RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL ECONOMIES (RESTORE)

This HEARTH Global Development Alliance brings together cocoa producing families, governments, and the private sector to improve livelihoods for cocoa farmers, increase tree cover, and help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

This activity will have a direct impact on an estimated 15,000 farmers managing 50,000 hectares of farmland.

THE PROBLEM

Cocoa is the leading export of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, with millions of families relying on the crop for their livelihoods. Yet cocoa farmers capture only about 5.5 percent of the value in the cocoa and chocolate supply chain. As a result, food insecurity is widespread and there has been a surge in illegal and environmentally destructive activities like gold mining and logging.

As the effects of climate change worsen, studies show that there will be significantly less suitable land for cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, and that increases in rainfall and humidity levels will increase the incidence of cocoa pests and diseases. Currently, few cocoa farmers in the region restore degraded forest patches on their farms and forest encroachment—driven by low yields on farmers' existing land—results in greater land-based GHG emissions and threats to biodiversity. Gender equality is also a major challenge facing the cocoa industry in this region.

Photo: Rainforest Alliance, 2019

OBJECTIVE: BRINGING STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER TO IMPROVE LANDSCAPES AND LIVELIHOODS

RESTORE, implemented by the Rainforest Alliance and Olam Food Ingredients, seeks to demonstrate a scalable and regionally replicable model for community-led governance, natural resource management, and biodiversity conservation that aligns with regional and government priorities in cocoa production landscapes in the Guinean forests of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

We will work in partnership with multinational companies, such as Blommer Chocolate Company, Costco Wholesale, Mondelēz International, Mars Wrigley, and Nestle, as well as farmer cooperatives, local government, and community partners to establish the technical capacity, policy implementation approaches, and economic incentives to achieve four key objectives at the farm and landscape levels:

1. **Increase tree cover** on and off the farm in the cocoa production landscapes through tree planting initiatives

2. **Set up Landscape Management Boards (LMB) to enable effective and inclusive participatory governance** for conserving forests and restoring degraded land in three target landscapes—Sui River in Ghana and South Tai National Park and Beki-Bossematie in Côte d'Ivoire

3. **Build capacity and market incentives for farmers** to apply climate-smart farming practices and increase benefits from cocoa farming for women and young people

4. **Facilitate economic diversification in cocoa farming communities**, creating enabling conditions for economic and social empowerment of women and young people

DESIRED IMPACTS

RESTORE will achieve the following outcomes by the end of the Activity period (2022-2027):

- 70 percent of farming households confirm that they have increased their incomes through farming and other supplemental activities and have greater food security as a result of the project

- Farmland in the project landscapes will have 15 percent denser tree cover compared to baseline assessments

- A 25 percent reduction in forest encroachment recorded by LMB's monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems

- 50 percent of community members in the project landscapes are actively participating in LMB action plans to conserve the forests with 50% of women and youth

- 5,000 hectares of ecologically important land outside of farms and protected areas in the project landscapes are actively being restored

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

Goal: Establish the technical capacity, policy implementation approaches, and economic incentives to bring cocoa producing families, governments, and the private sector together to secure improved livelihoods from cocoa farming, reduce threats to biodiversity, and enhance economic growth in West Africa.

Life of Program: April 2022 – March 2027

Total USAID Funding: $7,000,000

Geographic Focus: West Africa in scope, with work in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

Implementing Partners: Rainforest Alliance and Olam Food Ingredients (ofi)