

NESTLÉ S.A.

JOSÉ LOPEZ
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Frank Mechielsen
Policy Adviser
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March 7, 2013

Dear Frank,

Thank you for keeping us to date with the progress of the GROW Campaign and the forthcoming action in the US.

We welcome and support Oxfam's contribution to the debate to make progress towards a sustainable food system. On the issue of women in the cocoa supply chain, please be assured of our utmost attention to this important topic.

In the short term we will actively explore how we can more positively impact the lives of women through the Nestlé Cocoa Plan and the Rural Development framework. Specific gender indicators have already been integrated into the Framework, which combines a human rights approach together with a human development approach. It is our intention that improving our approach toward women in our supply chains is not just something we do in cocoa but is applied more broadly across other commodities especially dairy and coffee where we have existing programmes to build upon.

As I am sure you can appreciate it will take some weeks before a more detailed plan can be put together which can be applied consistently across the organisation. We will need to work together with all stakeholders as one company alone cannot solve these issues.


In terms of next steps we will consult with experts in this field in order to gather data and take the necessary actions to better support and promote women as farmers, workers and community members across our supply chains, and in particular in the area of cocoa. The role of women in cocoa cultivation needs to be made more visible, and their needs understood and listened to.

We will also investigate if it is possible to strengthen the gender dimension of our ongoing efforts to eliminate child labour and in particular our commitments under the FLA action plan as they made a number of recommendations which could impact women . (Recommendation 6 including women in farmer field schools as trainers or attendees; Recommendation 7, women's role in extension services and micro credit/savings; Recommendation 11, projects for alternative income generation.)

In the Nestlé Cocoa Plan in Cote d'Ivoire, the majority of coop members are men, and most of the participants in farmer training are men. Almost all coop managers and farmer trainers are men. When we did find a women's farmer association we have tried to help them as much as possible. As part of our plant programme, we have enabled them to produce 168,000 cocoa plants and the assistance continues in 2013 for a further 90,000. Nestlé provides the seeds and pays for the cost of the nurseries, while the women are involved in the watering and care of the plants in the nursery right through to distribution to coop members. This women's association was created to help solve some basic problems – women's access to land and the resulting income. The issues are clearly deeply rooted in society and not easily solved.

Please be assured of our continued attention to this important topic. We will report transparently on our progress and ensure regular updates.

With Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'José Lopez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

José Lopez

Executive Vice President Operations & GLOBE.