed agroforestry systems and shade-grown cocoa.

**The final area of focus is strong community engagement and social inclusion, with a particular focus on women and youth.** The governments and companies have committed to full and effective consultation and participation of cocoa farmers in the design and implementation of key actions, and promotion of community-based management models for forest protection and restoration. The governments have adopted social and environmental safeguards and are assessing and mitigating the social impacts and risks of any proposed land-use changes on affected communities.

## 2022 PROGRESS REPORT

### 4. FACTS & FIGURES

To date, General Mills has advanced key ambitions within each of the CFI focus areas. 2022 highlights for General Mills' progress include:

- **14,206 farmers** (6,296 farmers in Côte d'Ivoire and 7,910 farmers in Ghana) were trained in Good Agricultural Practices this year
- **7,540 people** (5,103 in Côte d'Ivoire and 2,437 in Ghana) participated in Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) groups
- **379,999 multi-purpose trees** (138,567 in Côte d'Ivoire and 241,432 in Ghana) were distributed for on-farm planting
- **9,243 individuals** (6120 in Côte d'Ivoire and 3,123 in Ghana) were impacted by gender equity or empowerment programs

### 5. GENERAL MILLS COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE PROGRESS

Since 2018, General Mills has been working through our suppliers and partners to deliver on the core commitments set out under the CFI, in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

Highlights of our progress in Côte d'Ivoire include:

#### Healthy Planet

- **81% traceability to farm:** One of our priorities has been to ensure we understand the origin of the cocoa used in our products to ensure our sourcing contributes to our Forest Positive agenda. As of December 2022, 80% of our cocoa volumes were traceable from the farm to the first purchase point in Côte d'Ivoire. Our CFI 2.0 Action Plan (below) will seek to address challenges in reaching 100% traceability to origin.
- **138,567 multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting:** This program focused on the co-benefits of non-cocoa trees on farm plots, such as increasing moisture and shade. Taking advantage of a change in local law that solidified tree tenure and incentivized the upkeep of these trees, the program was able to distribute 138,567 seedlings and help farmers realize these benefits for their land.

## **Prosperous Farmers**

- **6,296 farmers trained in GAPs:** Investment in the long-term productivity and quality of cocoa/farms in our supply base is a priority for General Mills, as this limits the need for cocoa farm expansion into protected areas. Working through our suppliers, 6,296 farmers were trained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) this year, surpassing our goal.

## **Empowered Communities**

- **5,103 farmers participated in VSLA groups:** Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) have demonstrated themselves to be a highly successful sustainable livelihood intervention in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly for empowering women who become leaders in their household, businesses and communities. By the end of 2022, our sustainable sourcing programs had enabled **5,103** farmers to participate in VSLA groups representing 199 VSLA groups in 2022.
- **Woman and youth empowerment:** through our partnership with CARE, we continued to support community capacity building on issues related to women's empowerment, food security and the fight against child labor. To date, these activities reached **6,120** farmers directly, contributing to the long-term sustainable development of cocoa-growing communities.

Highlights of our progress in Ghana include:

## **Healthy Planet**

- **66% traceable to farm:** One of our priorities has been to ensure we understand the origin of the cocoa used in our products to ensure our sourcing is not driving deforestation. As of December 2022, 66% of our cocoa volumes were traceable from the farm to the first purchase point. Our 2.0 Action Plan (below) will seek to address challenges in reaching 100% traceability to origin.
- **275 hectares of cocoa agroforestry in development:** Working through our suppliers, General Mills contributed to the distribution and planting of multi-purpose trees for on-farm restoration via agroforestry. Over 240,000 multi-purpose trees were distributed for on-farm planting along with more than 240,000 improved cocoa seedlings. These seedlings will contribute to long term farmer livelihoods as well as improved cocoa quality and yields.
- **103 farmers educated on forest law enforcement and tree tenure provisions.** In the final year of this commitment, an additional 103 farmers were educated on forest law enforcement and tree tenure. Going forward, we will continue to expect high engagement on this important topic through outreach programs that cascade through farm field schools.

## **Prosperous Farmers**

- **7,910 farmers trained in GAPs:** Investment in the long-term productivity and quality of cocoa/farms in our supply base is a priority for General Mills, as this limits the

need for cocoa farm expansion into protected areas. Working through our suppliers, 7,910 farmers were trained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in Ghana.

### **Community engagement and social inclusion**

- **3,123 farmers in cocoa communities reached:** Through our partnership with CARE, we directly impacted 3,123 farmers in the promotion of gender equity, building smallholder cocoa farmers' resilience to climate change impacts, and to strengthen the capacity of cocoa-growing communities to initiate and own their own development. These programs indirectly impacted over 15,000 cocoa farmer family members.

## **ANNEX 1: TRACKING TABLES**

### **Côte d'Ivoire**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2022 Target</b>	<b># Through direct investment (Current reporting year)</b>	<b># Through direct investment (Since 2018)</b>
<b>FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION</b>			
# of cocoa plots mapped in direct supply chain	<i>No Target Set</i>	8,716	8,716
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain	6,400	7,042	7,042
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	14,000	21,775	21,775
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée	<i>N/A</i>		
# trees registered	<i>N/A</i>		
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	<i>No Target Set</i>	10	10
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	4,600	2,621	2,621
# individuals receiving PES: New	0	94	94
# individuals receiving PES: Total Active	50	172	172
# farmers applying agroforestry	<i>No Target Set</i>	903	903
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	115,000	138,567	292,648
# hectares cocoa agroforestry in development	2,300	903	2,807
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	3,750	6,807	12,701
# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	5	0	2
# farmers trained in CSC best practices	<i>No Target Set</i>	4,502	4,502
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)	<i>N/A</i>		
<b>SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD</b>			

# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers	<i>N/A</i>		
# of farmers reached by GAP training programs	5,600	6,296	6,296
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)	<i>No Target Set</i>	4,522	4,522
# of individuals in the current reporting year enrolled in a formal financial products and services with support from companies	2,600	2,233	2,233
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	700	5,103	5,103
# of VSLA groups in the current year	<i>No Target Set</i>	199	199
<b>SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY</b>			
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM)	30	0	6
# hectares under CBNRM	10	0	1,152
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	12	6,120	6,120
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	12	2,120	2,120

## Ghana:

Indicator	2022 Target	# Through direct investment (Current reporting year)	# Through direct investment (Since 2018)
<b>FOREST PROTECTION AND RESTORATION</b>			
# of cocoa plots mapped in direct supply chain	<i>No Target Set</i>	17,680	17,680
# of farms mapped in direct supply chain	8,700	7,178	7,178
# of hectares in the direct supply chain with deforestation risk assessments completed	8,500	17,802	17,802
# hectares restored in Forest Reserve / Forêts Classée	<i>N/A</i>		
# trees registered	42,720	0	42,720
# of farmers with land tenure agreements/documentation obtained via company support	30	93	93
# farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on the new Forest Code, law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration	3,200	103	103
# individuals receiving PES: New	0	627	627
# individuals receiving PES: Total Active	180	627	627
# farmers applying agroforestry	<i>No Target Set</i>	208	208
# multi-purpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	16,000	241,432	444,892
# hectares cocoa agroforestry in development	1,600	275	3,447
# of trees distributed for off-farm planting	600	0	2,553

# hectares of forest area restored off-reserve / in rural zone	N/A		
# farmers trained in CSC best practices	5,800	469	469
# of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS)	2,400	0	0
<b>SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD</b>			
# improved cocoa seedlings distributed to farmers	200,000	244,556	683,797
# of farmers reached by GAP training programs	13,500	7,910	7,910
# individuals participating in additional Income Generating Activities (IGA's)	6,500	835	835
# of individuals in the current reporting year enrolled in a formal financial products and services with support from companies	3,200	1,460	1,460
# of members of VSLA groups in the current year	2,700	2,437	2,437
# of VSLA groups in the current year		109	
<b>SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY</b>			
# of cocoa communities with active forest restoration and protection program (CBNRM)	40	0	40
# hectares under CBNRM	200	N/A	N/A
# of individuals participating in women's empowerment projects and activities	40	3,123	3,123
# of individuals participating in youth focused projects and activities (15-35 years old)	20	134	134

## ANNEX 2: RESULT STORIES

### Julien's Story – March 2023

“When I look at those trees that belong to me, I encourage my parents, my neighbors, to join [this project]. We as farmers know that this will bring us a lot of blessings later,” remarks Julien Constant Kpazaï, regarding his land. Mr. Kpazaï, 40, is a cocoa farmer from Liberté, in the Guémon region of Côte D'Ivoire. Deforestation rates in Côte D'Ivoire top out at around 3% annually<sup>1</sup>, threatening the country's agricultural economy and putting the livelihoods of smallholder farmers like Mr. Kpazaï at risk.

Before 2014, farmers were reluctant to partake in reforestation and agroforestry activities on their plots. National law allowed trees to be harvested by private timber companies on cocoa parcels owned by small holder farmers in the rural domain. As a result, there was little incentive for farmers to invest in and keep non-cocoa trees healthy and thriving, not only preventing reforestation but also depriving their plots of tangential benefits like shade.

Against this backdrop, PUR has been distributed seedlings and providing technical training to cocoa farmers regarding agroforestry techniques and spreading awareness of this new change in

<sup>1</sup> <https://euredd.efi.int/countries/cote-ivoire/>

law. In 2022, PUR distributed in collaboration with General Mills over 10,037 trees to over 82 farmers in Côte D'Ivoire that are theirs to plant and manage.

“We have never had a tree association like this that would help us implement shade in our cocoa fields,” remarks Mr. Kpazaï. “With this project it is not only that we can get trees, but that those trees we plant in our fields belong to us, not to the technician or the cooperative,” explains Mr. Kpazaï.

The new Forestry Code launched in 2014 designated tree ownership and its timber to the landowner, even those with customary land ownership. In 2019 the law evolved further, reinforcing the legitimacy of customary rights, landowner rights on natural and planted trees, and opened the option of tree ownership for the person who planted the tree not necessarily the landowner, contingent upon an agreement between the two.

In addition, under the PUR program, farmers whose trees thrived were given a small cash bonus as an incentive. “The technician provided the training”, recalls Mr. Kpazaï, “and after that, he came to map the fields. Later on, he came to count the trees that were alive and then, the 2nd time he came with the incentives for those trees that we had planted and were still alive.”

“Imagine for a moment!” says Mr. Kpazaï, “They bring you the trees and then, if you take care of them, they also give you money! It is very interesting!”

“I am very, very, happy to be part of this project.”

## **Award-Winning Savings in Ghana**

Ghanaian cocoa farmers face a multitude of challenges - limited access to training, lack of quality inputs, credit constraints and the overall volatility of a single source of income. Women farmers especially face more challenges in accessibility to credit and more social headwinds than men.

The Cocoa Sustainability Initiative (CSI), implemented by CARE International in the Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa District of Ghana's Central Region, helps address these challenges from multiple different angles. CARE works with Extension Officers from Ghana's Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) to provide trainings in good agricultural practices (GAPs) and input advice, as well as organizing Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) to address credit constraints and spur entrepreneurship within the community.



The Nyamebikyere VSLA in Domeabra is very vibrant, poses high-level team spirit and ensures respect and loyalty in managing their group activities. This predominantly female group is steadfast in their commitment to their community welfare and development, as well as to each other.



“Our success comes out of adoption to good education that CARE and its partners provide to us especially on gender and women in leadership positions. We are united and we have effective and strong leaders. Our husbands understand us and provide support, which enables us to put in total commitment” remarked Jennifer Buabeng, Group Secretary.

Over the course of the program, The Nyamebikyere VSLA has benefited from soap making training, business management trainings, good agronomic practices, gender dialogues, and nutrition among others. They are consistent in establishing alternative livelihood activities in support of not only their members, but their entire VSLA. Together, they have established a cassava farm, maize farm, tomato farm, pepper and garden eggs farms. They sell the produce among themselves and use the funds generated to support their self-initiated workshop building, which also serves as meeting hall for the VSLA meetings.

In the recent farmers day celebration, the Nyamebikyere VSLA was awarded the district’s “Best Farmer-Based Organization” for the year 2022. This increased recognition will allow the group to remain focused and strengthen their compliance to business and group management skills, as well as GAPs.



## CFI 2.0 ACTION PLAN

### 6. CFI 2.0 CONTEXT

We have reached an important milestone for The Cocoa & Forests Initiative with the successful completion of the collaboration's first phase. Over the past five years, the signatory governments and companies have made significant progress towards eliminating deforestation and restoring forest areas. Building on this partnership, there is a strong commitment from the companies and government, and other stakeholders, towards the continued and growing success of CFI.

Both private sector and the governments agree that for CFI 2.0 (2023-2025) to be successful, we must accelerate and scale impact on the ground by building collective action and co-investment in priority landscapes in addition to supply-chain investments. Therefore, the focus of CFI 2.0 is to also implement public-private collaborations in priority landscapes to improve livelihoods, conserve forests and restore degraded area, thereby protecting biodiversity and ecosystem services, reducing and sequestering carbon, and establishing zero-deforestation landscapes. CFI 2.0 will also play a key role in building alignment with EU (and potentially other) due diligence legislation on deforestation.

The Governments have adopted comprehensive plans (Côte d'Ivoire National Action plan ([French](#) and [English](#)), [Ghana National Implementation Plan](#)) for CFI 2.0 that outline key public sector priorities, actions and timelines in line with this common goal. The CFI signatory companies have developed new action plans that set their targets for CFI 2.0 (2023-2025) in alignment with the national plans and Frameworks for Action.

### 7. GENERAL MILLS' OVERALL VISION FOR THE COCOA & FORESTS INITIATIVE 2.0

The ambitions of CFI 2.0 are highly aligned with and support General Mills' Global Impact commitments, including our commitment to reduce GHG emissions, advance regenerative agriculture, and to advance respect for human rights.

As a global food company, General Mills recognizes the risks that climate change presents to humanity, our environment and our livelihoods. Changes in climate not only affect global food security but also impact General Mills' raw material supply. Effectively addressing GHG emissions, reducing climate change impacts and doing our part to tackle food security challenges requires an innovative, holistic systems approach. Our goals for 2030 and 2050 are aggressive, but needed, to achieve a stable climate. In order for General Mills to hit these targets, we need to collaborate across our value chain and drive systemic change. We have identified several key levers to help us achieve our climate commitment, including *Eliminating Deforestation: Advance work to eliminate deforestation in supply chains across select high-risk ingredient categories*, which includes cocoa.

To stand for good, General Mills is accelerating action to respect human rights and positively impact all the people we depend upon — and who depend upon us. Some of the raw materials and ingredients General Mills sources for use in our products are recognized as posing a higher risk of negative human rights impact due to their growing regions and production methods. We are conscious of this impact — including for cocoa. We engage with key strategic partners to help us enable social and environmental progress in these value chains.

## 8. OVERVIEW OF GENERAL MILLS ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan presents General Mills' key activities and investments over the next 3 years (2023-2025) to fulfill CFI commitments to end deforestation and forest degradation in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

## 9. PRIMARY ACTIVITIES AND INVESTMENTS

Continuing the investment, engagement and progress General Mills has made to date, we intend to maintain our engagement with key suppliers and partners working at both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to advance the three pillars of CFI:

- **protect and restore forests** through forest protection and holistic, community-led agroforestry programs.
- **promote sustainable cocoa production and farmers' livelihoods** through Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) training, income diversification, and financial inclusion.
- **engage communities and boost social inclusion** through women's empowerment programs, access to education and child protection programs.

We will continue to prioritize a learning mindset and center our programs in General Mills' holistic, principles-based approach to regenerative agriculture that seeks to strengthen ecosystems and community resilience.

## ANNEX 3: ACTION PLAN TABLES

To view General Mills' 2.0 Action Plans for Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, [please visit our website](#).