

The Journey of C^oc^oa

Cocoa is in high demand. In 2018, the global chocolate industry was worth close to **USD 100 billion**, and it is projected to grow. Follow the journey of cocoa as it transforms from bean to bar.



Production

The journey of cocoa starts on a farm, where millions of small farmers in warm, humid climates grow cocoa on land averaging 2-3 hectares. Cocoa is cultivated for its beans which are used mainly to produce popular chocolate confectioneries and beverages. Farmers in Ivory Coast, Ghana, and Indonesia produce **75%** of the world's cocoa.

Farmers harvest cocoa by removing ripe pods from cocoa trees and opening them to extract the beans. Cocoa beans are then often fermented and dried on the farm or in the farmer's village.

Commercialization

The beans are weighed and sold through intermediaries between farmers and exports, reducing farmer's margins, or directly to exporters. There is rarely equitable benefit sharing among all actors in the cocoa value chain, with farmers being the most vulnerable link. Many cocoa farmers live in poverty despite a high market price for cocoa.



Processing

Once the cocoa is ready to be processed into cocoa butter, paste or powder, it is often shipped away from where it was grown. There are few incentives to encourage cocoa processing in producing countries, thus, the bulk of the crops harvest is exported as raw product. Only around **7-10%** of the value generated along the cocoa value chain is captured by producing countries and the farmers. It is estimated that a country like Côte d'Ivoire receives only **5-7%** of this value although it contributes 40% of the world supply, the rest being earned by the processors and distributors.

Cocoa butter is mixed with other ingredients such as sugar, vanilla, and milk to make popular sweet confectioneries for consumers, who primarily live in high-income countries.



Sources:

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