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NestlÃ© Income Accelerator Boosts Cocoa Yields

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A new independent evaluation by the KIT Institute has found that NestlÃ©'s Income Accelerator programme is delivering significant improvements in cocoa productivity, women's empowerment, household income and resilience among cocoa-farming families in CÃ´te d'Ivoire.

The report assessed nearly 2,000 participating households during the programme's test-at-scale phase, which began in 2022. According to the findings, cocoa-farming households enrolled in the programme increased cocoa yields by 4 per cent in kilograms per hectare, while yields declined by 16 per cent among comparable households. This represents a 20-percentage-point advantage for participating farmers.

During the challenging 2024/2025 cocoa season, characterised by adverse weather conditions and market volatility, participating households produced an average of 2,116 kilograms of cocoaâ??approximately 500 kilograms more than comparable farming households. The results suggest stronger farm performance and greater resilience among programme participants.

The report also highlighted substantial social gains. The share of women classified as empowered more than doubled, increasing by 114 per cent compared to 2022 levels and outperforming comparable communities by 66 percentage points. Participation in Village Savings and Loans Associations among women increased by 23 percentage points, while food insecurity declined by 8 percentage points. Improvements were also recorded in dietary diversity and ownership of productive assets.

According to the KIT Institute, the programme's integrated approachâ??combining farm support, household support and conditional cash transfersâ??has played a key role in driving these outcomes. Increased adoption of good agricultural practices and greater involvement of women in household financial decision-making contributed to higher cocoa productivity, improved income and stronger household resilience.

The study further revealed that participating households increased their savings by 272 percentage points more than the comparison group. Cocoa income among programme participants rose by 190 per cent, supported by strong gains in cocoa revenues and improved reliability of cash transfer deliveries.

The findings also underscored the importance of income diversification for long-term resilience. While the programme has not yet generated significant increases in diversified income sources, the report noted that it has established the necessary foundations to support future diversification efforts. Additional income streams could help cocoa-farming households better withstand market fluctuations and external shocks, including volatile cocoa prices and changing farm-gate prices.

Commenting on the findings, StÃ©phane Detaille, Head of ESG for Confectionery & Snacking Strategic Business Unit at NestlÃ©, said, "These findings validate our pioneering approach to helping cocoa-farming families in West Africa close the gap to a living income. They show that rewarding effective farm practices, strengthening women's empowerment and building household resilience deliver encouraging results and must go hand-in-hand to deliver lasting impact."

He added that the results would help guide the next phase of the programme, particularly in strengthening income diversification and protection against future shocks as NestlÃ© expands the initiative to reach more cocoa-farming families across the region.

The Income Accelerator programme forms part of NestlÃ©'s broader efforts to support sustainable cocoa sourcing and improve livelihoods within cocoa-growing communities in West Africa.