

**Minutes of the Taskforce Living Income
on April 22, 2026 | 10:00–11:30 a.m.
held virtually via MS Teams**

Participants:

1. Elise Glaab (Ferrero)
2. Anders Saxbol (Ferrero)
3. Rupert Day (Cargill)
4. Alexander Bernet (BMLEH)
5. Sandra Brück (Fairtrade)
6. Ann-Kathrin Binot (GIZ für das BMZ)
7. Karidja Konate (Geschäftsstelle, Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao e.V)
8. Johanna Colley (Geschäftsstelle, Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao e.V)
9. Hannah Herrig (Geschäftsstelle, Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao e.V)

Agenda Items

TOP 1: Feedback on priority action areas for the development of contributions to political dialogue processes

The Task Force members identify the following priority topics for political dialogue:

- Transparency in the determination of farmgate prices and stabilization funds (Topic 1)
- Future risks of cocoa production (Topic 5). Anders Saxbol (Ferrero) proposes renaming Topic 5 to “Resilience of cocoa farming households,” which is agreed upon.

In addition, land rights are considered a priority topic. However, this is expected to be addressed within the Environment Task Force, which will define its final set of topics at the next Task Force meeting. Johanna Colley will outline thematic overlaps with the Environment Task Force and ensure information flow between the Task Forces on the topics of land rights and the resilience of cocoa farming households.

TOP 2: Important key actors who should be added to the overview of stakeholders for political dialogue processes.

Regarding organizations that can provide expert knowledge, particularly on swollen shoot disease and cocoa production, Anders refers to the universities in Reading and Bristol, as well as the research institute [CGIAR](#). Rupert reports on an exchange with the [Together Cocoa Foundation](#), which is a joint initiative by Lindt & Sprüngli, Mars, Mondelēz International, and the Hershey Company aimed at closing income gaps in producing countries. The initiative is also seeking to engage in dialogue with producer countries in West Africa. Johanna Colley confirms that the Together Cocoa Foundation is included in the overview of existing dialogue formats and that there is an option to invite the Foundation to a Task Force meeting if needed.

Johanna Colley also reports on the ICCO Working Group on Markets and Prices, where producer country marketing systems and the topic of sustainable sourcing are being discussed. The aim is to develop a roadmap to be submitted to the ICCO Economic Council. The Task Force members express interest in the Working Group. The next meeting will take place on April 30. Johanna Colley will participate, report back afterwards, and share the Terms of Reference (ToRs) with the Task Force members.

TOP 3: Relevant stakeholders for political dialogue – potential representatives of GISCO positions

Subsequently, the discussion turns to who can represent the positions developed by the Task Force in political dialogue processes. To date, this role has been assumed by the Board and, to some extent, by the German ministries (BMZ and BMLEH). BMZ raises the question of whether this role could in future also be taken on by other GISCO members. Following a brief exchange, the Task Force members agree that official positions of the Forum should continue to be represented in political dialogue processes by the Board members.

TOP 4: Priority countries for political dialogue

Johanna Colley summarizes the feedback on the selection of countries for political dialogue. In the written responses, all participants expressed support for a focus on West Africa (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana). The industry group is also considering including an additional West African country (Nigeria or Cameroon). Alexander Bernet advocates for selecting a country without a state-regulated market and for greater geographical diversification by including Latin America, particularly Ecuador. He criticizes GISCOs long-standing focus on Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Johanna Colley notes that other West African countries also have non-regulated markets and that Nigeria and Cameroon have been discussed within the industry group. In both countries, GIZ has cocoa projects and established contacts.

Anders Saxbol supports maintaining the focus on Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Ann-Kathrin Binot emphasizes that it may be convenient to start with Côte d'Ivoire and gradually expand the political dialogue to avoid overburdening the process by addressing too many countries at once. Sandra Brück explains that civil society favors a focus on West Africa, considering Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana particularly relevant due to the importance of price and income issues. Rupert Day also agrees with a West Africa focus and questions the objective of including Latin America in the political dialogue. He stresses the need for a clear thematic focus. Alexander Bernet reiterates his support for Ecuador as an additional focus country, highlighting the benefits of including and comparing diverse contexts for cocoa production. Elise Glaab sees potential in incorporating additional West African countries or in including a Latin American country. In her view, the decision selected countries for political dialogue should be made by the industry group as a whole.

Conclusion and next steps:

No final decision has been reached. It is therefore proposed to select the countries based on thematic considerations. For the topic of farmgate price transparency, the focus will be on Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire as regulated markets. Ecuador, and potentially one additional West African country, will be included in the analysis for comparative purposes. The second topic, the resilience of cocoa farming households, still needs to be further narrowed down and more clearly defined in order to determine the relevant focus countries. In any case, the objective of the policy dialogue in each country should be clearly defined in advance.

TOP 5: GISCO Member Challenges with implementing living income strategies

Johanna Colley provides an overview of the existing challenges faced by industry members in implementing Living Income strategies. The industry identifies challenges related to dependence on customer demand, a lack of collective action, the absence of harmonized methodologies, and limited scalable approaches.

Johanna Colley asks industry members to identify gaps with regard to standardized methodologies on Living Income. She notes that the ISCOs have established a common definition for Living Income strategies and that the ISCO procurement principles have now been translated into measurable indicators. Rupert Day explains that, in his view, gaps remain in the standardized calculation of income gaps and in income measurement methodologies (e.g., the CHIS methodology). This results in limited comparability of data.

Conclusion and next steps:

There remains a need for harmonized methodologies, particularly in relation to monitoring and income measurement. Task Force members are requested to provide feedback on whether GISCO can address the identified challenges and potentially take on a role in these areas. If so, they should outline how GISCO could contribute to addressing these highlighted challenges.

TOP 6: Feedback on the mapping of existing dialogue formats and their relevance to the topic of Living Income

Johanna Colley presents GISCO's existing formats and instruments and asks Task Force members which of these are considered important for advancing the implementation of Living Income strategies.

Rupert Day emphasizes that, in his view, webinars are a key instrument that should continue to be used. He praises GISCO's recent webinar on "Decommoditising Cocoa," which sparked interest among Cargill employees. Elise Glaab agrees and stresses that webinars are important for building a shared knowledge base. In addition, Rupert Day supports the use of practical guidance materials. Existing resources, such as the "Technical Guidance on Due Diligence for Living Income," could be leveraged and made more accessible to GISCO members.

Regarding new format ideas, Anders Saxbol supports the introduction of a monitoring pilot and peer group comparisons to assess where companies perform better or worse compared to their relevant peer groups. Rupert Day also suggests further exploring formats tailored to buyers and recommends engaging with IDH in this context. IDH has already developed relevant products and communication materials for procurement teams.

Conclusion and next steps:

As there was limited time for discussion at the end of the meeting, Task Force members are invited to provide written feedback on both existing formats and new ideas. This input will then be discussed in a broader setting with members at the General Assembly, where the formats will also be weighted according to their relevance and impact.