



CACAO-LED DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Despite strong global demand for cacao, producers often struggle to capture the crop's full market value. Lutheran World Relief works with smallholder cacao farmers in Latin America¹ to improve their livelihoods by maximizing their profitability and promoting sustainable agroforestry in the region.

Lutheran World Relief's extensive experience in the cacao supply chain has afforded us the opportunity to serve as a member of the International Cocoa Organization's (ICCO) Consultative Board and implement quality development programming that:

- Improves the quality and profitability of cacao
- Establishes long term private sector partnerships
- Provides agriculture extension through an innovative mobile platform
- Creates opportunities for youth
- Promotes gender equality and empowerment of women
- Promotes sustainable agroforestry

¹ In Latin America and the Caribbean, Lutheran World Relief works with cacao farmers in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, Peru and Haiti, who speak a variety of languages and practice a multitude of religions.



PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS

Lutheran World Relief works with the specialty cocoa industry to develop quality and sensory standards and introduce protocols to facilitate greater communication and transparency. For example, in collaboration with ZOTO, the Cocoa of Excellence Program and Guittard Chocolate, we have defined the flavor diversity of cocoa in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador through the **Regional Cocoa Flavor Map**.² This map helps cacao producers better connect with buyers of fine and specialty cocoa to quickly identify the sources of the cocoa flavors, profiles and characteristics they are seeking. Lutheran World Relief, along with the International Chocolate Awards and the Meso-American Association of Fine Cacao and Chocolate, organized Central America's first cocoa competition to recognize and stimulate the production of fine cacao in the region.

Lutheran World Relief is an active member of the **Cocoa Standards Working Group**, which sets and enforces uniform standards for cocoa production and trade. Through the working group, we collaborate closely with Tcho Chocolate, Equal Exchange, Guittard Chocolates and ECOM. Lutheran World Relief also links cacao farmers with industry organizations, such as Chocolate Makers, Taza Chocolate, Theo Chocolates, Pitch Dark Chocolates, Lake Champlain Chocolates and ZOTO.

² <http://cocoaflavormap.cacaomovil.com/>

Since 1945, Lutheran World Relief has been successfully tackling poverty in some of the world's hardest-to-reach places. We provide relief in emergencies and help families restore their lives. We partner with communities to build and grow rural economies that are beneficial to the poorest farmer. By investing in people, their skills, and strengthening their ability to adapt, we help them build the resilience they need to thrive.

MOBILE COCOA

For smallholder farmers in Central America, geographic isolation makes it difficult to learn how to grow quality cacao. Lutheran World Relief developed **Cacao Movil** (Mobile Cocoa),³ a smartphone application that provides farmers access to a comprehensive guide to cacao cultivation, covering subjects from planting and pruning, to grafting and treating plant diseases.

Mobile Cocoa is free for download in Spanish and has been distributed to more than **4,000 farmers** in Central America as of summer 2018. There is a version available in Haitian Creole and, for Peruvian users, the app includes real-time updates on market prices and weather alerts.

YOUTH

In El Salvador, where young people face daily dangers of violent gang activity and intense pressures to migrate due to lack of access to education and high unemployment, Lutheran World Relief launched a diploma program designed to prepare young people to be the next generation of entrepreneurs in the country's burgeoning cocoa industry. The Diploma in Cocoa Management program — offered at the Universidad de Oriente, known locally as UNIVO — integrates training in cocoa cultivation, business management and life skills, like decision making, problem solving and critical thinking. More than **100 students** have graduated from the program in 2018.⁴

GENDER

Lutheran World Relief is integrating gender into our cacao programs to address inequality and ensure that men and women have equal opportunities to benefit from the sector. These efforts have demonstrated that successfully integrating gender equity into the policies and practices of farmer organizations generates positive economic outcomes for the cooperative and member households.

In Honduras, for example, women's groups successfully advocated with local authorities to approve over \$81,000 in public funding for 165 women-led projects benefitting an estimated **22,872 people**. Additionally, 56 rural savings and loan cooperatives changed internal policies and practices to facilitate women's access to financial services. This gender-focused programming was responsible for doubling the yield productivity of women cocoa farmers between 2012 and 2015.



Williams Saravia and his wife, Margarita Sarai Parada, proudly show the processed cocoa they sell in their hometown Los Jicaros, just outside of San Miguel, El Salvador. Williams learned how to process cocoa through the Lutheran World Relief Diploma in Cocoa Management program. Williams was thinking about migrating because of the lack of employment opportunities, but now thinks about expanding his own cocoa business, which involves his entire family. (photo by Oscar Leiva for LWR)

SUSTAINABLE AGROFORESTRY

The establishment of agroforestry systems with cacao cultivation creates a sustainable and profitable balance between farmer's economic needs and biodiversity conservation. With careful planning, trees grown in a cacao agroforestry system can provide food, fodder, shade, soil and water protection and conservation, as well as income for farmers, simultaneously increasing food security and overall farm resilience and stability. Lutheran World Relief promotes socially and environmentally sustainable production practices that conserve wildlife, ecosystems, water resources, and that are also socially equitable and economically viable. In El Salvador, as part of the Cocoa Alliance project, we established 74 individual and group cacao nursery sites. As a result, more than **507,000 cocoa trees** have been planted.

The success of Lutheran World Relief's cacao programming is made possible through generous contributions from ECOM Atlantic, Howard G. Buffett Foundation, Inter-American Development Bank, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of State, and the generosity of individuals and Lutheran congregations in the U.S. In 2019, we are launching a 5-year regional cocoa project focused on market-access and cocoa research in partnership with TechnoServe and with funding from USDA – Food for Progress.

³ <http://cacaomovil.com/>

⁴ The Diploma in Cocoa Management program is linked to the Cocoa Alliance project (consortium led by CRS) and funded by USAID and the Howard G. Buffett Foundation



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