

Final Performance Evaluation

Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana's Cocoa-Growing Communities (MOCA)



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Final Performance Evaluation of *Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana's Cocoa-Growing Communities (MOCA)* Project
Final Evaluation Report

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This report presents the findings of the final evaluation of the *Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana's Cocoa-Growing Communities* (MOCA) project. IMPAQ International, LLC (IMPAQ) conducted fieldwork for this independent evaluation from July 15 to 26, 2019 in collaboration with the project team and stakeholders, and prepared the evaluation report according to the terms specified in its contract with the United States Department of Labor. IMPAQ would like to express sincere thanks to all the parties involved for their support and valuable contributions.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAP	Community Action Plan
CAPC	Community Action Plan Committee
CL	Child Labor
CLFZ	Child Labor Free Zones
CLM	Child Labor Monitoring
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
COCOBOD	Cocoa Board of Ghana
COTVET	Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
CVET	Community-based Vocational Education and Training
DA/MMDA	District Assembly; Officially the “Metropolitan, Municipal, District Assembly”
DPMS	Direct Participant Monitoring System
ECLIC	Eliminating Child Labor in Cocoa project – USDOL-funded project implemented in Côte d’Ivoire by International Cocoa Initiative Foundation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAWU	General Agricultural Workers Union
GHC	Ghana Cedi (national currency)
GoG	Government of Ghana
IABA	Integrated Area Based Approach (towards child labor free zones) under Ghana NPA2
IGA	Income Generating Activities
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
IMPAQ	IMPAQ International, LLC
ILO	International Labour Organization
JMK	JMK Consulting Group
KII	Key Informant Interview
LOP	Life of Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCP	Master Craft Person
MELR	Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations
MFS	Model Farm School
MOCA	Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana’s Cocoa-Growing Communities Project
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan (of the Municipal/District Assembly)
MTE	Midterm Evaluation
NBSSI	National Board for Small Scale Industries
NPA2	National Plan of Action Phase II for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Ghana (2017-2021)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NVTI	National Vocational Training Institute
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
OIC	Opportunities Industrialization Centres
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
SO	Supporting Outcome
TOR	Terms of Reference

TOT	Training of Trainers
TPR	Technical Progress Report
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor
WI	Winrock International

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Description and Evaluation Background

In September 2010, the Ministers of Labor of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, industry representatives, and the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) came together to reaffirm their commitment to eradicating the Worst Forms of Child Labor (WFCL) in the cocoa sector, by signing a Declaration of Joint Action to Support the Implementation of the Harkin-Engel Protocol. A Framework of Action accompanied the Declaration, under which the partners committed to take action to reduce child labor (CL) and WFCL in the cocoa sectors of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, with the specific goal of reducing the WFCL by 70 percent by 2020. The USDOL, the Government of Ghana (GoG), and other partners have committed significant funds to activities related to this Framework, including funding the Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana's Cocoa-Growing Communities (MOCA) project, the focus of this report.

In November 2015, the USDOL Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded \$4.5 million to Winrock International (WI) to implement MOCA. The MOCA project began on November 6, 2015 and will end on November 5, 2019. MOCA targets 40 cocoa-growing communities in the Ashanti and Western regions of Ghana for project services. Cocoa is Ghana's third most important commodity after oil and gold; but the industry faces numerous challenges, and poverty among farmers is widespread. The Ashanti and Western regions have particularly high cocoa production, and pervasive CL and hazardous CL practices were reported there in 2015.

MOCA's goal is to reach 5,080 participants (50% female), including 3,200 youth ages 15–17 years (approximately 80 from each of 40 communities), 1,600 households (approximately 40 households per community), and 280 community leaders (approximately seven per community). The overall project objective is to reduce the incidence of CL and hazardous CL in the project's 40 target cocoa-growing communities.

MOCA focuses on achieving four main outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Increased prioritization of CL by community and external stakeholders
- Outcome 2: Increased acceptable work opportunities among beneficiary youth 15 through 17 years of age
- Outcome 3: Beneficiary youth knowledge, attitudes, and skills increased to improve employability¹
- Outcome 4: Increased income in beneficiary households

In June 2019, ILAB contracted IMPAQ International, LLC (IMPAQ), to conduct performance evaluations of technical assistance projects in Paraguay, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana. This report presents the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the final evaluation of the MOCA project. The purpose of this report is to:

¹ ILAB has transitioned to using the term *participant* rather than *beneficiary* to refer to direct recipients of support, however the report uses the term *beneficiary* when quoting project documentation.

1. Assess if the project has achieved its objectives, identify the challenges encountered in doing so, and analyze the driving factors for these challenges.
2. Assess the intended and unintended effects of the project.
3. Assess lessons learned and emerging practices from the project and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in Ghana and in projects designed under similar conditions or target sectors.
4. Assess which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.

The report provides evidence to inform decision-making, understanding of lessons learned, and recommendations for future projects. The evaluation team assessed the project through the perspectives of a diverse range of stakeholders who participated in, and were intended to benefit from, the project's interventions. The team conducted semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and observations during field visits in July 2019. The team complemented these findings with a document review, including project monitoring data, to address the evaluation questions identified in the Terms of Reference (TOR). Below, we summarize the key findings, lessons learned, promising practices, and recommendations.

Key Findings

Relevance. MOCA's target age group of youth ages 15–17 in cocoa growing communities was appropriate given the high prevalence of CL among this age group in the target districts. MOCA's integrated area-based approach was well aligned with the country's National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Phase 2 (2017-2021). Overall, the design was logically coherent and the project's key strategies were relevant in the context of disadvantaged cocoa growing communities. However, the ILAB Funding Opportunity Announcement did not include a CL monitoring component as an explicit part of the project, which would have been valuable to ensure community-based systems are in place to identify children in CL beyond the project's direct participants, and refer those children to support services.

MOCA support has proven to be highly relevant to the needs of its communities, including community leaders, families with children at risk of CL, and especially to female youth and adult women household members. The project has also served District Assemblies' (DAs) needs to reach communities and support community development and CL prevention. Women's empowerment strategies were well developed, brought significant social benefits, and improved economic resilience among women. The vocational training options were relevant to the interests of girls, but were not sufficiently sensitive to the needs of male youth (boys), who represented a minority of vocational training enrollments, for a variety of reasons.

Effectiveness and Perceived Impact. MOCA delivered the majority of its interventions as planned, and attained most of its outcome targets. The major challenge encountered was in reaching the original target number of youth to be assisted, in the face of youth outmigration and the unmet assumption that two eligible youth could be identified per household. Identifying eligible youth turned out to require a larger number of assisted households than originally planned, stretching the project's resources.

The project successfully mobilized Community Action Plan committees (CAPCs) in all 40 communities, which have overseen implementation of tangible community improvements—including school equipment and improved access to drinking water—as well as awareness-raising activities addressing a variety of CL and occupational safety and health (OSH) issues. These activities brought demonstrated improvements in awareness of acceptable work for

youth, as well as infrastructure improvements that helped reduce the risks of CL. The linkage of the CAPCs with the DAs successfully enabled elements of the Community Action Plans (CAPs) to be adopted in the district Medium Term Development Plans (MTDPs).

MOCA enrolled some 2,806 youth in six-month community-based vocational education and training (CVET) and agriculture based vocational training, delivered by local skilled master craft persons (MCPs) and Model Farm School (MFS) facilitators. MOCA's graduates in dressmaking, tailoring, hairdressing, bakery, carpentry, and welding reported being more self-confident as a result of the training, and are now pursuing further training, self-employment, and paid employment pathways. However, despite some outstanding success stories, the six-month duration of vocational training has not permitted most youth participants to transition directly to self-employment or paid employment post-graduation. Rather, a large number are pursuing skills upgrading to enable them to have the level of skills required to set up business. The agriculture-based MFS training, representing around 14 percent of youth participants (most of whom were in school), introduced students to a variety of sustainable agricultural techniques and brought a modest income for the participants from produce sales—providing a 'taster' experience for youth to consider a future in agriculture.

The women's Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) model was among the most successful and sustainable of the interventions, bringing economic and social empowerment to 1,970 women from project-supported households and wider community members. The VSLA groups are thriving, creating substantial savings and modest sources of income their members are using for children's education costs and investments in existing and new businesses. Women's livelihood diversification—including cocoa seedling production and a range of promising non-agricultural activities—met with some success; but more time is needed for these fledgling economic activities to reach maturity and provide substantial incomes.

The combined effects of the project's interventions have seen a decrease in CL from 66 percent to 55.7 percent among assisted youth, according to April 2019 project monitoring. Validation of this data was ongoing at the time of writing (September 2019). The continued engagement in CL of a substantial proportion of participants appears to be due to the number of vocational trainees who continued to resort to CL either: (1) to earn income for themselves during their training, or (2) to save for further skills training and apprenticeships.

Efficiency. The strategies adopted by the project's management enabled systematic and well-coordinated implementation. Project management was generally flexible and responded in a timely manner to the contextual circumstances and arising issues. However, the project lacked the time and resources to diversify the provision of community vocational training, as was recommended by the Mid-term Evaluation (MTE). The wide reach of the project brought extensive benefits, but a smaller scale might have enabled more intensive monitoring of activities by the local coordinating staff. The MOCA team has put the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data to good use in adjusting the course of activities. However, the project continued to face challenges with the externally managed database—leading to the evaluation team's conclusion that the contractor modality for the database and project monitoring data production has not been optimally efficient.

Sustainability. MOCA's overarching sustainability strategy of increasing community prioritization of CL through enabling community ownership of the interventions has laid a solid foundation for sustaining the results. The project has also brought sustainable benefits for district service providers in their capacity to meet community needs.

A major legacy of MOCA is that community leaders' and members' awareness of CL and farming hazards is now well-established. The communities' capacity to mobilize resources from the district funds for CL and other community development needs has favorable prospects for

continuing beyond the project's end. However, among some of the CAPCs initiated by MOCA members are uncertain that they will continue to operate after the project closes.

CVET participation has placed many youth on a path to paid employment or viable self-employment, although the sustainability prospects for the community-based six-month local training model are mixed. The MCPs are willing to continue to provide training, but this is not likely to be sustained without external support. Women's VSLA groups, in contrast, have high prospects for sustainability without external support, and even appear likely to expand. The demonstrated skills and confidence of adult female community members to engage in a variety of income generating activities is gradually improving their economic resilience.

The evaluation team found the exit strategy to be well planned, including discussion meetings with each community to encourage them to continue updating their action plans, as well as exit meetings with each district assembly and with the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) to discuss their ongoing roles in supporting project initiatives. It might have been beneficial if the strategy had included a plan for experience sharing with national stakeholders and a range of parallel CL projects.

MOCA's implementation provides useful lessons for future CL projects in Ghana's cocoa growing areas. The project demonstrated technical expertise and resourcefulness resulting in promising practices. As described in the body of the report, the lessons and promising practices emerging from the evaluation are:

Lessons Learned

1. Youth participant target setting must take careful account of family and population sizes and youth migration patterns.
2. Programs need to offer a diverse range of youth vocational skills training geared towards both existing and emerging market demands.
3. Vocational training interventions for youth engaged in, or at risk of, CL need to be gender sensitive, meeting the interests and needs of both boys and girls who are potential trainees. In communities where youth at risk of CL are already working, alternative gender-responsive services (such as work-based OSH interventions) are needed to reach those who may not wish to engage in vocational training.
4. MOCA's CVET model for youth delivered by local tradespersons is viable provided that trainee fees are provided to the MCPs and that intensive support for quality control is available through the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) or an external project. The integration of soft skills (marketing, financial management) as well as sexual and reproductive health training are also critical to the effectiveness and relevance of the training. Additionally, the duration of vocational skills training period needs to be longer than the MOCA-provided six months to enable graduates' transition to acceptable work.

Promising Practices

1. MOCA's engagement with district level government partners—specifically the District Assemblies, Cocoa Board of Ghana, Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), NBSSI, and NVTI—strengthened the quality of technical support and contributed to the interventions' sustainability.
2. The MOCA VSLA model with open membership is an effective approach to strengthen women's economic resilience in poor communities.

3. The CAPCs are an effective community-based approach for prioritizing action on child labor, promoting community ownership and the capacity to leverage community and district support for child labor initiatives.
4. Leveraging complementary support for agricultural diversity training by agricultural college interns, funded by MOCA through its Robert D. and Elizabeth Havener Fellowship, strengthens agricultural extension and provides role models for youth and adult women farmers.

Recommendations

The evaluation team's recommendations comprise: (1) those directed to WI and ILAB to enhance MOCA's achievements prior to its closure, and (2) those intended to inform future projects.

Enhance MOCA's Achievements

1. Prior to MOCA's closure, ILAB and WI should jointly convene a meeting for MOCA to share experience and lessons learned with the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR), other relevant ministries, and other major CL projects supported by ILAB—including the International Labor Organization (ILO) CARING Gold Mining Project² and the CARE International/Olam Ghana "Adwuma Pa" project. Such a meeting is tentatively planned between MOCA and the "Adwuma Pa" project that focuses on empowering adult women and girls in the cocoa supply chain. Other projects and the government would benefit from such exchanges of experience to ensure the benefits of MOCA's experience are not lost.
2. **Identify follow-up support for CVET graduates.** As part of MOCA's exit strategy, project management should develop plans with the DAs, the NBSSI and CAPCs to provide ongoing mentoring and advisory services to support MOCA trainees to graduate to acceptable paid work.

Future Projects Focused on Cocoa Growing Communities in Ghana

3. **Match project scale to human and financial resources.** Ensure that the scale of projects with direct participant interventions is matched to available project staffing and financial resources, by setting realistic and attainable participant targets and community numbers. This will enable more intensive interventions in the delivery of vocational skills and soft skills training, provision of adequate self-employment start-up kits and household income-generating activities (IGA) supports, and more intensive services to promote youth transition into acceptable work.
4. **Replicate Community Action Plan Committees for child labor.** Future projects and DAs should replicate CAPCs as the focal point for mobilizing action on CL, whether in agriculture or other sectors.
 - Continue the inclusion of tangible community development initiatives supported by community development grants, as well as CL awareness and CL monitoring within the CAPs.

² ILO CARING (Convening Actors to Develop and Implement Strategies to Reduce Child Labour and Improve Working Conditions in Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining) Project

- Identify incentives for voluntary membership, such as recognition of community service awards.
 - CAPCs should be built on mandated community structures, such as the Unit Committee or the Child Protection Committee, with the assembly member or unit committee as the focal point for mobilizing funding for CAPs via the DAs.
 - Extend the responsibilities of the CAPCs, in coordination with the DAs, to include CL monitoring, as set out in Ghana's NPA2 2017-2021.
5. **Build capacity among the relevant officers at the district level.** Future projects should include district capacity building (e.g. among education, planning, social welfare, NBSSI, and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice Officers) as a specific project outcome to support CL-responsive education, awareness, and livelihoods towards the project interventions' sustainability.
6. **Diversify youth skills training and intensify support for transition to work.** Future projects should introduce a number of adjustments to MOCA's vocational training model, to improve employability outcomes for youth trainees engaged in or at high risk of CL:
- Increase the diversity of youth skills training by conducting forward-looking labor market assessments based on existing and emerging skills demands and the perspectives of district economic development officers, as well as community perspectives.
 - Support a diverse range of training modalities, including through local MCPs as well as through district or township training facilities.
 - Limit the number of training places in any one skills area relative to the population size, to avoid flooding the local market.
 - Provide modest training allowances and/or integrate an IGA related to the skills in the training week, such as allocating one day per week, to prevent the return of out-of-school youth to CL.
 - Increase the duration of CVET to one year of support.
 - Intensify services to support training graduates' transition to paid employment or self-employment, partnering directly with agencies such as the NBSSI, Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET), and the private sector.
7. **Ensure child labor interventions are gender-sensitive, relevant, and attractive for both boys and girls.**
- Given the likelihood of the persistence of gender-stereotyped skills and employment norms, at least in the short term, diversify the skill training areas to provide more options that are attractive to adolescent boys.
 - Address gender stereotypes that define some skills areas as designated for women and others for men, and increase education and employment opportunities by showcasing men engaged in skills areas typically dominated by women, and vice versa.
 - Include a wider range of interventions, particularly to reach boys, including OSH improvements for working youth, support to remain in Senior High School, and vocational skills training for out-of-school youth, depending on the pre-intervention assessment of current activities of both boys and girls.
8. **Extend the target age group in projects addressing child labor in cocoa-growing areas to include youth ages 13–14 as well as ages 15–17, to foster earlier prevention.**

Future projects can provide interventions for youth ages 13–14 in school, such as pre-vocational guidance and vocational skills taster options before students leave school and reach Ghana’s legal minimum working age of 15 years.

9. **Replicate and refine livelihood diversification for households in cocoa-growing areas.** Development projects and district authorities should replicate the VSLA combined with IGA model for adult women household members with the following recommended adjustments:
 - Deliver technical and soft skills training for supplementary household income generation in parallel with savings and loans group development within a time-bound project context, to enable the establishment of a longer period of gestation (at least two years) for agricultural, food processing, and non-agricultural income generation.
 - Encourage women IGA participants and/or CVET graduates to form small production groups for income-generating activities, rather than starting up individual businesses with insufficient capital. The cooperative business model for local economic development is worth exploring in these communities, based on international experience with agricultural and non-agricultural cooperatives in resource-poor settings.
10. **Replicate and strengthen MOCA’s Model Farm School approach for community cocoa seedling nurseries in partnership with the Ghana Cocoa Board, MoFA, private sector partners and agricultural colleges.** Garner funding support from private sector cocoa buyers in support of sustainable and CL-free Ghana cocoa production.
11. **In future projects supported by ILAB, locate the project direct participant monitoring system database in-house.** The monitoring database requirements should be fully considered during the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) development process. Additionally, it is advisable to place the monitoring database directly under project management once the technical work of developing the database is completed by a contractor.

1. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

In 2001, due to heightened awareness of the plight of children employed in hazardous cocoa growing activities in West Africa, representatives from governments, the global cocoa industry, cocoa laborers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the International Labour Organization (ILO) partnered to implement the Harkin-Engel Protocol. The Protocol is a voluntary public-private agreement to eliminate the worst forms of child labor (WFCL) in the cocoa sector.³

In September 2010, the Ministers of Labor of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, international cocoa industry representatives, and the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) came together to reaffirm their commitment to eradicating the WFCL by signing the Declaration of Joint Action to Support the Implementation of the Protocol. A Framework of Action accompanied the Declaration, under which these partners committed to take action to reduce child labor (CL) and the WFCL in the cocoa sector in Ghana, with the specific goal of reducing the WFCL by 70 percent by 2020. USDOL, the Government of Ghana (GoG), and other partners have committed significant funds to activities related to this Framework aimed at eradicating CL in Ghana.

As a result of their ongoing commitment to the Declaration and the Framework, USDOL funded the Mobilizing Community Action and Promoting Opportunities for Youth in Ghana's Cocoa-Growing Communities Project (MOCA) and the Eliminating Child Labor in Cocoa (ECLIC) project in Côte d'Ivoire in 2015. The performance evaluation of MOCA by IMPAQ International LLC (IMPAQ) is the subject of this report. This evaluation report provides evidence to inform future decision-making by reporting on the findings, lessons learned, promising practices, and recommendations to enhance the sustainability of the MOCA project's outcomes, and to shape the development of future ILAB and WI projects in Ghana, as well as projects to combat CL more broadly.

MOCA's overall objective is to reduce the incidence of CL and hazardous CL in 40 target cocoa-growing communities in Ghana. Cocoa is Ghana's third most important commodity after oil and gold, but the industry faces numerous challenges due to aging cocoa farmers, increasing competition from countries with lower production costs, shrinking farm size, and persistent poverty in the face of low global prices for cocoa beans. Economically stressed cocoa growing families often resort to using CL to increase production and reduce its cost.⁴

In November 2015, USDOL ILAB OCFT awarded \$4.5 million to Winrock International (WI) to implement MOCA. The MOCA project began on November 6, 2015 and will end on November 5, 2019. MOCA targets 40 cocoa-growing communities for project services across four districts in Ghana's Ashanti and Western regions.⁵

MOCA's key strategies are to help communities design and implement Community Action Plans (CAPs) to address CL; to provide vocational skills training for youth at risk of, or engaged in, hazardous CL; assist youth of legal working age to transition to acceptable work, and assist households to access livelihood services. The project also supports a range of awareness

³ The Protocol was signed by the Chocolate Manufacturers Association and the World Cocoa Foundation and witnessed by representatives of major chocolate companies, civil society and relevant governments. It provided for the formation of an advisory group to provide guidance on appropriate remedies, and establishment of a joint foundation to oversee intervention efforts.

⁴ MOCA Project Document; Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. 2013/2014 Survey Research on Child Labor in West African Cocoa Growing Areas. 2015

⁵ The Ashanti and Western regions have particularly high levels of cocoa production. The Tulane University study reported pervasive CL and hazardous labor practices in these regions in 2013-14.

raising activities aimed at increasing youth, household, and community leaders' understanding of child labor and hazardous child labor and occupational safety and health (OSH) standards.

The project focuses on achieving four main outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Increased prioritization of CL by community and external stakeholders
- Outcome 2: Increased acceptable work opportunities among beneficiary youth 15 through 17 years of age
- Outcome 3: Beneficiary youth knowledge, attitudes, and skills increased to improve employability
- Outcome 4: Increased income in beneficiary households

MOCA's primary outcomes and corresponding supporting outcomes (SOs) that constitute MOCA's Results Framework are presented in Exhibit 1.⁶

Exhibit 1. Summary of MOCA Results Framework

Project Outcomes and Supporting Outcomes
Outcome 1: Increased prioritization of child labor by community and external stakeholders
SO 1.1. Increased community resources to address CL issues
SO 1.2. Increased awareness of CL/OSH
SO 1.3. Increased involvement of youth in CAP
SO 1.4. Increased advocacy with District Government Authorities
SO 1.5. Increased community capacity to design CAPs that are approved by communities
Outcome 2: Increased acceptable work opportunities among beneficiary youth 15-17 years of age
SO 2.1. Increased partner support for acceptable work opportunities for youth
SO 2.2. Increased financial support for business start-up (start-up kits, community grants)
SO 2.3. Increased community advocacy for acceptable work/OSH
SO 2.4. Increased awareness of acceptable work conditions/OSH
SO 2.5. Increased peer support to youth workers/entrepreneurs
Outcome 3: Beneficiary youth knowledge, attitudes and skills increased to improve employability
SO 3.1. Improved youth access to vocational training (CVET/MFS)
SO 3.2. Improved quality of CVET/MFS training delivery
SO 3.2.1. Improved alignment of CVET/MFS curriculum to market needs/OSH standards
SO 3.2.2. Increased skills of CVET/MFS facilitators
SO 3.2.3. Improved CVET/MFS materials and equipment for training
SO 3.3. Increased community awareness of the benefits of CVET/MFS
Outcome 4: Increased income in beneficiary households
SO 4.1. Increased agricultural production or other income-generating production by women beneficiaries
SO 4.2. Improved skills and knowledge in livelihoods activities
SO 4.3. Increased access to microloans and savings

MOCA was implemented by a team of project staff under WI based in Kumasi, in partnership with the Community Development Consult Network (CODESULT) until their sub-award ended on May 31, 2019.

⁶ The results framework was developed through the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan process, building on the original project proposal.

2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Evaluation Objectives

The objectives of the final performance evaluation as determined by the TOR are to:

1. Assess if the project has achieved its objectives, identify the challenges encountered in doing so, and analyze the driving factors for these challenges.
2. Assess the intended and unintended effects of the project.
3. Assess lessons learned and emerging practices from the project and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in Ghana and in projects designed under similar conditions or target sectors.
4. Assess which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.

Four evaluation criteria were applied for the performance evaluation:

- **Relevance.** The evaluation team assessed the validity of the design and whether the objectives and implemented activities of the project met the needs of direct and indirect beneficiaries and other stakeholders, given the implementing context in the country.
- **Effectiveness and Perceived Impact.** The evaluation team assessed the effectiveness of the project's strategies and interventions in reducing the incidence of child and hazardous labor in the project's 40 target cocoa-growing communities with reference to the primary project objectives and targets. The team identified the project's strengths and weaknesses in these efforts, the positive and negative immediate and potentially long-term effects produced by the project, whether produced directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally.
- **Efficiency.** The evaluation team evaluated the project's implementation and management efficiency, and whether resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time) were used efficiently to achieve the desired results.
- **Sustainability.** The evaluation team determined whether the implementers took steps to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes and key results produced by the project and their benefits for local or national stakeholders. The evaluation also determined whether the benefits of the project outcomes are likely to continue over time.

2.2 Methodology

This section describes the evaluation questions and data sources, schedule, site sampling and data collection, data analysis, and study limitations.

2.2.1 Evaluation Questions and Data Sources

The evaluation set out to answer a list of specific questions organized according to the thematic criteria described above, agreed upon by ILAB, WI, and IMPAQ. The methodology for data collection and analysis was primarily qualitative. The evaluation team addressed the evaluation questions using multiple sources of evidence, combining primary qualitative data with secondary quantitative data. Qualitative data was obtained from key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). Quantitative data was obtained from the performance reporting data presented in the semi-annual Technical Progress Reports (TPRs) to ILAB as well as data from the project baseline study conducted by JMK Consulting. Data collection methods and stakeholder perspectives were triangulated to bolster the credibility and validity of the results.

Exhibit 2 lists each evaluation question and the methodology used to conduct the data analysis.

Exhibit 2. Evaluation Questions and Data Sources

#	Evaluation Questions	Data Sources
Relevance		
1	To what extent was the theory of change valid and coherent given the implementing environment? Were the project strategies relevant to the specific needs of its target communities, participants, and other stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project documents ▪ Context documents ▪ Interviews with the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MELR) ▪ Project staff interviews ▪ Stakeholder workshop ▪ FGDs with youth participants, Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups, CAP committees ▪ Observation of activities
2	To what extent has the project addressed gender empowerment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FGDs with CAP committees, youth, and female household members ▪ Project staff interviews ▪ Stakeholder workshop
3	To what extent has the project managed community expectations from its various engagement strategies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Selected community FGDs and KIIs ▪ Project staff interviews
Effectiveness and Perceived Impact		
4	<p>To what extent has the project achieved its objective and planned outcomes at the time of the evaluation, and is the project likely to achieve them by the end of the project?</p> <p>a) To what extent have the project's VSLA activities with adult female participants affected perceptions of household resilience and financial stability?</p> <p>b) To what extent have the livelihoods trainings for adult female participants assisted households to diversify and expand their sources of household income?</p> <p>c) To what extent have the project's vocational training programs (CVET/MFS) fulfilled the needs of youth participants?</p> <p>d) To what extent are the CAP Committees able to mobilize resources (internal/external) to implement activities to address child labor?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project TPRs ▪ Comprehensive Evaluation and Monitoring Plan (CMEP) indicator data ▪ Baseline and endline survey reports ▪ Interviews with project staff and local authorities ▪ FGDs with youth beneficiaries, VSLA members, and CAP committees ▪ Observation of activities where possible ▪ Stakeholder workshop
5	Were the midterm evaluation's recommendations incorporated into the project's management? If so, how did they affect project effectiveness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interim evaluation report ▪ Project staff interviews ▪ Project TPR and other project reporting
6	What were the key internal or external factors that limited or facilitated the achievement of project outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project TPRs ▪ Project staff interviews ▪ District stakeholder interviews ▪ Community level interviews ▪ Project staff and partner interviews ▪ District stakeholder FGDs ▪ Stakeholder workshop

#	Evaluation Questions	Data Sources
7	Did the project have unintended effects on its target communities and participants? If so, what were they?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FGDs with CAP committees, youth participants, VSLA participants ▪ FGDs with District stakeholders ▪ Interviews with project staff
Efficiency		
8	To what extent did the strategies and measures adopted by the project's management: (1) address the problems or delays encountered by the project, and/or (2) can be attributed to achieving the project's objective and outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project staff interviews ▪ OCFT Project Manager interview
9	To what extent has the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system been effectively used by the project to inform management decision making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Director interview ▪ M&E Officer interview ▪ Project TPR reporting ▪ Interview with JMK Consulting
Sustainability		
10	What is the likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue in the absence of USDOL or other external resources? Are there any factors that limit or facilitate sustainability of project outputs or outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project TPRs and sustainability planning and reporting ▪ District interviews ▪ Project staff interviews ▪ Community-level FGDs/interviews ▪ Stakeholder workshop

2.2.2 Evaluation Schedule

Prior to the site visit, the evaluation team developed interview and focus group guides and, in collaboration with the WI team, developed the site sampling criteria and field schedule. The evaluation team completed a project document review in July 2019. The evaluation team conducted site visits in Ghana to collect information from stakeholders and beneficiaries between July 15 and July 26, 2019. During the site visit, the evaluation team conducted KIIs and FGDs with beneficiaries, stakeholders, and project staff, culminating in a stakeholder workshop held on July 26. After the site visit, the evaluation team held a debriefing with ILAB to discuss key findings and recommendations. Most of the data analysis and report writing was conducted in August 2019.

2.2.3 Site Sampling and Data Collection Methods

Site sampling. The evaluation team determined the sampling of communities in consultation with WI's home office and the MOCA project team, to represent communities from each of the four implementation districts and communities from the three project implementation phases, taking logistical travel arrangements into account. Given the time available for site visits, it was decided that the evaluation team would visit seven of the 40 communities distributed across the four districts, and hold meetings at the district stakeholder level. The resulting site selection is shown in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3. Community Sample

Region	District	Community	Phase
Ashanti	Atwima-Nwabiagya	Worapong	2
		Boahenkwa	3
	Atwima-Mponua	Kansakrom	1
		Akomfore	3
Western Region	Sefwi Wiawso	Penakrom	1
		Nyameagyeso	2
	Wassa Amenfi West	Kokoase	2

Data collection methods. The evaluation team collected data from four sources: KIIs, FGDs, document reviews, and secondary data. The team used the data from these sources to answer the evaluation questions proposed for each analytic area.

The KIIs and FGDs were designed to obtain stakeholders' perspectives on the project's implementation and progress. Exhibit 4 presents the number of participants in FGDs and KIIs, by stakeholder group and locality.

Exhibit 4. Participants in Interviews and FGDs

Stakeholder Group	No. of participants	F	M
USDOL ILAB	2	-	2
MELR	1	1	-
MOCA Staff Ghana	11	2	9
WI Home Office	1	1	-
CODESULT	1	-	1
JMK Consulting	4 (1 FGD)	-	4
District Assemblies	21 (2 FGDs)	4	17
Communities (CAP committees, CVET, MFS, VSLA, men household members)	668 ⁷ (28 FGDs)	551	134

The evaluation team facilitated three to five focus groups in each community for a total of 28 FGDs across the seven communities. Two FGDs were conducted with stakeholders at the district level.

In the field work plan, the evaluation team had scheduled FGDs in each community with the Community Action Plan Committee (CAPC), the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA), and with youth participants to discuss the project. During the field work, the evaluation team decided that it would be valuable to conduct additional FGDs where time permitted with the Master Craft Persons (MCPs) and Model Farm School (MFS) facilitators, who provided training to the youth participants. In one community the opportunity arose to meet with male household members whose children had benefited from project activities. Each focus group type addressed a different set of questions.

⁷ While the evaluation team requested the project to help assemble small numbers of FGD participants per intervention group, much larger numbers of participants were gathered to meet the team for some FGD meetings. The team addressed this situation by holding follow-up discussions with smaller numbers of participants.

Stakeholder Workshop. The evaluation team conducted a stakeholder workshop in Kumasi on July 26, to present the preliminary findings of the evaluation and to solicit further inputs from stakeholders regarding project achievements. The evaluation team provided three key questions for discussion, and group presentations were made by district. The group presentations were used as an additional source of data to enrich the evaluation findings.

Document Review. The evaluation team conducted a document review to inform the KIIs and FGDs, and to supplement the findings from other data collection efforts.

The main sources of information for the project’s progress were the semi-annual TPRs submitted to ILAB from October 2016 through April 2019. The evaluation team also reviewed the project baseline study and documentation produced by the project to carry out specific trainings. The team identified relevant documents for the review based on the evaluation questions and each document’s main purpose.

Exhibit 5. Documents Reviewed by Category

Operation and Reporting	Training and Capacity Building Materials	Research and Context Literature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project documents ▪ TPRs ▪ CMEP ▪ Work plans ▪ MTE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manual for VSLA groups ▪ Marketable Skills Assessment ▪ Sample of CAPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Baseline Study ▪ Tulane University Study (2015) ▪ Ghana National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2017-2021)

2.2.3 Data Analysis

The document review, stakeholder KIIs, FGDs, and a small number of direct observations generated substantial raw qualitative and quantitative data. The evaluation team categorized, synthesized, and summarized the raw qualitative data captured from the KII and FGD transcripts and the internal document review. The evaluation team also summarized the latest TPR quantitative data for comparison with end-of-project targets. The qualitative and quantitative data summaries were then triangulated to develop the evaluation’s findings. During this process—which was driven by the evaluation questions—the evaluation team requested further assistance from WI to clarify any data questions or request missing or additional information. The data analysis process was driven by the evaluation questions.

2.2.4 Limitations

The limitations were fundamentally due to the limited data collection opportunities available. Even so, the evaluation team considers that the sample design of communities visited, KIIs, and FGDs provided a solid representation of the views of key stakeholders and project participants more generally.

The TOR allocation of 12 days for in-country work limited the range of stakeholders who could be interviewed and the number of communities that could be visited. The time initially allocated to interview project staff was too short to gather as much data as the evaluation team wanted. But the team and MOCA staff did find time during the community visits to conduct additional interviews with the Project Director and the M&E staff. The community-level staff of WI and CODESULT had finished their contracts by the time of the evaluation visit; however, the evaluation team was able to interview one of the WI local coordinators, who attended the

stakeholder workshop. Additionally, the schedule did not permit meetings with collaborating partners such as Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), which would have been helpful to gain their perspective on both agricultural and non-agricultural livelihood activities. Finally, cocoa nursery activities were limited during the time of the evaluation field visit, as most of the seedlings had been harvested and sold.

3. FINDINGS

This section presents the evaluation findings based on the data collected from KIIs and FGDs with MOCA project stakeholders in Ghana, secondary data analysis, and a review of project documents and reports. The key findings are presented for each evaluation criterion: relevance, effectiveness and perceived impact, efficiency, and sustainability.

3.1 Relevance

This section addresses the extent to which the project theory of change was valid and coherent within the implementing environment; the relevance of the project strategies to the government policy; the needs of target communities, participants, and other stakeholders; the extent to which the project addressed gender and women's empowerment; and the extent to which the project managed community expectations.

3.1.1 Design Validity

Participant, geographic, and sectoral targeting. The project's focus on CL among youth ages 15–17 in cocoa growing areas was determined by the ILAB solicitation (FOA-ILAB-15-09) on the basis of the 2013/2014 Tulane University study's finding of a higher prevalence of CL among this group than among younger age groups.⁸ This choice was further supported by MOCA's baseline survey conducted in early 2017, which found the highest rate of CL in the same age group (80%) across the project's targeted districts,⁹ and that hazardous labor in agriculture was the most common form of CL. The baseline survey prevalence of hazardous CL in agriculture in the project districts averaged 54 percent, higher than the country average found in the Tulane University study; a finding that validates the MOCA target district selection.

The baseline survey concluded that CL was driven primarily by agricultural CL. However, CL was also notably present in other economic activities—also highest among youth ages 15–17 (23.7%), and slightly higher among boys (25%) than among girls (22%). While the baseline survey report did not specify the other economic activities youth were engaged in, the final evaluation interviews heard anecdotal reports of youth in the target age group engaged in activities such as motorcycle taxi driving, carrying wood for loggers, carrying goods to the market, and small-scale mining (known as *galamsey*), as mentioned in Akomfore in the Atwima Mponua district.¹⁰

According to WI staff, MOCA used the survey results in selecting slightly higher numbers of communities in districts with high CL prevalence. The selection of target communities was not based on the baseline data,¹¹ however, but on the project's community-selection criteria, which used other reports of high levels of CL as well as logistical convenience (such as clustering of communities).

⁸ Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. 2013/14 Survey Research on Child Labor in West African Cocoa Growing Areas. July 2015.

⁹ The baseline survey found that the rate of engagement in child labor was the highest among the 15-17 year old group at 80%, and higher among boys (87%) than girls (72%). JMK Consulting/Winrock International. October 2017

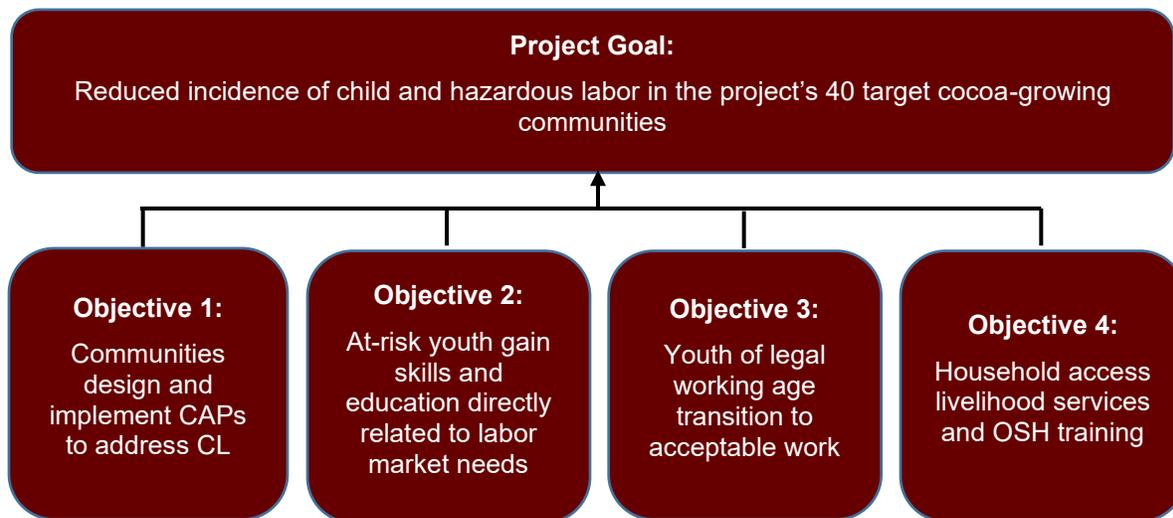
¹⁰ Baseline survey p.36-37. JMK Consulting/Winrock International. October 2017.

¹¹ The baseline survey was intended to provide in-depth quantitative evidence on the nature of CL in the project districts but cannot be used as the basis to attribute project impact. This is because not all project communities are included in the baseline, and the baseline and endline do not provide any comparative evidence of what would have happened in the absence of the program (as would be provided in a control-treatment methodology).

The evaluation team concurs that the prevalence level of other forms of CL in the target districts justifies an area-based approach. That approach is deliberately intended to respond to any form of CL within an area. Second, the area-based approach minimizes the risk that children may move from one form of CL to another as sometimes found when project interventions focus solely on one sector. As an example, through project advocacy children may perceive that working in cocoa farming is strictly prohibited, so they may then move to working in market portering if that activity is not monitored and subject to intervention. The area-based approach does not interfere with the project’s predominant focus on CL in agriculture, and cocoa in particular, in terms of its awareness-raising and OSH strategies. Unfortunately, MOCA’s reporting does not provide systematic information on the range of other types of work youth are engaged in to provide further insight on the nature of child labor in the communities, apart from mentioning the issue of children’s involvement in *galamsey*, (these small scale-mines are frequently illegal and involve highly hazardous work), and engagement in market portering, both of which are discussed in the TPR reporting.

Validity of the theory of change. The project document described the causes of CL among youth in cocoa communities as wide-scale poverty related to low cocoa farming income underpinned by low farm-gate prices for cocoa. Further causes mentioned are the lack of community awareness, lack of vocational skills and opportunities for youth of legal working age to engage in safer work—all compounded by families’ lack of experience in OSH and lack of income to keep children in school or pay for vocational training. As simplified in Exhibit 6, the project theory of change defined in the ILAB solicitation proposed that appropriate skills development among youth at risk/engaged in CL and support for their transition to acceptable work, combined with improved economic resilience of households and supported by community-wide mobilization and awareness of CL, will lead to CL reduction among youth ages 15–17.

Exhibit 6. MOCA Project Theory of Change



MOCA’s project design as stated in the project document followed this theory of change in setting its target number of direct beneficiaries, selection of communities, and models of education provision and household economic development. Overall, the evaluation team assesses MOCA’s theory of change as valid and coherent, and that WI’s approach provided a well-integrated approach to addressing the factors contributing to CL in the target communities. The approach was supported by prior research and the partners’ experience, and was also confirmed by the qualitative interviews with staff, government, and community stakeholders. The

evaluation team also considers the community focus sound in providing a well-integrated approach that is practically focused given time and financial resources. The integration is provided through targeting multiple supports - both education for youth and livelihoods assistance - to a given household. Strategies for raising community awareness of OSH in agriculture were treated as a cross-cutting intervention, integrated across all four outcomes. The broader issue of poverty in the cocoa sector is beyond the scope of the project, being subject to national policies and international cocoa pricing. For further discussion of the project scale and quality of interventions see Section 3.2.1 Overview of Achievement, Contributing Factors, and Response to Mid-term Evaluation and Section 3.3.

One gap in the intervention strategies suggested in the ILAB FOA is capacity building at the community level to conduct community-wide CL monitoring (CLM) to strengthen the intended approach under the GoG National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (both Phase 1, 2009 – 2015 and Phase 2, 2017-2021). The MOCA project document noted that previous attempts by government and international NGOs to institute CLM systems stalled due to lack of resources and the complexity of the system. Moreover, the project document stated that ongoing systems in Ghana at the time were largely donor-supported and outside the national framework, implying that they were therefore not sustainable. Introducing more extensive and systematic CL monitoring in MOCA communities would have required the mobilization of larger teams of community members and appropriate training of the CAPCs or other relevant community groups (such as Child Protection Committees) where they exist, to identify and list children engaged in CL in a register and refer them to social service supports.¹² According to WI and MOCA staff, few Child Protection Committees are currently functioning in Ghana, and moreover, introducing a more extensive CL monitoring system in MOCA would ideally have required a district-level monitoring system for the community-level monitoring to feed into and support, which is not yet functioning. Nevertheless, the evaluation team considers that a systematic area-based CLM approach is an important contribution to fully respond to CL in all its forms and to reach project non-participants. As such, support for an area-based CLM approach should be considered in developing future CL projects in Ghana, in the context of an assessment of progress in implementing the government's intended system.¹³

Involvement of the private cocoa sector partners was included in the project document to support youth in their transition to work and in providing training scholarships; but has been limited under MOCA implementation. Private sector support to selected MOCA communities has been provided by companies such as Olam, Nyonkopa Cocoa License Buying Company of Barry Callebaut (for health care supplies), and Cargill (for kindergarten building improvements), as reported in the MOCA TPRs. The evaluation team did not have the opportunity to interview cocoa industry representatives to ascertain their perspective on MOCA or their relative lack of involvement. However, for future CL programming in Ghana, it would be worth ILAB or other development partners exploring the most effective role to pursue for the cocoa sector companies to contribute to child labor elimination, whether through supporting youth training

¹² This system is set out in the NPA Phase 2, which came into being after MOCA began.

¹³ Internationally, area-wide community-based CLM has taken a variety of forms in recent decades with USDOL support. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire CL monitoring is implemented through joint community and government efforts through the "System of Observation and Monitoring of Child Labor" (SOSTECI); and in parallel through a Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System, monitoring is initiated by the International Cocoa Initiative, a foundation with cocoa/chocolate industry and civil society membership. Efforts have recently been made to coordinate the two systems.

and other community development (essentially a CSR role), supporting cocoa farmers' productivity, or involvement in cocoa supply chain monitoring as is occurring in Côte d'Ivoire.¹⁴

The evaluation team notes that the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) representation of the design for M&E purposes, reversed the order of Outcomes 2 and 3, formulating Outcome 2 as "the transition to work" (or more accurately, the creation of an enabling environment for youth to proceed on a pathway to employment); and Outcome 3 as "improved employability of youth through skills."¹⁵ The order did not reflect the sequencing of the results, however. In terms of the clarity of the CMEP logic, the evaluation team observes that some supporting outcomes under Outcome 2, such as the marketable skills assessment, would have been more appropriate under Outcome 3, because skill area identification logically contributes to the selection and development of the vocational skills training.

3.1.2 Relevance to Community Context, Policy and the Needs of Stakeholders

The MOCA interventions were well suited to the social and economic community contexts. Among the participants, poverty, lack of basic community infrastructure and education resources, lack of training opportunities and acceptable jobs for school leavers, and lack of awareness of OSH hazards (such as the harmful effects of exposure to pesticides on children) were viewed as major causes of, and contributing factors to, CL. The testimonies of the community leaders met by the evaluation team highlighted MOCA's value and relevance in providing much needed resources through community grants.

MOCA's strategies are closely aligned with the GoG's current policy and programming on CL, as expressed in the National Plan of Action Phase II for the Elimination of WFCL in Ghana (NPA2). The NPA2 sets forth an Integrated Area Based Approach (IABA) towards Child Labor Free Zones (CLFZ) as the locus for the overall strategy. Under the plan, the design and sustained implementation of CAPs is a central mechanism for mobilizing action at the local level. In terms of specific outcomes, MOCA contributes to Outcome 1.1 (well informed society); Outcome 1.4 (IABA towards CLFZ); Outcome 1.8 (youth employment); and Outcome 3.4 (CAPs monitored in all communities of the MMDA). The evaluation team's interview with the head of the MELR's Child Labor Unit confirmed the relevance of MOCA to the Ministry's program.

The DA FGD participants highlighted the relevance of MOCA in assisting them to reach the communities under their jurisdiction, and were generally highly appreciative of MOCA's support in helping them carry out their mandates given scarce resources. The evaluation team is unable to gauge the perception of COCOBOD regarding MOCA's relevance to their needs; but their involvement throughout suggests the approach was deemed relevant. Private sector involvement in MOCA appears to have been relatively minimal and intermittent based on reporting and interviews, despite the inclusion of private sector partnerships in the design.

With respect to youth needs, FGDs with youth learners demonstrated that girls in particular found the provision of training highly relevant to their needs. They said they are no longer "idling about the village," have somewhere to go in the morning, and can see a future through their skills. Boys, though a minority of the trainees, found the skills training in carpentry and welding, and a few in tailoring, relevant to their occupational aspirations. Section 3.2.3 Youth Vocational Training for Employability and Transition to Work provides a more detailed discussion of the

¹⁴ According to the ICI website, private sector cocoa buyers are involved in supply chain monitoring in Côte d'Ivoire. <https://cocoainitiative.org/>

¹⁵ WI staff noted that the CMEP facilitator from Management Systems International reversed the order of the outcomes when drafting the CMEP document. This was not requested by the MOCA team.

extent to which the type and duration of the skills training provision met youth needs. The evaluation team generally observed strong gender norms in the communities regarding occupational preferences which affected the relevance to girls and boys of the courses offered.

3.1.3 Gender and Women's Empowerment

MOCA had a clear strategy with respect to empowering women and girls, both as set out in the project document and as implemented. Girls are traditionally not prioritized in rural families' education and training investments, according to project staff and research reports. The evaluation team concurs with the focus on adult women household members for IGA and VSLA, as women are underemployed and lack access to land for cocoa farming. The major elements of the strategy comprised targeting 50 percent girls in skills training, targeting women household members for IGA, and promoting women as leaders in the CAPCs. The project introduced reproductive health training for CVET trainees as an additional initiative in the latter half of the project, as part of the soft skills training. The project made impressive achievements regarding girls' participation and women's empowerment. Efforts to engage girls in vocational training were highly successful, with girls constituting 90 percent of the skills trainees. Women's participation in community leadership and decision making was enhanced by their role in the CAPCs. The evaluation team observed that most of the CAP members are men, with most CAPCs including only two to three women, though the team did not meet all members in each community. CMEP data does not record the percentage of women in CAPC membership or women leadership roles in CAPCs. However, the evaluation team did find women members of the committees to be vocal and confident. MOCA has also been highly successful engaging adult women as MCPs, and adult women members of participant households in economic development activities.

The predominance of girls in vocational training was unintended (the target for girls was at least 50 percent). The view of the evaluation team is that MOCA could have made more efforts to serve the needs of boys, with different entry points depending on the various activities they engaged in—whether unoccupied, working in agriculture or other employment, or attending high school. The evaluation team thinks the project could have explored a range of strategies to engage more boys in training, such as increasing the skill areas or addressing gender stereotypes in skill areas. A view shared by the project staff in hindsight. Reasons for the low level of boys' involvement are discussed in Section 3.2.3 Youth Vocational Training for Employability and Transition to Work. MOCA was particularly successful in inspiring women in agriculture, especially through the support of WI's complementary Robert D. and Elizabeth Havener Fellowship initiative, which brought women agricultural college students into MOCA communities as interns.

The evaluation team interviewed adult men community members where possible to gauge their response to MOCA's support. In the Akomfore community, for example, adult men were very happy with the contributions women were making to the household income; but here and elsewhere men asked why there are no activities for men. The evaluation team's view is that, as an incentive to balance the predominant project focus on women, adult men farmers could have been provided with direct education on OSH and with protective gear.

3.1.4 Managing Community Expectations

Overall, MOCA has managed community expectations well (for example, providing clear guidelines on the use of the in-kind grants). The evaluation team concludes that overall, the communities are highly satisfied with the improvements and contributions brought by MOCA. The community representatives the evaluation team met with universally expressed their

gratitude to the project for bringing tangible aid such as school furniture and equipment, school computer labs, and mechanized boreholes. “Without MOCA our youth would never have seen a computer,” one CAPC member said.

The expectations, or more accurately hopes, of the community members whom the evaluation team met are that the project will continue. On several occasions the evaluation team was asked if the project could continue. This demonstrated the huge contribution MOCA has made, but also raises the concern that the communities do not feel ready to manage on their own. While all the communities the evaluation team met were informed that the project will end in a few months’ time, and the M&E Officer introduced the team’s meetings with a message to this effect, some communities seem not to have fully absorbed the information or at least do not want the project to exit. This suggests that the project’s local staff could have done more to inform the communities of the project timeline. The evaluation team also learned of some confusion among MFS learners about when the distribution or “share-out” of profits from nursery sales would occur. In Boahenkwa community, for example, the students had taken their seedlings to a buyer but had not received any of the proceeds from the MFS facilitator, suggesting that the MFS facilitator’s communications were not sufficiently clear, or that there was some lack of transparency.¹⁶

3.2 Effectiveness and Perceived Impact

This section presents the evaluation findings regarding the extent of MOCA’s success in reaching its development objective and each of its intended outcomes, discusses the contributing factors and intended and unintended results, and identifies impacts from a variety of stakeholder perspectives. An overview of MOCA’s performance and implementation progress is followed by an in-depth discussion of the achievements per intervention area and the perceived outcomes.

3.2.1 Overview of Achievement, Contributing Factors, and Response to Mid-term Evaluation

Performance against outcome targets and contributing factors. As of this writing, MOCA has delivered its interventions to reduce CL on a large scale, establishing a range of community development and CL preventive activities in 40 communities, and reaching 2,806 youth with vocational training.¹⁷ MOCA has also introduced community-managed action planning, community-based vocational training, and household livelihoods diversification in all the targeted communities. Further, the project has achieved most of its targets for each of the four outcomes, although some planned targets are not likely to be fully achieved by the end of the project, as discussed below. The detailed results of the project’s Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) indicators for the most recent reporting in April 2019 can be found in Appendix A: Summary of MOCA Performance Results.

Exhibits 7 through 11 summarize MOCA’s achievements against its key life of project indicator targets for the overall objective and the four outcomes, with additional evaluation comments as relevant.

¹⁶ In the community in question, the seedlings had been carried to the buyer and sold, but the income had not been distributed. The guideline is that the profit will be shared at the end of the production season.

¹⁷ A total of 2,528 youth were provided services, as reported in April 2019 TPR. According to project updates provided during report writing, an additional 278 youth were provided services since the April 2019 reporting, and will be included in the October 2019 TPR.

Achievement of overall objective. As of April 2019, MOCA reported a CL rate of 55.7 percent among its youth beneficiaries, a reduction from 66 percent at baseline. While this data is subject to final verification to ascertain its accuracy, the reduction is significantly short of the targeted 20 percent set by the project,¹⁸ and making it unlikely that the target will be reached by the end of the project. The final rate recorded may drop, however, as more youth trainees begin earning income through self-employment or paid employment. As discussed later in the report, many youth are finding they need to keep working to support their needs while they are in training.

Exhibit 7. Project Objective Achievements per PMP and Evaluation Comments

Objective/Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
<p>Project Objective: Reduced incidence of CL in the project's 40 target cocoa growing communities Indicator POC1: % of beneficiary children in CL Indicator POC2: % beneficiary children in hazardous CL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CL among beneficiaries ages 15–17 reduced from 66% at baseline to 55.7% ▪ 55.7% of beneficiaries ages 15–17 engaged in hazardous CL ▪ Higher CL among boy (65%) than girl (53.6%) beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MOCA still significantly short of the target of 20% of the beneficiary target group in CL ▪ Persisting CL among the beneficiary target group, possibly due to youth's continued need to earn money

Outcome 1 achievements. The project progressively engaged with 40 communities (10 in Phase 1, 20 in Phase 2, and 10 in Phase 3) to establish CAPCs in all 40 communities. All developed CAPs that were supported by MOCA in-kind grants. OSH sensitization activities were implemented in all communities as planned, through a variety of communications methods. In addition, all 40 CAPs have been presented to DAs for funding elements of the plans that cannot be supported by MOCA.

Exhibit 8. Outcome 1: Achievements per PMP and Evaluator Comments

Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
Outcome 1: Increased prioritization of CL by community and external stakeholders		
1.1 % of communities with functional CAPs to address child labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40 (100%) CAP committees functioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quantitative targets met ▪ Varying community contribution and support to CAPCs
1.2 Number of communities that implement 80% of planned annual CAP CL activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30/40 (75%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target of 90% not yet achieved but expected for October 2019, when the final 10 communities in Phase 3 will be included in final data reporting. ▪ Outstanding infrastructure needs in numerous communities beyond the scope of MOCA grants
1.3 Number of districts with CL activities in their annual plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4/4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieved
1.1.1 % of CAPs awarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All 40 communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieved

¹⁸ The project has requested the direct participant monitoring system (DPMS) contractor to verify the POC1 and POC2 data.

Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
community grants	awarded community grants	
1.2.1 % of CAPCs that have implemented CL/OSH awareness raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% CL and OSH sensitization activities by CAPCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved
1.3.1 % CAPCs with at least one youth committee member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 (100%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved target. Three CAPCs had a youth representative subsequently drop out at the time of the evaluation to study or work elsewhere. Two CAPCs replaced the youth representatives. (See discussion of youth involvement in text)

Outcome 2 achievements. Regarding the increase in acceptable work opportunities for participant youth (Outcome 2), MOCA identified and developed six vocational training packages and trained 183 MCPs to deliver training, meeting its Outcome 2 target. The capacity of the community to provide training opportunities has increased. The reported rate of entry to acceptable work – apprenticeship, employment, or self-employment – was below target in April 2019 reporting, at 66% of youth participants. But, as reflected in the follow-up data subsequently submitted, MOCA reported that it had exceeded its target, with 2,595 youth in acceptable work at the time of writing. The evaluation’s qualitative findings provided further insight into the forms of work participants entered, and suggest that most graduates were in apprenticeships to upgrade their skills, for which they were paying fees and not receiving income. According to the project’s definition of acceptable work opportunities for this indicator, training graduates who are paying for extended apprenticeships are classified as participating in an acceptable work opportunity, alongside those in formal or informal sector employment and self-employment.¹⁹ The evaluation considers the definition of acceptable work opportunity to be quite broad. A disaggregation of the type of work opportunity, by apprenticeship, paid employment, and self-employment, would have been useful to reflect trainees’ outcomes more specifically.

Exhibit 9. Outcome 2: Achievements per PMP and Evaluator Comments

Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
Outcome 2: Increased acceptable work opportunities for beneficiary youth		
2.1 Number and % of beneficiary youth ages 15–17 participating in acceptable work opportunities (formal jobs/apprenticeships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,848 (66%) Male: 342 Female: 1,506 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target of 90% not fully achieved as of April 2019 Additional youth outcomes will be reported in October 2019, when MOCA expects to exceed its target for trainees finding acceptable work opportunities—with an expected total of 2,595. The evaluation team learned that most trainees are undertaking further training before they can secure paid employment or self-employment.

¹⁹ MOCA Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. p. 49. Indicator 2.1. Definition of key words: “Participating in acceptable work opportunity means he/she starts working in a formal or informal sector job, is self-employed, or enters an internship or apprenticeship. Acceptable work is one that does not expose the youth to physical harm, dangerous machinery and equipment and unhealthy environment”.

Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
2.2.1 Number of beneficiary youth who have received start-up kits	▪ 1,309 (47%)	▪ Almost achieved the LOP target of 50%. MOCA expects the target will be exceeded when the final start-up kits are distributed.
2.4.1 Number and percent of community members who demonstrate adequate understanding of OSH regulations	▪ 854 (89%)	▪ Achieved LOP target of 90%.

Outcome 3 achievements. As of April 2019, the project had delivered vocational training services to 2,528 youth ages 15–17, achieving 79 percent of its 3,200 target for Outcome 3. The project experienced challenges in identifying the planned 80 youth per community. However, project staff explained this as partly due to the level of youth outmigration in the communities, and partly to the unmet assumption that there would be two youth in a given household of eligible age or reaching eligibility within the implementation period. Among those trained, 86 percent were CVET trainees and 14 percent MFS trainees. The project reported an additional 278 participants enrolled in training post-April 2019 reporting, bringing the total to 2,806 at the time of writing.

Exhibit 10. Outcome 3: Achievements per PMP and Evaluator Comments

Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
Outcome 3: Beneficiary youth knowledge, attitudes, and skills increased to improve employability		
E1. Number of children engaged in (CL) or at high risk of entering CL (CAHR) provided education or vocational training services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2,528 provided with CVET and MFS training, meeting 79% of its 3,200 target (E.1) ▪ 90% girls and 10% boys (Source: MOCA presentation) ▪ CVET trainees=86% ▪ MFS trainees=14% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not achieved ▪ The project has reached 79% of its target number of youth provided with skills training. ▪ Additional youth completing training during this reporting period will bring the achievement to 87% of the target. ▪ Challenges meeting the targets include lower numbers of youth in the target age group resident in the community who were interested in enrolling in the training offered.
3.1 Number and percent of beneficiary youth who are certified after completion of MOCA CVET/MFS training	▪ 1058 (53%) (1,461 at July 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target of 80% not achieved. ▪ 997 learners are still enrolled and yet to graduate. ▪ The project TPRs record a total of 298 training drop-outs, representing 10.6% of total enrollees. The reasons for drop-out recorded by MOCA are discussed below in the text.
3.2.1 Number of CVET/MFS that meet project quality standards (curriculum, materials, equipment, facilitators)	▪ 183 (100%)	▪ Achieved
3.2.2.1 Number and percent of CVET/MFS facilitators with	▪ 183 (100%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exceeded the target of 80%. ▪ The indicator, percentage with improved

Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
improved skills to deliver competency-based training (CBT)		skills, may not reflect the level of skill attained.

Outcome 4: MOCA has exceeded its targets for number households assisted, reaching 2,301 compared to the original target of 1,600. This was exceeded due to the need to engage with more households to reach youth participant numbers. A total of 1,940 adult women have joined 97 VSLAs (including non-participant household members). A proportion of these have also received agricultural and non-agricultural IGA training and received start-up inputs for individual or group economic activities. Almost half (48%) of assisted women reported increased income from expanding their existing activities or introducing new IGAs.²⁰ Similarly, 46 percent of April 2019 respondents report an increase in production. The Outcome 4 indicator target for increased annual income among supported women household members was not met in April 2019. However, this indicator is difficult to interpret as increased income may not be attributed solely to project support.

Exhibit 11. Outcome 4 Achievements per PMP and Evaluator Comments

Indicator	Achievements as of April 2019	Comparison with Life of Project Targets & Comment
Outcome 4: Increased income in beneficiary households		
L1. Number of households receiving livelihoods services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2,301 ▪ VSLA only (beneficiary) HH: 760 ▪ Vocational training IGA): 252 ▪ Both VSLA and IGA: 1289 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exceeded 1,600 LOP target. ▪ Number of households was increased to reach the target number of beneficiaries.
4.1 Number and percent of beneficiary adult women who report increased annual income, based on at least 50 Ghana cedis (GHC) increase per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 736 (48%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target of 60% of assisted women reporting an increased annual income was not reached in the April 2019 period. ▪ The indicator is quite stringent, and VSLA-only participants are not expected to show an increase in income.
4.1.1 Number and percent of beneficiary women who report increased production (annual report)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 744 (46%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target of 60% not reached in the reporting period
4.2.2 Number and percent of adult beneficiary women practicing a new or expanding an existing livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 783 (50%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target of 75% not reached in the reporting period
4.3.1 No. of VSLAs formed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 38 VSLAs active during the reporting period; 97 formed, totaling with 1,940 members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exceeded the target of 40 groups in LOP, due to community interest in forming additional groups

²⁰ MOCA expects this rate to reach 74% based on additional data to be reported in October 2019.

Factors contributing to implementation progress. The evaluation identified several overarching enabling factors affecting the implementation quality and the quantity of results. These include the high quality of technical support provided by the MOCA staff, both WI and CODESULT; systematic and phased implementation; and strong engagement with the district authorities.

As noted in the MTE and TPRs, the project was challenged to meet its youth target, which the project attributed to outmigration and community demographics. It may also have been due to a lack of interest in the training offered. Additionally, the project did not garner as much support as expected from private sector cocoa industry partners (such as Olam, Mars, and Kuapa Kokoo Farmers' Union) to provide employment opportunities and scholarships to youth trainees. The private sector did contribute in-kind materials to some MOCA CAPs/communities, but as discussed earlier, their corporate social responsibility funding was limited, and their priorities were elsewhere, according to project staff.

Most of the major implementation challenges arose in the first half of the project, and were raised in the MTE. In the latter half, the major challenge has been depreciation of the national currency, which has stretched project resources in providing full start-up packages to all trainee graduates.

Project response to the mid-term evaluation recommendations. Following the MTE, completed in February 2018, the project considered each recommendation and reported on progress in addressing the recommendations in the subsequent TPRs from April 2018 to April 2019. MOCA has made efforts to address most of the recommendations progressively during 2018 and 2019. This assessment of the extent of implementation is based on the TPR reporting and the stakeholder interviews.

Exhibit 12 summarizes the strategy adjustments MOCA made in response to the MTE recommendations. MOCA has largely implemented the recommendations for strengthening CAP implementation and community mobilization (Rec. 1-4). For example, MOCA intensified community sensitization on parental responsibility and the benefits of vocational training for their children. CAP sustainability planning was also executed and is ongoing as part of the Exit Strategy (Rec. 4). In addition, the project instituted several significant changes in response to the recommendations concerning improving the quality of CVET training. It instituted training certificates for CVET graduates provided by the DA and the CAPC (Rec. 7), and introduced soft-skills training for CVET trainees delivered by the NBSSI prior to their graduation (Rec. 6). MOCA has also acted on the recommendations concerning strengthening management of cocoa nurseries (Rec. 10) and strengthening the IGA and VSLA business capacity (Rec. 12 and 13). The extent of business support to IGA was not as extensive as suggested in the recommendations, however, based on MOCA's perspective that training in business planning and management was not appropriate across the board for all VSLA members, many of whom are petty traders and not ready to start a small business. The evaluation team agrees with this point but suggests that such training needs to be tailored to the aspirations of the individual IGA/VSLA participant.

Several recommendations, especially those focused on youth skills training, either have not been fully implemented by MOCA, or present significant challenges to be implemented by end of project. MOCA, for example, did not implement one of the key points of Recommendation 6 to diversify the range of CVET training. MOCA's response was that, at that stage in the project, insufficient budget and time were left to identify trainers and adapt competency-based curricula to provide new training courses. The evaluation team concurs that a change of course would have been challenging; but perhaps the training strategy could have been varied at this stage in

implementation by providing some options for youth to study outside the community within a more tailored approach.

MOCA implemented Recommendation 8 to deliver start-up kits to all graduates, though—due to depreciation of the Ghanaian currency and additional resources allocated to provide livelihoods services to more households to reach more youth—project funds are running short to provide the full range of start-up kit items to the last cohort of youth, such as some of the consumables and individual ovens.. Recommendations 9 and 11 related to improving the transition of trained youth to acceptable work. The recommendation to provide follow-up support to graduates for one year beyond the project is supported by the evaluation team, but it seems unlikely that a one-year follow-up of graduates will be implemented, given the limited capacity of the CAPCs and the lack of resources at the district level to follow up such a large number of training graduates. Some of the responsibility may lie with the CAPCs and the MCPs, many of whom are continuing to train some of their trainees as paying apprentices. The evaluation team recommends that MOCA identify and discuss with the key agencies how they can provide follow-up mentoring to at least some of the graduates.

Recommendation 14 concerning resolution of the M&E system issues has not been fully resolved, as discussed further in Section 3.3.

Exhibit 12. Project Response to MTE Recommendations

#	Recommendation	Project response and evaluation comment
1	Reinforce awareness-raising activities on women's participation in CAPCs, community participation in CAP implementation.	Implemented. MOCA responded progressively with moderate success.
2	Enhance CAP implementation.	Implemented. MOCA responded with success reported in terms of mobilizing resources for CAP implementation internally and via presentation to DAs.
3	Promote further support from the District Assemblies (DAs).	Implemented. MOCA progressively engaged the DAs and instituted quarterly stakeholder meetings with the DAs.
4	Prepare sustainability strategies for CAPs.	Implemented. All CAPs presented to DAs. CAP sustainability planning was in process during the project exit period.
5	Count of E1 Indicator – Education Services.	Satisfactorily resolved. Agreement that services counted at intake
6	Ensure that CVET programs provide sufficient and relevant hard and soft skills. The project should further diversify the CVET specialties offered.	First part implemented, more diversified CVET not implemented. MOCA introduced soft skills training with qualitative reports of success. Diversity of training offered was not increased, due to MOCA assessment that budget and time available were insufficient to develop curricula, identify trainers, and train them.
7	Introduce certificates for graduates.	Implemented. Certificates were introduced, signed by MOCA and the DA. Not certified by the NVTI because of certification cost
8	Prioritize distribution of trainee start-up kits and clarify expectations of kit contents.	Implemented. Kits were reduced in size for the final graduate cohort due to budget constraints.
9	Carry out strategies to support trainees' transition to the labor market.	Partially implemented. Systematic support from the NBSSI or the project to the training graduates was not highly evident from the interviews, though a small number gained positions with employers through opportunities

#	Recommendation	Project response and evaluation comment
		provided through training linkages. Most trainees met by the evaluation team were seeking further training.
10	Improve management of cocoa nurseries.	Implemented. Clear management guidelines were instituted. Some dissatisfaction or misunderstandings among youth in one community
11	Foresee follow-up procedures for trainees for at least one year after the project ends.	Low prospects of implementation. MOCA reporting indicated that CODESULT might follow up graduates in communities it covers. However, the evaluation did not learn of CODESULT's intent to do so. MOCA also indicated that the CAPCs will be encouraged to follow-up with the MCPs and MFS facilitators to mentor graduates. Capacity of the MCPs to support graduates to access employment/self-employment does not appear high, however, although a substantial number are providing fee-for-service apprenticeship training for MOCA graduates.
12	Ensure VSLA members have proper skills to engage in IGA/business.	Implemented. MOCA integrated short generic entrepreneurial skills, basic book keeping, and market access training. MOCA's response to the recommendation was that training in business planning for running a micro/small business is not appropriate across the board for all VSLA members, many of whom are petty traders and not ready to start a small individual business. The final evaluation suggests that business training needs to be tailored to the aspirations of the individual IGA/VSLA participant. More extensive and tailored training is recommended in future projects.
13	Support livelihood beneficiaries in developing and managing their IGAS.	Implemented. As above
14	Provide an online-based DPMS system and related training.	Not fully resolved. MOCA was not able to upload data to the IMPAQ database system.

3.2.2 Effectiveness of Community Action Plan Committees for Prioritization of CL

Effectiveness of formation and operation of CAP committees. CAPCs were initiated jointly by CODESULT and WI. The CAPCs had the role of overseeing all the CL and community development efforts of MOCA in a community, providing the focal point in the community across the project's activities. The committees were set up through a systematic process of community entry and engagement. The CAPC members' accounts to the evaluation demonstrated that the process was commonly transparent and clear to the communities. The general composition of community representatives on the committees was suggested by MOCA: seven members, usually including one representative each from: Chief and elders, Queen Mother (women elders representative), adult women, teacher from the community school, youth, religious groups, and

the assembly member/Unit Committee.²¹ In some communities the MFS Facilitator and the Community Monitor were part of the CAPC, but they were not automatic members. The Community Monitors put in place by MOCA had the role of project monitoring data collection. The committees include a chairperson and a treasurer; members are selected by the whole community, including the community elders. CODESULT Community Mobilizers provided training to the CAPCs in how to conduct CL sensitization and OSH awareness. The youth CAPC members played an important role in providing peer-based advocacy on child labor in the community. During the course of the project, a few CAPCs replaced their youth representatives as they were found to be not sufficiently capable of the role, and a small number were replaced due to taking up work or training elsewhere, but overall, the inclusion of youth on CAPCs appears to have been effective in helping to empower young people.

The evaluation team observes that CODESULT's long-term experience of facilitating CAP formation, particularly in the Western Region, appears to have been key to success in establishing the committees.

The evaluation finds that MOCA's in-kind grants were particularly effective in garnering the commitment of the CAP committees and the communities, based on testimonies of community members, CAPC members, and project staff. Respondents explained that the provision of grants demonstrated to the communities that MOCA had something tangible to contribute, and importantly, the committees had a material resource to manage—which increased their sense of responsibility.

The evaluation team observes that the committees worked best where there was strong support for the committee from the community, and where the community contributed their labor or in-kind support for CAP implementation. In Kokoase, for example, the community provided construction materials and labor for the construction of the mechanized borehole platform; in Penakrom, the community rented a room for the school computer lab equipped by MOCA grant funds.

Some committee members reported that they underestimated the work involved: “We realized the enormity of the task and the sacrifices we have to make to do the committee work.” Asked what they gained as individuals, CAPC members mentioned lobbying skills (knowing which agency to approach for help), organizational skills, learning about OSH for farmers (how to use protective gear when spraying pesticide), learning (as a parent) what labor is acceptable and unacceptable for children.

While the majority of the CAPCs met by the evaluation team were very positive about their role and achievements, some CAP committee members did not feel they had the full support of their communities. The evaluation team met with one Phase 1 community committee in which members felt they had worked very hard over a two-year period, but that their hard work had not been supported by other community members. They felt there was too much burden on their shoulders. They were also disappointed that their CAPs were put forward to the district assemblies but not yet funded. The evaluation team observes that members were motivated by the desire to serve the community and to combat CL, while for some, membership may have been politically advantageous for elected assembly members.”

Success in mobilizing resources for CAP implementation. MOCA made in-kind grants up to a value of \$10,000 (distributed in two tranches) available to each community to implement their

²¹ Assembly member is a local term for the elected representative from the community to the district assembly. Most of the assembly members are men, hence they are often called ‘assembly men.’

CAP. The CAPCs had the role of consulting with the community to develop CAPS, overseeing the use of the in-kind grants used to implement the MOCA eligible activities and carrying out community sensitization activities via, for example, house-to-house sensitization. The CAPs were developed through consultation with communities and represented a mix of items, some that could be provided through MOCA grants and others (such as construction) for which the committees sought funding externally or through the community.

Through the grants, MOCA supported a wide range of tangible items to meet prioritized community needs such as school desks, school computer labs, mechanized water boreholes in areas where only hand pumps existed, children's football kits, grain mills, community information centers (radio and loudspeaker equipment), community sensitization and awareness sessions, and bakery training for adult women. The evaluation team notes the project rationale for supporting some of these items was that their provision is closely related to reducing CL. For example, improvements to the school learning environment by providing sufficient school desks for the number of students promotes school attendance and offers a comfortable environment for teaching and learning for children, instead of the alternative of children working on the farm all day. Similarly, there is a hypothesized link between borehole repair and CL reduction—borehole repair and mechanization reduces the time children spend fetching water and reduces the volume of water children carry. For example, in communities where there are insufficient boreholes there are long lines to fetch water, and children have to bring big buckets to the borehole for water, to avoid having to make multiple trips to the borehole and wait in line. MOCA does not have quantitative evidence to support this hypothesis, but the evaluation community interviews indicated that children's workloads have, indeed, been reduced as a result of borehole repairs.

The evaluation team, noting a consistency among the items that made up the different grant packages, asked whether there was a menu of items for the communities to choose from. Staff explained that the similarities among the packages arose due to the common needs of communities, as well as communities picking up on the contents of other communities' CAPs at common meetings. A positive feature of the CAP model was the introduction of accountability meetings, where CAPCs reported to the community on how their grants were used.

A critical feature of MOCA's strategy was to link the CAPCs with the DAs, through district involvement in activities, especially quarterly stakeholder meetings held at the district, where the CAPs were presented and discussed. Both district representatives and CAPCs appreciated this process. For example, Sefwi Wiawso's DA members expressed that the process enabled the districts to better understand community needs in a context of high transport costs, where it is difficult for the DAs to visit communities on a regular basis, given such a large number of communities (up to 1,500) in a district and stretched resources.

As of this writing, all community CAPs have been presented to the districts, and all 40 communities have had items from their CAPs integrated in the respective DA MTDP and forwarded to the central level government for funding. The MTDPs are usually for three to five years. As reported in the April 2019 TPR, MOCA staff learned that the district MTDPs are funded from the national budget in two tranches. The first tranche is intended for administrative purposes; the second can be used for actual infrastructure implementation. This means that the national funding of CAP items via the district mechanism is mostly still in process. However, the CAPC's advocacy did gain district attention and action for some much-needed infrastructure projects, such as bridge construction on the road to Kokoase.

Success in child labor and OSH sensitization. While the CAPCs were not the sole locus for MOCA CL sensitization and OSH preventive behaviors, the committees played a central part in organizing community events to raise awareness of CL or integrate CL drama and messages

into regular community festivals and events. Such an event was witnessed during the evaluation team visit to a community, where the CAPC organized an elaborate welcome ceremony for the team, including the chiefs and elders and demonstrating the products produced by the women's livelihood groups. The CAPC members representing religious groups and women's groups conducted door-to-door advocacy and the peer advocates conducted CL advocacy with youth. The national anti-CL slogan "Child labor, Away!" was well used and widely known throughout the communities the evaluation team visited.

Community level institutional impacts. According to project staff, in some communities the CAPs were built on existing but non-functional Child Protection Committees. In this sense MOCA unofficially reactivated such committees. Towards institutional sustainability, it may have been better for MOCA to explicitly align the CAPCs' identity more closely with government-mandated structures.

3.2.3 Youth Vocational Training for Employability and Transition to Work

This section assesses the extent to which the project's skills training interventions fulfilled the needs of youth participants—including the quality of the CVET and MFS vocational training provided and the skills and employment outcomes as perceived by youth and other stakeholders.

In the project design, as noted, approximately equal numbers of youth were expected to be provided training in MFS and in CVET. This was not what happened. The reason for the shift to 86 percent CVET and 14 percent MFS appeared to be due to the stronger interest of youth in CVET, which offered more extensive training and individual start-up kits. Most of the MFS learners were in school, although some out-of-school youth also participated. According to MOCA staff, MFS training was delivered outside school hours on weekdays, and in some communities on weekends as well, to accommodate the needs of those both in school and out of school, some of whom may work during the day.

Community Vocational Education and Training: Skills identification and areas offered

Marketable skills study. The preparatory step for delivering CVET intervention was the identification of skills for which youth would be expected to find a local market, through employment or self-employment. The Marketable Skills Assessment by Opportunities Industrialization Centres, Ghana (OICG) used a methodology based on interviews and FGDs with youth and community members in the target communities, to identify a long list of marketable skills areas (including hairdressing, tailoring/dressmaking, bakery, carpentry, welding, auto mechanics, masonry, palm oil processing, electricals, tiling and cocoa and vegetables nursery) providing opportunities for employment in the communities.²² Based on analysis of locally available skilled tradespeople and the project's budget, MOCA selected five skill areas: dress making/tailoring, hairdressing, bakery, carpentry, and welding.

MOCA selected the community-based training delivery model with the aim of countering outmigration and as an economical option. Initially, community training centers were envisioned for delivery, but as there were no facilities in the communities it was decided to deliver training through MCPs at their business premises. The skills courses offered were limited by the availability of MCPs in the target communities, although some were recruited from neighboring communities. Carpentry and welding, for example, were offered in only four of the 40

²² Surveyed youth interests and current activities also included kente weaving, carpentry, pot making, mobile phone repair, driving and welding.

communities, but interested learners from neighboring communities were also able to attend. The skills areas offered in a community depended, as well, on youth showing interest and opting for skills with MCPs present.

Youth preferences and course selection. Exhibit 13 shows the distribution of training graduates per area based on July 2019 data provided to the evaluation, which generally reflects the distribution of students enrolled.

Most youth trained in dressmaking/tailoring, followed by hairdressing and bakery. Smaller numbers took carpentry and welding. Project reporting shows that the vast majority (87%) of CVET participants were girls. A gender disaggregation of skills graduates by area was not available from the DPMS at the time of the report preparation; however, the majority of boys enrolled in carpentry and welding and a small number in tailoring, and girls enrolled in dressmaking/tailoring, hairdressing and bakery. The minimal engagement of boys appears to be due to several factors, including their outmigration and higher rate of enrollment in high school, but also due to the limited training options attractive to boys, as CVET FGDs reported. Project staff reported that it was also due to boys’ involvement in paid work such as motorcycle taxi driving, whereas many girls were out of school and under-occupied, according to community testimonies.

Exhibit 13. Number of Certified Skills Graduates by Area

Competency	Number	%
Dressmaking	874	60
Tailoring	81	5.5
Hairdressing	275	19
Bakery	196	13
Welding	29	2
Carpentry	6	0.4
Total	1461	100

CVET FGD participants reported to the evaluation team that there were boy non-participants in the community still engaged in heavy work, such as following logging tractors to carry wood and working in cocoa farms. As discussed in the preceding section, the project was constrained by the budget and time available to develop new curriculum areas once the gender imbalance became apparent, and the project was challenged to find MCPs in new areas. However, *Kente* weaving, for example, could have been promoted as a traditional male craft in communities such as Worapong, where it is already practiced, given the strong market for these products in Ghana.

Overall satisfaction. Generally speaking, the trainees and their parents were very happy that they could study a trade. Without the training, many youth said they would be “idling around” and helping their parents on the farm. The evaluation’s meetings with a range of community stakeholders demonstrated that skills training brought a great many positive benefits for the trainees, in terms of their skills acquisition and employability, and strikingly, in terms of increased self-esteem. The evaluation’s FGD participants commonly expressed their increased motivation to get a job, increased self-confidence and self-esteem, and positive impacts on their personal hygiene and respectful behavior. Both girl and boy trainees gained skills that they highly value and which demonstrably increased their employment options in many cases.

Training duration. For each skills area, MOCA developed a customized six-month training curriculum, based on competency-based training principles and aiming to fit the standard three-year training into a six-month training apprenticeship with an MCP. This aim was to enable learners to achieve the requisite skills in a short period of time; however, the assumption that

the level of skills for employability could be acquired within six months across all the skill areas was challenged by many of the trainees, MCPs, and district staff. One exception was bakery training, but dressmaking and hairdressing students commonly found that their skills did not meet market needs on graduating. We heard that in smaller communities customers were satisfied with simple dress designs, but in larger communities the expectations were for higher quality garments. Many of the graduates are now taking, or intending to take, further training to polish up skills, either with their MCPs or in nearby larger centers where they pay for the training themselves.

Quality of training skills and learning environment. The project delivered training of trainers (TOT) to the MCPs through a Competency-Based Training guide to assist them to deliver training in six months. The project fully covered the fees paid to MCPs for the training, amounting to 200 GHC (\$40) per trainee over six months. Students' progress was monitored by the district and NVTI as far as possible, to ensure the training was delivered according to the curriculum. However, the quality of instruction inevitably varied. Some MCPs had limited literacy skills, and told the evaluation team they did not really follow the training manual. MCPs also needed to take breaks on occasion for their own personal reasons. The evaluation heard that MCPs ensured discipline and timely arrival, applying penalties for lateness. One of the project's challenges was to provide sufficient learning equipment within budget. For sewing classes one machine was provided between three to five learners, for example, which greatly limited the time for practice.

The evaluation heard that the introduction of soft skills training, delivered by NBSSI and by MOCA staff, was a valuable addition to the training, providing much needed reproductive health advice as well as business start-up skills.

Student monitoring and assessment. The CAPCs monitored learners' attendance. Project reporting indicated an overall attrition rate of around 10 percent (298 learners) following initial enrolment. Based on the project's interviews with those leaving, the most common reason was lack of interest (36%), followed by migration out of the community (31%), and to enroll in free Senior High School (23%.) 15 Fifteen girls dropped out due to pregnancy or to deliver a baby, but others returned to training after delivering their baby, indicating the attendance requirements were quite flexible. MOCA introduced monitoring and assessment of the learners' performance through the NVTI. At the end of their training, learners were assessed by officers from NVTI, and successful graduates awarded with certificates signed by MOCA staff and the DA, which helped in the recognition of skills. MOCA could not afford the cost of certification by NVTI at a cost of 100 GHC (\$20) per certification, but the certificates were signed by the project and a representative of the DA. The evaluation team notes that providing training certificates was not foreseen in the project design, but was introduced following an MTE recommendation. Certification and the associated budget should ideally have been included in the project design.

Trainees' transition to work or self-employment. In most cases, MOCA support placed the trainees on a pathway toward employment, rather than in paid employment or self-employment. According to CMEP reporting 1,848 (66%) of all youth trained by April 2019 are participating in formal jobs, internships or apprenticeships, or in self-employment, as of the time of writing. The evaluation's community and staff interviews suggest that the majority of those reported are in fee-paying apprenticeships, rather than formal employment or paid apprenticeships. The evaluation team met or heard about only a small proportion who are self-employed, and based on the evaluation's qualitative interviews, the rate of skills training graduates gaining formal employment is relatively low. Most of those trainees reported that they are seeking further training as apprentices. Bakery skills graduates, as an exception, appear to have good prospects for self-employment, as there is a ready market in every local community. The evaluation team met bakery graduates who have been able to set up businesses quickly due to

the demand in the community (see success story overleaf). The evaluation team met some dressmaking graduates who are now making and selling clothes for sale while continuing their apprenticeship with the MCP.

Carpenters and welders are similarly in high demand. However, there do not appear to be enough customers to support employment for all of the large number of dressmaking and hairdressing graduates in the students' home communities. As a side effect some of the MCPs are losing customers to the training graduates, while some graduates seek employment elsewhere.

Some trainees' parents help to pay for their skills upgrading. Other youth are finding whatever work they can to save for further training or to set up their business. The start-up kits were highly appreciated by the trainees, but MOCA had to reduce the value of the kits in the last six months due to depreciation of the national currency. For example, ovens for bakery were shared between a group of graduates. Some graduates indicated they need to save to invest in hairdryers and other equipment before they can start serving customers.

Model Farm School for Youth ages 15–17

Most of the MFS trainees were enrolled in Junior Secondary School, with some leaving the training when they graduated to Senior Secondary School. Project reporting shows that approximately half the MFS enrollees were boys (174) and half girls (176), indicating that both boys and girls are interested in learning and practicing agricultural production. A similar proportion of boy and girl MFS learners participated in the evaluation FGDs.

MFS training was delivered by the community-based facilitators in after-school sessions of two hours twice a week. The MFS facilitators were local residents who had a background in agriculture, trained by MOCA in safe and sustainable farming methods. Some of the sessions for cocoa seedling nurseries were held for youth together with adult women. The project provided the inputs for the MFS produce, leveraging support from COCOBOD for cocoa seedlings and vegetable seedlings from MOFA. Unlike the CVET trainees, MFS trainees could receive some income for the sale of their produce, with profit sharing at the end of the production season, once the rainy season begins (April/May) and farmers can purchase the seedlings from the nurseries to plant on their farms. Sales from MFS seedlings amounted to 800 GHC (approximately \$160) in one community met by the evaluation team. The income was divided, part to the students to use for their ongoing studies and part to reinvest in the nursery. Together with the MFS for adult women, the farms provided the opportunity to raise cocoa seedlings and produce a range of new vegetables, integrating OSH and sustainable farming methods. MOCA additionally provided training on OSH in agriculture to 80 youth, who then took a peer-advocacy role, and provided protective gear, including overalls and wellington boots, to 247 youth and adult female MFS participants. The evaluation team learned that the protective equipment was used and appreciated, but the evaluation time limit prevented them from being able to ascertain the specific effectiveness of peer awareness raising.

The MFS students met by the team were highly engaged in the activity and satisfied with the results. Only in one community did the evaluation team hear dissatisfaction among the youth that the MFS facilitator had not yet shared out the profits from cocoa seedling sales, as noted earlier in the report. Based on the perspectives of the project staff and youth interviews, the evaluation team concluded that successful outcomes of the MFS in terms of crop sales and future work preferences depended very much on the skills and motivation of the MFS facilitators. Nevertheless, the sample of MFS facilitators the team met with was too small to provide any overall trend towards high or low skills and motivation among the facilitators.

Among approximately 20 MFS learners interviewed, only one or two were interested in pursuing employment in agriculture.²³ Most preferred to complete their studies to find non-agricultural work outside the community. This appears to be based partly on their preference for employment in towns rather than villages. Given that the incomes of cocoa farmers remain very low, and some of these communities lack electricity and poor road access, it is understandable that many young people see better futures elsewhere.

This suggests that MOCA's aim of inspiring a new generation of cocoa and other agricultural commodity farmers among students and out-of-school youth has not yet been successful. Future projects might encourage more youth to pursue agriculture through providing them training and mentoring by successful farmers as role models, building on MOCA's agricultural college intern initiative. In contrast, the adult women engaged in MFS tended to see their future in their communities and in farming as well as supplementary income generating activities; and the MFS training strengthened their technical skills and OSH awareness.

MOCA Stories: Successes and Challenges

A 17-year-old from Boahenkwa could not further her studies after she completed Junior High School. Before MOCA, she was collecting leaves for sale to save some money to start learning a trade. She could not save enough because she had to use part of her income for her basic needs. She joined the MOCA project as a bakery trainee. She graduated after six months, and MOCA provided her with two bags of flour, one bucket of margarine, a tin of baking soda, and a satchel of yeast. With no oven, she builds her own oven fire for baking. Since then she has been preparing meat pies and selling them. "On a good day, I make about GHC 70 profit and on bad days, I make about GHC 50 as profit. Although I could not further my education to secure a formal job, I think I am earning more from my business than a salaried worker earns in a month." She aspires to expand her business; and produce bread and other pastries and recruit other youth in the community to train them in bakery as well.

In Penakrom, a small community in which gender norms make it difficult for men to enroll in tailoring with women crafts persons, a male MCP served as a role model and encouraged boys to register for the CVET skills training in tailoring. Four graduates of the six-month MOCA training are upgrading their skills with him. They work on their own over the weekend to make some income. They sew shirts and wear them as an advertisement; customers interested in the designs order such shirts to be sewn for them.

3.2.4 Effectiveness of VSLA and Income Generating Activities for Women

VSLA membership and household perceptions of resilience

VSLA operation and membership. The VSLA model emerged as one of MOCA's success stories. The VSLA groups have been very popular, with 97 groups established and averaging more than two groups per community. Communities have taken the initiative to form additional women's groups. Men formed their own groups outside MOCA support; they were not permitted to join the women's groups.

MOCA introduced the VSLA model initially to adult women members of participant households, who were invited to form a group. Communities were initially skeptical, as they had prior

²³ Unlike CVET training, MFS training was not expected to lead directly to work in agriculture among all the learners, but to provide a 'taster' and encouragement, therefore interviewee preferences should not be interpreted as an indication of future employment pathways.

negative experience with microfinance organizations that had left them and taken the savings; but they reportedly trusted MOCA due to the range of supports the project brought to them.

The VSLA operation was based on a comprehensive training manual and TOT delivered via the MFS facilitators. The model is based on a 12-month cycle, with weekly savings contributions and “share-out” at the end of the cycle. The groups set their own contributions, ranging from 1 to 10 GHC per week. The distributed amounts range from 150-250 GHC (\$30 – \$50) per person in the first cycle. The amounts are expected to increase after the second cycle as many groups have increased weekly contributions to two to 10 GHC, with additional money from group IGAs saved. At the time of writing, MOCA reported that savings across the 40 communities are substantial, amounting to 323,468 GHC (close to \$60,000). The savings serve as a loan source for the members, which were highly appreciated according to FGD participants. Loans usually have a three-month repayment cycle, with 10–20 percent interest per month, as determined by each group. The groups also set their own penalties, such as small fines for defaulting. The evaluation team learned that the loans are frequently used to invest in the women’s pre-existing small businesses or in their children’s education or skills upgrading costs. The evaluation team did not learn of any difficulties regarding loan repayments. However, an in-depth investigation of the operation of the groups was not possible within the time constraints, limiting evaluation team meetings with the groups involved.

Membership motivation and excluding factors. Based on the FGDs, the evaluation team concludes that, while VSLA membership was optional for parents with a youth MOCA participant, some felt obligated to join the group as a recipient of support to their child. Among some of the poorest households, once their child completed the training, the household left the VSLA group. Others could not even afford the minimum of one or two GHC per week to join. Migrants from other areas who came to work as hired labor are especially disadvantaged, being often the poorest in the community. The majority of the VSLA members already had at least a small IGA, such as petty trade (selling kenke food, other foodstuffs) prior to formation of the VSLA group.

Benefits for income and financial stability. According to the evaluation’s FGD participants, loans and share-outs were used for children’s school costs, supporting CVET graduates to upgrade their skills, and expanding their existing small-scale IGAs and investment in new IGAs. A proportion of the savings were used for re-investment in the group’s IGA activities. VSLA members in all communities met by the evaluation team expressed satisfaction with membership of the VSLA, and confidence that their group will continue. The participants expressed that their economic security had improved as a result of the savings and loans facility. However, VSLA savings and interest distributions had not yet brought substantial annual increases in individual income as per the CMEP indicator, with less than 50 percent of women reporting an annual increase.

Social benefits: One of the additional benefits of VSLA membership noted by the evaluation team is an increase in women’s social capital. FGD participants expressed that it gave them the opportunity to come together as a supportive group: “Coming to a meeting and talking with others helps you forget your burdens.”

MOCA Stories: VSLAs

A young member of a VSLA group in the Kokoase community in Wassa Amenfi District, before joining the VSLA, she had constructed a stall but did not have the capital to procure goods to stock her stall. When she joined the VSLA, she took a loan from the association and procured goods to stock her stall. She started running the shop and paid back the loan in three months with 10% interest. At the end of the 12-month cycle, when the group shared their savings, she used hers to procure more goods and expanded her business. “Because of MOCA, I am now a proud owner of a shop that is running and growing.”

Effect of livelihoods training on diversification of income sources

Delivery. MOCA provided a range of livelihood training in agricultural and non-agricultural production to adult women members of beneficiary households. This took place following the formation of the VSLA groups. However, livelihood training was not only available to members of VSLAs, but also to other participants who did not join VSLAs. Training in a wide variety of production areas, delivered by MOCA’s Youth Employment and Livelihoods Specialist in cooperation with the Women in Agricultural Development Department of MOFA, introduced a range of livelihood training to women household members including beekeeping, orange-fleshed sweet potato, cocoa seedling nursery, and mushrooms. Non-agricultural skills training included soap making and baking, with start-up supplies provided and delivered through the VSLA groups or separately.

Extent of success of IGA activities. As reported in the TPRs, and supplemented by the evaluation team interviews, the agricultural training and start-up supplies met with considerable success and the recipients are beginning to reap increased incomes.

Groups trained in beekeeping met with mixed success. For example, in Nyameagyeso the women learned to place the boxes away from pesticide spraying areas. Their first harvest of honey was sold with a value of 140 GHC. But in the Worapong community, the beekeeping start-up failed as all the bees died, which was explained as due to location of the hives within the insecticide spraying area.

MOCA introduced the cultivation of orange-fleshed sweet potatoes—a nutritional and hardy crop—to 10 communities across the four districts in mid-2018. Training was provided, as well as sweet potato vines for planting. A number of women now use the processed vegetable to add to food stuffs, with potential markets found as far away as Kumasi and Accra.

Non-agricultural products. Soap making was introduced to seven communities in early 2019. The evaluation team met with a group in Boahenkwa, who were highly enthusiastic about the venture and have started producing and selling soap as a group venture. Sales amounted to GHC 720 by January 2019, with 300 GHC reinvested in inputs. In Nyameagyeso, the group trained in making beauty products and plan to establish a group business.

Cocoa seedling nurseries. MOCA in collaboration with the Havener Fellowship project and COCOBOD introduced a cocoa nursery management model to women farmers and MFS youth participants in eight communities, based on a hybrid cocoa. At the time of the evaluation visit, most of the cocoa seedling crop of both youth and adult MFS participants had been harvested and sold, preventing the evaluation team from being able to see the model farms under cultivation. The model was inspiring to women farmers—one of whom the team met in Kansakrom, who aspires to be the best cocoa farmer in the district.

The evaluation team concludes that the IGA activities have reached varying degrees of maturity, given that some activities only began in late 2018. The activities are beginning to reap profits, but are still at the early stages. The length of implementation of the agricultural and non-agricultural activities, with the longest being two years but the shortest being only eight months,

has been too short in many cases to see productivity and incomes stabilize. This finding helps explain the CMEP data, which reports that 48 percent (below target) of women reported an annual increase in income, based on the PMP Indicator 4.1 measure of an increase over 50 GHC (\$10) a month. This indicator may not be reliable as a measure of MOCA impact, however, as it is difficult to separate income due to participation in MOCA VSLA and vocational training activities from other income, and the project did not have the resources to track individual women's income to confirm the extent to which they were breaking even or making a profit. Measuring income to track profit/breakeven/loss was beyond the resources and scope of the project.

Five key factors, (including enabling and limiting factors), affected the success of the IGA interventions:

- The additional support of the Havener Fellowship interns made a critical difference to the success of the farm diversification.
- The level of skills and commitment of the MFS facilitators was critical to the success of the IGAs.
- The duration of project support to IGAs was too short for many to reach maturity, especially for Phase 3 communities.
- All of the VSLA and IGA groups benefited from a generic business skills training, which included financial literacy; but this training was not extensive and was not tailored to the needs of individual women or groups.
- As observed by the evaluation team, the ventures were either in large groups or individual; the women have not attempted to experiment with small group business models.

3.2.5 Perceived Impacts on CL and Other Impacts

The evaluation team's observations regarding the impacts on CL are tentative, drawing on a range of stakeholder perspectives including the reports of MOCA's youth beneficiaries. As noted earlier in the report, the prevailing rate of engagement in CL among youth beneficiaries is approximately 56 percent, subject to final verification. When asked about their engagement in economic activities before taking part in the training and after, most youth said they have reduced their involvement in hazardous work, and some of them no longer go the farm with their parents.

Those who have found apprenticeships with payment, or who are making profits from their new business, appear not to be engaged in their former work or any type of CL. However, some youth interviewees indicated that they continue to have financial needs while they are in training, and so hire out their labor on the weekends. Trainees were not provided with any allowances while they trained, as this is not an allowable cost under ILAB funding. Additionally, numerous trainees and graduates reported that they engage in paid work to save money to upgrade their skills. "I have gone back to cutting firewood to sell. I need to save so that I can go and upgrade my skills" (CVET trainee, Kansakrom). Closer examination of the individual cases is required to determine if these youth are engaging in CL according to MOCA's definition, including factors such as age of the youth, hours worked, and tools used. However, for those engaging in CL as reported in the project's monitoring data, the need to have an income while they train may be a key reason for continuing to engage in CL.

In Boahenkwa, MCPs reported that, because there is no money given to graduates as a business start-up, they go back to work to earn money to start their business.²⁴ These MCPs expressed the view that training and skills development alone are not sufficient to prevent CL, and that community sensitization on CL is an even more critical factor in keeping the trainees out of CL, one MCP stating, “if anything is keeping them out of CL it is the community sensitization.”

A considerable number of girl trainees have babies to take care of, but since their parents cannot support them financially, these girls still have to work on weekends to make money. According to CVET trainees in Nyamegyeso, CL has been reduced but parents are still poor farmers and do not have money to hire labor, so their children’s labor is still very important to the farm: “The males are engaged in harvesting cocoa and avocado pear, burning the land (slash and burn land preparation), weeding, breaking cocoa pods, spraying pesticides. Girls are engaged in carrying water for spraying, carrying cocoa pods, and breaking pods. Learning a trade can be an escape, but on weekends we still have to do that” (CVET FGD, Nyamegyeso).

Commenting on those who did not join training, youth CVET trainees in Akomfore said that MOCA “did not bring skills that men are interested in, so the male youth are still engaged in CL. They are carrying cocoa, logs of wood, and [engaging] in *galamsey*.” The evaluation team concludes that the interventions did not have a marked impact on CL among non-participant boys, who training participants suggested would be more interested in typically male skills areas—such as building, auto mechanics, and welding. Further, the project may not immediately prevent CL among all youth participants, but once the graduates have an alternative source of income after upgrading their skills and setting up a business or finding paid work, they may stop engaging in hazardous CL.

Apart from the direct impact on CL, the project has reaped considerable benefits in terms of the self-esteem and confidence of the youth, as the evaluation heard from the testimonies of many trainees, especially girls. Those who have begun earning a living are no longer in CL and no longer need to ask boyfriends for financial favors. MOCA has also brought tangible impacts on women’s social and economic participation, as described earlier. Anecdotally the evaluation team heard from girl trainees and adult community members that girls are engaging less in pre-marital sex, partly because they are more occupied with their training and also plausibly because the reproductive health training raised their awareness. Some community members met by the evaluation team claimed that teenage pregnancy is dropping due to the project’s influence, but there is no quantitative evidence to support this; and the team observed that a high proportion of trainees they met (estimated at around 20%) had children already or were pregnant. Testimonies across a range of youth and adult women and men community interviews demonstrated the project’s impacts on OSH awareness for youth and on safer farming practices generally. For example, adult FGD participants described their new understanding of the harmful effects of pesticide on children and youth. These findings are corroborated by the project monitoring data, which demonstrates increased awareness of safe and unsafe agricultural activities for youth. It is difficult to determine which specific project activities brought about these changes; they appear to have come about due to the range of community sensitization activities conducted via the CAP Committees, as well as MOCA’s provision of personal protective equipment to MFS youth and women participants.

²⁴ MOCA provides business start-up kits to graduates rather than money.

3.3 Efficiency

3.3.1 Effectiveness of management strategies in achieving objectives and addressing problems

Overall, the strategies adopted by MOCA management have enabled a systematic and well-coordinated implementation of program roll-out in the communities. The project management has generally been flexible in adapting to contextual circumstances and issues that arise.

Efficiency of implementation and use of human resources. The phased introduction of communities contributed to the successful achievement of objectives, by dividing the roll-out into manageable parts and enabling the implementing team to learn from the phase 1 communities. The scale of implementation achieved represents an impressive achievement considering overall staff numbers, with the project utilizing community human resources effectively to supplement staff resources. For example, community members, two per community, were trained to conduct follow-up visits to beneficiary households to collect DPMS monitoring data.

Implementing partner coordination. Coordination between the implementing partners, WI, and CODESULT, was largely effective and contributed to achieving project objectives. Initially, the frontline staff of each agency had clearly demarcated roles, with WI Local Coordinators covering TVET and livelihoods, the Regional Mobilizers covering CAP establishment, and WI staff also liaising with CAPCs on grants implementation. Project staff expressed to the evaluation team that there could have been more joint staff orientation and common reporting lines between WI and CODESULT teams, rather than Local Coordinators reporting to the WI livelihoods and CVET specialists and Regional Mobilizers reporting to the CAP Coordinator. Further, the assignment roles and workload could have been more evenly shared across the local staff from the outset for better efficiency (so that all intervention areas could be covered in a single community visit). This took some time to re-adjust, according to the KIIIs, with roles shared more evenly in the latter half of the project.

Adaptation to reach youth participant targets. During the first half of MOCA implementation, the project recognized that it could not identify two youth per household in enough cases to fill the target, because only around 15 percent of households fitted this assumption. In order to reach the target of 80 youth per community, therefore, project management decided to include a much larger number of households. This decision was successful in terms of reaching the target number of youth, but meant that additional resources were required for the IGA activities and available funds had to be spread more thinly across livelihood vocational training for youth, for example, reducing the funding per youth start-up kits. MOCA and ILAB discussed the possibility of the project seeking a formal modification to lower the target of 3,200 for E1 following the MTE. ILAB advised against this, based on the view that lessons can be learned from non-achievement of project targets. For 2019, the project set an annual E1 target of 880 (480 to be reached by April 2019 and 400 to be reached by October 2019), which if met would put the project at 2,800 youth beneficiaries. While lower than the LOP (Life of Project) target of 3,200, both MOCA and ILAB agreed the priority was to provide quality services to participants, rather than to reach a target at the possible cost of reduced quality.

Adaptations in the face of currency devaluation. During the project, Ghana's currency progressively depreciated against the dollar. In the most recent reporting period, the value dropped from 4.82 GHC to 5.44 GHC between October 2018 and March 2019. As a result, project management was progressively challenged to deliver the CVET training costs and intended packages of start-up kits per CVET graduate—dealing with the depreciation, for example, by providing one clay oven to a group of bakery graduates, rather than one oven per

graduate. This was not only a practical solution, but it was more sustainable, given the cost of replacing gas cylinders for the graduates.

Capitalizing on technical (OSH and reproductive health) expertise in the team. Apart from initial staffing issues, the project was able to provide a strong range of technical expertise across the staff of WI and CODESULT. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Specialist and the Youth Employment and Livelihoods Specialist provided strong expertise in their respective areas. The project further capitalized on the experience in reproductive health education of the TVET Specialist and the Grants Manager, to support the inclusion of reproductive health education within CVET TOT for the MCPs and youth training. While the expected role of the General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU) in delivering OSH training was not realized as planned, the team identified relevant teaching skills through the Youth Employment and Livelihoods Specialist. In addition, the CODESULT staff are highly experienced in community mobilization; and the Havener Fellowship initiative brought additional expertise through its coordinator, who succeeded the Livelihoods Specialist when that person left the project in late 2018.

3.3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation System Operation and Effectiveness

Based on staff interviews and the documentation review, the evaluation team concludes that the M&E system has generally worked effectively, in both collecting valuable monitoring and evaluation data and serving project management and USDOL reporting needs.

According to KIIs, the CMEP process was thorough, but resulted in too many indicators for practical purposes and some redundancy among them, such as those primarily related to the completion of work plan activities (e.g. 1.1.1, the number of communities awarded MOCA grants, or 1.2.1, the number of CAPCs that implemented CL/OSH awareness raising in their community). The evaluation team concurs that some indicators could have been dropped without significant loss to monitoring effectiveness. The process of collecting the DPMS data appears to have been well managed through the Community Monitors. Most of them are teachers, however, who often return to their hometown during vacations; so the project team collected the monitoring data during their absence. Both regular Community Monitors and M&E staff were thoroughly trained in the data collection process, and the M&E staff did not report any inconsistencies in the approach or the data collected.

M&E staff confirmed that the data was well used by project management to understand and respond to the project's performance. For example, the system was well used to monitor the overall number of beneficiaries reached, which was discussed by the project team and a response agreed to in consultation with the WI home office. The system has also been used to monitor the presence of a youth member on the CAPC, as required. The project team has been able to discuss the reasons for departure of youth members, such as the youth representative going beyond age of 17 or taking up studies elsewhere.

The project team encountered technical problems throughout the project with the operation of the computer database for the uploading of data and calculation of indicators. This has caused delays in reporting the data in six monthly progress reporting. Use of the external evaluation contractor (IMPAQ) to develop and operate the DPMS database remained problematic for the project team until the time of the evaluation. For example, the system is still not able to calculate accurately some of the CMEP performance indicators (e.g. Indicator 1.12). The project team reported the difficulties to the technical contractor, but resolution has been slow to non-existent. Due to the problems encountered with the online DPMS, the project M&E team uploaded data manually via EXCEL to calculate some indicators. One of the reasons put forward for the difficulties was that IMPAQ did not participate in the CMEP process, which prevented them from

fully understanding the indicators. In addition, the project team felt it was inefficient and disempowering having the database housed externally. Project staff recommended that future projects consider the database requirements when developing the CMEP, and then hand management of the database over to the project once the technical contractor has completed development of the technical database.

3.4 Sustainability

3.4.1 MOCA Sustainability Planning and Exit Strategy

MOCA's central strategy for sustainability, described in the most recent annual sustainability plan, was to employ a bottom-up approach, increasing community-level capacity to address CL through the CAPCs. This strategy is valid, but external sources of support and increased district level capacity are still needed to see services such as community-based vocational training continue in the communities and expand in the districts, given the funding required.

The MOCA exit strategy is intended to leave the communities with active CAPs the communities can continue to pursue. At the time of the evaluation in July 2019, the project was mounting its exit strategy through meetings held with each community, to help them make plans for continued implementation of their CAPs and to make arrangements for handover of equipment. The team is also holding exit meetings with each DA regarding the potential support they can provide to MOCA communities across the intervention areas. As part of the project closeout activities, MOCA held discussions with NBSSI on ways NBSSI will continue to support the graduates trained and reached agreement that MOCA will provide the project participants' data (both youth and women household representatives) to NBSSI, to enable them to register the data in their database and follow-up to provide further mentoring support. To support this effort, MOCA allocated some project assets in the form of computer equipment to one of the government Business Resource Centers in the Ashanti Region.

In terms of sharing MOCA's experience, the project plans to meet with CARE International to share experience of the project. However, the evaluation team observes that in other respects the exit strategy contains limited activities for sharing lessons with higher levels of government and other development agencies. This may be due to project funding constraints impeding additional exit meetings, and also because the project focus is at the district and community levels.

3.4.2 Prospects for Sustainability

Child labor awareness and OSH practices. The increase in understanding of the concept of CL among the communities appears to be robust and likely to remain. Both youth participants and their parents are now aware of CL and the need to eradicate it. Youth awareness of their rights with respect to CL is also high and expected to be sustained. Further, improved awareness of safe farming practices is also well-established, based on the evaluation team's observations.

Community Action Plans and CAP Committees: Ongoing implementation of the current CAPs appears likely to continue, based on the inclusion of CAPs in district MTDPs. The ability of some community leaders to mobilize external funds is also a lasting legacy. Ongoing community action planning appears likely to be sustained if the committees continue to review the CAPs on a regular basis, such as every six months, which will provide an ongoing role for the CAPCs. The evaluation team found mixed evidence of the likelihood that the CAPCs will continue as an institution. In Boahenkwa, for example, the committee members expressed that they intended to continue going long term ("for another 10 years"), whereas in Akomfore,

members said they would only continue if there is another project with management grants, suggesting a degree of dependency on external development support in this community.

Community-based vocational training. Indications regarding sustainability of the CVET model are mixed. The six-months training curriculum and the trained cohort of MCPs represent a valuable resource to the communities and the districts. MCPs express their willingness and interest to continue to train youth in their respective skill areas, but continued operation of the six-month apprenticeship program in its current form and as a fee-charging program is uncertain.

A large number of youth in the communities now possess vocational skills. Bakery graduates have thrived on self-employment already, and tailoring/dressmaking and hairdressing graduates are likely to take off in future, as many of them are upgrading their skills with either their MCPs or other craft persons in bigger communities. Most important to the long term sustained impact of the project on the lives of individual youth is the reported change in youth perceptions of their futures and their realistic ambitions.

Women's income diversification and agricultural extension. The evaluation team's interactions with women's VSLA groups provided substantial evidence of the sustainability of the model in the target communities and its potential expansion. Based on the sample of communities visited, the groups look very likely to continue to operate beyond the life of the project. The evaluation team concludes that this activity is one of the most sustainable of MOCA's intervention models. Members of multiple VSLA group informed the evaluation team that they plan to continue and expand beyond the end of the project. In some communities, expansion beyond the MOCA beneficiaries has already begun, and loans are being given to non-VSLA members with a guarantee from two VSLA members. Loan availability in the VSLA provides the needed capital injection for the expansion and resilience of women's businesses.

While many of the women's IGA are in their infancy, women with existing businesses have been able to expand them, increasing their resilience. The project has also built a wealth of knowledge of new agricultural crops in the communities, and built their confidence in knowing where to seek technical advice. The long-term application of the new crops will depend partly on women's access to land. Overall, women are enthusiastic to try new agricultural and non-agricultural ventures, both collectively and individually.

4. LESSONS LEARNED AND PROMISING PRACTICES

4.1 Lessons Learned

The evaluation team identifies the following lessons learned from the implementation of MOCA that are instructive for future programming by ILAB, Winrock, and other development actors.

1. Youth direct participant target setting must take careful account of family and population sizes and youth migration patterns.

Target setting for CL projects needs to take more thorough account of the family size and the population of the communities, as well as outmigration trends, to avoid setting unrealistic targets. One of MOCA's biggest challenges was to identify two youth ages 15–17 per household to meet the target number; this, in turn, increased the number of households with a child participant to be provided with IGA services.

2. Programs need to provide a diverse range of youth vocational training geared towards both existing and emerging market demands.

The methodology employed in MOCA's marketable skills assessment and the subsequent selection of training areas did not provide a sufficiently diverse range of existing and emerging skills areas with employment opportunity. Many youth in a given community trained in the same skill area, and the evaluation KIs indicated that the market for dressmakers and hairdressers, for example, was not large enough to sustain their employment, with some graduates moving elsewhere to find work. Additionally, the labor market assessment was based largely on the perceived needs of the communities and the existing trades, and could have given more attention to emerging job markets in the communities and surrounding areas. Future project investments in training in growing trades and skill areas, as well as existing trades may enhance the trainees' employment opportunities and develop human resources in the communities.

3. Vocational training interventions for youth engaged in, or at risk of, child labor need to be gender sensitive.

Programs need to offer vocational skills training options that meet the needs and interests of both male and female youth, taking into account or addressing the prevailing gender norms in the community. Additionally, in MOCA's experience, adolescent boys in the community were often already working in a range of paid jobs, and vocational training did not meet their needs. This suggests that additional interventions, such as OSH interventions at work, need to be offered in these or similar communities in the future to reach working youth at risk of child labor.

4. Strengths and limitations of community-based skills training (CVET)

The evaluation team's assessment of MOCA's CVET model provides both positive and negative lessons.

- MOCA's experience demonstrated that local tradespersons such as qualified dressmakers, welders, and carpenters can provide an acceptable quality of community-based vocational training for youth, provided that incentives in the form of trainee fees are provided, either by an external agency or by the learners. The model requires intensive support for quality control through NVTI or an external project. Critical factors in the quality and relevance of such training are the integration of soft skills (marketing, financial management) as well as sexual and reproductive health awareness training.

- The evaluation team found a consensus among trainers and learners that the duration of vocational skills training needs to be longer than six months to enable successful transition to work or self-employment for many trainees, given community expectations regarding acceptable skills and the degree of learner absenteeism. Community-based training should be one among a range of options. Limiting the training to skills that already had MCPs present in the community was a limiting factor on the range of options available.

4.2 Promising Practices

1. Effective engagement with government partners strengthens technical support to vocational training and IGA interventions and promotes sustainability.

MOCA's approach to engaging with district level government partners—DAs, COCOBOD, MoFA, and the NBSSI—achieved significant levels of partner involvement, with the benefit of strengthening technical implementation as well as supporting sustainability of the interventions. According to staff and DA representatives interviewed, the partnership strategies worked well overall, because the project ensured that the government partners and well as the communities and participants benefited from involvement in the project activities.

MOCA engaged representatives of the **district authorities** in project activities in the development of MOCA communities' CAPs, specifically through holding quarterly stakeholder meetings with CAP committees per district, where each presented their CAP for discussion. It was a significant achievement to secure such engagement in a context of scarce local government resources, and the project's support for the transport costs of district authorities was a supportive factor. MOCA helped the DAs to link with the communities, and furthered tangible and social community development through inclusion of elements of the CAPs in district MTDPs.

The project also established a successful partnership with **COCOBOD**, to supply sustainable hybrid cocoa seedlings to the communities, and provide technical support to the MFS and community cocoa nurseries. While this partnership was not without some shortcomings in terms of COCOBOD's on-time supply of seedlings, the partnership was aligned with the COCOBOD's strategy of increasing the production of these seedlings (with shorter cocoa harvest time and pest resistance), to support the sustainability of the industry as well as its goal of creating a new generation of cocoa farmers.

MoFA's support to MOCA through its Women in Agricultural Development was key in introducing a variety of new crops to women IGA participants with training facilitated jointly with the MOCA Livelihood Specialist.

The **NBSSI** was successfully engaged to conduct assessments of the CVET trainees and assisted in development of the competency-based training curriculum. As noted, as part of the exit strategy is MOCA holding discussions with NBSSI to provide ongoing mentoring services, to support MOCA's skills graduates in their transition to work following the project close.

2. MOCA's VSLA model with open membership is an effective approach to strengthen women's economic resilience in poor communities.

The VSLA successfully engaged women community members from both participant and non-participant households in savings and loans activities. It provides women from mostly poor households with a peer-based source of loans and savings, which is highly relevant to their needs as indicated in the evaluation team's interviews. The benefits of belonging to the groups include making savings to invest in children's education needs, investment in the group IGA,

and to a limited extent, in individual IGA. It did not necessarily produce sufficient income for investment in individual IGAs.

The evaluation team concludes that implementation of MOCA's VSLA model works well due to its relevance to women's needs, the mostly affordable and appropriate level of the contributions, the clear guidance provided by the VSLA manual, and the effective skills of the trained MFS facilitators.

3. Community Action Plan Committees are an effective community-led approach for prioritizing action on child labor, promoting community ownership and the capacity to leverage community and district support for child labor initiatives.

The establishment of CAPCs was effective in establishing community ownership across the range of MOCA interventions, and delivered a range of vital community improvements, supported by in-kind grants as well as leveraging community contributions of labor and construction materials, district support and private sector assistance.

4. Garnering complementary support for agricultural diversity training by agricultural college interns, funded by MOCA through its Robert D. and Elizabeth Havener Fellowship, strengthens agricultural extension and provides role models for youth and adult women farmers.

The project's initiative in securing separate funding via the Havener Fellowship for an internship program in partnership with the Kwadaso Agricultural College, Kumasi, supplemented the agricultural expertise available to the project communities. The evaluation team observed that project's agricultural diversification activities with female household members appeared to be particularly successful in the communities where the Havener Fellowship interns were placed. The interns acted as role models and inspired female farmers to become outstanding farmers in cocoa and other agricultural commodities. The partnership also provided gender role models for aspiring women farmers, and helped invigorate diversified agricultural production in the MOCA communities. It has also helped MoFA recruit talented and skilled new graduates to the agricultural extension service.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the evaluation team's conclusions about the project's performance with regard to each of the evaluation criteria. The team also makes recommendations based on the evaluation findings presented in Section 3, and the lessons learned and promising practices presented in Section 4.

5.1 Conclusions

The discussion of conclusions is divided into four components: relevance, effectiveness and perceived impact, efficiency, and sustainability.

5.1.1 Relevance

MOCA's target group of youth ages 15–17 years in cocoa growing communities was appropriate, given the particularly high prevalence of CL in the target districts among this age group. MOCA's integrated area-based approach was well aligned with the country's objectives and plans, as expressed in the former and current National Plans of Action on Child Labor. Overall, the design was logically coherent and the three key strategies—community-led action plans for community improvements and CL advocacy, vocational skills training for youth, and livelihood diversification for women household members—were relevant in the context of highly disadvantaged cocoa-growing communities.

The Funding Opportunity Announcement released by ILAB did not include a CL monitoring component as an explicit part of the project, which would have been valuable according to the thinking of the evaluation team to ensure that systems are developed to identify children in CL beyond the project's direct participants and provide them with assistance. The evaluation acknowledges that this would have been challenging, however, given that broader government reporting and remediation structures to support such a system are not yet functioning in these districts. Informally, the CAPCs did identify children in CL outside the direct participants and take action such as requiring the parents to remove them from the hazardous activities such as market portering.

MOCA support has proven to be highly relevant to the needs of its target communities, including the community leaders, families with children at risk of CL, and especially to girls and adult women household members. MOCA has also served DA needs to reach communities and support community development and CL prevention.

The project's strategies for women's empowerment were well-developed and relevant to the needs of women from mostly poor households to strengthen their economic security and broaden their sources of income. The vocational training strategies proved to be most relevant to the interests of out-of-school girls, but were not sufficiently sensitive to the needs of boys, who did not enroll in large numbers, either because the training offered did not suit their interests or because they were already working.

5.1.2 Effectiveness and Perceived Impact

MOCA delivered most of its interventions as planned, and attained most of its outcome targets. The major challenge encountered was identifying the target number of youth to be assisted, in the face of youth outmigration and the unmet assumption that there would be two eligible youth per household. Remedying this shortfall, in turn, required a larger number of assisted households than originally planned, stretching the project's resources.

The project successfully mobilized CAP committees in all 40 communities, which have overseen the implementation of tangible community improvements, including school equipment and drinking water access. Significantly, MOCA assisted the CAPCs to reach the DAs with community development proposals that could not be funded by MOCA, for consideration under the government-funded MTDPs. Through the CAPCs, a variety of CL and OSH awareness raising was conducted with demonstrated impacts on community awareness.

MOCA successfully enrolled some 2,806 youth in six-month community-based vocational training, delivered by local skilled master craft persons. MOCA's graduates in dressmaking, hairdressing, bakery, carpentry, and welding are more self-confident, and are pursuing further training and self-employment. The evaluation team heard some outstanding success stories of learners whose businesses have taken off within the life span of the project. However, most graduates have not yet established their own businesses or found paid employment, but are still upgrading their skills. This appears to be due to the relatively short training period supported, and the limited mentoring support available to the last cohort of youth learners (who are still undergoing training as the project draws to a close).

The project had benefits in terms of reducing pre-marital sex among female CVET students, as anecdotally reported; partly as a result of sexual and reproductive health awareness training, and partly through skills training providing the girls with rewarding activities. The MFS training, representing around 14 percent of trainee participants, introduced a variety of sustainable agricultural techniques with profitable results; but most participants the evaluation team met with are not interested in pursuing careers in agriculture, aspiring to seek work in non-rural environments.

MOCA's savings and loans model for adult women was highly successful, bringing economic and social empowerment to 1,970 participant household and wider community members. The VSLA groups are well-established, based on the evaluation meetings with groups and project staff, as well as project reporting. The groups are creating annual savings and modest income from loan interest, which are being used for children's education costs and investments in existing and new businesses. The evaluation team finds that the women's VSLA model was among the most successful and sustainable of the interventions. Women's livelihood diversification, including cocoa seedling production and a range of promising new non-agricultural activities, met with considerable success—although more time is needed for the fledgling economic activities to reach the maturity necessary to provide substantial incomes.

The combined effects of the project's interventions have seen a decrease in CL among assisted participants (approximately 56 percent among assisted youth as of April 2019 reporting) but many trainees continue to resort to CL, either to earn income for themselves during their training or to save for further skills training and apprenticeships.

5.1.3 Efficiency

Overall, the strategies adopted by MOCA's management have enabled a systematic and well-coordinated implementation in the communities. The project management has generally been flexible, and responded in a timely manner to the contextual circumstances and arising issues. However, the project lacked time and resources to re-adjust the CVET strategy to diversify the provision of vocational training, to provide more attractive CVET options for male youth.

The MOCA team has put the M&E data to good use in adjusting the course of activities. The project continued to face challenges with the externally managed database, and the evaluation team concludes that the contractor modality for the database and production of indicator values has not been optimally efficient.

The capacity of WI community-level staff was reportedly stretched to enable frequent monitoring. While the wide reach of the project brought extensive impacts, a smaller scale may have enabled more intensive monitoring support by project staff.

5.1.4 Sustainability

MOCA's overarching sustainability strategy of increasing community prioritization of CL through enabling community ownership of the interventions laid a solid foundation for sustainability. The project has also brought sustainable benefits for district service providers in terms of their capacity to understand and address community needs.

Community leaders' and members' awareness of CL and farming hazards is well established and looks likely to remain beyond the project's timeframe. The communities' capacity to mobilize resources from the district funds allocation for CL and other community development needs has good prospects for continuing beyond the project's end.

The vocational training of MOCA youth has placed many of them on a path to employment or viable self-employment with lasting benefits. The sustainability prospects of the community-based six-month local training model are mixed, however. On the one hand, the MCPs are willing to continue to provide training, but this is not likely to be sustained without external support. Women's VSLAs demonstrate a high of sustainability without external support and the groups appear likely to expand in MOCA communities. The demonstrated skills and confidence of women community members to engage in a variety of IGA is improving their long-term economic resilience.

The project is mounting a comprehensive exit strategy including plans with each community to continue updating their CAP, as well as exit meetings held with each DA towards their continued engagement with the communities regarding support for the CAPs. It has also engaged with NBSSI to encourage the agency to provide ongoing mentoring support to CVET graduates to assist their transition to acceptable work.

5.2 Recommendations

The evaluation team's recommendations include: (1) those directed to WI and ILAB to enhance the achievements of MOCA prior to its closure, and (2) those intended to inform future projects.

Recommendations to enhance MOCA's achievements

- 1. Share MOCA lessons with national stakeholders and parallel CL projects.** Prior to MOCA closure, ILAB and WI should jointly convene a meeting for MOCA to share experience and lessons learned with the MELR, other relevant ministries, and other major CL projects supported by ILAB, including the ILO CARING gold mining and the CARE International/Olam Ghana "Adwuma Pa" project.²⁵ Such a meeting is tentatively planned between MOCA and the "Adwuma Pa" project, that focuses on empowering women and girls in the cocoa supply chain. Other projects and the government would benefit from such exchange of experience, to ensure that MOCA's experience is not lost.²⁶

²⁵ ILO CARING Project: Convening Actors to Develop and Implement Strategies to Reduce Child Labour and Improve Working Conditions in Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining Project

²⁶ CARE participated in the final evaluation workshop and the district meeting in Sefwi Wiawso and expressed significant interest in learning from MOCA's experience.

2. **Identify follow-up support for CVET graduates.** As part of MOCA's exit strategy project management should develop plans with DAs, NBSSI, and CAPCs to provide ongoing mentoring and advisory services to support MOCA trainees to graduate to acceptable paid work.

Future projects focused on cocoa growing communities in Ghana

3. **Match project scale to human and financial resources.** Ensure that the scale of projects with direct participant interventions is matched to available project staffing and financial resources, by setting realistic and attainable direct participant targets and target community numbers. This will enable more intensive interventions in the delivery of vocational skills and soft skills training, provision of adequate self-employment start-up kits and household IGA supports, and delivery of more intensive services to promote youth transition to acceptable work.
4. **Replicate CAP Committees for child labor.** Future projects and DAs should replicate CAPCs as the focal point for mobilizing action on CL, whether in agriculture or other forms.
 - Continue the inclusion of tangible community development initiatives supported by community development grants, as well as CL awareness and CL monitoring within the CAPs.
 - Identify incentives for voluntary CAPC membership, such as recognition of community service awards.
 - CAPCs should be built on mandated community structures, such as the Unit Committee or the Child Protection Committee, with the assembly representative or unit committee as the focal point for mobilizing funding for action plans via the DAs.
 - In coordination with the DAs, the responsibilities of the CAPCs should be extended to include area-based CL monitoring as set out in Ghana's NPA2 2017-2021.
5. **Build capacity at the district level among the relevant officers.** Towards the sustainability of project interventions, future projects should include district capacity building (e.g. among education, planning, social welfare, NBSSI, and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice Officers) as a specific project outcome, to support CL-responsive education and awareness, and sustainable livelihoods.
6. **Diversify youth skills training and intensify support for transition to work.** Future projects should introduce several adjustments to MOCA's vocational training model, to improve the employability outcomes for youth trainees engaged in or at high risk of CL:
 - Increase the diversity of youth skills training by conducting forward-looking labor market assessments based on existing and emerging skills demands as well as the perspectives of district economic development officers and community perspectives.
 - Support a diverse range of training modalities, including through local MCPs as well as through district or township training facilities.
 - Limit the number of training places in any one skills area relative to the population size, to avoid flooding the local market.
 - Provide modest training allowances and consider integrating an IGA related to the skills being learned into the training week, such as allocating of one day per week, to prevent the return of out-of-school youth to CL while training.

- Increase the duration of CVET to one year of support.
 - Intensify services to support graduates' transition to paid employment or self-employment, partnering directly with agencies such as the NBSSI and the Council for Vocational Education and Training, and with the private sector.
7. **Ensure child labor interventions are gender sensitive, relevant, and attractive for both boys and girls.**
- Given the likelihood of gender-stereotyped skills and employment norms remaining in the short term, diversify the skill training areas to provide more options that are attractive to adolescent boys.
 - Address gender stereotypes that define some skills areas as designated for women and others for men, and increase education and employment opportunities by showcasing men engaged in skills areas typically dominated by women, and vice versa.
 - Include a wider range of interventions, particularly to reach boys, including OSH improvements for working youth, support to remain in Senior High School and vocational skills training for out-of-school youth, depending on the pre-intervention assessment of current activities of both boys and girls.
8. **Extend the target age group in projects addressing child labor in cocoa-growing areas to include youth ages 13–14 as well as 15–17 to foster earlier prevention.** Future projects can provide interventions for youth ages 13–14 in school, such as pre-vocational guidance and vocational skills taster options, before students leave school and reach Ghana's legal minimum working age of 15 years.
9. **Replicate and refine livelihoods diversification for households in cocoa-growing areas.** Development projects and district authorities should replicate the VSLA combined with IGA model for women household members, with the following recommended adjustments:
- Deliver technical and soft skills training for supplementary household income generation in parallel with savings and loans group development within a time-bound project context, to enable a longer period of gestation (at least two years) for agricultural, food processing, and non-agricultural income generation to be established.
 - Encourage women household participants and/or CVET graduates to form small production groups for IGAs, rather than starting up individual businesses with insufficient capital. The cooperative business model for local economic development is worth exploring in these communities, based on international experience with agricultural and non-agricultural cooperatives in resource-poor settings. Examples of successful approaches to economic development through agricultural cooperatives include the ILO's support to cooperatives in Sri Lanka under the *Local Empowerment through Economic Development* Project and the *Empower* project supporting women's economic development in disadvantaged communities. Further details can be found at https://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_614448/lang--en/index.htm
10. **Replicate and strengthen MOCA's MFS approach for community cocoa seedling nurseries, in partnership with the Ghana Cocoa Board, MOFA, private sector partners**

and agricultural colleges. Garner funding support from private sector cocoa buyers in support of sustainable and CL-free Ghana cocoa production.

11. **In future ILAB-funded projects, locate the operation of the project monitoring database in-house.** The monitoring database requirements should be fully considered during the CMEP development process, and the monitoring database placed directly under project management once the technical work of developing the database is completed by a contractor. MOCA experience suggests that this would benefit the efficiency and accuracy of the CMEP data management system.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF MOCA PERFORMANCE RESULTS

Indicator	Baseline Value (if applicable)	Total M/F	Actual April 2019	Target End of project	Comparison of actual April '19 with LOP target (CMEP)
Project Objective: Reduced incidence of child labor in the project's 40 target cocoa growing communities					
POC.1 Percentage of project beneficiary children engaged in child labor	66.2%	Total	55.7%	20%	Not achieved
	66.9%	Male	65.0%	N/A	N/A
	65.8%	Female	53.6%	N/A	N/A
POC.2 Percentage of project beneficiary children engaged in Hazardous Child Labor	66.2%	Total	55.7%	20%	Not achieved
	66.9%	Male	65.0%	N/A	N/A
	65.8%	Female	53.6%	N/A	N/A
POC.4 Percentage of project beneficiary children who regularly attended any form of education during the past six months	N/A	Total	97.31%		Achieved
		Caseload	2817 (cumulative)	N/A	N/A
		M	588	N/A	
		F	2033	N/A	
POH.1 % of livelihood beneficiary HHs with at least one child engaged in child labor	78.8%	Total	61%	10%	Not achieved
POH.2 % of livelihood beneficiary HHs with at least one child engaged in hazardous child labor (HCL)	76.8%	Total	61%	10%	Not achieved

Outcome 1: Increased prioritization of CL by community and external stakeholders			
Indicators	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of actual April '19 with LOP target (CMEP)
1.1: Number and percent of communities that have established functional CAPs to address CL	100% (40)	100%	Achieved
1.2: Number and percent of communities that implement 80% of their planned annual CAP CL-related activities	30/40 (75%)	90%	Not achieved
1.3: Number of districts with CL activities reflected in their annual plans	4/4	100%	Achieved

Outcome 1 Supporting Outcome Indicators				
Supporting Outcome	Indicators	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of actual April 2019 with LOP target
SO 1.1 Increased community resources to address CL issues	1.1.1: Number and percent of communities that are awarded MOCA community grant	40 (100%)	100%	Achieved
	1.1.2: Number and percent of communities who have mobilized resources (community/district) to address CL issues	40 (100%)	80%	Exceeded
SO 1.2 Increased awareness of CL/OSH	1.2.1: Number and percent of CAP committees who have implemented CL/OSH awareness-raising activities in their community	40 (100%)	100%	Achieved
SO 1.3 Increased involvement of youth in CAP	1.3.1 Number and percent of CAP committees that have selected at least one youth to serve as a committee member	40/40 100%	100%	Achieved
	1.3.2 Number and percent of CAP committees that have implemented at least two youth-led activities per year	35/40 88%	90%	Almost achieved
SO 1.4 Increased advocacy with District Government Authorities	1.4.1: Number and percent of CAP committees who advocate for the inclusion of child labor issues or CAP activities in the District Plans	40 (100%)	80%	Exceeded
SO 1.5 Increased community capacity to design CAPs approved by the community	1.5.1 Number and percent of community approved CAPs	40 (100%)	100%	Achieved

Outcome 2: Increased Acceptable Work Opportunities among Beneficiary Youth 15-17 years of age				
Indicators	Disaggregation	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of actual April '19 with LOP target
2.1: Number and percent of beneficiary youth (15-17) participating in acceptable work opportunities (Formal jobs/internships/apprenticeships/self-employment)	Total	1848 (66%)	90%	Not fully achieved
	Male	342	N/A	
	Female	1506	N/A	

Outcome 2 Supporting Outcome Indicators					
S.O.	Indicators	Disaggregation	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of April 2019 with LOP target
SO 2.1 Increased partner support for acceptable work opportunities for youth	2.1.1 Number and percent of partners who offer youth safe, acceptable work opportunities jobs/internships/mentorships/apprenticeships through partnerships	By district	183 (91%)	100%	Almost achieved
SO 2.2 Increased financial support for business start-up (start-up kits, community grants)	2.2.1 Number of beneficiary youth who have received project start-up kits/tools/inputs/funding	By sex	1309 (47%) Male: 272 Female: 1037	50%	Almost achieved
SO 2.3 Increased community advocacy for acceptable work/OSH	2.3.1 Number and percent of communities that have carried out advocacy meetings with employers for acceptable work/OSH	N/A	40 (100%)	80%	Exceeded
SO 2.4 Increased awareness of acceptable work conditions/OSH	2.4.1 Number and percent of community members who demonstrate adequate understanding of OSH regulations. (pre/post-test)	Sex and district	854 (89%) Male: 220 Female: 634	90%	Achieved
SO 2.5 Increased peer support to youth workers/entrepreneurs	2.5.1: Number and percent of youth graduates joining youth associations or cooperatives	Sex and district	178 (6%) Male: 34 Female: 144	20%	Not achieved
	2.5.2: Number and percent of communities who select at least 2 young adult advocates who regularly engage in peer-to-peer mentoring	Sex and District	39 (98%)	80%	Exceeded

Outcome 3: Beneficiary Youth Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills Increased to Improve Employability				
Indicators	Disaggregation	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of actual April '19 with LOP target
E1: Number of children engaged in (CL) or at high-risk of entering CL (CAHR) provided education or vocational training services	Total	2528 (cumulative)	3200	79%
	Male	461	N/A	
	Female	2,067	N/A	
	CL	1734	3200	
	CAHR	793	3200	
	CVET	2178	N/A	
3.1 Number and percent of beneficiary youth 15-17 years of age who are certified after completion of MOCA CVET/MFS training	Total	1058 (53%)	80%	Not achieved 997 are still training and yet to graduate
	Male	128	N/A	
	Female	930	N/A	
PO C 4:Percent of beneficiary children who regularly attended any form of education during the past six months	See above			

Outcome 3 Supporting Outcome Indicators					
SO	Indicators	Disaggregation	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of April 2019 with LOP target
SO 3.1 (N/A)	-	-	-	-	-
SO 3.2 Improved quality of CVET training	3.2.1: Number and percent of CVET/MFS that meet project quality standards (curriculum, materials/equipment/ facilitators)	District	183 (100%)	180	Achieved
SO 3.2.1 Improved alignment of CVET curriculum to market needs	3.2.1.1 Number of CVET/MFS that integrate OSH standards into training	District/CVET/MFS	183 (100%)	100%	Achieved
	3.2.1.2 Number of CVET/MFS trainings that revise programs based on market needs	District/CVET/MFS	166 (91%)	100%	Almost achieved
SO 3.2.2 Increased skills of CVET/MFS facilitators	3.2.2.1 Number and percent of CVET/MFS facilitators with improved skills to deliver competency-based training (CBT)	CVET/MFS Male/Female	183 (90%)	80%	Exceeded
SO 3.2.3 Improved CVET/MFS equipment for training	3.2.3.1 Number and percent of CVET/MFS provided with materials and equipment by MOCA	CVET/MFS	182 (87%)	80%	Exceeded
SO 3.3 Increased community awareness of the benefits of CVET/MFS	3.3.1 Number of community members (youth and parents who can identify two benefits of CVET /MFS training	District	63%	90%	Not achieved

Outcome 4: Increased Income in Beneficiary Households				
Indicators	Disaggregation	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of actual April '19 with LOP target
4.1: Number and percent of beneficiary adult women who report increased income (annual)	By district	736 (48%) Total of women who responded Yes to question (have increase income) by total number of HH respondents	60%	Not achieved
L.1: Number of households receiving livelihoods services	Total	2301	100%	Exceeded. The number of households was increased in order to reach the target number of beneficiaries
	VSLA groups	760		
	Vocational training	252		
	Both	1289		

Outcome 4 Supporting Outcome Indicators					
S.O.	Indicators	Disaggregation	Actual April 2019	LOP Target	Comparison of April 2019 with LOP target
SO 4.1 Increased agricultural production or other income-generating production by adult women beneficiaries	4.1.1 Number and percent of beneficiary women who report increased production (using simple volume measures – bags etc.)		744 (48%) Caseload:1617	60%	Not achieved
		VSLA groups	178	N/A	N/A
		Vocational training	566		
SO 4.2 Improved skills and knowledge in livelihood activities	4.2.1 Number and percent of adult beneficiary women with increased knowledge of livelihoods (oral pre-post test)		596 78%	80%	Nearly achieved. This reporting period 596 women out of 1036 (58%) who received the training scored more than 80% on the post-test on use of chemicals, use of dangerous tools, workplace safety and the need for safe working gear.
	4.2.2: Number and percent of adult beneficiary women practicing a new or expanding an existing livelihood activity		783 Caseload 1600	75%	Not achieved. A total of 783 women have expanded their existing livelihoods activities through vegetable, OFSP, and mushroom production, and cocoa farming.
SO 4.3 Increased access to micro loans and savings	4.3.1 No. of VSLAs formed		38/97 cumulative 95%	40	Achieved
	4.3.2 Percentage of VSLA members who repaid loans		37	90%	
	4.3.3 Value of savings of VSLA members		187,507	GHS 48,000	Exceeded target

APPENDIX B: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

MOCA Operational and Reporting Documents

- USDOL Solicitation: FOA-ILAB-15-09
- Grant Award
- MOCA Project Document
- Grant Modifications
- Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, November 2016
- Semi-annual Technical Progress Reports: October 2017 through April 2019
- Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports
- MOCA Project Mid-Term Evaluation. Sistemas Familia y Sociedad for USDOL. February 2018

MOCA Training and Research Materials

- Baseline Survey Report. Winrock International. By JMK Consulting. October 2017
- Marketable Skills Assessment (*Marketable Skills Assessment and Mapping of Entrepreneurial and Employment Opportunities for Youth in Cocoa Growing Communities ages 15-17 and their households in Ashanti and Western Regions of Ghana*), Prepared by Opportunities Industrialization Centres (OIC), April 7, 2017.
- VSLA Training Manual: Ghana MOCA. 12-Month Program in Village Savings and Loans Associations. Winrock International. (No Date)
- CVET Training Certificates

Background Documents

- National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (NPA1; 2009-2015)
- National Plan of Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Phase 2 (NPA2; 2017-2021)
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