

# Newsletter - December 4, 2024



## Insights from Fall Trip to Côte d'Ivoire



There has been a lot of activity in the past several months, including a September trip by Jacq and myself to the three Project Hope and Fairness villages in Ivory Coast. The trip began with three days at the ninth annual trade show JNCC (*Journée Nationale de Chocolat et Cacao*). PHF rented a booth and highlighted chocolates made by all three of our partner villages, N'Douci, Pezoan, and Depa.



**Pezoan fudge  
Bars**

The rest of the trip focused on visits to the villages. At N'Douci, we showed the staff how to assess bean fermentation quality by doing a cut-test using a machine that splits the beans in half. We then get a ratio of well-fermented beans to lesser quality beans.

At Pezoan, we met with a local Rotary Club about fixing wells so that the Cooperative can get the health certificate needed for chocolate sales. At Depa, we met with a company that is helping the Cooperative get its HACCP certificate, allowing them to export cocoa butter, cocoa powder, and chocolate.

[Video of Tom and Jacq describing Fall 2024 trip](#)

The PHF team's key findings:

- Bean quality is directly linked to chocolate quality; we are making good progress teaching staff and cocoa farmers about the relationship between bean selection, chocolate



- We identified and toured a cooperative near N'Douci that is a successful organic cocoa producer. They train their members on bean fermentation and sell many tons of organically certified cocoa beans. They may well prove to be a valuable partner.
- All sites have great personnel potential but need more intensive training in technical and management skills.

In hope and fairness,  
**Tom Neuhaus**

## Accomplishments



In 2024, PHF funded two ambitious goals: 1) create a training program to boost chocolate making skills in Côte d'Ivoire, and 2) double sales of Village Chocolates. Significant progress in these goals is due to recruiting three talented African leaders, filling gaps in our leadership team.

The Training Center in N'Douci, near Abidjan, has **Roger Gnepo** continuing as entrepreneur and administrator. Joining him is **Jerome Kouakou** as the new lead chocolatier. Jerome has extensive expertise in creating high-quality chocolate. He will be teaching these methods at the Center and at Pezoan. This Center has received several new pieces of equipment this year.



**Jean Joel Yao** is now the lead in marketing and communication, working as the administrative liaison to the villages of the Village Chocolates brand.

Also, Depa, home of SOCOPLAN, the cooperative that we helped establish in 2019, is working with the German non-profit, GIZ to increase efficiency of production.



## Next Steps 2025 – We Need Your Help Expansion and Sustainability Needs

Project Hope and Fairness has created a solid foundation to help cocoa farmers in Cote d'Ivoire earn their way out of poverty. Donors have provided the seed equipment and we are building the expertise to sell quality chocolate products. PHF has secured the commitment of our Côte d'Ivoire leadership team to direct village production of chocolate and cocoa products and increase sales.

### A. Training Program to Advance Chocolate-Making Leadership in Cote d'Ivoire ~ \$38,000

- Two site visits by PHF CEO Tom Neuhaus and support staff are needed to guide the scaling up of production of high-quality chocolate, including training, trouble shooting, and product development. (\$20,000)
- PHF needs 12 months of working capital in support for local leaders until the village chocolate program achieves profitability. (\$18,000)

### B. Boosting Sales of Village Chocolate ~ \$26,000

- For successful increase in sales, greater levels of inventory need to be maintained. Storage facilities, refrigeration, power, sanitation, and equipment and its maintenance are all required. (\$20,000)
- Funding for expanding sales channels – in Cote d'Ivoire, internationally, and online – and creating marketing materials. (\$6,000)

**PH&F hopes you share our pride in what has been accomplished thus far and [donate](#) what you can to help African cocoa villages achieve sustainable success.**

Please consider a [monthly contribution](#) through PayPal.

**Donate  
Today!**

Click to Donate



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## How You Can Help:

### Donate Today

Support the PH&F Mission

### Volunteer

Assist with online marketing and social media presence!

### Share This Email

Share this email with someone new (forward to a friend)!



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## Our Vision

Our vision at Project Hope and Fairness is to serve as a center of excellence for cocoa cooperative members to learn quality production techniques and business and marketing skills to boost their incomes and improve their lives.

## Our Mission

Helping African cocoa farmers boost incomes and improve their quality of life.

## Our Values

**Respect** - *for village cultures and capabilities*

**Integrity** - *true to our word*

**Accountability** - *accountable for the use of resources and the results achieved*

**Inclusivity** - *encouraging opportunities for all*





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