

Mars Chocolate Gender Action Plan in Vision for Change Program (V4C) Côte d'Ivoire

Basis of Action Plan: The gender assessment of V4C carried out by Margaret Greene (GreeneWorks) in June 2013 is the basis of Mars Chocolate's understanding of the gender gaps existing within its Vision for Change (V4C) program. Mars reviewed the assessment and its recommendations from July through September 2013 and determined that to address gender oriented gaps highlighted in the assessment, it would be necessary to carry out a series of interventions as noted here:

- Train ICRAF implementers and others closely involved with V4C (Mars associates and other implementers) to be sensitized to gender issues and to better recognize and address gender inequalities within their work assignments.
 - At least 25 staff and implementers will be trained in gender issues by the end of 2014
- Be more intentional with respect to including more women within various cocoa training programs including
 - Training of women within the basic Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) approach
 - The participation rate of women in V4C GAP training will be more than doubled from <10% to at least 20% by the end of 2015.
 - Training of women Cocoa Village Center (CVC) operators (CVC's are a type of farmer business training center)
 - The participation rate of women in CVC training will increase from <5% to at least 20% during the second cohort training taking place in early 2016.
- Better integrate women's productivity roles (diversifying beyond cocoa) into the community development pillar
 - We will further prioritize women's activities within community development plans:
 - From a base of supporting 5 Women's Income Generating Activities in 2013, we will increase this by supporting an additional 5 IGA programs in 2014.
 - We will initiate crop diversification / food security activities within women's groups of 25 communities in 2014 and convert at least half of these to IGA's during 2015.
 - Within the Community Development Pillar of V4C, we will achieve at least a 25% participation rate by women in all committees and subcommittees (in total)
- Use M&E to strengthen the program and track the participation of women.
 - We will monitor the income of women involved in community based women's projects (IGA's)
 - We will monitor the attendance of girls in primary schools
 - We will monitor the number of women in leadership positions within the communities and also measure their influence in the communities
 - M&E results will be evaluated with the implementation partner and additional gender experts.
- Disseminate learnings and contribute to transforming the cocoa sector through advocacy at the national and sector levels
 - We will work in conjunction with the WCF Cocoa Action program to maximize the industry alignment on gender approaches and the policy impact within Cote d'Ivoire on gender

Upon completion of the original gender assessment and the internal review, it was further noted that in order for Mars to carry out the recommended actions, it would be necessary to identify an individual or individuals with gender expertise within Côte d'Ivoire who possessed the local understanding of gender related issues and the capacity to work with Mars to carry out the required actions. A landscape analysis and capacity assessment of organizations having gender expertise within Côte d'Ivoire was carried out by the World Cocoa Foundation, through the Leland Fellow and gender expert, Ms. Elizabeth Kiewisch, who completed the analysis in April. The desire to include the information from the capacity assessment in its longer term gender response planning caused Mars to delay the publication of the Action plan from our originally intended date of 30 April 2014.

Action Plan Perspective: Mars views the assessment of the Vision for Change program, completed in 2013, as phase 1 of a multi-phase and multi-year gender program. Addressing gender in the Vision for Change program and advocating for gender oriented change beyond the confines of the V4C program will require activities that are likely to take place within the following phases:

- Phase 1: Carry out and publish gender assessment of the Vision for Change Program. (completed during 2013)
- Phase 2: Mobilize the necessary resources to address recommendations made in the assessment. Completed by the end of 2014.
- Phase 3: Carry out the actions with the resources identified within Phase 2. Initiated during December 2014 and carried out in full during 2015.
- Phase 4: Assess the impact of the actions carried out in Phase 3. Ongoing through 2015 and into 2016.
- Phase 5: Scale up the actions that are found to be effective during the assessment of Phase 4. From 2016 and beyond.

It is noted that transparent reporting and advocacy for women within the cocoa sector of Côte d'Ivoire and beyond are cross-cutting actions that will be carried out through all phases of the work.

The action plan presented here is the Phase 2 action plan – identifying the resources within Côte d'Ivoire to carry out the actions recommended from the Vision for Change assessment and defining the actions that will be carried out by Mars, the Vision for Change Implementer (ICRAF) and by any third party partners who participate in the effort.

Action Plan Steps:

- Carry out landscape analysis and gender expertise capacity assessment of local Ivorian institutions in order to determine best available partner(s) to meet V4C gender objectives.
 - Initiated in November 2013
 - Completed in April 2014 (carried out by E. Kiewisch of WCF)
 - Assessment delivered to Mars on 5 May 2014
- Evaluate landscape analysis / gender capacity report to determine priority approach to potential partners – including input of WCF and GreeneWorks expertise
 - Initiated in May 2014
 - To be completed by end July 2014
- Determine potential to integrate Mars efforts in V4C gender approach with WCF Cocoa Action Community workstream activities related to gender. Also evaluate opportunity to work with new WCF gender specialist posted to Côte d'Ivoire.
 - Initiated in June 2014
 - Ongoing through 2014
- Identify focal point for Mars in Côte d'Ivoire who will serve as strategic point of contact between Mars and gender experts
 - Carry out evaluation from June thru Sept
 - Focal point decision expected by Sept 2014
- Interview potential partners and discuss scope of work for Vision for Change work.
 - Carry out from July through October 2014
- Identify and confirm partnership with local group(s) to carry out work.
 - Partner decision made by October 2014
- Agree actions and timing for interventions related to gender with partner and V4C.
 - Detailed Phase 3 intervention plan available by December 2014
- Field work activities initiated in Côte d'Ivoire
 - During December 2014
- Continue Advocacy with other institutions in cocoa sector to improve activities targeted towards women.
 - Ongoing over life of program