

Fairtrade Foundation Parliamentary Briefing for Fairtrade Fortnight 2020

Summary – She Deserves a Living Income

The UK chocolate industry is worth at least £4 billion each year, yet despite this, most cocoa farmers live in abject poverty – a typical farmer in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana earns under 75p a day. Women farmers are worse off, working longer hours and earning less. Just 25% of women cocoa farmers own their land, and working about a third more than men when you take childcare and domestic chores into account.

As a nation of chocolate lovers – consuming more per person than any other European country – the UK could play a powerful role in bringing about change to ensure cocoa farmers get to live a dignified life and receive a living income. You can find out more in our new report, [*The Invisible Women Behind our Chocolate*](#).

We call on the UK Government to:

- 1. Play a leadership role and join the Alliance on Living Incomes in Cocoa**, a new global initiative, by the end of 2020.
- 2. Support Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) in cocoa**, that encourages the UK chocolate industry to enact mandatory due diligence on human rights, child labour and the effects of cocoa production on the environment.
- 3. Make sure interventions on the ground reach women**. DFID should put achieving living incomes and wages at the heart of its Economic Development Strategy. DFID should also design and implement gender-sensitive programmes that would improve the economic empowerment of women cocoa farmers.

Background

In 2019, the Fairtrade Foundation launched a new campaign, *She Deserves*, to achieve living incomes for cocoa farmers in West Africa, especially women. This year's Fairtrade Fortnight (24 February – 8 March) is again fighting for the livelihoods of these farmers.

The campaign made a huge noise. There were 4,000 campaigner events reaching one million people, 10,000 new supporters joining us on our journey, and businesses and MPs making their voices heard on the issue.

Meanwhile, on 7 August 2019, Côte d'Ivoire's Independence Day, Fairtrade campaigners joined Fairtrade Foundation staff at 10 Downing Street to hand in a petition with more than 50,000 signatures. It called for Prime Minister Boris Johnson to back cocoa farmers fighting for a fairer deal through UK-funded aid projects, business and human rights legislation, and by joining international efforts that unite governments, chocolate companies and civil society to achieve living incomes.

What do we mean by a 'living income'?

In the UK, we are all familiar with the term 'living wage', a living income is the same concept applied to self-employed and smallholder farmers. Simply put, a living income should cover the costs of food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transport, clothing and other essential needs, including provision for unexpected events. Studies in cocoa communities have estimated the living income to be approximately \$2.50 (around £1.86) per person per day in Côte d'Ivoire and \$2.16 (around £1.60) per person per day in Ghana.

The key challenges in cocoa

- **Poverty:** In Ghana and Côte D'Ivoire, which account for 60% of the world's cocoa production, a typical cocoa farmer lives on under 75p day. That is below the World Bank's extreme poverty line of \$1.90 (about £1.40) per day.
- **And it's worse for women:** When considering farming, household and other non-farm tasks, women's working hours exceed men's by almost 30%.
- But in Côte d'Ivoire, women carry out nearly 70% of the labour involved in cocoa farming and yet earn less than a quarter of the income generated. In Ghana, female-headed households earn around a third less income from cocoa than male-headed ones.
- **Gender inequality:** About a quarter of cocoa farms in West Africa are women-run. But just 25% of women farmers in Côte D'Ivoire own land. They often face barriers in securing legal title for their land, and without that are often excluded from saving and credit systems, access to training, co-operative membership and certification schemes.

Recommendations to the UK Government

As the UK begins negotiating trade deals outside of the EU, the Government has an important opportunity to pursue the gold standard in 'trade for development' policy and support the world's poorest people to escape poverty. We are asking the UK Government to make sure our trade with developing countries puts poverty reduction first and delivers living incomes. We have three more specific asks for the UK Government below:

1. Play a leadership role

We are asking the UK Government to support a global initiative of governments and businesses to enable living incomes in supply chains, starting with cocoa. **The Alliance on Living Incomes in Cocoa** now has the support of the German, Dutch, Swiss and Belgian governments, as well as a growing number of cocoa traders and companies, certifiers and CSOs, including Fairtrade. The Alliance aims to contribute to systemic change in the cocoa sector to ensure that farmers receive a living income.

We encourage the UK Government to join this international initiative by the end of 2020 and then work to take collaborative action to address the challenges facing women cocoa farmers, including the invisible women this report has identified.

2. Support Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) in cocoa

Fairtrade members based in the EU are calling for legislation that requires all companies placing cocoa or cocoa products on the EU market to enact mandatory due diligence on human rights, child labour and the effects of cocoa production on the environment. We want to see the EU begin a consultative process around due diligence regulation on cocoa this year with a draft regulation to be published no later than the end of 2020.

Though Britain is leaving the EU, we would like to see the UK Government bring forward HRDD regulations that align with those proposed in the EU.

3. Make sure interventions on the ground reach women

Ambitious goals to enable cocoa farmers to achieve a living income will fall short without specific interventions to reach women cocoa farmers.

We are asking for DFID to put achieving living incomes and wages at the heart of its Economic Development Strategy, supporting programmes and businesses that take living income seriously.

[In our report](#), we set out detailed suggestions for how DFID, working with the governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, and the chocolate industry, could **design and implement gender-sensitive programmes that would help enhance women's economic empowerment.**

How can MPs support the campaign?

- **Work with us to raise the issue of living incomes in parliament**
We would be delighted to work with you to raise the issues associated with our campaign in Parliament, via debates, Parliamentary Questions and Select Committee inquiries. You can also get involved in the Fairtrade APPG, which will be working on this issue. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to take these ideas forward.
- **Attend our local events in your constituency**
If you were unable to attend our event in Parliament, a Fairtrade community group is likely to be running an event in your constituency. You can find and get in touch with your local groups on our website.
- **Show your support on social media**
Please share content and show your support using the hashtags #SheDeserves and #FairtradeFortnight. We can also support you if you would like to write articles or blogs on the theme of the campaign.

A full report is available on the Fairtrade Foundation website – [fairtrade.org.uk/What-is-Fairtrade/Policy-briefings-and-reports](https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/What-is-Fairtrade/Policy-briefings-and-reports)

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