



# Cocoa Nutrition Innovation Program

## Company Learning Brief: The Hershey Company

### 1. Why is nutrition important for The Hershey Company?

Nutrition is key to the Hershey Company's cocoa sustainability strategy, *Cocoa For Good*, particularly to advance the objectives of nourishing children and building prosperous communities.

Hershey's corporate strategy focuses on farmers and their communities but also recognizes the importance of intervening at the household level. Improving the nutrition, health and incomes of farmers and their families, can make it easier for them to undertake their daily activities. To help nourish children, the engagement of parents is essential, both in terms of understanding the need but also in securing access to nutritious foods.



### 2. Description of Interventions

The Hershey nutrition intervention under the CNIP has reached out to a total of 630 farmers in cocoa growing communities throughout 2018 and 2019. The program specifically targeted females with 81% participation from women with

also a strong interest and engagement from males. The nutrition program is one of the interventions used to address challenges identified in cocoa communities and households and as such it was delivered alongside regular farmer training and income diversification programming.

Through the CNIP and the testing of supply-side interventions such as horticultural production and animal rearing, Hershey is tackling improving nutrition from both demand and supply angles - helping households to provide better nutrition for their children, for themselves and for their communities.

The nutrition model Hershey tested had several key components. On the demand side, farmers received a **behaviour change communications-focused training** on dietary diversity and benefits of key food groups for an hour, once a week for seven weeks. Alongside this household level intervention, a **school-based training** was developed to assist children in learning more about better nutrition and improved diets.

**On the supply side**, farmers were encouraged to increase the supply of nutritious foods available within their own communities, particularly by **experimenting with new crops (orange flesh sweet potato and vegetables)** on demonstration plots and learning about animal rearing opportunities (rabbits and grasscutter). These activities were coupled together **with financial and life skills trainings** on group management, conflict resolution, household and farm budgeting, savings and entrepreneurship, which went deeper than what they would have already received as part of the Farmer Business School program. The life skills training was important in ensuring their success in their new livelihood endeavours supplying nutritious foods in the community.

### 3. What has Hershey learned from implementing nutrition programs under the CNIP?

The nutrition program under CNIP has allowed Hershey and ECOM to learn how nutrition and other social programs can successfully be layered into existing structures and programming, which is essential to sustainability and scale up.

Through the CNIP, Hershey has learned that their supplier, ECOM's, **platform and delivery mechanism for trainings via field trainers can be leveraged successfully to deliver social programming.** Prior to the nutrition program, trainings from ECOM focused primarily on cocoa (and other crop) farming and productivity with limited information on social issues. The intervention model provided evidence that the training platform and delivery structure can be used to deliver programming in diverse issue areas and/or for further scale up of the nutrition program itself.

Furthermore, previous programming has been delivered to the cocoa farmer directly but this intervention model has been the first attempt to engage broader within the community, especially to directly reach females in households. **The training delivery mechanism showed the ability to target and train a broader community base.** Also, there was greater community buy-in for the program as it was nonconventional in terms of both content and approach.

Trainers were capacitated to view activities through a nutrition lens, which allowed ECOM to **provide more nutrition sensitive trainings and activities as a result.** Beyond nutrition content, there was a large focus on improved facilitation skills of trainers, needed for communicating behaviour change programming.



However, the implementation was not without its challenges and it was recognized that **it was highly ambitious to attempt to include trainings on horticultural and animal production, as well as financial and life skills training as part of the intervention model within the limited time period.** Adequate time is needed to capacitate facilitators, test training approaches and build in additional technical expertise.

In addition, access to markets needs to go beyond the stimulation of demand; new 'sales' channels need to be developed, and produce needs to be able to be aggregated.

Finally, while participants were eager and able to grow the newly introduced nutritious crops, **the more significant capital outlays for animal rearing may prove to be more challenging for some.**



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### 4. Looking forward | Recommendations for sustainable scaling

As it is clear that these components are necessarily interlinked with nutrition, further work needs to be done to successfully streamline and enhance this approach. Hershey recognizes that integrating nutrition in livelihood diversification and income generating programming helps reach objectives cocoa companies are concerned with, but also assists farmers in their goals to provide for their families as well; it is via these pathways that nutrition programming can be delivered to communities in a sustainable and scalable way.

*'For the nutrition program to be successful and sustainable, we have to tackle it in a holistic manner from both the demand and supply side and be flexible in programming to meet the farmers' needs.'*

*- Tawiah Agyarko-Kwarteng,  
Sustainable Sourcing Representative, West Africa,  
The Hershey Company*

