ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION PRACTICES IN COCOA LANDSCAPES PHASE III (ESP PHASE III) PROJECT

TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION PRACTICES IN COCOA LANDSCAPES PHASE III (ESP PHASE III) PROJECT

By

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT

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Project and Evaluation Information Details

Project/outcome Information		
Project/outcome title	Environmentally Sustainable Production Practices in Cocoa Landscapes Phases III (ESP Phase III)	
Atlas ID	00131356	
Corporate outcome and output	**Outcome 6:** Urban and rural communities have access to affordable services, knowledge, and tools to increase their resilience. **Expected Output(s):** 6.3 Communities have greater capacities and skills to adopt environmental conservation practices such as climate-smart agriculture.	
Country	Ghana	
Region	RBA	
Date project document signed		
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	1Jnauary, 2021	31 December, 2023
Project budget	Phase III: US$871,013.00	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	The budgets for Phases III were fully utilized with a zero balance	
Funding source	Mondelēz International Cocoa Life Programme	
Implementing party	Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD)	
Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/outcome / thematic / country program, etc.)	Project	
Final/midterm review/ other	Terminal Evaluation	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	January 1, 2021	December 31, 2023
Evaluators	Dr. Mrs. Wilhemina Quaye, Dr Gordon Akon-Yamga, Dr Selorm Ayeduvor	
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Evaluation dates	Start	Completion
	January 2024	February 2024

Table of Content

Table of Contents

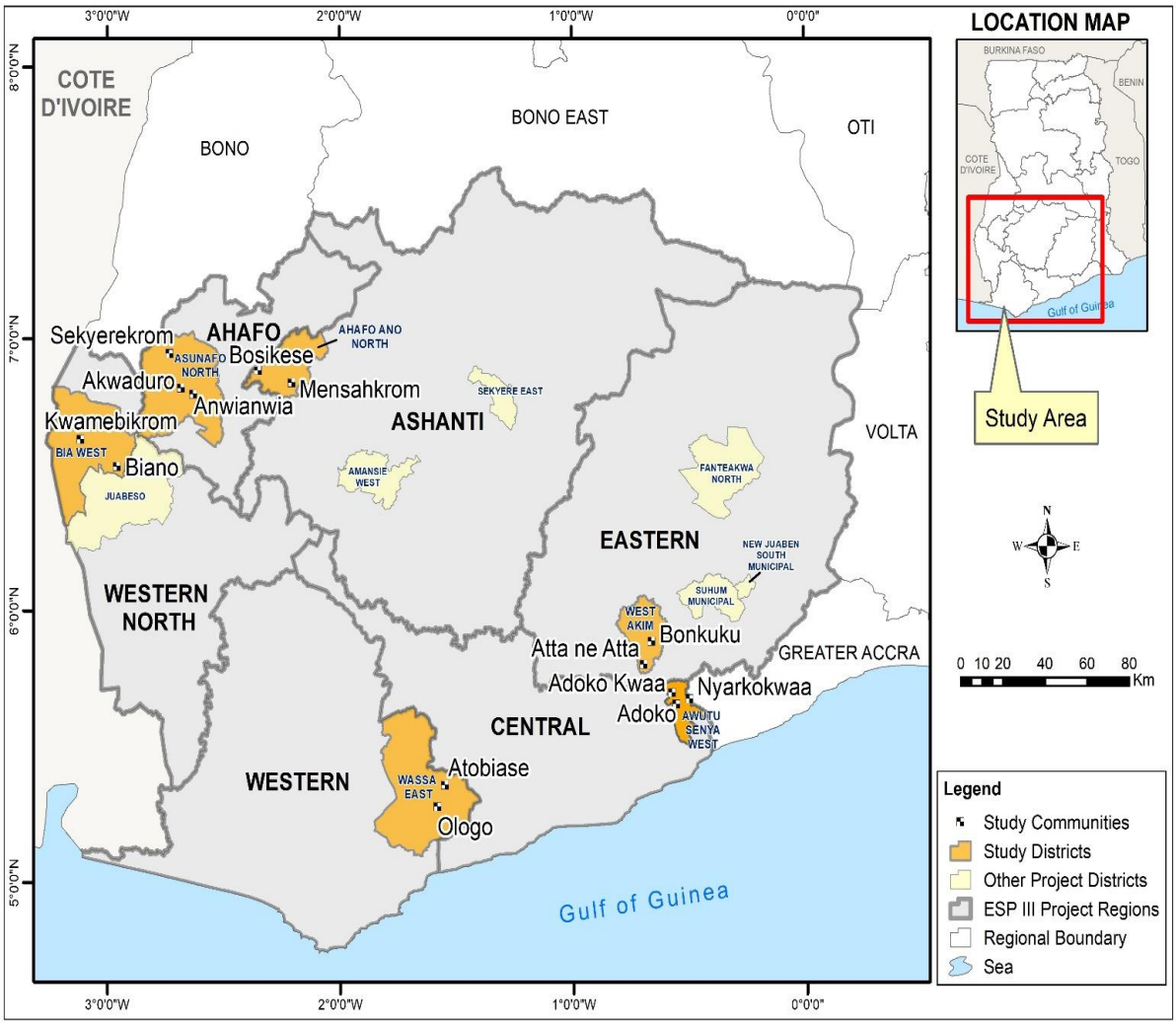
List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CHED	Cocoa Health Extension Division
CREMA	Community Resource Management Area
CRI	Child Rights International
CRIG	Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana
ESP	Environmentally Sustainable Cocoa Production Practices
FC	Forestry Commission
GCP	Green Commodities Program
GES-BAC	Ghana Enterprises Agency-Business Advisory Center
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MTS	Modified Taungya System
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PMU	Project Management Unit
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TE	Terminal Evaluation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

ESP III TERMINAL EVALUATION STUDY AREA MAP



Executive Summary

Background Context

Ghana's cocoa sector is partly affected by unsustainable practices that have resulted in landscape impacts leading to soil degradation and nutrient loss on farms – a key factor for the low yield. The expansion of the area cultivated to cocoa has caused the conversion of most of the forests in the cocoa-growing areas into initially productive but increasingly degraded farmlands with adverse environmental impacts, on the ecosystem services provided, including soil fertility, carbon sequestration, habitat and biodiversity conservation, and regulation of micro-climate. This has resulted in low overhead tree cover, fewer goods, and services provided by forests, and a steady decline in the productivity of cocoa plantations. Under the ESPIII project cocoa farmers have been trained and empowered since 2021 to adopt environmentally sustainable cocoa production and agroforestry practices with tangible outcomes of enhanced farmers' livelihoods, forest protection, and restoration (in the off-reserve area), community engagement, and social inclusion. Institutional capacity building sought to mainstream environmentally sustainable management practices by training COCOBOD's Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) extension officers and with the involvement of the youth and community leadership in the sustainable management of their natural resources. ESPIII is funded by Mondelez International through UNDP and forms the environmental pillar of its Ghana Cocoa Life program. The Mondelez-Cocoa life-UNDP ESPII project creates opportunities for additional income for farmers through intercropping cocoa with other crops. The ESPIII has two outcomes including Degraded forests restored with the Modified Taungya System (MTS) and Community organization and sustainable farming practices strengthened.

Objectives and Evaluation Approach

This study seeks to assess project performance by gauging project results against expected outcomes, as detailed in the logical framework and agreed with stakeholders at the inception stage. The specific objectives of the terminal evaluation are:

- Evaluate the project in terms of its efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability.
- Investigate how the intervention sought to strengthen the application of the rights-based and gender mainstreaming approaches during implementation;
- Identify key lessons and potential practices for learning; and
- Assess the challenges encountered, and best practices, document the outcomes for future processes, and promote transparency and accountability.

Using the Evaluation manual of the UNDP, the study methodology and approach involved a systematic review of project-relevant documents including project proposal, results framework, annual work plans, monitoring and evaluation reports, and financial reports among others. The review was then followed by the development of survey instruments for one-on-one farmer-level surveys, focus group discussions, and semi-structured stakeholder interviews. A field mission protocol was developed, key informant and relevant stakeholder lists generated and enumerators were identified and trained to support the data collection field mission. A total of 245 cocoa farmers (48 percent females and 52 percent males) were covered, 44 key informants and stakeholder's interviews, and 24 focus group discussions

were conducted in six ESPIII project participating districts were covered including Wassa East, Asunafo North, Akim North, Awutu Efutu Senya, Bia East and Ahafo Ano North.

The evaluation approach rated the ESPIII project performance using effectiveness, efficiency, M&E, implementation/oversight & execution, relevance, and progress toward impacts criteria using a 6-point scale: 6 =Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). In addition, the Sustainability indicator was rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U).

Key Findings

Assessing the project design and implementation, the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan was well designed, although there was no M&E manual. The Result framework with the well-articulated theory of change and Annual Work Plans facilitated the operationalization of the M&E plan and tracking of actuals against targeted indicator results at output and outcome levels. In addition to the results framework the project had a costed M&E framework developed during project implementation. The quality of the M&E Plan design at entry and implementation was rated by the evaluation team as satisfactory. There were evidence of annual, quarterly, and monthly reports, minutes of steering committee, and project coordination and management meetings. The quality of UNDP implementation/oversight was rated as Highly Satisfactory (6) given that there was evidence of timely delivery of planned activities and regular supervision at all levels. Management utilized recommendations from annual monitoring and evaluation reports to resolve challenges and improve project management decisions and implementation over the 3 years of ESPIII project.

Assessment of project delivery and outcomes was done together with key informants and stakeholders in a more participatory manner. The evaluation results indicated an overall score for project relevance as highly satisfactory (6), Effectiveness is rated highly satisfactory (6), Project effectiveness in terms of gender empowerment and inclusion as highly satisfactory (5) and Efficiency scored satisfactory (5) from the assessment of timeliness, financial management, procurement management and accountability aspect of the ESP III project. The overall likely sustainability of ESP III project was rated moderately likely sustainable because most stakeholders and beneficiaries could not report 100% sustainability levels beyond the project lifespan. There was no exit strategy to cover post-project sustainability issues. Additionally, there is no established and reliable funding mechanism to support COCOBOD and farmer unions to continue key activities such as PES scheme and alternative livelihood training. The analysis of the Outcome Indicator Evaluation Matrix showed impressive results. From the project beneficiaries' perception survey, the cocoa farmers reported that the project addressed their needs, institutional capacities were built, and the partnership arrangement were strengthened through effective engagements with the IPs working in the cocoa agro-forestry ecosystem.

From the cocoa farmers' perspectives, the ESP III project had a positive economic, social, and environmental impact resulting in improvement in yields and farm incomes, with 86.7 percent of the farmers interviewed strongly agreed to improvement in farm incomes and 84.9 percent strongly agreeing that the ESP III project had offered additional income opportunities such as planting of other crops in their cocoa farms, soap making and bakery skills. Again, about 76.5 percent of the respondents had experienced improved food security situations as a result of the implementation of ESP III project activities. There was evidence of high adoption of sustainable cocoa agricultural practices, planting of economic trees, safe use of agro-chemicals, prevention of water pollution, biodiversity, and wildlife conservation through enforcement of forestry by-laws and close seasons. Women have been empowered to access farm lands and in some cases to have control and ownership of land and women occupying leadership positions at the community group formation level. **OVERALL PROJECT SCORE is 5.7 out of 6.0, rating is Highly Satisfactory**.

Challenges, Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

Some of the challenges facing farmers are (i) high labour demand and high cost of labour (ii) inadequate financial support and incentives for pruning (iii) registration of tree crops (iv)marketing of other crops is a challenge sometimes (v) aging farmers and sustainability of practices learnt. The ESPIII project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and learning showed the following lessons:

- Sustaining farmers' interest in Environmentally Sustainable Practices requires gendered targeting with extra effort and incentives for farmers.
- Alternative Livelihood and Additional Income Sources for farmers are critical since cocoa is seasonal.
- The role of Traditional Authorities in project implementation for effective local participation and control over forest resources and wildlife conservation is critical.
- There are changes in cultural norms and social transformation in addressing gender issues at the community level through education and sensitization with the right partners, women now own land and make their own decisions.
- Conducting participatory community needs assessment has been very useful and formed a basis for the development of community action plans.
- Other lessons-Farmer group formation as a vehicle for the delivery of technical support/inputs and market coordination, using part of the PES funding for creating fire belts and buying of firefighting equipment and tricycles for famer transportation, timely allocation of plots and early delivery of inputs are crucial.

Some recommendations made include;

- Targeted programs for youth and aging women cocoa farms,
- Enhanced coordination mechanism,
- Incentives for economic tree integration in cocoa farms,
- Research into improvement in soil health,
- Market linkages for other crops, and post-harvest training and nutrition education and ownership of trees and tree tenure issues for sustainable cocoa agro-forestry in Ghana.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Cocoa holds a unique position in Ghana's economy in terms of export earnings and as an important source of rural employment. Cocoa production provides jobs and income during production, processing, transportation, and marketing. It remains the country's most important agricultural export crop. In 2021, cocoa exports earned Ghana a total of $2.07 billion, contributing about 23.9% to the country's total export earnings (Bank of Ghana, 2021). Overall, the cocoa sector also contributes about 8.2% to the agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Ghana (GSS, 2021).

Despite the significant contributions, one of the key challenges in the cocoa sector is deforestation and forest degradation associated with unsustainable production practices, which has partly affected the production of cocoa, thereby depriving local communities of their livelihoods. For instance, Ghana lost 9.3% of the humid primary forest between 2002 and 2020 (Cocoa and Forest Initiative, 2022), which is attributable to the expansion of cocoa production in recent years. Additionally, the remaining forest which is mostly under different kinds of protected area status, has also been severely degraded by illegal loggers and hunters who encroached on these reserves in search of timber, firewood, and game. To address these challenges, the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), with funding from Mondelez International's Cocoa Life Programme has since January 2021 been implementing a 3-year project titled "Environmentally Sustainable Production Practices in Cocoa Landscapes (ESP Phase III) in 12 selected districts and 330 communities in Eastern, Ashanti, Central, Western North, Western and Ahafo Regions of Ghana.

ESP III was funded by Mondelez with an amount of USD871, 013.00 and was executed between January 1, 2022, and December 2023. The project seeks to tackle the complex challenge of deforestation from the long-term perspective through building capacities of farmers particularly smallholder cocoa farmers in Ghana and empowering them to adopt environmentally sustainable cocoa production and agroforestry practices with tangible outcomes of enhanced farmers' livelihoods, forest protection, and restoration (in the off-reserve area) and community engagement and social inclusion. In addition, the intervention sought to scale up innovative models of forest restoration that simultaneously involve and benefit neighboring cocoa communities, strengthen institutional and community-led capacity for forest management and conservation, and produce significant synergies with the rest of the Cocoa Life program. Institutional capacity building sought to mainstream environmentally sustainable management practices by training COCOBOD's Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) extension officers and with the involvement of the youth and community leadership in the sustainable management of their natural resources.

1.2 Project Objective and Expected Outcomes

ESP III is designed to support Cocoa Life deliver on its commitments under the Cocoa Forest Initiative as well as other global initiatives aimed at promoting forest protection and restoration to incentivize cocoa farmers to adopt environmentally sustainable production practices and to promote resilient and thriving communities through additional livelihoods. These objectives of the project will be achieved through the implementation of various activities under the following two outcomes:

Outcome 1: Degraded forests restored with the Modified Taungya System (MTS)

Outcomes 2: Community organization and sustainable farming practices strengthened

The expected results from the implementation of the project include:

1. Enhance restoration and rehabilitation of forest reserves within the selected Hotspot Intervention Areas (Asunafo-Asutifi) through gender-responsive and effective agroforestry approaches such as the Modified Taungya System (MTS)
2. Farmers in the project districts adopt environmentally sustainable cocoa production practices on farms
3. Increase shade trees and carbon stock on cocoa farms and in cocoa landscapes to provide short and medium environmental and socio-economic benefits to farmers.
4. The establishment of a gender-responsive, effective, and financially sustaining community-led governance mechanism for efficient management of natural resources within Ayum Asuokow and Pra-Subri CREMAs.
5. Strengthen policy engagement with the government on land tenure and tree tenure rights.

1.3 Evaluation Scope and Objectives of Terminal Evaluation

The overall purpose of the assignment is to conduct the Terminal Evaluation for "Environmentally Sustainable Production Practices in Cocoa Landscapes (ESP Phase III)". This assignment seeks to assess project performance by gauging project results against expected outcomes, as detailed in the logical framework and agreed with stakeholders at the inception stage. It would also document lessons learnt, challenges, and the sustainability strategy of the project going forward. Based on the above, the specific objectives of the terminal evaluation are:

- Evaluate the project in terms of its efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability
- Investigate how the intervention sought to strengthen the application of the rights-based and gender mainstreaming approaches during implementation;
- Identify key lessons and potential practices for learning; and
- Assess the challenges encountered, and best practices, document the outcomes for future processes, and promote transparency and accountability.

1.4 Evaluation Approach and Methods

The main methods employed in preparing this Terminal Evaluation (TE) included a review of documents, questionnaire design and administration, statistical analysis, and report writing.

1.4.1 Review of Documents

Desk review of past and present reports and documents of the project was conducted. Strategic, operational, and monitoring documents related to the project were reviewed to gather insights for the preparation of the TE report. The baseline report, project document, annual work plans, results-oriented monitoring report, results framework document, quarterly and annual reports and training materials and manuals, budgets and outturns, disbursement plans and outturns, procurement plans, and plan outcomes, audited financial statements, amongst others were reviewed; these documents provided insights into the assessment of the project's performance, efficiency, effectiveness, effectiveness, sustainability, and impacts.

The evaluation team also assessed project board meetings, technical/financial monitoring reports, training materials and manual, project organogram, organogram of COCOBOD, reports from other initiatives in the cocoa sector funded by Mondelēz International Cocoa Life and other partners,

sets of cocoa sustainability standards, and other independent evaluations of the performance of farmers in the cocoa landscapes in Ghana.

The TE team conducted literature on Cocoa production in Ghana, analyzing trends in production, yield, and land area expansion over the past two decades. The review will also assess the impacts of environmentally sustainable cocoa production practices on farmers' livelihoods in West Africa and Ghana. This review informed the findings of project interventions, likely impacts, and recommendations of the future best practices for the cocoa sector in Ghana.

1.4.2 Questionnaire Design and Administration

Desk review was used to design the questionnaire under the following headings: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, gender considerations, and empowerment, impact on the growth of the business, impact on alternative livelihoods, capacity building, and knowledge transfer, etc (see annex 2 for questionnaire). The questionnaire for the impact study on the cocoa farmers considered the following key focus areas including beneficiary farmer identification, impact of interventions, training of farmers on sustainable cocoa production practices, impacts of alternative livelihood activities, gender empowerment and inclusion, and overall project impact on household income and wellbeing. The questionnaire was administered face-to-face to farmers about 240 farmers and some selected stakeholders in the project area.

1.4.3 Data Collection and Statistical Analysis

All the qualitative interviews were recorded and transcribed. The quantitative survey questionnaires were digitized using KOBO Collect software and analysis was done using STATA and SPSS software. Frequency distributions and graphs/infographics were generated and used as part of the discussions on the assessment of the project's relevance, effectiveness, etc. of the TE report.

1.4.3 Overall Project Evaluation Approach

The project's results were evaluated and rated according to outcomes, effectiveness, efficiency, M&E, implementation/oversight & execution, relevance, and progress toward impacts. These indicators were rated on a 6-point scale: 6 =Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). In addition, the Sustainability indicator was rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U).

The assessment of relevance measured the extent to which the activities of the project were suited to the local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time as well as how they are compatible with the UNDP’s operational programs. Effectiveness measures the extent to which the project objectives and outcomes have been achieved or how likely that they can be achieved by the close of the project. By efficiency, the consultant measured the extent to which the results have been achieved with the least costly resources possible and also examined compliance with incremental cost concept and judicious use of funds. Sustainability was measured by assessing the likelihood that the project results will be sustained after Mondelēz International Cocoa Life Programme funding for technical assistance & support, institutional capacity building, collaboration & partnership, institutional framework & governance system, etc ends. Progress toward impact is measured as whether the project's logical framework and theory

of change brought about results that will lead to long-term impact in line with the assumptions and risks made as well as estimated intermediate states of outputs and outcomes. Project impact on beneficiary farmers on income, livelihoods and women empowerment was assessed.

1.5 Structure of Report

The TE report has been subdivided into five parts. The first part is the introduction; the second part is project design and implementation–it covers the evaluation of the project's performance (the results framework), design at entry, implementation, overall assessment of M&E, implementing agency (UNDP), and executing agency and the overall project oversight/implementation and execution. Part 3 covers project delivery–it assesses the relevance of the project; effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Part 4 looks at the impact of the project on beneficiary farmers, environmental and social impacts, gender, and social inclusion. Part five, the last part provides a summary of the project's overall performance (overall project score), lessons learnt and recommendations.

PART TWO: PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

2.0 Introduction

Part two of the report covers project design and implementation of ESP III project. It evaluates the project monitoring and evaluation arrangement in terms of its design at entry and implementation. It also assesses the role implementing agency (UNDP)/oversight and the executing agency (COCOBOD). UNDP is responsible for overall programme coordination and oversight in close coordination with project manager and key implementing partners. COCOBOD as executing agency provides farmer training on climate smart production practices, community mobilization and organization, provide administrative support for implementation including mobilizing extension staff for field level activities and also provide overall cocoa sector policy alignment and support.

2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

2.1.1 Design at Entry

The ESP III project has a well-designed M&E system as shown in the Results Framework in section V of the project proposal document. In addition, the project has costed M&E framework based on the results framework, developed during implementation. The outputs and activities to be implemented were outlined with their respective output indicators. According to UNDP programming policies and procedures, the project was expected to be monitored through the project monitoring and evaluation plans. However, the monitoring plan in the initial project document was not adapted to the project context and thus the ESP III project does not have M&E manual. The project, however, has annual work plans which presents the overall project implementation strategy and the estimated cost of each activities. The set of activities in the annual work plan are those outlined in the project proposal document and approved by the donor. The ESP III also has more reliable output indicators. In addition to the results framework the project had a costed M&E framework developed during project implementation.

Based on this evidence above, the M&E Plan design at entry was rated by the evaluation team as satisfactory (S).

2.1.2 Implementation

The project prepared annually, quarterly and monthly progress reports (largely with inputs from the district monitoring reports). These progress reports were discussed in Project Coordination and Management Unit (PCMU) management meetings and action plans drawn from them. Annual progress reports were used for stakeholder briefing through established platforms such as Project Steering Committee meetings to inform learning and decision making – which hasten the pace of the project interventions. The following tools–results framework, annual work plans (2021,2022, 2023), progress reporting formats etc. were in place to guide the operationalization of the M&E system towards a purposeful end/results of the project.

A decentralized M&E framework anchored on the district COCOBOD offices was in place. The project had in place a mechanism for verifying samples of these district reports through field validation and farm monitoring visits. All planned project monitoring visits (5 of them) were

conducted and reports prepared. All planned UNDP monitoring visits (three (3)) took place and the feedback provided were acted on. Additionally, Mondelez conducted 1 monitoring visits while COCOBOD also conducted two visits.

There has been various local stakeholder meeting organized in collaboration with District/municipal Assemblies, Cocoa Health Extension Division (CHED, Child Rights International (CRI), Ghana Enterprises Agency-Business Advisory Center (GES-BAC), Cooperative Unions and Department of Cooperative to review the project activities and to validate performance, targets, timelines, and recommend improvements. Implementing partners (IPs) also use the occasion to consolidate their activities in order to ensure best use of resources by reducing duplication of efforts.

The following M&E tools were available for review during the assessment. They were all found to be useful and appropriate for the purposes they were supposed to serve.

- Results framework
- Output Indicators
- Monitoring reporting formats for the districts
- District quarterly progress report (2021, 2022, and 2023)
- Annual Progress Reports (e.g., ESP III Progress of Implementation 2021, 2022 and 2023)

The monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the project at implementation was rated Highly Satisfactory (HS). It stands out as a key strength of ESP III.

2.1.3 Overall Assessment of M&E

Overall, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the ESP III project was rated **Satisfactory (5.5)** (see table 2.1). It stands out as a key strength of ESP III.

Table 2.1: M&E Evaluation Ratings

Criteria	Rating[1]	Comments
Monitoring & Evaluation M&E design at entry	5=Satisfactory	The project has a well-designed M&E system. The outcome indicators were also clear and measurable but there was no M&E Manual/Plan.
M&E Plan Implementation	**6=Highly Satisfactory**	All planned project monitoring visits (5 of them) were conducted and reports prepared. Regular planned UNDP the three (3) monitoring visits took place and the feedback provided were acted on. Mondelez and COCOBOD also conducted 1 and 2 monitoring visits respectively. There were evidence of

[1] **M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution** are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

		participatory monitoring from the field feedback.
Overall Quality of M&E	5.5 =**Satisfactory**	
Implementation & Execution Quality of UNDP Implementation / Oversight	*6=**Highly Satisfactory (S)***	The quality of UNDP implementation/oversight was rated as Highly Satisfactory (6). The project team ensured timely delivery of planned activities, there were regular meetings and reports were verified. These reports record output indicators, target set for the period, updates on results achieved, and observed challenges during implementation of these activities. Progressively over the three-year period there were evidence of providing solutions identified from the field visits. This is highly commendable.
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	5= Satisfactory	Though COCOBOD was expected to play leading roles in implementation, this did not happen due to some management challenges that restrained them from accessing funding directly from the donor. This negatively affected the level of interest and motivation in the execution of project activities. This was evident from the national level engagement with management. COCOBOD chaired the steering committees and field coordinators participated fully in all trainings and other activities.
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	5.5=Satisfactory	The overall project oversight/ implementation and execution was rated as satisfactory (5).

2.2 Implementing Agency (UNDP)/Oversight and Executing Agency

Implementation Agency (UNDP)

This section evaluates the role of UNDP as implementation agency of the project. This is based on UNDP evaluation guidelines which outlines the quality standards for programming. Technical and administrative support to the ESP III project was provided by UNDP Ghana Country Office (CO) and the UNDP Green Commodities Program (GCP). UNDP is responsible for overall programme coordination and oversight in close collaboration with project manager and key implementing partners. To ensure timely delivery of planned activities, there was regular meetings and reports. These reports record output indicators, target set for the period, updates on results achieved, and observed challenges during implementation of these activities (Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) micro assessment). This was the assessment for partners undertaking projects through the national implementation modality (NIM) approach for project.

Based on the available evidence, the evaluation team rated the quality of UNDP implementation/oversight as Highly Satisfactory (HS).

Executing Agency (COCOBOD)

COCOBOD was selected as the implementer of the ESP III project because the activities outlined in the project document are directly in line with their mandate. However, due to technical challenges, COCOBOD was unable to undergo quality assurance assessment. Thus, UNDP was unable to release the project funds directly to them. Instead, the funds are kept at the UNDP and a Project Management Unit (PMU) hired to do the implementation. But technically, COCOBOD are the implementers with support from the PMU. Per the project design the PMU were the lead in the day to day implementation of the project, working with the district officers of COCOBOD and CHED for the off-reserve activities. A focal person was appointed by COCOBOD to be their representative on the PMU. This focal person approves all decisions and requests on the project before they are submitted to UNDP although COCOBOD did not control the project funds directly. This situation has resulted in an "ownership" challenge. However, COCOBOD chairs the Steering Committee with other representatives. But daily decisions are made by the PMU. For the release of funds, and other administrative works are done by the PMU and submitted officially by COCOBOD to the UNDP who passes it through their system for payments to be made. The main objective of the ESP III project was to mainstream its activities with COCOBOD– especially CHED. Most of the TOTs organized by the project were targeted at the CHED extension agents.

Based on the evidence available to the evaluation team, the quality of Implementing Partner Execution was rated as "satisfactory".

2.3 Overall project oversight/implementation and execution

The overall project oversight/ implementation and execution was rated as satisfactory (5). The oversight/implementation by UNDP through timely delivery of planned activities, regular meetings and frequent reports on activities implemented was key driver of the ESP III project success. This was evident during the focus group discussion with farmers and discussion of key informants.

PART THREE: PROJECT DELIVERY

3.0 Introduction

The project delivery part covers relevance of the project in terms of Ghana's development aspirations and appropriateness of the design; the extent to which project delivery process / systems (effectiveness) in place could achieve results; and the extent to which resources were used in a manner that ensures value for money (efficiency). The last section under project delivery presents evaluation findings on sustainability issues.

3.1 Relevance

ESP IIIs relevance is assessed along the context of the development challenges at the time of its design – which led to the selection of its purpose of contributing to conservation and restoration of forest cover in both on and off reserve areas in harmony with the promotion of sustainable cocoa farming practices in landscapes; and) the structure of its design in a situational context.

3.1.1 Relevance: Development Aspirations

The relevance of the project is to ascertain whether the project is design in way to achieve its set goals at the global, regional and national objectives. ESP III in Ghana's development context is underpinned by global, regional and national development frameworks that were in place at the time of project design. These initiatives at the global level – the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ESPIII Focus on SDG (1, 2, 5, 10,11,13 and 15). The first SDG goal out of the seventeen goals requires all countries to end poverty; the second goal requires countries to end hunger, achieve food security, improved nutrition and promotion of sustainable agriculture. The tenth SDG goal entails reduction in inequalities within and across countries.

This phase of the project takes a long-term holistic approach to tackling the complex problem of deforestation linked to cocoa production with a prime focus on sustainable production and farmers' livelihoods; forest protection and restoration (in off-reserve area) and community engagement and social inclusion. At the local level, the project sought to empower cocoa farming communities in a manner that puts them at the forefront of restoring their landscapes in a sustainable manner whiles enhancing their livelihoods through the adoption of cocoa and agroforestry practices. Regionally, the project will scale up innovative models of forest restoration that simultaneously involve and benefit neighboring cocoa districts/landscapes including the Asunafo Asutifi Hotspot intervention Area (HIA) under the Cocoa Forest Initiative and the Ghana REDD + program at the national level. Amongst others, the project works to strengthen institutional and community-led capacity for forest management and conservation, and produce significant synergies with the rest of the Cocoa Life program as well as other national cocoa and forest sector programs.

3.1.2 Relevance: Design

The key issues in the design include-consistency in the relationship between project outcomes and outputs; conformity to policy and best practices in institutional arrangements; whether the target beneficiaries felt the project addressed their needs; the assigned outputs in terms of number and definition will result in the attainment of an outcome; that the institutional arrangements were appropriate; the project delivery systems were appropriate in terms of their access and whether the stakeholders found the design supporting them to achieve their mandates and build their institutional capacities. Furthermore, there were not many changes to the focus of the project

during implementation, suggesting that the project design, objectives and various assumptions were consistent with its, outputs, outcomes and impact. As a result, the project continued to be of relevance from inception to closure.

3.1.3 Project Component outputs and outcomes

Overall Project Performance

The average score for the achievement of output indicators is 124.60%; this qualifies the performance to be graded as highly satisfactory (6). In all the project has 22 output indicators of which outcome 1 has 12 indicators while outcome 2 has 10 output indicators. The end target of 1.1.2 which is number of ecosystem services developed was 50% of the project target. This indicator was overestimated and that was the reason for in ability of the project to meet the target. Similarly, the number of farmers receiving PES incentive for MTS was also not achieved. The project target was 400 while 162 farmers were reached with the PES scheme. The project target was also overestimated.

Table 3. 1:Outcome Indicators Evaluation Matrix

Outcome 1: Degraded forests restored with the Modified Taungya System (MTS)					
Output Indicators	**Baseline Value**	**Project Target**	**End Target (Actual)**	**Progress towards impacts**	**Grading and Narrative Assessment**
Outputs 1.1: Farmer registration & plot allocation and related preparatory works					
1.1 1 Number of Farmers participating in ecosystems scheme	0	400	511 (212M, 299F)	127.75%	The actual was 127.75% of the target- Highly satisfactory
1.1.2 Number of individuals participating in additional income generating activities	0	400	511 (212M, 299F)	127.75%	The actual was 127.75% of the target- Highly satisfactory (6)
Output 1.2 Inputs and logistics support to establish and maintain MTS plantations					
1.2.1 Number of Ecosystem Services developed	0	2	1	50%	The actual was 50% of the target. The score is Moderately satisfactory (4)
1.2.2 Number of Category 2 or HCV forests supported	1	1	1	100%	The actual is 100% of the target. The score is Highly satisfactory (6)
1.2.3 Number of trees distributed for off-farm planting (MTS)	160,000	400,000	645,000	161.25%	The target was exceeded by 61.25%. The score is Highly satisfactory (6)
1.2.4 Payments made under the ecosystems scheme (USD)	0	88,654	80,000	90.23%	Target almost met. The score is Highly satisfactory (6)
1.2.5 Number of farmers receiving PES incentive for MTS	0	400	162	40.5%	The end target falls short by 59.5%. The score is unsatisfactory.

					The number of beneficiary farmers were overestimated.
1.2.6 Number of trees planted under ecosystems/ MTS scheme (seedlings)	160,000	400,000	618,000	154.5%	The target was exceeded by 54.5%. The score is Highly satisfactory (6)
1.2.7 Number of CL farmers on MTS work supported with non-cocoa planting materials (ha)	0	400	162	40.5%	The end target falls short by 59.5%. The score is unsatisfactory. The number of beneficiary farmers were overestimated.
1.2.8 Number of hectares of forest plantations established	170	500	532	106.4%	The target was exceeded by 6.4%. The score is Highly satisfactory (6)
Output 1.3 Capacity Building for MTS Farmers					
1.3.1 Number of farmers trained in Modified Taungya System (MTS) and crop agronomy	198	400	210 makeup of 116 males and 94 Females	180.25%	The target was exceeded by 80.25%. The score is Highly satisfactory (6)
Output 1.4 Set up participatory monitoring and enforcement systems to protect the integrity of plantation areas.					
1.4.1 Number of monitoring visits by Forest Commission and other stakeholders including the Project Steering Commission	0	2	5	250%	The end target was exceeded by 150%. The score Is highly satisfactory.
Outcome 2: Community organization and sustainable farming practices strengthened					
Output Indicators	**Baseline Value**	**Project Target**	**End Target**	**Progress towards impacts**	**Grading and Narrative Assessment**
Output 2.1: Extension Officers and Farmers trained and equipped in environment-ally sustainable production practices					
2.1.1 Number of farmers trained in CSC best practices (M/F)	19,944	200	6,652 (2,954 females and 3,698 males)	3,312.5%	The target was exceeded by 3,312.5%. The score is Highly satisfactory (6)
2.1.2 Number of extensions officers trained (M/F)	344	50	25	50%	The actual fell short of the target by 50%. The score is Moderately unsatisfactory (3)
2.1.3 Number of farmers informed, trained, and / or consulted on forest policy/law enforcement, forest protection, and restoration (M/F)	19,944	800	821	102.6%	The target was exceeded by 2.6%. The score is satisfactory (5)

Output 2.2 Farmers enhance trees and carbon stocks on cocoa farms					
2.2.1 Number of multipurpose trees distributed for on-farm planting	1,300,000	400,000	612,000	153%	The target was exceeded by 53%. The score is Highly Satisfactory (6)
2.2.2 Number of hectares of forest area restored off-reserve	73,000	22,200	32,800	147.74%	The target was exceeded by 47.74%. The score is Highly Satisfactory (6)
2.2.3 Number of farmers applying agroforestry (M/F)	19,944	8,000	16,323	204%	The target was exceeded by 104%. The score is Highly Satisfactory (6)
2.2.4 Number of hectares of cocoa agroforestry in development (on-farm)	73,000	22,000	22,800	103.63%	The target was exceeded by 3.63%. The score is Satisfactory (5)
Output 2.3 Continue to support the Ayum-Asuokow and the Pra-Subri CREMAs to become independent and functional					
2.3.4 Number of farmers trained on sustainable ecosystem management practices (CREMAs)	19,944	400	6,000	1500%	The target was exceeded by 1400%. The score is **Highly Satisfactory (6)**
Output 2.4 CREMAs provided with alternative livelihoods					
2.4.1 Number of CREMAs with alternative livelihoods	0	2	2	100%	

Table 3. 2: Gender Outcome Indicators Evaluation Matrix

Outcome 1: Degraded forests restored with the Modified Taungya System (MTS)					
Output Indicators	**Baseline Value**	**Project Target**	**End Target (Actual)**	**Progress towards impacts**	**Grading and Narrative Assessment**
Output 1.1: Actively encourage equitable participation of women in the formation of MOTAGs					
1.1 1: % and number of women members of MOTAGs	0(2020)	At least 30%	210 Farmers are participating in the MTS this year made up of 116 Males and 94 Females Female constituted 43.33%.	144.7%	The actual exceeded target by 44.7%-Highly satisfactory
Output 1.2 Ensure equitable participation of women and men in the development and signing of MTS contracts					
1.2.1 % and number of women and men	0	30% women, 70% men	All 210 Farmers are participating in the MTS this year made up of 116 Males and 94 Females have signed the initial MTS project level contract.	144.7%	The actual was 44.7% above the target-Highly satisfactory
Output 1.3 Target at least 40% women participation for MTS trainings					
1.3.1% and number of women participating in trainings	0	At least 40%	All 210 Farmers are participating in the MTS this year made up of 116 Males and 94 Females have participated in all the training sessions organize for participants	100% Fully achieved	Target met Highly satisfactory
Output 1.4: Design all trainings and consultations to encourage women's participation and active involvement in MTS work					
1.4.1 % and number of trainings designed to address women's constraints in participating in MTS	0	100% of trainings designed to address women's constraints in participating in MTS	All 94 Female MTS participants and additional 36 Female Traders were trained in specific MTS constraints including marketing, pricing and packaging (loading) of their plantain into trucks in order to reduce damages.	100%	The actual was 100% of the target-Highly satisfactory
Output 1.5 Actively ensure equitable participation of women in incentives/ PES schemes for MTS farmers					
% and # of women participating in PES/ incentive schemes	0	At least 30% women beneficiaries	196 Farmers received PES payments so far made up of 104 Males and 92 Females. The actual is 46.9% women	156%	The actual exceeded target by 56% of the target-Highly satisfactory
Outcome 2: Community organization and sustainable farming practices strengthened					

Output Indicators	Baseline Value	Project Target	End Target	Progress towards impacts	Grading and Narrative Assessment
Output 2.1: Equitably and meaningfully involve women, men and youth from communities in CREMA consultations and trainings					
2.1.1 % of women and men participating in CREMA trainings and consultations	0	40% women, 60% men, 60% youth	All CREMA residents including women, men and youth participated in all trainings including the community sensitization sessions. 40% of all CRMC are made up of females while the CEC has at least one female representative.	100%	The actual was 100% of the target- Highly satisfactory
Output 2.2 Actively ensure equitable participation of women in national dialogues on tree tenure and CREMA					
2.1.2 % women participation of women in national dialogues on tree tenure and CREMA	0	% women participation of women in national dialogues on tree tenure and CREMA	At least 30% women	100%	The actual was 100% of the target- Highly satisfactory
Output 2.3 Design and tailor capacity building and alternative livelihood packages to address any knowledge gaps and particular needs of women and youth					
% and number of women and men participating in alternative livelihood packages	0	At least 30%	40 Farmers including 5 females trained and equipped in beekeeping as an enterprise 12.5% women	12.5%	The actual was 12.5% of the target- moderately satisfactory
Output 2.4 Actively ensure equitable participation of women in ToTs organized within project districts					
2.4.1 % women participation of women in in ToTs	0	At least 30% women participation	394 Farmers including 112 females trained in land tenure issues and registration procedures	Just about 42.7% achieved	The actual was below target- satisfactory. Most of the available ToT are males
Output 2.5 Equitably target women in the distribution of on-farm tree seedlings					
2.5.1 % of women farmers receiving tree seedlings for on-farm planting	0	At least 30% women	3,402 Farmers including 1,761 Females given seedlings for on-farm planting, 51.7% were women	172%	The actual exceeded target by 72% - Highly satisfactory

3.1.4 Institutional Arrangements

The main institutional arrangements for the oversight responsibilities of the Project is by Steering Committee, while the execution of the project interventions was through COCOBOD and other stakeholders; farmer unions, cooperatives, etc. The Project Management Unit report to steering committee. The project steering committee comprises of a group of representatives from COCOBOD CHED and CRIG, UNDP, Mondelez CocoLife Ghana, Ministry of Lands and Natural resources, Forestry Commission, Ministry of Finance (MOF), and Ministry of Food, Agriculture (MOFA), World vision, ESP III project, and Co-operative Union President. The chairman of the steering committee was Deputy Executive Director of COCOBOD.

The steering committee meetings were held to review work plans and project implementation outcomes provided the platform for ensuring that project outputs are delivered successfully; farmer unions were actively promoted by the project; and the groups ensured that project interventions pertinent to them were executed successfully. Stakeholders as, district COCOBOD were assigned the following tasks: sensitization of beneficiary farmers on adoption of sustainable/environmental practices; farmer training on crop protection and storage of agrochemicals, conservation and protection of the environment, shade management, optimization of soil fertility and structure, post-harvest storage and quality management; wildlife conservation, etc.

Analysis of survey data showed that the decentralized intervention arrangements with stakeholders were very fruitful in terms of the attainment of project outputs etc.; the training/technical assistance provided to some of the stakeholders by the project were going to be useful beyond the life of the project. In sum, the institutional arrangement of the project is very appropriate. Based on the evidence available to the evaluation team, and results of responses received from key stakeholders, the institutional arrangement is rated Highly Satisfactory (6).

3.1.5 Management of Risks

The consultative approach taken for the preparation of the project as per the project document; inclusion of the women, youth and marginalized to own both the processes and the outcomes of the project; and the preparation of Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and ensuring their implementation during project execution are positive aspects of the project design in terms of risk management. Most of the risks identified were rated low which shows low probability of their occurrence. The environmental and operational risks which the project design assigned to be of a low probability of occurrence do not happen or if they do their occurrence during the implementation do not interrupt the project activities as anticipated. The score for risk management is Highly Satisfactory (6).

3.1.6 Stakeholders and Beneficiaries perceptions

Insights from the responses from stakeholder including COCOBOD, Forestry Commission, Traditional Authorities, CocoaLife, Ghana Fire Service, World Vision International and farmer unions indicated that the project design process and outcomes addressed their needs; their needs being defined as increases in productivity improvements, restoring the degraded environment, employment creation, and building their capacities for sustainable livelihoods. The stakeholders were asked the extent of relevance of the ESP III Project in relation to attainment of the district/regional development objectives of their institutions.

Sixty percent (60%) of the stakeholders surveyed responded that the project support was highly relevant to the development objectives of their institutions. Thirty five percent found the support to be relevant. With regards as to whether the support given was relevant to the attainment of institution's mandate/set goals, 66.7% of the stakeholder responded that the support was highly relevant. About 28.2% responded it was very relevant while only 5.1% report the support was not relevant. Nearly all stakeholders responded that ESP III was properly conceived and also support development initiatives in the cocoa sector in Ghana.

Additionally, the stakeholders mentioned some initiatives implemented under ESP III projects which they consider very relevant. These include training in sustainable cocoa production practices such as climate change and climate smart agriculture, planting of trees, forest conservation, soil conservation, water management, ecosystem conservation, and cocoa agroforestry. Other supports by the project include bush fires management and education, safe disposal of plastics and agrochemicals, protection of water bodies and trainings in alternative livelihood activities. CREMA establishment and byelaws have also helped to ameliorate bush fires as well as environmental conservation. Implementation of MTS also help in restoring degraded forest reserve in the Asunafo North. Also, through the project, community action plan were drawn which help in identification of projects in various communities.

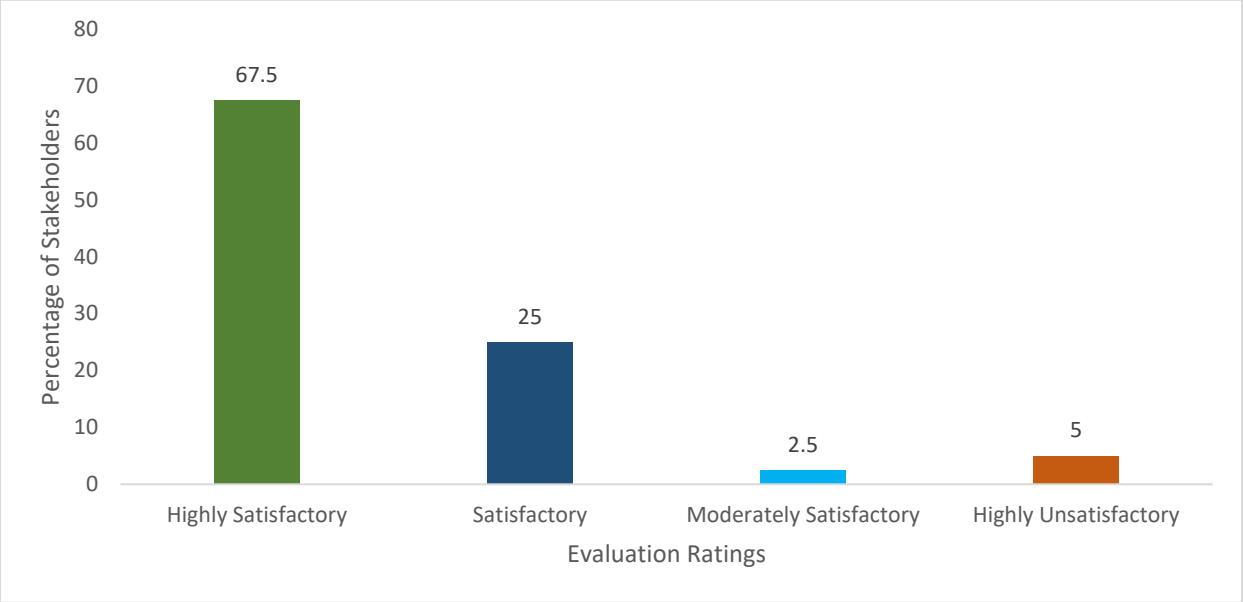


Figure 3. 3: Respondents Rating of ESP III Relevance

In summary, about 67.5% of stakeholders rated the ESP III project as highly relevance, 25% respondents satisfactory, moderately satisfactory (2.5%). Only 5% of stakeholder rated the project support and design as highly unsatisfactory.

The average score for Relevance in terms of development aspirations and design is 6; giving relevance as Highly Satisfactory (HS) score.

3.2 Effectiveness

Project execution effectiveness is assessed along the following dimensions: extent of the level of results delivery; the stakeholder arrangement in place to deliver results and stakeholder / beneficiary perceptions. Thus, it tends to measure the extent (How well) to which the project interventions achieved its objectives including the supportive factors and obstacles encountered during the implementation.

3.2.1 Extent of delivery of project results

A measure of project effectiveness is the extent to which the project results framework turned out at the end of the project completion. The assumption is that effective project delivery generates good project results. There were indicators for the project results –outcome and output. These are assessed as follows:

Outcome Indicators

The output indicators including base line and end target figures are contained in the ESP III Results Framework in the project document. The indicators are organized along the two project outputs. Table 1 presents a summary of the evaluation of the output indicators. The output one (1) which is degraded forest restored with the Modified Taungya System (MTS) has 12 output indicators (see table 1). The evaluation of the output indicators shows that the end target (actual) of 6 out of 12 indicators exceed the project targets. Also, the end target of 5 output indicators were exactly achieved while the end target of only one indicator was not achieved.

Similarly, the project output two (2) which is community organization and sustainable farming practices strengthened has four main activities with 9 output indicators. The end target (actuals) of 8 out of the 9 indicators exceeded project target. However, the end target of one of the indicators was not achieved. In all, the project end target (actual) of 19 out 21 output indicators were achieved.

Gender Output Indicators

Gender equality is essential if cocoa communities are to thrive. That is why promoting women's empowerment has been a crosscutting theme for EPS III and the whole of the Cocoa Life Program. As part of its gender mainstreaming efforts, ESP III has collaborated with Cocoa Life and IPs, in the following areas: (i) ensuring the active participation of females in all training events and also increase women's access to finance, farm inputs, land ownership and membership of farmer organizations. (ii) helping women develop other livelihood options by increasing their access to finance through the establishment of the Village Loans and Savings Schemes and improving business entrepreneurial skills and teaching the importance of household food security (iii) empowering women to play an active role in decision making in households, communities and district and national farmer forums; engage women in developing Community Action Plans (iv) training community leaders, Cocoa Life implementing partners and staff in gender awareness; engage district and national government institutions on issues affecting women (v) tracking progress against key performance indicators and local metrics in response to the commitment to gender mainstreaming for each program objective and focus area.

The gender action plan was designed to improve the quality of implementation by identifying constraints to poor participation and benefits to women and men, and by developing strategies that require a balanced approached to all the project components.

The ESP III gender action plan has 10 output indicators aligned to two main project outcomes. Under outcome 1, there are five (5) indicators, aimed at ensuring women participation in the formation of MOTAGs, signing of MTS contracts and women participation in all trainings. Also, encouraging women participation in PES schemes and other CREMA trainings were targeted. The end targets of all the five output indicators exceeded the project targets.

The second outcome, also has five gender output indicators. Two (2) output indicators were achieved while the end target of the 1 indicator was exceeded. Two other indicators were not achieved during the project period.

In all, 4 out of the 10 indicators exceeded the project target, four (4) output indicators were exactly achieved while end targets of two (2) were not achieved. Based on the available evidence, the evaluation team rated project effectiveness in terms of gender empowerment and inclusion as highly satisfactory (HS).

3.2.2 Effectiveness of Delivery of Support Services to MTS Beneficiaries

ESP has implemented the Modified Taungya System in Ayum Forest Reserve to restore the heavily degraded forest by replanting it with selected economic trees in a plantation model. Adjacent farming communities are allowed to plant food crops, such as plantain, and vegetables, between emerging timber trees for approximately four years until the canopy closes, giving them access to fertile land in exchange for their work to plant and nurture the new trees. These interventions are aimed at enhancing the recovery, resilience, functionality of forest ecosystems, boosting food security and economic opportunities for the forest fringed communities. A total of 523 ha of forest plantation has been established by the project but needs thorough maintenance. Species planted include African Mahogany (Khaya ivorensis), Ofram (Terminalia superba), Emire (Terminalia ivorensis), Oprono (Mansonia altissima), Cedrella (Cedrella Odorata).

Delivery of Payment of Ecosystem Services to MTS beneficiaries

The Project commenced the operationalization of its PES scheme that is meant to reward farmers with a monetary incentive. For each tree planted and nurtured, that have survived for at least one year the farmers received a grant of GHC2. Payment have so far been made for plantings done in 2020/21 and based on a recent tree census data and farmer registration data. Payment to the first batch of farmers is completed. The Table below shows the details:

Table 3. 3: Distribution of PES Package to MTS Farmers – 2022/23

No	Name of Community	Number of Farmers Paid			Amount Paid per Community (GHC)
		Male	Female	Total	
1	Akwaduro	53	38	91	64,550
2	Anwianwia	51	54	105	81,000
	TOTAL	***104***	***92***	***196***	***145,550***

Source: Project progress report, 2023. This is only the cash component of the PES. This is in addition to all the other non-cash inputs they received.

Addressing the Emerging Needs of MTS Farmers as Part of PES Package

The original Low Value Grant (LVG) was design to facilitate mainly the disbursement of the proposed cash incentive the MTS Farmers and other closely related administrative activities. However, it became necessary during the course of implementation to introduce some adaptive management measures in response to the needs of the Farmers. The Union, based on the emerging request from the Farmers, held further consultations with the UNDP through the PMU and a decision taken to slightly vary the format of the PES to include both cash and inputs. Accordingly, the Union procured a cutlass and a pair of wellington boots each and added it to the cash incentive for each participating Farmer. In addition to the two production inputs, each of the two communities - Akwaduro and Anwianwia–were give two Tricycles each as means of Farm Transport. Each of the bikes were fueled prior to the handing over. Furthermore, the Union have organized community volunteers to undertake the tree census and farm mapping and applied have some of the funds to provide lunch and T&T for members of the Census Team including the technician who is helping with the management of the field data.

3.2.3 Delivery of Support Services to CREMAs

In 2021, about 88 Farmers who are also CREMA executives (42 from the Pra-Subri CREMA and 46 from the Ayum-Asuokow CREMA) given refresher training. The training builds the capacity of CREMA Executives in the development of annual work plans preparation, group dynamics and team work and leadership skills. Similarly, in 2022, about 225 farmers and CREMA executives from the Pra-Subri and Ayum-Asuokow CREMAs undergo same training.

The project also procured some office equipment for Pra-Subri CREMA to improve professionalism and efficiency: These include motor bike, filing cabinet, desktop computer, monitor, office table and chairs. An office space has also been rented. In all, over 6,000 farmers resident in the 2 CREMAs communities has received diverse training on sustainable ecosystem management practices through the various training packages/modules. This has resulted in the adoption of environmental sustainable practices such as the proper use of agrochemicals to lessen their negative impact on the environment, protection of waterways through the creation of buffers and the planting of economic trees along the streams, avoidance of wild fires, etc. The delivery of the services to the beneficiary farmers under the project has been effective and timely.

3.2.4 Stakeholder and Beneficiary Perceptions

Stakeholders' perceptions were assessed through a survey in terms of the effectiveness of the project delivery. All the respondents indicated that the project always had targets / goals or milestones set based on their interactions with them. All respondents indicated that 80-99% of the targets under the milestones were achieved; and this could be attributed to the work plans / Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) that were agreed between them and the project.

The MoUs provided clarity in terms of the results expected from them within set time limits. They therefore found the use of the targets / milestones and MoUs as the basis for collaboration very useful. For example, all the district COCOBOD officers surveyed rated project implementation effectiveness as highly satisfactory. Additionally, nearly 55% of the stakeholder survey rated the effectiveness of the ESP III intervention as highly satisfactory while 42.5% rated the interventions as satisfactory (See figure 3.2). Only 2.5% rated the effectiveness of the project as moderately

satisfactory. All the stakeholders surveyed found the training received, technology transfer, economic tree seedlings, alternative livelihood activities and payment and production inputs received under the PES Schemes as adequate and timely. The adequacy and the timeliness of the support helped them to achieve their goals. Stakeholder / beneficiary stakeholder perceptions as to the effectiveness of the project delivery is scored Highly satisfactory (6).

From the assessment of the results delivery, and stakeholder perceptions, the grade assigned to effectiveness in project delivery is highly satisfactory (6).

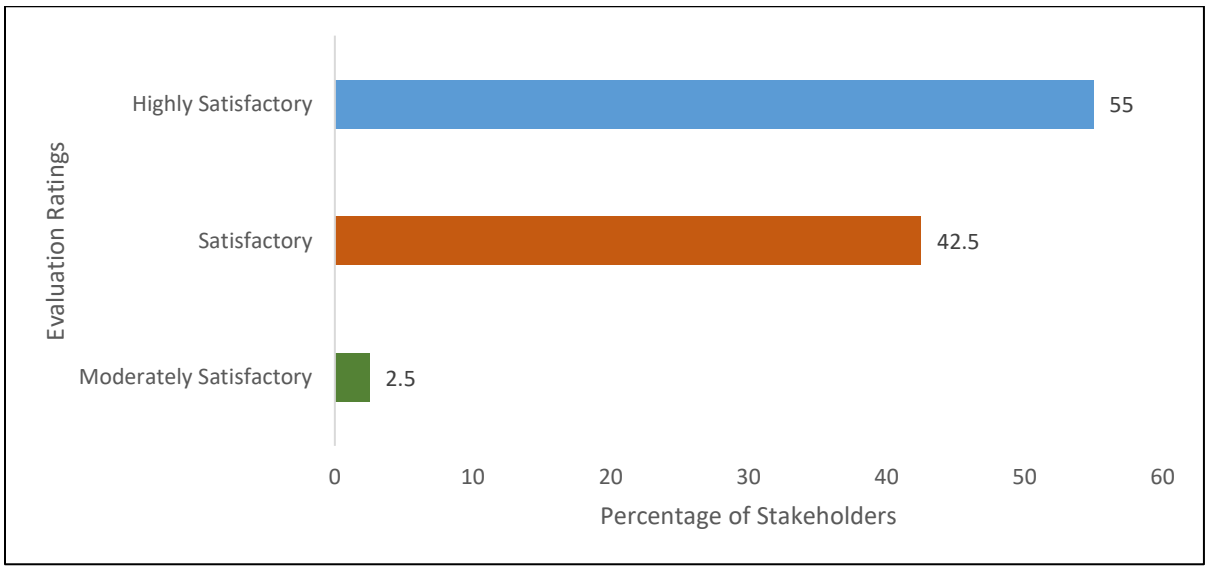


Figure 3. 4: Respondents Rating of ESP III Effectiveness

3.3 Efficiency

Efficiency assesses the extent to which resources were prudently used during project delivery. The assessment is done along four dimensions–timeliness; financial management (systems and budgets) procurement management; and oversight accountability in the implementation of the ESP III project.

3.3.1 Timeliness

The project was approved by the Ministry of Finance, UNDP and COCOBOD on 29/03//2022 while the effective start date was 01/01/2022. The project implementation might have started three months after effective date. The lapse in the time appears to be normal in projects of this nature. It means UNDP ensured that all conditions precedent were met within three months. This is very commendable. From all indication, it appears that the deadline for the first project implementation was met. Thus, project execution in terms of timeliness was graded satisfactory (5).

3.3.2 Financial Management

Practices, Processes and Systems

Efficiency issues related to financial management are the existence of systems and processes to ensure conformity to efficiency practices; and minimal variations between planned and actual disbursement by implementers and budgeted and actual expenditures. It thus looks at how ESP III

results were delivered in the least costly manner possible. The project fiduciary management responsibilities resided in the most with financial and procurement management units of the PMU. The efficiency assessment of these units in project delivery is done in terms of adherence to what is required in the agreement between UNDP and Modelezez cocolife Ghana. The evaluation team received actual budget expenditure based on activities implemented in 2022 and 2023. There was no significant variance between the budgeted and actual releases. However, the finical audited reported were not available to the team. Financial management is rated highly satisfactory (HS)

3.3.3 Procurement Management

In the interest of value for money / efficiency gains in the use of project funds, the UNDP require that projects prepare and implement procurement plans. The project prepared annual procurement plans for 2022-2023 were as specified by the Public Procurement Act and UNDP procurement management requirements–including a built-in mechanism for revision, updating on time, quantity and cost etc within a procurement cycle.

3.3.4 Accountability

To ensure that activities/outputs were delivered on time and of the right quality, the project had mechanisms for ensuring accountability right from the Project PMU/UNDP to stakeholders and beneficiaries. Regular technical committee meetings, existence/use of formal procurement systems, regular audits, regular monitoring visits are parts of the accountability systems the project put in place to ensure / maintain efficiency in project delivery.

The project was inclusive in its approach to ensuring accountability; it integrated beneficiaries such as, CREMAs including farmers into technical committees at the local level; representatives of farmer unions and co-operatives monitored progress and appropriateness of activities and reported observations for redress at local coordinating meetings spearheaded by the district CCOBOD offices and district project coordinators. The UNDP regular visits and the project steering committee meetings added another layer of accountability that was helpful to ensure timely delivery of the project's outputs without compromising on the quality of the outputs. This is graded as **highly satisfactory (6).**

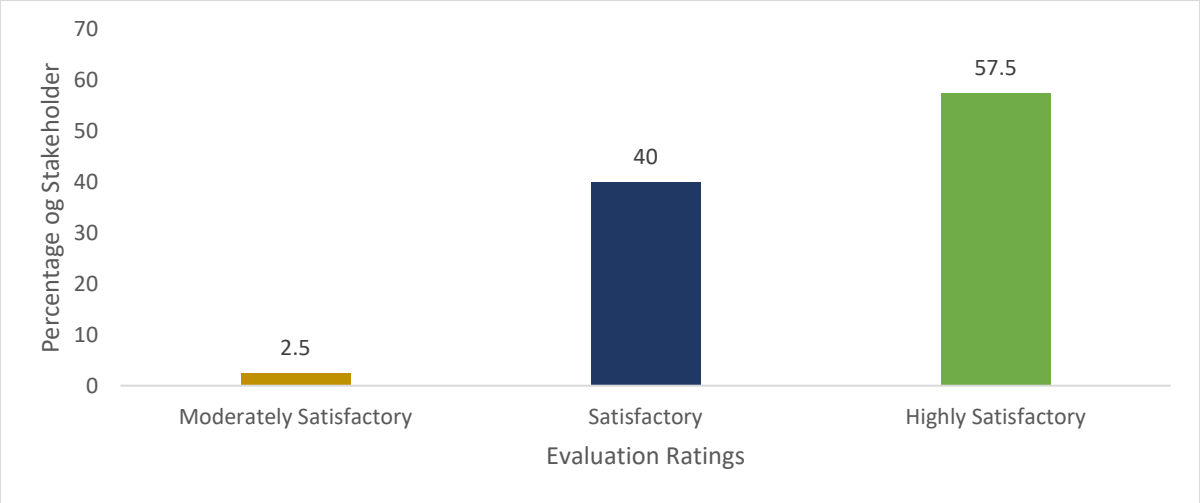


Figure 3.3 Stakeholder Rating of ESP III-Efficiency

About 57.5% of the stakeholders interviewed, perceived the project efficiency as highly satisfactory, 40% rated satisfactory while 2.5% rated the efficiency as moderately satisfactory (See figure 3.3).

From the assessment of timeliness, financial management, procurement management and accountability aspect of the ESP III project, the evaluation team rated **Efficiency as Satisfactory (HS).**

3.4 Sustainability

An efficient project delivery ensures that the benefits from investments made–its processes and outcomes - do not end with the completion of the project. ESP III attempted to address this issue through a decentralized service delivery–driven by capacitated district/regional COCOBOD offices; with the most of the interventions facilitated/coordinated through CHED and other stakeholders as agro-eco, world vision, District Department of MoFA, forest commission etc.

The extent which the financial, institutional, socio-political and environmental risk will affect sustaining long-term project results is minimal (low risk). With regards to how the benefits that resulted from the ESP III interventions will continue at districts levels through adequate ownership, commitment, and willingness displayed by the government, private sector and producer organizations, the project has worked with the Farmer Unions whose capacities are built to continue most of the activities. Similarly, the project has mainstreaming most of its activities with CHED that will likely take over the project once Mondelez and UNDP are no longer part of it. In addition, ESP III is mainly a climate change mitigation effort working to help farmers adopt environmentally sustainable production practices. The challenges of climate change and its impact on the cocoa sector are very relevant and would continue for a considerable length of time – making the project relevant under current circumstances.

3.4.1 Financial

The stakeholders were asked the extent are project results likely to be dependent on continued financial support. The overwhelmingly rated the financial risk as low. This is because, by project implementation arrangement, COCOBOD and the Unions would take over the implementation of project activities with their own funding. Also, the likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the ESP assistance ends is medium. This is will depend on GOG funding from COCOBOD and the ability of the Unions to raise funding.

3.4.2 Socio-economic/ Socio-political risks

Low–this is a privately funded project.

3.4.3 Institutional Framework and Governance

By institutional arrangement, COCOBOD as lead partner is expected to support the ESP III by (i) community mobilization and organization of farmers for operationalization of CREMAs, (ii) provide training on GAP and climate smart production practices, (iii) lead sourcing and supply f farm inputs (iv) provide administrative support for implementation including mobilization of extension staff for field level activities and (vii) provide support for overall cocoa sector policy alignment. However, the extent to which project results dependent on institutional frameworks and

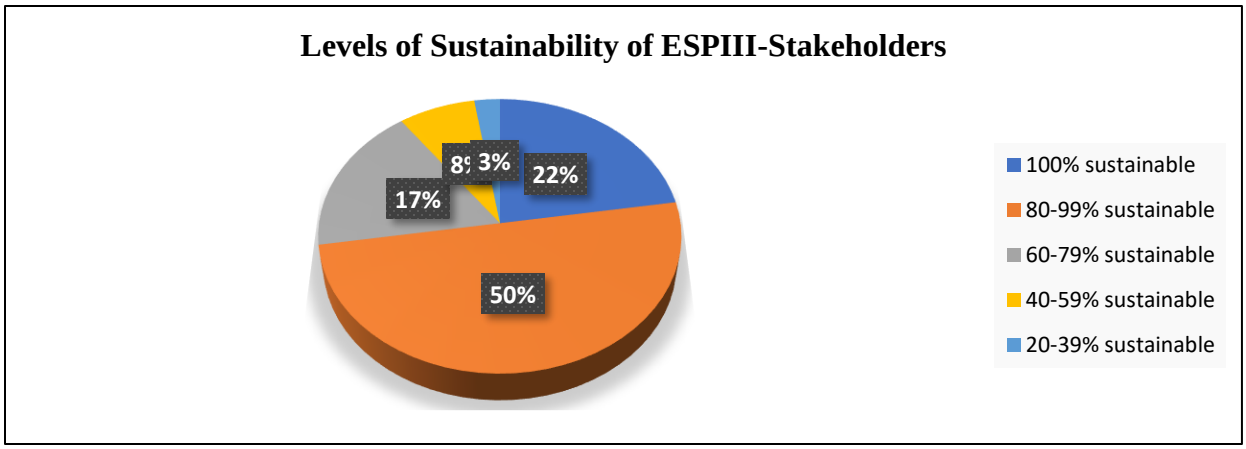
governance is medium as COCOBOD is the implementer and any significant changes at the COCOBOD may affect the project. In addition, key stakeholders such as COCOBOD and Famer unions have received the necessary technical capacity to ensure that ESP III project benefits are maintained. However, with regards to level of "ownership" COCOBOD has to put in more effort in terms of ensuring that their staff are well motivated and resourced to sustain the gains of the project.

3.4.4 Environmental

Farmers' low perception and appreciation of environmental sustainability issues and their impact on their productivity was a challenge initially. Before project inception, majority of the farmers did not consider most of their current practices as damaging to the environment and did not see the need to do something about it–to them it was business as usual. With the project implementation activities especially the training and capacity building activities on environmentally sustainable practices farmers' perception and appreciation of environmental sustainability issues and their impact on their productivity have improved (See Section 4.4). Training and Education on current land and tree tenure policies were very useful as well but this needs to be continued. Although the current land and tree tenure policies do not provide enough incentives for farmers to adopt environmentally sustainable production practices the project implementation helped changed the narratives on the ground. In this regard, ESP III has been successful in incentivizing cocoa farmers to adopt environmentally sustainable production practices to promote resilient. There were complaints about lackadaisical attitude and lack of commitment from state standard-bearers to initiate meaningful reforms to incentivize farmers to adopt best practices.

3.4.5 Stakeholder and Beneficiary Perceptions

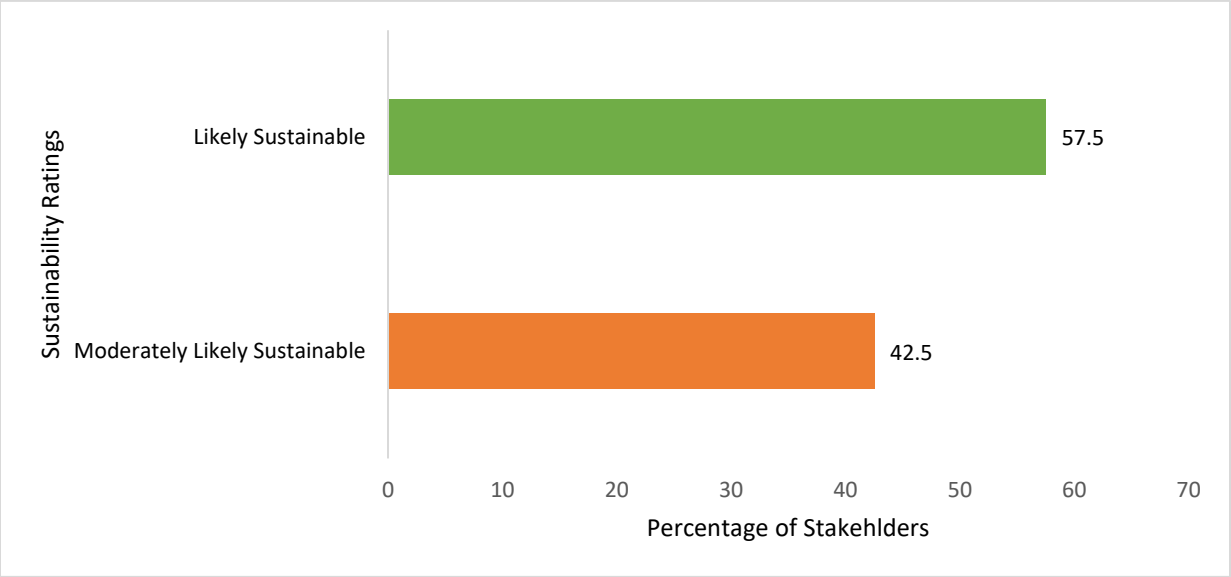
In the survey of key stakeholders (see figure 3.4)- about 22% of the respondents indicated that they could sustain the processes and outcomes of the intervention beyond the project life. They attributed this to the technology transfer / skills they received through trainings on sustainable cocoa production practices and alternative livelihood activities. These skills had been well imbibed and would be with them when the project ended. Some women who received training on soap making, bee keeping and nursery of economic tree seedling have also established small scale business in their communities. Also, about 50% of the stakeholders indicated that they could sustain 80% and above of the processes and outcomes of the initiatives / collaborations they had



with the project; 17% indicated that they could sustain 60% and above of the processes and outcomes of the cooperation. In sum all respondents indicated their ability to sustain all / some of the processes and outcomes of the cooperation.

Source: Field Survey of Stakeholders, 2024

Figure 3.*4*: Levels of Sustainability of ESP III Interventions–Stakeholders



Source: Field Survey of Stakeholder, 2024

Figure 3.5: Ratings of Sustainability–Stakeholders

A key stakeholder in the project delivery framework was the district COCOBOD CHED, district agriculture department and forestry commission. About 57.5% of the stakeholders sampled indicated that they could sustain the benefits from the project while the remaining 42.5% reported that the sustainability of the project benefits are moderately likely. They indicated that the skills and knowledge they obtained (through district cocoa extension agents) through training received from the project in areas such as (1) Rapid Plantain Sucker Multiplication techniques, (2) Lining, Pegging & Planting of both plantain suckers and tree seedlings (3) Tree integration in Cocoa Farms (4) Food crop harvesting & Post harvest Management (5) Climate Change and Cocoa farming (6) Wildlife conservation (7) Soil conservation (8) Water Conservation and Safe use of agrochemicals etc. are all embodied and would stay with them beyond the project. However, they indicated that lack of funding could hamper their ability to transfer the skills to the farmers which is a major cause for concern. While the process and benefits of the project can be sustained by the stakeholders and the beneficiaries, the project does not have an exit strategy that should address / make recommendations of post project sustainability issues.

3.4.6 Overall Likelihood of Sustainability

A grade of moderately sustainable (3 out of 4) is assigned to sustainability because most stakeholders and beneficiaries could not report 100% sustainability levels beyond project life; and there was no exit strategy to cover post-project sustainability issues. Additionally, there is no established and reliable funding mechanism to support COCOBOD and farmer unions to continue key activities such as PES scheme and alternative livelihood trainings.

PART FOUR: ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPACTS

4.1 Introduction

Part 4 looks at the impact of the project on beneficiary farmers, environmental and social impacts, gender, and social inclusion.

4.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 245 cocoa farmers consisting of approximately 48 percent female farmers were interviewed in six project participating districts. Majority (78.6 percent) of the ESP III project beneficiaries interviewed were above 40 years. This suggests that the cocoa farmers are ageing and therefore the need to attract the youth into cocoa farming. Over 83 percent of the respondents were married, and in terms of education 21.4 percent had no education, 23.5 percent had attained primary level education while 35.4 percent had Junior High School level of education. Majority (67.7 percent) had over 15years of experience in cocoa farming. Table X presents the profile and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4. 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Percentage (%) Distribution by Sex			
Variable	Male	Female	Pooled
Age			
20-30yrs	5.5%	3.7%	1.7%
31-40yrs	15.7%	19.8%	17.7%
40-50yrs	26.8%	33.6%	30.0%
Above 50yrs	52.0%	44.8%	48.6%
Marital Status			
Single/Widowed	6.3%	27.6%	16.5%
Married	93.7%	72.4%	83.5%
Level of Education			
No Schooling	10.2%	33.6%	21.4%
Primary school	16.5%	31.0%	23.5%
JHS	44.1%	25.9%	35.4%
SSS	18.9%	3.4%	11.5%
Tertiary	4.7%	2.6%	3.7%
Other	5.5%	3.4%	4.5%
Size of Household			
Number of male adults (>18yrs)	2.57	2.37	2.47
Number of female adults (>18yrs)	2.15	2.13	2.14
Number of male children (<18yrs)	1.63	1.45	1.54

Number of female children (<18yrs)	1.56	1.70	1.63
Experience			
Under 5yrs	1.6%	3.4%	2.5%
5-10yrs	8.7%	20.7%	14.5%
10-15yrs	17.5%	12.9%	15.3%
15-20yrs	23.0%	22.4%	22.7%
Above 20	49.2%	40.5%	45.0%
Farm Size (Acres)			
Mean	12.14	7.42	9.76
Minimum	2.00	2.00	2.00
Maximum	40.00	24.00	40
Std Deviation	8.05573	5.06828	7.08701
Benefits from Membership in FBOs			
Input Procurement	93.5%	82.5%	88.2%
Extension services	98.4%	97.4%	97.9%
Additional income	95.9%	94.7%	95.4%
Savings and loans schemes	82.9%	86.8%	84.8%
Welfare services	63.4%	71.7%	67.1%
Mutual labor support	62.6%	60.5%	61.6%
Other	4.9%	15.8%	10.1%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The impact of ESP III project on beneficiaries was assessed through a perception survey at the farmer level as part of the terminal evaluation. Beneficiary farmers were asked questions that explored benefits derived from participation in training and application of sustainable cocoa production practices, economic, social and economic benefits, and challenges.

4.3 Impact of Training

The project supported the cocoa farmers through trainings in relevant topics. The application of these training by the farmers were contributory factor to the improvemet in the farm income oberved. The analysed the training programmes offered and the level of particpation by the farmer. Figure 4.1 provides a summary.

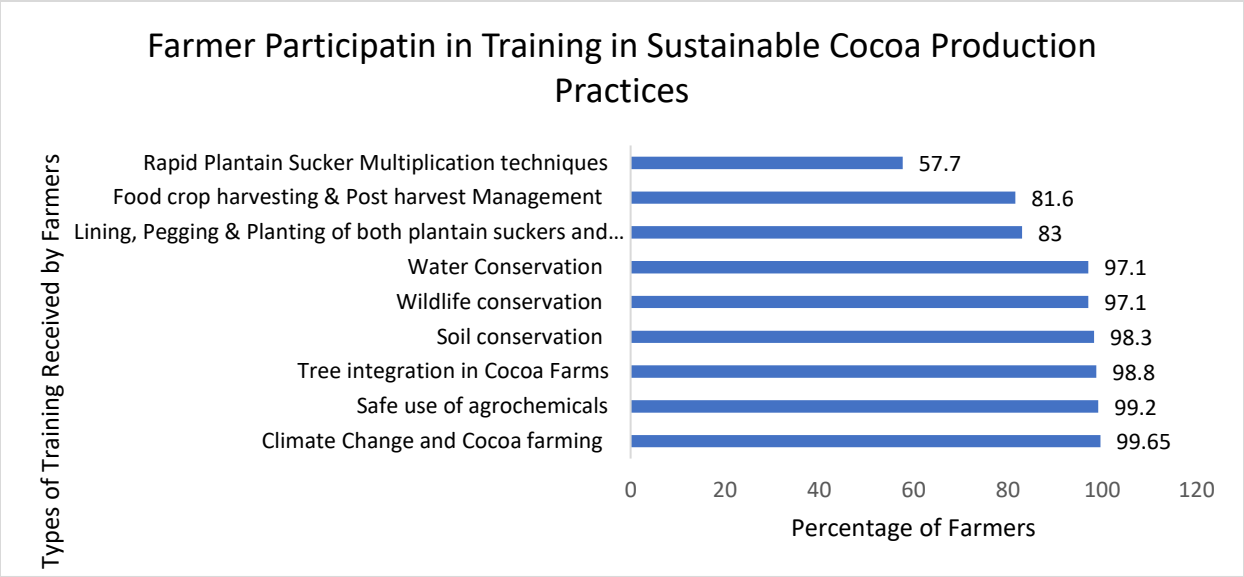


Figure 4.1: Training Types Received by Farmers in Sustainable Production Practices

Farmers were asked if they had received training on sustainable cocoa production practices. Nearly all 240 participating farmers, responded yes. Majority (above 90%) participated in climate change and cocoa farming (99.65%), safe use of agrochemicals (99.2%), tree integration in cocoa farming (98.8%), soil conservation (98.8%), wildlife conservation (98.3%) and water conservation (97.%) (See table 4.1). The application of these trainings has resulted in increased crop yield, increased quality of produce, reduced post-harvest losses leading to increased price of produce. However, the he most common challenge identified by farmers in applying the training was the high-cost cost of inputs. The second commonest challenge reported was the need for more labour. Unavailability of Inputs and high production cost were also reported among farmers as a major challenge in applying the trainings.

Farmer's Level of Satisfaction Regarding Support Received under ESPIII Project

The Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of satisfaction levels among farmers regarding the support they received from the UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD Project, disaggregated by gender. From the data, 53 percent of the male respondents were very satisfied and 44.8 percent were satisfied while 50.9 percent of the female respondents were very satisfied and 47.4 percent were satisfied. Both genders were equally represented among the very dissatisfied, with 50% male and 50% female. No male respondents were not satisfied, but 100% of the respondents in this category were female. This figure is represented by a single person. The data thus, suggest that overall, male respondents tended to be more satisfied with the support they received from the project compared to female respondents, with the exception of the “Very dissatisfied” category, which was evenly split.

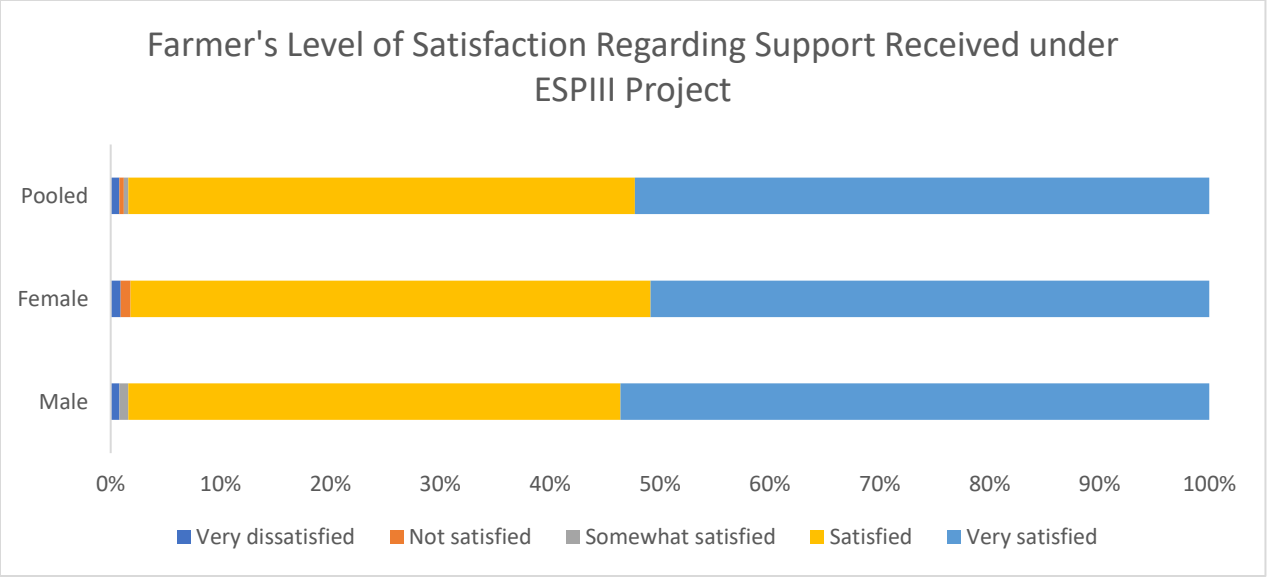


Figure 4.2 Farmer's Level of Satisfaction Regarding Support Received under ESPIII Project

Distribution of Satisfaction Levels Among Farmers in the three Systems

When considered in terms of type of systems, the data shows that farmers involved with the CREMA system were the only ones who reported “Somewhat satisfied”. The farmers in the landscape system had the highest percentage of 'Satisfied' farmers (63.1%) while farmers involved with both CREMA and MTS had the lowest “Very satisfied” rate (26.2%) and “Satisfied” rate (3.6%), but none were “Somewhat satisfied,” ”'Not satisfied,” or “Very dissatisfied.” It appears that the farmers' perceptions of the support they received vary quite significantly depending on the system they were associated with. Those involved exclusively with CREMA show a range of satisfaction yet no complete dissatisfaction, whereas Landscape-associated farmers exhibited a split between high satisfaction and complete dissatisfaction. Those involved with both systems tended to show less extreme satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels, with no respondents being “Somewhat satisfied,” “Not satisfied,” or “Very dissatisfied.” This suggests that there may be systemic differences in how support is perceived or delivered across these systems

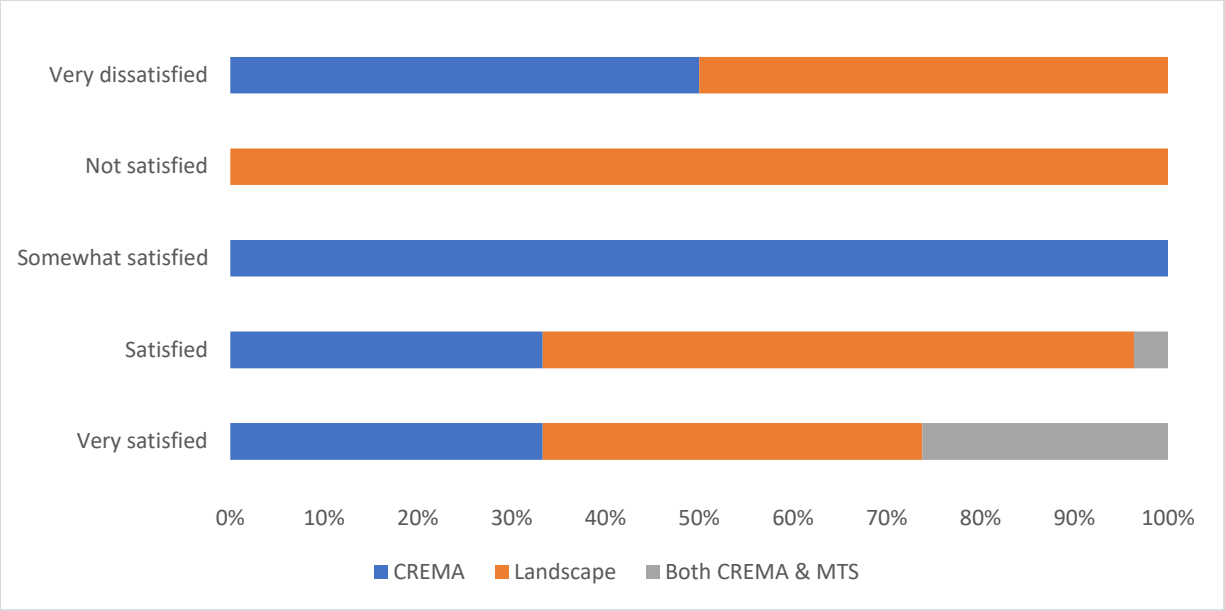
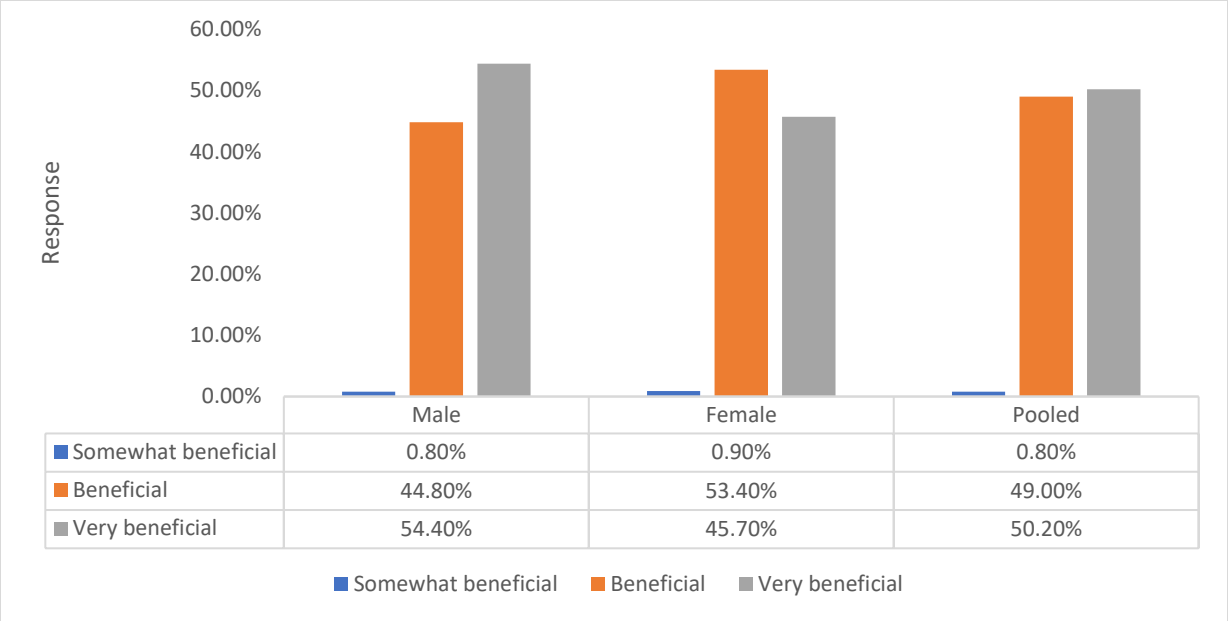


Figure 4.3: Distribution of Satisfaction Levels Among Farmers in the three Systems Regarding the Support they Received

Perceived benefits from the project to their Farm/Businesses

When the farmers' perceptions are considered in terms of benefits of the project to their businesses, the data shows very interesting revelations (see Figure 4.3). A higher percentage of male respondents (54.4%) found the project to be very beneficial compared to female respondents (45.7%). Furthermore, a slightly higher percentage of female respondents (53.4%) found the project to be beneficial, as opposed to male respondents (44.8%). Thus, Males were more likely than females to consider the project very beneficial; females were more likely than males to rate the project as beneficial; and there was an equal perception of the project being somewhat beneficial across genders. It's worth noting that the terms "very beneficial," "beneficial," and "somewhat beneficial" suggest a positive impact overall, but the intensity of perceived benefit varies between male and female respondents.



	Male	Female	Pooled
Somewhat beneficial	0.80%	0.90%	0.80%
Beneficial	44.80%	53.40%	49.00%
Very beneficial	54.40%	45.70%	50.20%

Figure 4.4 Perceived benefits from the project to their Farm/Businesses

From Figure 4.5, we can deduce that the landscape system farmers perceived the project to have benefited their businesses the most across all three categories, with notably high percentages in the "Beneficial" (58.5%) and "Somewhat beneficial" (58.5%) categories.

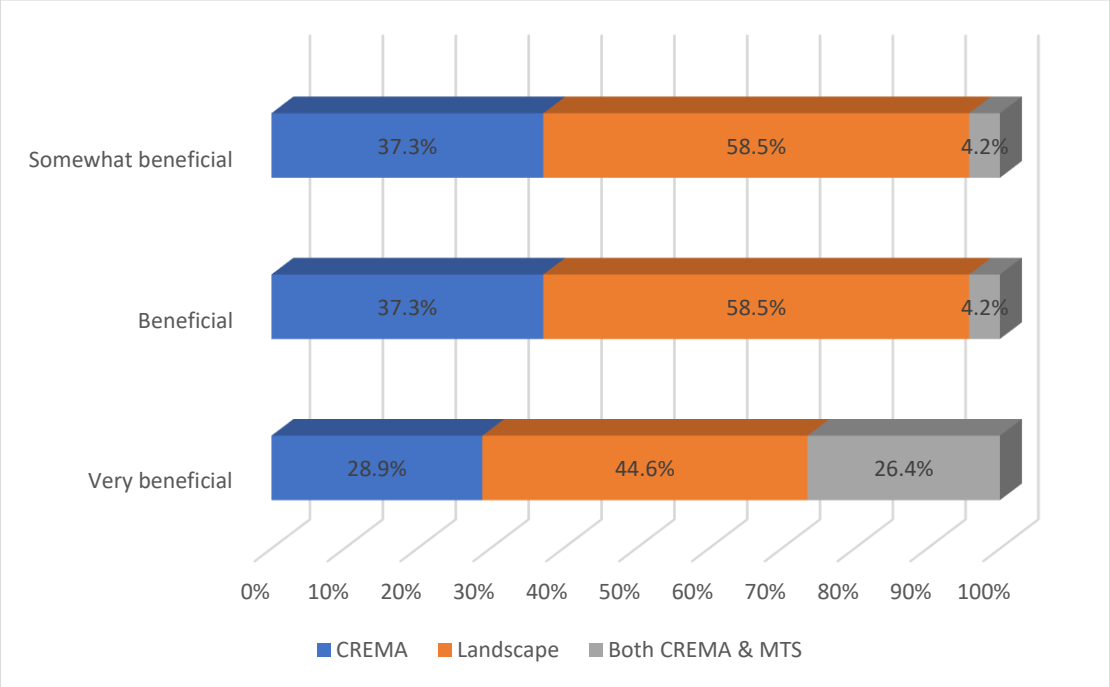


Figure 4.5: Perceived Benefits to Farmers' Businesses Across Systems

The CREMA system had a more even distribution of perceived benefit across the three categories while farmers who had a combination of Both CREMA & MTS perceived less beneficial than the other two systems, with a very low percentage of respondents finding it beneficial or somewhat beneficial. Thus, overall, respondents associated with the Landscape system seem to have a more favorable view of its benefits compared to CREMA and the combined CREMA & MTS systems. It's interesting to note that for those involved in both CREMA and MTS, a relatively equal and low percentage perceived it as beneficial or somewhat beneficial, which may indicate issues or dissatisfaction with the integration or effectiveness of these combined systems. Some questions and responses from the focus group discussions have been presented below:

Evidence from Focus Group Discussion

Have you learnt any sustainable cocoa production practices from the ESP III/UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD project? If so, explain what and how you have applied what you've learnt.

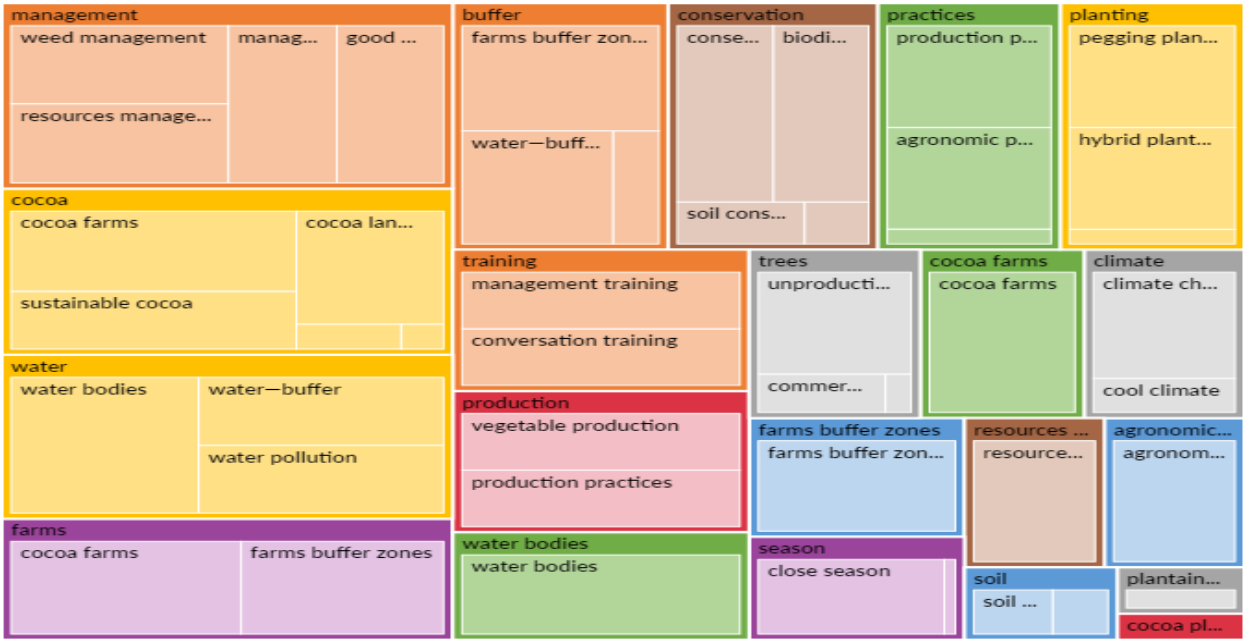


Figure 4.6 Hierarchy Chart for Women – Thematic Areas of training received

The women identified four major subject areas from the Hierarchy Chart above that they learned from the ESP III/UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD project's sustainable cocoa-producing practices. Among them are

1. Knowledge on Management of natural resources
2. Knowledge on sustainable cocoa production practices
3. Knowledge on Water conservation
4. Knowledge of Farm management

Four categories of management knowledge were acquired: good shade management, training management, resource management, and weed management.

The female farmers acquired these fundamental areas of cocoa knowledge. understanding of sustainable cocoa, cocoa farms, cocoa landscapes, cocoa plants, and cocoa trees.

Additionally, water bodies, water pollution, and water buffers introduced the women to knowledge about water. That is, no more weeding into the water bodies and a 10-foot boundary.

Finally, regarding their understanding of farms, the women said they had learned about cocoa fields and farm buffer zones.

Figure 4.7: Application of Trainings Received by farmers

Will it be possible to maintain these sustainable practices after the project ends? If so how? Will you need any further support? If so why and in what form?

Two major themes were found in the responses from women regarding their potential plans for continuing sustainable behaviors when the initiative is over. These are issues regarding tree tenure and certification for planting economic trees which are areas that need policy attention. The following were indicated as a cross-cutting issues of the thematic areas identified. The women mentioned that there is (i) they need further assistance from the project in terms of incentives for planting and nurturing economic trees/carbon stocks (ii)policy and advocacy work on tree tenure and ESP payment arrangement (iii) need further support to maintain their farms since most sustainable practices are labor-intensive and demanding in terms of financing. For example, the women are not able to do pruning and have to use hired labour.

Figure 4:8 Sustainability of Training received

Did the project work to empower specific groups of people in particular (e.g. men, women, youth, elders, people with disabilities) and if so how?

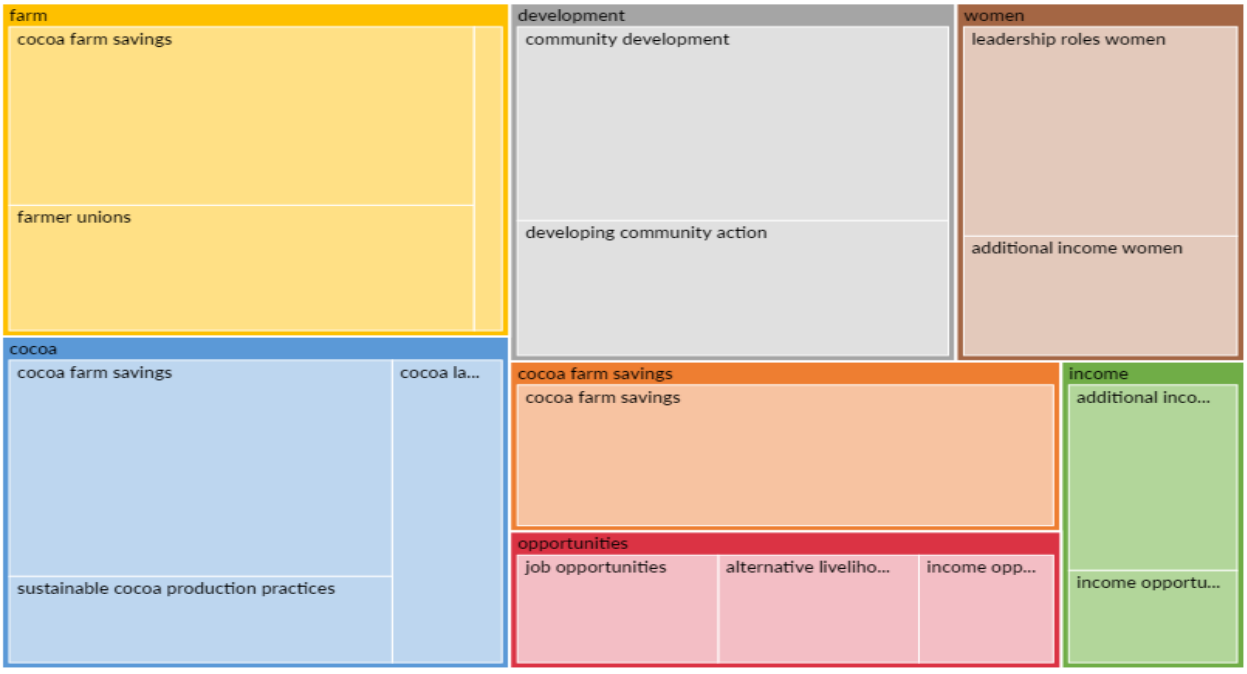


Figure 4.9: Hierarchy Chart for Women – Thematic Areas

According to the women, the Hierarchy Chart above indicates seven main thematic areas that project work to empower specific groups of people from the ESP III/UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD project. These include

1. Farm management empowerment
2. Sustainable Cocoa practices empowerment
3. Development Empowerment
4. Women's Empowerment
5. Cocoa farm savings empowerment
6. Opportunities empowerment
7. Income empowerment

Generally, the women in the various communities have been empowered. Women are involved in all the training and sensitization programs conducted by Cocoalife/Mondelez/UNDP project. Also, the community mobilization effort to encourage women to participate in community development and decision-making in developing community action plans has encouraged women to take leadership roles such as president of the farmer unions and a woman in one of the communities surveyed.

In addition, women have been involved in all the training programs, decision-making, and community mobilization efforts. For cocoa savings empowerment, the savings and Loans scheme has helped women to be financially empowered and now the women can also pay the school fees of their wards.

For opportunities empowerment, the women have been taught alternative livelihood opportunities.

For income empowerment, the women were trained on soap making and bakery for additional income as well as women have adopted environmentally sustainable cocoa production practices to enhance productivity and maintain ecosystem health including biodiversity conservation in cocoa landscapes.

Has the ESP III /UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD project impacted your livelihoods in anyway?

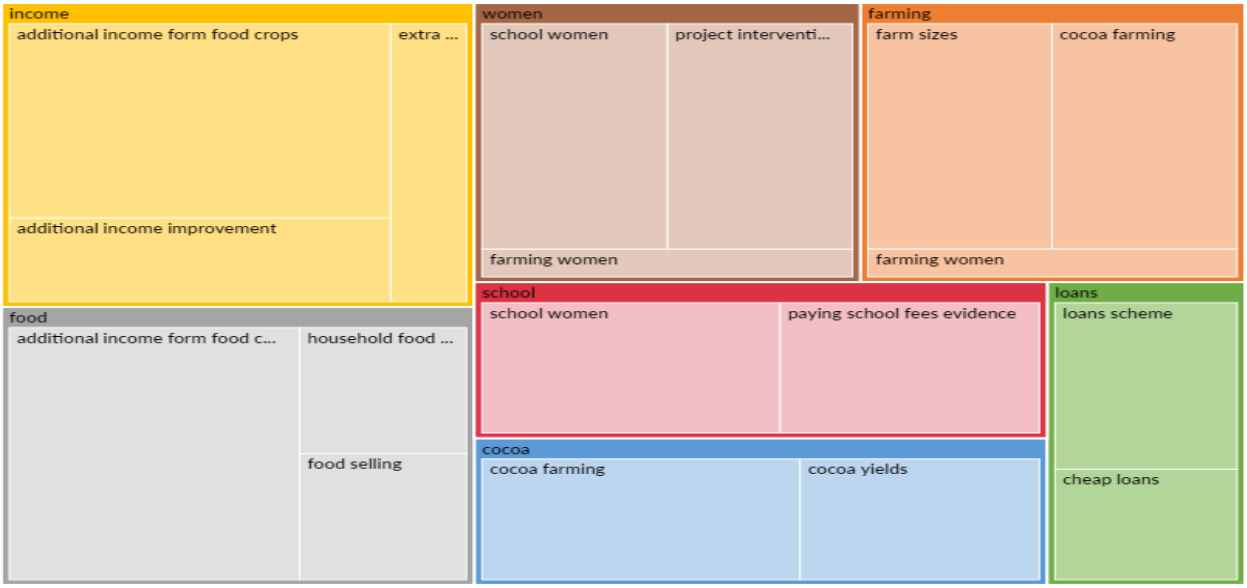
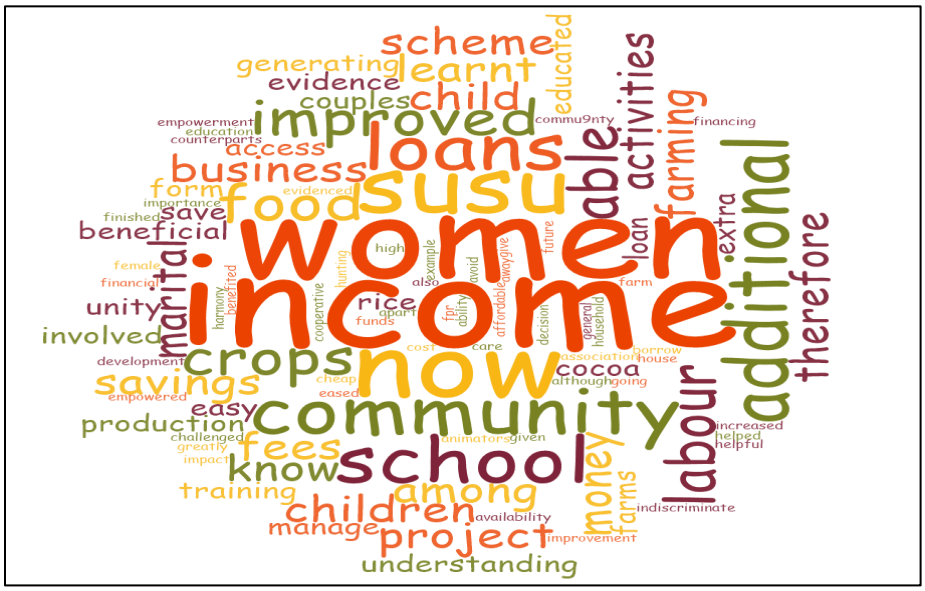


Figure 4.10: Hierarchy Chart for Women – Thematic Areas on livelihood Impact

The women's lives have been touched by the ESP III/UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD project in seven primary subject areas, as shown in the above Hierarchy Chart. Among them are

1. Effect on Income
2. Effect on Food
3. Effect on the Women
4. Effect on School
5. Effect on Farming
6. Effect on Cocoa



The women indicated that they support payment of school fees in their ward's school, this is evidence of children being educated from additional income. This additional income comes from food crops such as the production of rice and other income-generating activities such as vegetable production.

The women indicated that because of the increased yield they have been able to send their children to school.

On the other hand, the women are given leadership positions for example one of the Community Animators is a woman. Whilst, through the project intervention women now have their farms although the farm sizes are lower than that of their male counterparts.

Also, there are improvements in the cocoa yields this is because the Savings and loan schemes have been very beneficial in financing high labour costs.

In addition, the Village Savings and Loan scheme has been very beneficial and has improved the ability of women to save money and manage funds. One woman indicated that she had finished my house using the loans from the susu (VLSA).

Challenges

Hierarchy Chart for Women – Thematic Areas regarding challenges facing women

Two main thematic areas of challenges about the project ESP III /UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD project that are being faced by the women. These are

1. Challenges to Skills
2. Challenges on farms

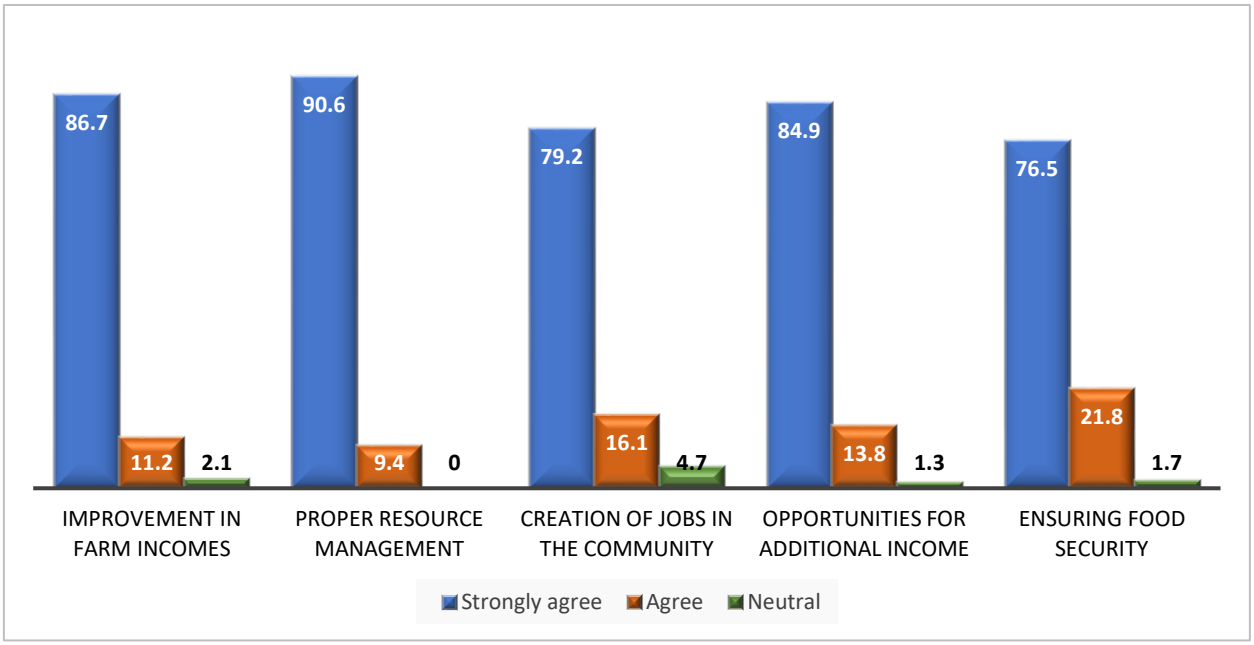
With regards to skills challenges, the women indicated that sometimes have to rely on their indigenous knowledge to complement skills training received from Cocoalife project. In addition, they indicated that skill training in soap making has been developed but some of the women have a lot of responsibilities and are not able to add on the skills acquired.

On the other hand, the challenges on farms were mentioned as labour being expensive in the farming business. Whilst the women also indicated that they need support for the pruning of cocoa farms, a mass spraying program would be very beneficial. In other words, there is inadequate pruning and mass spraying of the cocoa farms which is a challenge to the women.

Moreover, they also highlighted that some of the cocoa seedlings received had low survival rates, and some also sometimes were not received timely and died from harsh weather conditions.

4.4 Farmers' perception of Economic Impact of ESP III Project

Dimensions of Economic impact of the ESP III project assessed by farmers include improvement in farm incomes associated with higher yields and proper natural resource management, creation of jobs in the community, additional incomes or alternative livelihoods opportunities, and household food security. The perception survey results revealed positive economic impact of the ESP III project at the farmer level. Improvement in farm incomes was strongly agreed by 86.7 percent of the farmers interviewed, 90.6 percent strongly agreed that the ESP III project activities had resulted in proper management of natural resources at the community level while 84.9 percent strongly agreed that the ESP III project had offered additional income opportunities such as planting of other crops in their cocoa farms, soap making and bakery skills. About 76.5 percent of the respondents had experienced improved food security situations as a result of the implementation of ESP III project activities. The analysis also showed that the responses relating to the economic impact of ESPIII project implementation activities were similar for both male and female farmers as depicted in figure 4.1



Source: Farmer Survey, 2024

Figure 4. 21: Farmer perception about Economic impact of the ESP III project - Pooled

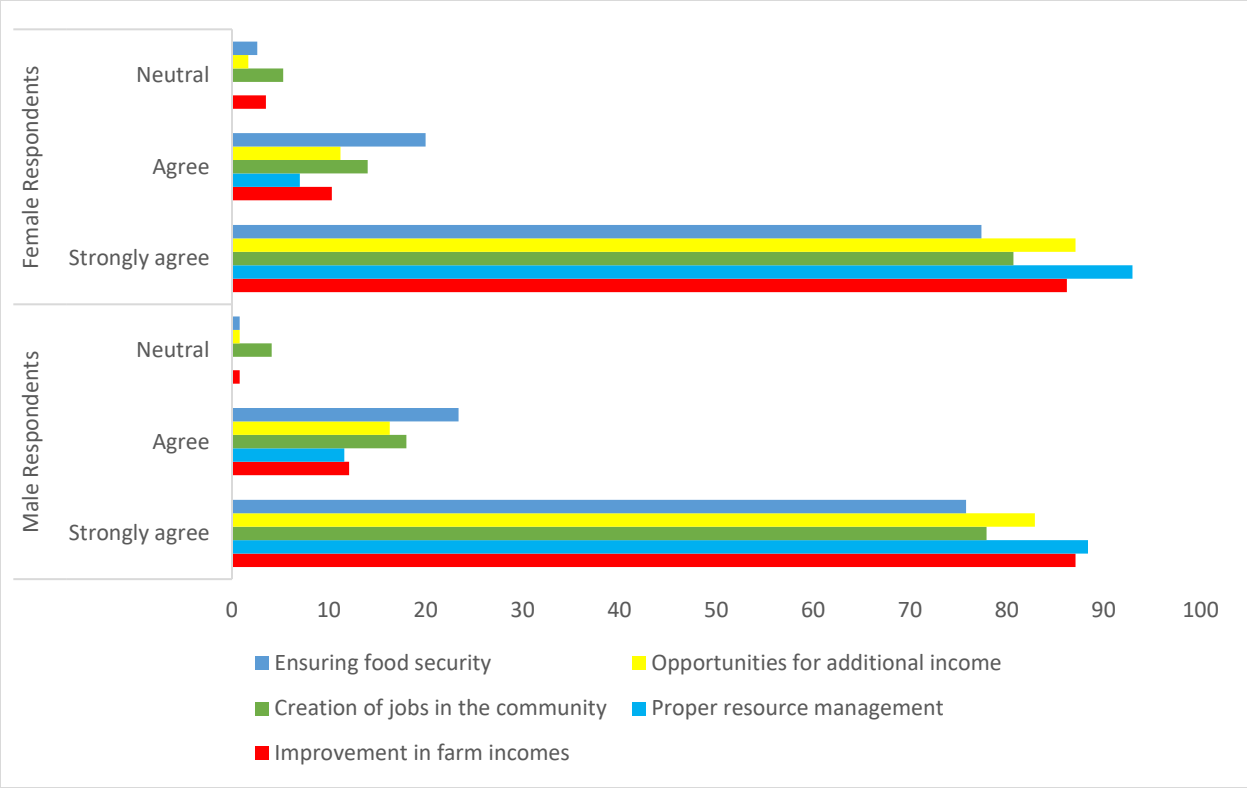


Figure 4. 12: Farmer perception about Economic impact of the ESP III project - Disaggregated by Sex

4.5 Farmers' perception of Social and Environmental Impact of ESP III Project

The findings showed positive social and environmental impact of the ESP III project implementation activities. Adoption of sustainable cocoa agricultural practices including proper weed management, pruning, combining organic and inorganic fertilizer, good shade management, rehabilitation and replanting of old unproductive trees, use of hybrid planting materials, pest and disease control, timely harvesting, establishment of buffer zone and Safe use of agro-chemicals prevention of water pollution, biodiversity conservation in cocoa landscape, planting of economic trees and storage of agro-chemicals.

The social and economic impact of ESP III project implementation activities, farmers had observed reduction in loss of vegetation cover, reduction in land degradation and soil erosion, and reduction in loss of wildlife by adopting close season during August to December (figure 4.3).

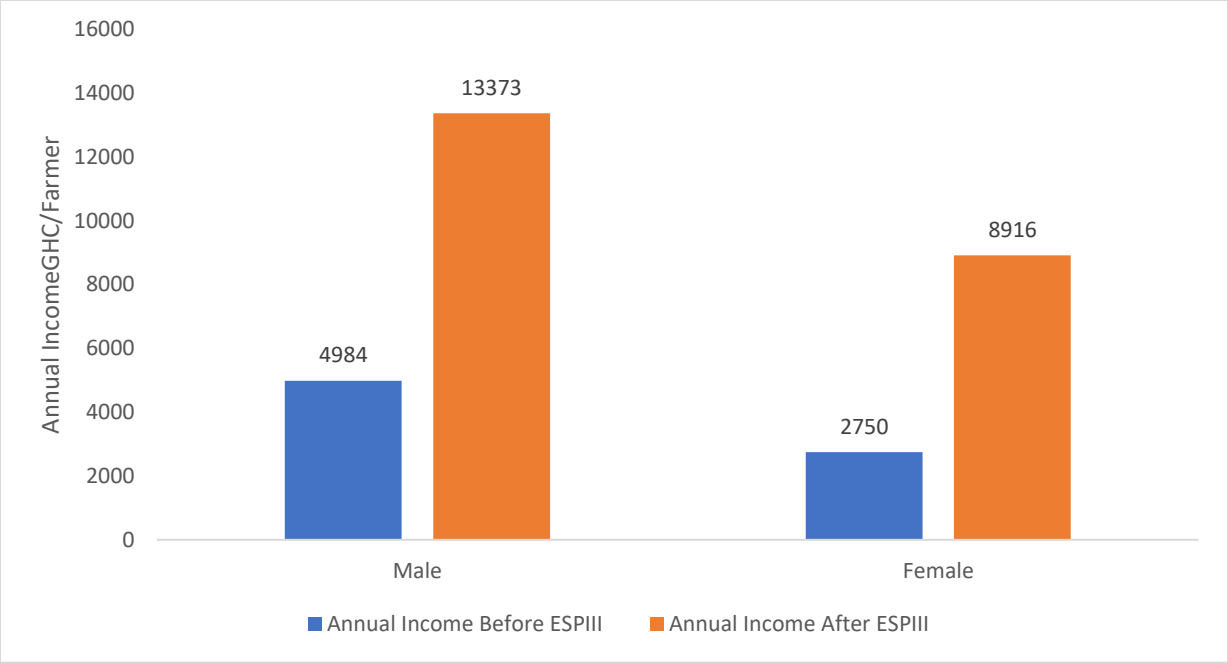
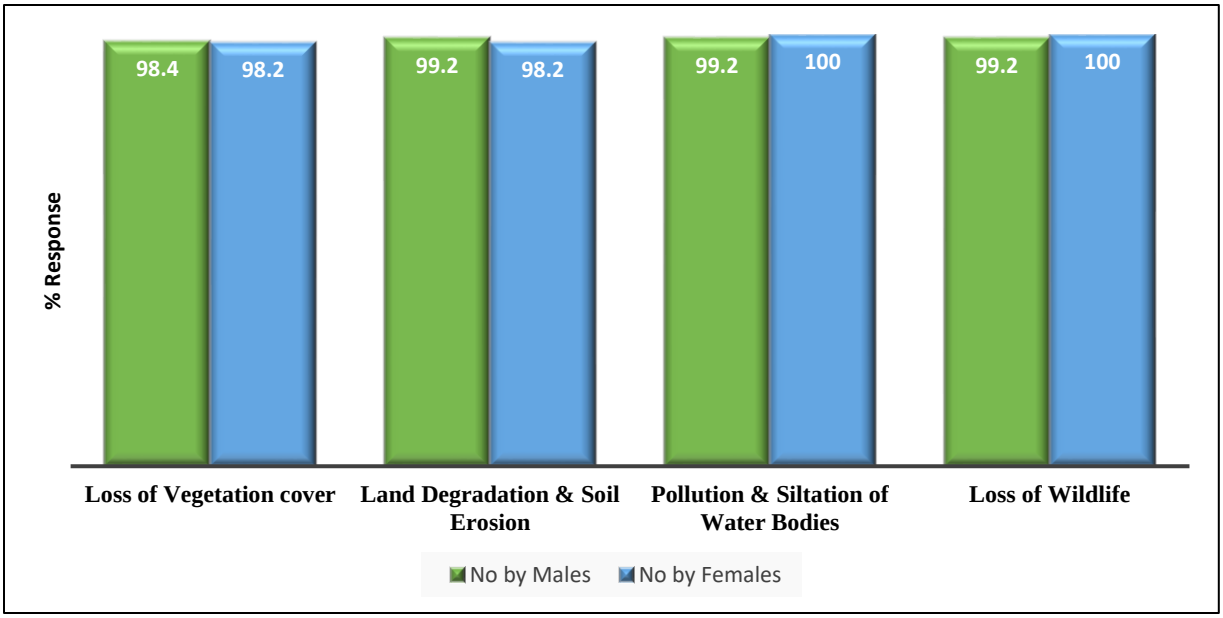


Figure 4. *13*: Annual Income of Farmers - Before and After ESPIII



Source: Framer Survey, 2024

Figure 4. 14: Farmer perception about Social & Environmental impact of the ESP III project - Disaggregated by Sex

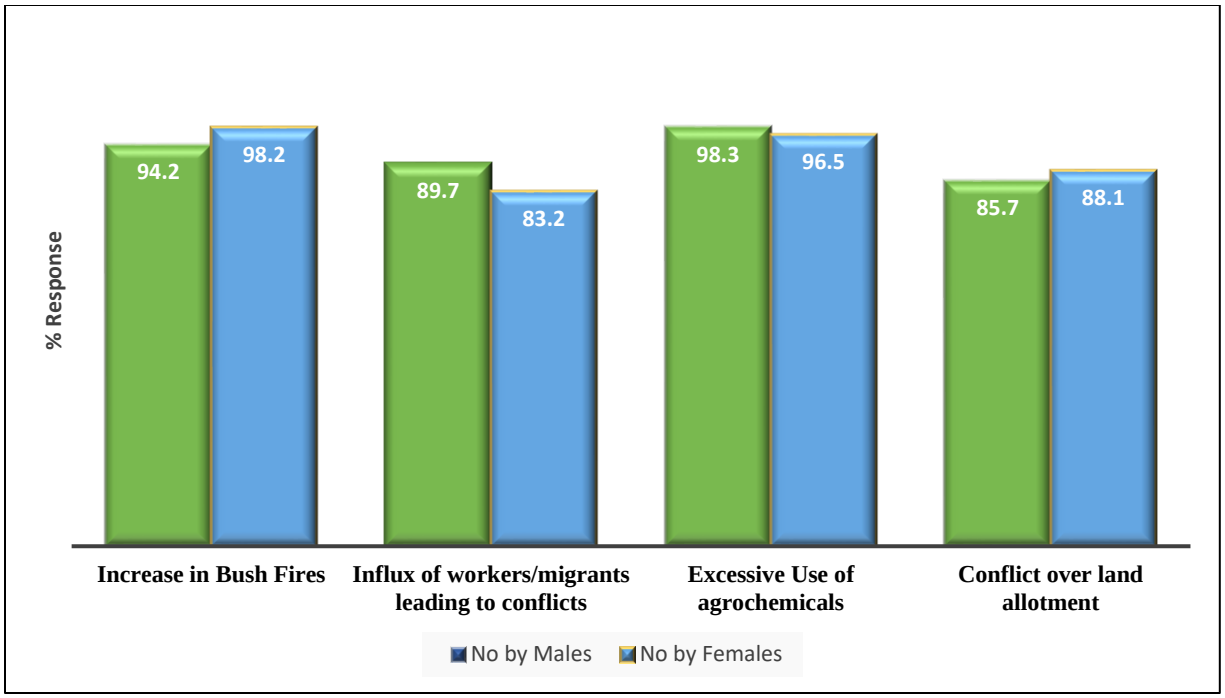
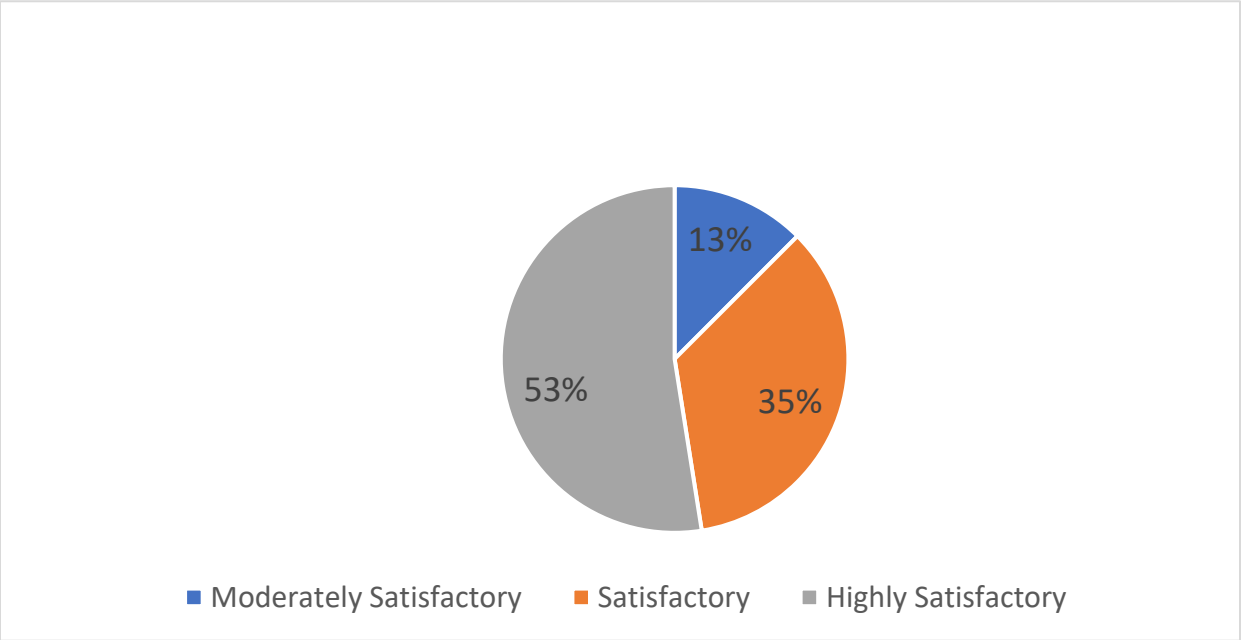


Figure 4. 15: Farmer perception about Social & Environmental impact of the ESP III project - Disaggregated by Sex

4.6 Gender mainstreaming and Rights-based approaches

Interaction with farmers through focus group discussions (men only, female only and mixed group) reveled that ensuring female participation in project implementation activities has been keenly followed through. Equal opportunities were offered to both men and women during training and capacity building as well as economic tree integration program activities. Specific programs were designed for increase in women's access to finance being handled through the Village Savings and Loans Scheme implemented with the support of World Vision International. At the community level, it was evident that capacity building and training programs designed to address the specific needs of women after a thorough needs assessment had contributed to improving business entrepreneurial skills and deepen understanding of household food security issues. Women have been empowered to play actives role in decision making at the household, community and district levels. Women have been engaged in the development of Community Action Plans. The CREMA governance structure there is always a female in the leadership. Women have been trained in effective planning and time management and delegation of tasks to enable them to participate in-group activities.



Source: Farmer Survey, 2024

Figure 4. 17: Rating of ESPIII in terms of Women Empowerment and Social Inclusion

Another critical outcome of the ESPIII project with the support of implementing partners and stakeholders has been empowerment of women to access farm lands and in some cases to have control and ownership of land and women occupying leadership positions at the community group formation level. The root causes of cultural norms being gender barriers are being removed through awareness campaigns and sensitization programs among community leaders and male family heads to support women owning land to cultivate cocoa and other crops as well as plant economic trees on their farms. Generally, the women in the community have been empowered. Because of the training, men and women in the associations all have the same voice and shares in association activities. The confidence level in asserting rights against chainsaw operators and other loggers has increased among the community members.

From the stakeholder interviews, 53 percent of the respondents rated ESPIII project as highly satisfactory in terms of women empowerment and social inclusion approaches, while 35 percent rated the project as satisfactory in terms of women empowerment and social inclusion approaches. This suggests that overall the project implementation process was gender responsive and indeed the project has promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women. The participants of focus group discussion summarized their point on this:

"The 'cocoa life' initiative has really helped us as women. This is because, in the past the women did not use to attend gatherings. For instance, if there was a gathering being held to make certain decisions, the women did not attend. Because we felt we were women and were supposed to stay at home and the men were the ones to attend the meeting and brief us on it afterwards. When they bring the information; as to whether or not the decisions taken were to our benefits is of no essence; because at the end of the day the men just report what was said. The 'cocoa life' initiative helped us realized that as women when there is a need for decision making, we as women should also attend and give our opinions in order to arrive at decisions that would benefit both men and women

alike. It is because of this that today we the women can organize ourselves and attend meetings. In the past, when your husband goes to the farm, as a wife your role was to prepare food for him and take it to him on the farm. Also, when the harvest was ripe be it cocoa, cassava or yam, as a woman your role was to sell the produce and give him the money without receiving any of the profit. But right now because of the 'cocoa life' initiative and everything that has been taught us, we also own farms now. As I speak to you, I have a cocoa farm. This year I will harvest some of it. I will have 6 acres of land left afterwards. Right now I am a land owner, I have my own cassava plantation and yam plantation. Whenever I need anything I can easily sell any of my produce to put money in my pocket. So it has helped us in doing a lot of things. We can now stand on our own to do whatever we want to do. We can now air our opinions and manage our own affairs without waiting to receive money from our husbands. For instance, in terms of paying our wards school fees, as I speak to you, I was able to pay my wards fees. This year if not for these trainings that we were given and everything that was taught; one of my children would not have been able to write the exams; because the other one fell sick around the same time and my husband used his money to take care of that one. I also used my money to register for the one that had the exam. So this year both of my children have written and they both produced excellent results, so the initiative has been very helpful"(Women FDG, 2024)

According to the women interviewed, through the ESP III project they were able to access land through the MTS initiative and are able to plant their own crops such as plantain, ginger and vegetables. A woman beneficiary farmer has this to say:

"Access to land by women and women having their own farms was really good news. Alternative livelihood for additional income is critical because cocoa is seasonal. A lot of farmers who were able to plant other crops such as vegetables, ginger and plantains had additional income to supplement income from cocoa" (Women FGDs, 2024).

"*The project has helped us women in the community to be assertive. It has also demonstrated that cocoa farming is good and so the youth are involved"*

The project did not discriminate against anyone in the community. Both women, men and youth benefited from the interventions. According the women beneficiaries, they were able get income from their farming and able to pay their children school fees in KNUST and UPSA. A woman beneficiary summary her point on this:

"*The entire community has benefited because there was no discrimination in the provision of intervention, Women too. Because previously cocoa was the only source of income, men were in charge of the income, which came yearly. But now because of the MTS, there are other sources of income that women too can partake and have their own. We are able to pay the school fees of our children to the extent that we have taken care of our children up to the university. We are even out of poverty. Our food security has improved" (Women FGDs, 2024).*

"*My children are in the university. One is in Tech and one is in UPSA. So I'm very grateful for the project. It's been 3 years now. The Village Savings and Loans we did really helped me and made payment of school fees very easy for me. In the absence of that we wouldn't have been able to take care of our children, so it has really helped us lot"* (*Women FGDs, 2024).*

Stakeholder engagement on the involvement of maginalised groups revealed that to a large extents, marginalized groups were attended to. Youth groups were involved in raising the economic trees at nurseries, youth gangs trained on safety issues in fertilizer application and additional income generation activities as well volunteer pruning and pollination to improve cocoa yields. From the stakeholders' rating, to a very large extent partnerships with other organisation, that is the Implementation Partners (IPs)

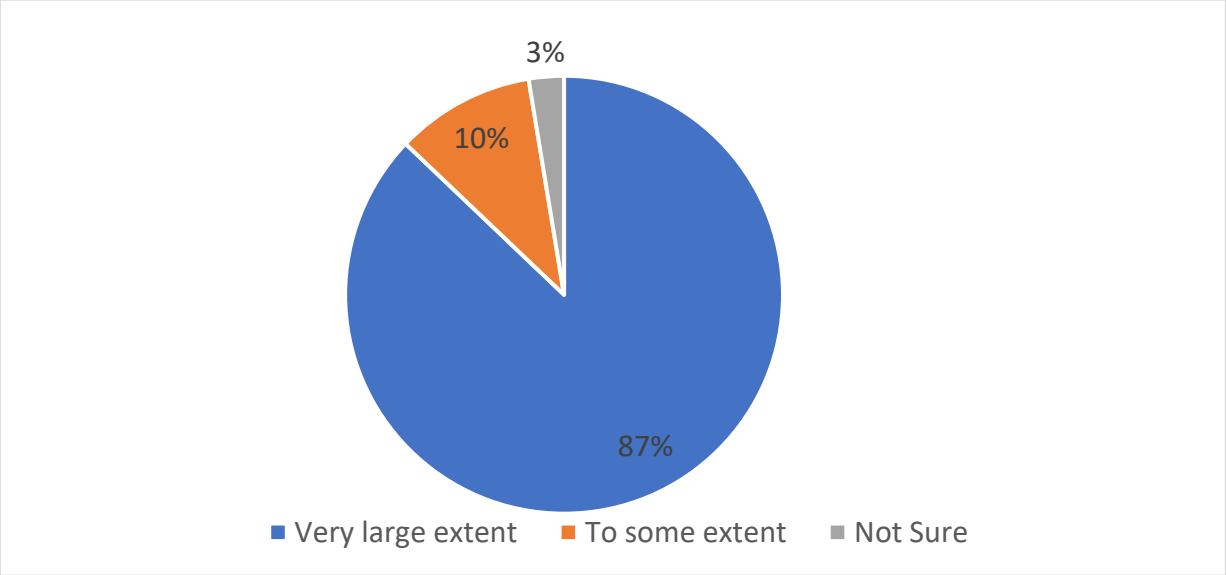


Figure 4.18: The extent of partnership in promoting gender equality

However, there was no fund set aside to cater for people with disabilities although the project did not discriminate against people with disabilities. In the MTS there was allocation of some part of the Forest to marginalized groups. Also due to awareness about child rights, children are going to school and there's no more child labour in the communities. Again to a large extent children are benefiting through the school gardens and programmes to stop child labour.

Disability

It is important to note that people living with disabilities were rare in the communities visited. From the project design disability needs were considered as cross cutting issue. There were no restrictions to participating in ESP III but accessible to all. The evaluation team through the stakeholder engagements and farmer survey did not observe and concrete effort to ensure disability mainstreaming neither was there any tailor-made activities that sought to put the empowerment of persons with disabilities at the centre stage. The Twin-track approach that combines disability mainstreaming and targeted support for persons with disability was not very pronounced at the field level implementation. The Monitoring and evaluation reports did not capture the proportion of the beneficiaries of programs who were persons with disabilities.

4.7 Project Implementation Challenges

4.7.1 At the Project level

Tree Tenure and Registration - From the project management perspectives, regular monitoring revealed a number of challenges with suggested coping strategies for a successful project implementation. One key challenge is failure of tree registration and maintenance of tree integrated cocoa farms for high survival rate. Tree tenure and ownership as well as inability to obtain economic benefits from trees is a major disincentive for cocoa agroforestry in Ghana. Therefore farmers had to be incentivized to plant economic trees and adopt environmental best practices.

Resourcing main Implementation Partner Directly – The initial implementation plan to have a dedicated budget for COCOBOD – CHED, which is the main implementation partner did not fully materialized and this triggered some operational challenges and mainstreaming of the environmentally sustainable cocoa production practices would properly suffer. The project is a National implementation modality project; meaning UNDP intends to use COCOBOD's systems to implement. COCOBOD did not offer themselves for micro-assessment by an independent 3rd party firm. As a risk management measure UNDP was unable to transfer funds directly to COCOBOD but this required COCOBOD to approve request for fund releases for project implementation activities. No activities are implemented on the project without the request from the COCOBOD focal person. UNDP's role is to quality assure the request and ensure they are in line with the project's agreed work plan and objectives.

Logistics and Procurement challenges - Technical assistance and Input support to farmers is critical and should be timely. Timely delivery of hybrid seedlings and seedlings of economic trees was a challenge that could also negatively affect the survival rate of economic trees. Establishment of nurseries at the community level helped. Provision of inputs such as wellington boots for safety and avoidance of snake bites, and cutlasses for regular farm maintenance was critical for application of training received under ESPIII project.

4.7.2 At the Farmer Level

Challenges at the farmer level obtained from Focus Group Discussions include the following:

- External Risk factors – Climate change, extreme weather changes such as long dry spells, excessive rains, and minor pests becoming major pests. For example, In 2023, farmers , experienced high incidence of pest and diseases due to excessive rain at the time when too much water was not needed. Climate Change consequences have eroded a lot the benefits accruing from interventions
- Late delivery of agro-inputs and need timely support for fertilizer application
- Illegal mining destroying cocoa farms and people with concession and Chain saw operators invading our farms because of the trees we have planted
- We no longer get bush meat to eat
- High Labour Demand and high cost of labour - Cutting of Ofram Branches is a lot of work
- Although getting support from Village Savings and Loans, this is inadequate and needs financial assistance or support from GoG in terms of mass spraying and incentives for pruning

Table 4. 2: Perception of Farmers about Challenges Before and After ESPIII Project

Challenges	BEFORE ESPIII INTERVENTION					After ESPIII INTERVENTION				
	Not Significant	Some What Significant	Neutral	Significant	Very Significant	Not Significant	Some What Significant	Neutral	Significant	Very Significant
Difficulty getting preferred seedlings (Hybrid)	7.9%	0.4%	0.4%	19.2%	72.0%	61.7%	3.3%	0.4%	11.3%	23.3%
Difficulty getting technical advice or Extension Services	5.0%	3.8%	5.0%	22.6%	63.6%	65.0%	0.4%	0.4%	10.8%	23.3%
Persistence illegal logging in Cocoa Farms	5.5%	2.5%	2.1%	29.4%	60.5%	47.5%	8.3%	2.5%	21.7%	20.0%
Lack of Compliance to Forestry & Wildlife Sectors Regulations	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	31.6%	57.0%	48.7%	7.6%	3.8%	22.0%	17.8%
Illegal chainsaw operators	5.5%	3.7%	6.4%	29.2%	55.3%	44.1%	6.4%	7.7%	25.0%	16.8%
Documentation (Trees) on agreed terms and conditions	4.7%	6.6%	8.5%	21.8%	58.3%	38.5%	14.6%	12.2%	21.5%	13.2%

- There is no ownership of the trees in the water buffer area and therefore no one took care of them and they have all died
- Registration of tree crops is a huge challenge and needs support going forward
- Bush burning is still a challenge
- Marketing of other crops is a challenge sometimes
- Tree Tenure is an issue that policy measures must address, with ESPIII trees are planted but not registered in our name and this is a challenge
- Gender consideration given to youth, and women and not very particular about people living with disabilities since you don't find them in the cocoa farming communities, rather the aging farmers and sustainability of practices learnt is an issue
- Conversion of cocoa farms into oil palm and rubber plantation in Wassa East
- Inadequate funds to pay for cocoa purchase by GoG

4.7.3 Suggestions for Improvement

- Get local farmers involved in the planning process to improve the project management
- Support for continuous pruning and proper documentation on economic trees planted
- Need further assistance from the project in terms of incentives for planting and nurturing of economic trees/carbon stocks
- Policy and advocacy work on tree tenure and ESP payment arrangement
- Need further support to maintain their farms since most of the sustainable practices are labour intensive and demanding in terms of financing. For example the women are not able to do pruning and have to use hired labour
- There is no land for cocoa farm expansion and would need to continue with sustainable practices to increase yield
- The project should be extended for some time when farmer group is financially stable then sustainability could be assured after project implementation
- Need seedlings of fast growing economic trees
- Carbon financing arrangement for the Payment of economic trees

PART FIVE: OVERALL PROJECT SCORE, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 5. 1: Overall Project Assessment Score

This section presents overall project assessment scores assigned to the various components of the evaluation matrix. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the overall score for ESP III.

Focus Area	Rating[2]	Comments
Monitoring & Evaluation		
M&E design at entry	5=Satisfactory (S)	The project has a well-designed M&E system. The outcome indicators were also clear and measurable.
M&E Plan Implementation	**6=Highly Satisfactory (HS)**	All planned project monitoring visits (5 of them) were conducted and reports prepared. Regular planned UNDP the three (3) monitoring visits took place and the feedback provided were acted on. Mondelez and COCOBOD also conducted 1 and 2 monitoring visits respectively.
Overall Quality of M&E	5.5= **Satisfactory (S)**	M& E design was rated Satisfactory (5), Implementation was rated Highly satisfactory (HS). Overall M&E was rated as satisfactory.
Implementation & Execution		
Quality of UNDP Implementation / Oversight	*6=Highly Satisfactory (HS)*	The quality of UNDP implementation/oversight was rated as Highly Satisfactory (6). The project team ensure timely delivery of planned activities, there regular meetings and reports. These reports record output indicators, target set for the period, updates on results achieved, and observed challenges during implementation of these activities. This is highly commendable.
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	5= Satisfactory (S)	Though COCOBOD was expected to play a leading roles in implementation, due to some challenges, they were not able to play such roles effectively. However, they participated fully in all trainings and other activities.

[2] **M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution** are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	5= Satisfactory (S)	The overall project oversight/ implementation and execution was rated as Satisfactory (6).
Assessment of Outcome		
Relevance	Highly satisfactory (6)	The average score for Relevance in terms of development aspirations and design is 6; institutional arrangement in place for the delivery of project activities was rated highly satisfactory (6) **Stakeholder ratings** About 67.5% of stakeholders rated the ESP III project as highly satisfactory, 25% rated satisfactory, moderately satisfactory (2.5%), highly unsatisfactory (5%). This gives the overall score for project relevance as highly satisfactory (6)
Effectiveness	Highly Satisfactory (6)	Extent of delivery of project results In all, 19 out 21 outcome indicators were achieved. Effectiveness is delivery of outcome was highly satisfactory (6) **Gender Output Indicators** In all, 6 out of the 10 indicators exceeded the project target, two (2) output indicators were exactly achieved while end targets of two (2) were not achieved. **Stakeholder ratings of Project Effectiveness** Highly satisfactory (55%), satisfactory (42.5%) and moderately satisfactory (2.5%)/ Project effectiveness in terms of gender empowerment and inclusion as highly satisfactory (5).
Efficiency	**Satisfactory (5).**	From the assessment of timeliness, financial management, procurement management and accountability aspect of the ESP III project, **Efficiency is scored satisfactory (5).**
Overall Project Outcome Ratings	**5.7=Highly satisfactory (6)**	Relevance rated Highly satisfactory (6), effectiveness rated highly satisfactory (6) and efficiency rated satisfactory giving average rating of 5.7

Sustainability[3]		
Financial Resources	Moderately sustainable (3)	The likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the ESP assistance ends is medium. This is will depend on GOG funding from COCOBOD and the ability of the Unions to raise funding.
Socio-political/economic	Likely sustainable (4)	Low – this is a privately funded project *Likely sustainable (4)*
Institutional framework and governance	Moderately Likely Sustainable (3)	The level of "ownership and sustainability of results from the implementation of ESP III, will be affected if the scuffle between UNDP AND COCOBOD is not addressed immediately.
Environmental	Moderately Sustainable (3)	Low farmer perception and appreciation of environmental sustainability issues may affect sustainability after the end of the project. Without interventions to incentivize farmers such as Payment for Ecosystem Service (PES), continuous adoption of environmentally sustainable practices cannot be guaranteed. Environmental sustainability is rated Moderately likely (3)
Overall Likelihood of sustainability	**Moderately sustainable (3)**	Overall grade of moderately sustainable (3) is assigned to sustainability of ESP III project because most stakeholders and beneficiaries could not report 100% sustainability levels beyond project life; and there was no exit strategy to cover post-project sustainability issues. Additionally, there is no established and reliable funding mechanism to support COCOBOD and farmer unions to continue key activities such as PES scheme and alternative livelihood trainings.
Impacts	Highly satisfactory (6)	The impact of the intervention on farmer incomes, household food security, farmer wellbeing and livelihoods are obvious in all communities visited by the evaluation team. Success stories of how project has empowered women was also reported by stakeholder. The project Impact Is rated Highly

[3] The Sustainability indicator was rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

		satisfactory
OVERALL PROJECT SCORE	**Highly Satisfactory (S) (5.7)**	***1.*** *Overall Quality of M&E-* ***satisfactory (5.5)*** ***2.*** *Overall quality of Implementation/Execution-***Satisfactory (5.5)** **3.** Overall Project Outcome**- Highly Satisfactory (5.7)** **4.** *Overall Likelihood of sustainability-* ***Moderately likely sustainable (3)*** *5. Project Impact-* **Highly satisfactory** (6) 6. ***OVERALL PROJECT SCORE*****- 5.7 out of 6.0**

5.2 Lessons Learnt

Sustaining Farmers' interest in Environmentally Sustainable Practices Requires Extra Effort - Training and capacity building of farmers to adopt Environmentally Sustainable Cocoa Production Practices requires more support than just technical assistance. Monitoring and annual reports have cited the challenge of farmers' low perception and appreciation of environmental issues. Performance-based annual incentive scheme instituted by ESP III project promoted the adoption of improved technologies and environmentally sustainable practices particularly in the Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) and Landscape communities. The grant funding support from UNDP to Union for disbursement to farmers as part of Payments made under the ecosystems scheme was very useful.

Alternative livelihood and Additional Income Sources for farmers – Cocoa production is seasonal and therefore training and capacity building of cocoa farmers in skills development particularly among women and cultivation of other crops for food security and income was critical. However, value addition and creating market opportunities for their farm produce could be handled more effectively to achieve intended outcomes.

Critical Role of Traditional Authorities – The involvement of traditional authorities in the implementation of ESPIII ensure effective local participation and control over forest resources and wildlife conservation. The role of the traditional authorities in enforcing Forestry by-laws and dissemination of government policies was key. The power structures at the community level was effectively managed through sensitization programs for the traditional authorities to see themselves as active participants of the ESP III project and not to overly empowered to control lands and resources. They were also educated on gender and right-based approaches and enabling equitable benefit-sharing arrangements for effective implementation of ESPIII Project. Although there were instances where traditional authorities became 'Power Blocks' within the community and security people. There was a reference manual covering land and typologies, capacity to grant land, registrable interests in land, state institutions involved in land registration, land agreements,

requirements for land registration at the customary Land Secretariat and importance of land registration at the community level.

Changes in cultural Norms and social transformation – addressing gender issues at community level through education and sensitization with the right partners has yielded results. Men taking time to alleviate the workload of women—"We now know there is no women-work or men-work" On a negative side children are now taking the "no child labour" to extreme where they are now refusing to do house chores. There has to be a balance approach.

Partnership Arrangement and Sustainability – The collaboration with CHED and other Cocoa Life IPs is supposed to play a crucial role in ensuring an improvement in project-farmer interface. The field level engagement with CHED to offer extension support, ensure regular monitoring and supervision has been effective but for sustainability purposes national level engagement need to be strengthened.

Community Needs Assessment and Development of Community Action Plans –
Conducting participatory community needs assessment has been very useful and formed basis for the development of community action plans. Community resource mobilization and working with farmers in groups significantly contributed to the realization of project outcome community organization and sustainable farming practices strengthened.

Others lessons - Farmer group formation as a vehicle for the delivery of technical support/inputs and market coordination, using part of the PES funding for creating fire belts and buying of firefighting equipment, timely allocation of plots and early delivery of inputs including seedlings and enhanced technical support (extension activities) in ensuring regular technical guidance in both farm organization and tree tendering.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the detailed analysis provided prior, in Parts Two, Three, and Four of this report, the following policy recommendations emerge to ensure future project implementation achieves better outcomes. On project design and implementation, the following policy recommendations are suggested:

- ***Targeted programs for youth and aging women***—The aging demographic among cocoa farmers poses a significant challenge to the sustainability of cocoa farming. Developing educational initiatives, internships, and programs that provide access to land and capital can attract younger individuals to cocoa farming. This approach can rejuvenate the agricultural sector and ensure the long-term viability of cocoa production. There should be tailored support for the old women in the cocoa sector.
- ***Gender-equal training programs***—The disparity in satisfaction levels between genders highlights the need for more inclusive training programs. Tailoring these sessions to meet the specific needs of female farmers can address barriers to their participation and success in cocoa

farming. This approach ensures that training is more equitable and effective, leading to increased productivity and empowerment of women farmers.

- ***Uniform support across systems***— Given the fact that intervention areas were at different levels across systems (CREMA, landscape, MTS), and therefore there are varied satisfaction levels among farmers in different systems (CREMA, landscape, MTS), there is still the need for a standardized approach to support delivery. Ensuring consistency in the quality and type of support across these systems can reduce dissatisfaction and improve the effectiveness of project interventions. This should also b On uniform support: While this is noted. I think it should be also with the understanding that not all the activities are at the same level. Some (landscape, CREMA) were started about 6-10 years ago others are in their 3rd year, hence the level of attention during this phase could not be the same, especially when some were almost at a more stable stage. The CREMAs at Asunafo North, for example, have been adopted in the REDD+ program of Ghana hence ensuring their sustainability. They are already receiving funds under the GCFRP
- ***Enhanced coordination mechanisms***—Effective resource distribution requires streamlined coordination between all project partners, including UNDP, COCOBOD, and others. By clarifying roles and improving communication, overlapping responsibilities can be minimized, leading to more efficient project implementation.

In respect of project delivery, the following recommendations are provided:

- ***Continuous support for economic trees integration in cocoa farms***—The positive economic impact of the project underscores the importance of continuous support for economic trees and alternative livelihood opportunities. Providing incentives, technical assistance, and market access can enhance farmers' incomes and promote diversification in agriculture.
- ***Sustainable cocoa production practices***—Encouraging sustainable production practices through incentive-based schemes such as PES and education can lead to better environmental outcomes. This includes managing water resources, conserving soil, and protecting biodiversity, all of which are essential for the long-term sustainability of cocoa farming.
- ***Expanded capacity building***—Tailoring training programs to meet the diverse needs of the community, including gender inclusivity and youth engagement, ensures that knowledge transfer occurs across generations. This approach supports the development of a robust and sustainable agricultural sector.

Policy recommendations to enhance impacts of the project activities include:

- ***Women's access to land and decision-making***—Advocating for policies that enable women's access to land and enhance their roles in decision-making processes within communities can dismantle traditional barriers to women's empowerment in agriculture as evidenced in this project. This is crucial for achieving gender equality and promoting social inclusion in rural development.
- ***Gender mainstreaming and social inclusion***—Prioritizing gender mainstreaming ensures that project benefits are equitably distributed among all community members, including marginalized groups such as women, youth, and people with disabilities. This approach fosters a more inclusive and cohesive community.

- ***Sustainable funding mechanisms***—Establishing sustainable funding mechanisms, such as Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes, can provide ongoing support for environmental conservation and alternative livelihoods post-project. An effective exit strategy that includes these mechanisms ensures the project's long-term sustainability and impact.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: List of Supporting Documents Reviewed

1. ESP III Project Document
2. Report on Impact Assessment Study of the Modified Taungya System (MTS)
3. Environmental Baseline Report on Cocoa in Ghana
4. Annual Work Packages and Budgets (2021, 2022, 2023)
5. Minutes of Steering Committee Meeting of ESP III (2022, 2023)
6. Training Manual on Sustainable and Climate Friendly Cocoa Production Practices and Biodiversity Conservation in Cocoa landscapes
7. Low Value Grant Agreement: Asunafo North Municipal Cooperative Cocoa Farmers and Marketing Union Limited (2022, 2023)
8. Women's Rights in The Cocoa (2016): OXFAM Discussion Paper
9. Report on the Annual of UNDP ESP III (2021,2022, 2023)
10. Quarterly report of ESP III (2021, 2022,2023)
11. MTS First Quarter Report, 2022
12. Terminal Evaluation Report ESP I &II
13. Combine Delivery Report, 2023
14. Combine Delivery Report, 2022
15. TOR for ESP III

ANNEX 2: List of Stakeholder Interviewed and Site visited

STAKEHOLDERS	DISTRICTS	REGIONS	CONTACTS
Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD)			0244459270
Cocoa Life			0244753484
District Extension Coordinator, District CHED	Tepa	Ashanti	0549616003
Ahafo Anor Cocoa Farmers CoopoUnion	Tepa	Ashanti	0242827720
Traditional Authority	West Akyem	Eastern	0242555143
West Akyem cooperative cocoa farmers and marketing limited	West Akyem	Eastern	0249840179
Solidaridad West Africa	West Akyem	Eastern	0245731423
Solidaridad West Africa	West Akyem	Eastern	023324311
World Vision Ghana	Ewutu Senya	Central	243644830
Cocoa Health and extension division	Ewutu Senya	Central	209382305
CREMA	Wassa East	Ahafo	246728483
CREMA	Wassa East	Ahafo	205136628
CREMA	Wassa East	Ahafo	242027337
CREMA	Wassa East	Ahafo	553567237
CREMA	Wassa East	Ahafo	592591139
UNDP Field Staff	Wassa East	Western	595215847
CREMA Board (Ayum-Asuokow CREMA Executive Chair)	Wassa East	Ahafo	24820986
Agro-Eco	Wassa East	Ahafo	240509821
Ghana National Fire, Goaso Municipal Fire Station	Wassa East	Ahafo	552524609
Asunafo North Anti-Bushfire Volunteer Squad	Wassa East	Ahafo	247975358
Forestey Commission, Regional Office of the Forest Division, Ahafo	Wassa East	Ahafo	243343516
Akyeamehemaa	Wassa East	Ahafo	248540396
Farmer Union's President	Wassa East	Ahafo	548840836
World Vision International	Wassa East	Ashanti	242981576
COCOBOD	Wassa East	Ahafo	240823239
Forestry commission	Wassa East	Ahafo	541743000
MOFA Goaso	Wassa East	Ahafo	24341784
Traditional leaders	Wassa East	Ahafo	

Union Executive TEPA	Wassa East	Ashanti	
Union Executives	Wassa East	Ahafo	
Farmer Union	Asunafo North	Western	240710568
Pra-Subri CREMA	Asunafo North	Western	553103229
Vice president of Pra-Subri Crema	Asunafo North	Western	546547115
Nana Atobra Traditional leader	Asunafo North	Western	540979941
Wassa East District CCP Cooperative cocoa farmers and marketing union limited	Asunafo North	Western	240762424
Steven Adorkor president of farmer unions	Asunafo North	Western	541471213
Cocobod CHED, Bia West	Ahafo North	Western North	243744762
World Vision	Ahafo North	Western North	243725754
Bia West MICL cooperative cocoa farmers and marketing Union	Ahafo North	Western North	247912002
Union President Bia West	Ahafo North	Western North	248600287

ANNEX 3: Survey Farmer Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COCOA FARMERS

Individual Consultant have been contracted by the Environmentally Sustainable Production Practices in Cocoa Landscapes Phase III (ESP Phase III) Project to conduct terminal evaluation and assess the impact of project intervention on beneficiaries. As a beneficiary of the project we want to find out your perception about the project.

A. HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFICATION

Questions to be answered by enumerator		**Answer**	**Codes**
1. What sampling group does the HH belong to?			1=ESP III/ UNDP project beneficiary, 0= Non-ESP III/UNDP project beneficiary
2. GPS coordinates of homestead (if possible):			
3. Respondent's status			1=Consented to interview 2=Refusal (replaced) 3= Non-contact (replaced); 4=Replacement household
4. Name of Enumerator:		A5. Date of Interview:	/ / 2023
5. Village (see code)		A7. District (see code)	
6. Region (see code)			
7. Crop (crop code)			1=Cocoa, 2. Others specify……..

B: HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

8. Age of respondent…….....years 1. 20-30yrs [ ] 2. 31- 40yrs 3. [ ] 41-50yrs- 4. [ ] above 50yrs [ ]
9. Sex of the respondents M [ ] F [ ]
10. Marital status 1. Single [ ] 2. Married [ ]
11. Level of Education 1. No schooling [ ] 2. Primary school [ ] 3. JHS [ ] 4. SSS [ ] 5. Tertiary [ ] 6. Other [ ], specify,……..……
12. What is the size of your household (including yourself)….....person(s).

Number of adults (>18 years)		Number of children < 18 years	
Males	Females	Males	Females

13. For how long have you been farming cocoa?……years
14. What is your farm size? …… (Acres)
15. Do you belong to any Farmer Based Organization/ Farmer Unions (FBO)? 1. Yes [ ] 0. No [ ]
16. If No, why? (Multiple responses allowed) 1= Not interested, 2= No available FBO to join, 3= Strict requirement by FBOs, 4= Other (Specify)……
17. What is the name of the FBO…….
18. What benefits do you derive from membership in this FBO? ***(Multiple Response)*** 1. Inputs procurement [ ] 2. Marketing [ ] 3. Extension Services [ ] 4. Additional Income [ ] 5. Savings and loans schemes [ ] 6. Welfare services [ ] 7. Mutual labour support [ ] 8. Other [ ], specify……

C. FAMER KNOWLEDGE AND PARTICIPATION IN ESP III PROJECT (Administer to only ESP III beneficiaries)

19. The purpose of this module is to assess the respondent's perception about the support they have received from ESP III Project.

Are you aware of UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD Project? Yes ...1 No 0	Have you ever participated in any intervention under UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD project? 1=Yes, 0=No	How were you selected to participate in the project? **CODE 1**	What type of support did you get from the project? **CODE 2**	On a scale of 1-5 how will you rate the support you have received from UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD Project? **CODE 3**	How beneficial has the project support been to your farm/business' goals? **CODE 4**	How beneficial has the UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD intervention been to you and your household to improve your social and economic situation? CODE 4

CODE 1	CODE 2	CODE 3	CODE 4
Volunteered to register ……1 Member of Cocolife Union ……2 Other (Specify)……3	Training on sustainable cocoa production practices ……1 Economic Tree seedlings……2 Access to farm machinery/equipment/input……..3 Cash incentive to MTS farmers……4	Very dissatisfied……1 Not satisfied……..2 Somewhat satisfied…..3 Satisfied…… ….4 Very satisfied……5	Not beneficial at all…….1 Not beneficial .....2 Somewhat beneficial ....3 Beneficial…….4 Very beneficial ……5

D: Training Received Under ESP III Project (Administer to only UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD **(ESP III) beneficiaries)**

20. The purpose of this sub-module is to assess the perception of the respondent about training they received under ESP III project.

Type of training	Did you receive training on	Did you follow the training easily? Yes…1 No….0	Did you learn something new from the training? Yes….1 No…..0	Have you applied the training? Yes…1 No….0	How have you applied training	How has your farm/business/household benefitted from your application of the training? **CODE 5**	What challenges have you faced in applying the training? **CODE 6**
Rapid Plantain Sucker Multiplication techniques							
Lining, Pegging & Planting of both plantain suckers and tree seedlings							
Tree integration in Cocoa Farms							
Food crop harvesting & Post harvest Management							
Climate Change and Cocoa farming							
Wildlife conservation							
Soil conservation							
Water Conservation							
Safe use of agrochemicals							

CODE 5	CODE 6
Not benefitted……1	Inputs not available……1
Increased crop yield……2	Inputs are expensive……2
Increased quality of my produce……3	Requires more labour……3
Reduced post-harvest losses……4	Increases my cost of production……4
Increased price of produce ……5	

E. Perception of Farmers about challenges of UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD **ESP III) project**

21. The purpose of this sub-module is to assess the respondent's perception about how ESP III/UNDP project has helped to relieve their farm/business constraints. Ask them to rate how serious each of the following was to their farm/business after and before ESP III support

	Before	After

Challenges	ESP III support Your rating of challenges **after** ESP III support CODE 7		ESP III Support Your rating of challenge **before** ESP III support CODE 7	
Difficulty of getting preferred seedlings (hybrid)				
Difficulty in getting technical advice or extension services on new technologies				
Persistence illegal logging in Cocoa Farms				
Lack of compliance to Forestry & Wildlife sectors Regulations				
Illegal chainsaw operators are threat to the MTS/CREMAs programme				
Documentations on the agreed terms and conditions (40% for framers) should be made available to farmers.				

CODE 7
Not significant ……1
Somewhat significant ……..……...2
Neutral…….3
Significant…….……..4
Very significant…….……..5

22.What is your perception about the following benefits of UNDP/Mondelez/COCOBOD (ESP III) project to you and your community? (Please tick one per row)

Benefits of ESP III project	**Ratings**		
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**
Improvement in farm incomes			
Community members are now aware of proper resource management			
The ESP III has created jobs in the community			
The ESP III project has helped me to get additional income			
The ESP III is significant in ensuring food security			
Through the ESP III, I have the ability to feed my family.			

23. Kindly provide the best livelihood income earned prior to project implementation, and post project implementation in the table below

Annual Income Amount Before Project Implementation……

Annual Income Amount After Project Implementation …….

E: Social & Environmental Impacts (Administer to only ESP III beneficiaries)

24. Have the ESP project activities resulted in any of the following social and environmental impacts?

No	Impacts	Response		Remarks (describe and indicate any mitigation measures adopted)
		YES	NO	
1	Loss of vegetation cover due to site clearing			
2	Land degradation, soil erosion, and pollution			
3	Pollution and siltation of water bodies			
4	Loss of Wildlife			
5	Increase in bush fires through the slush and burn traditional agricultural systems;			
6	Increase awareness of wildlife conservation			
7	Impact on cultural heritage sites			
8	Impact on any forests/natural reserves			
9	Impact on human settlements?			
10	Excessive use of agrochemicals including pesticides and fertilizers			
11	Conflict over land allotment/project beneficiary selection			
12	Pollution of water sources			
13	Sanitation issues and public health impacts			
14	Influx of workers/migrants leading to conflicts within communities			