

Awaken Foundation – Economic Evaluation Framework for the Cacao Value Chain

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Role: Volunteer Economist / Lead Author

Organization: Awaken Foundation (Ecuador)

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Objective

To develop a donor-ready economic evaluation framework and KPI system for Awaken Foundation's cacao value-chain program in Ecuador. The goal was to create an evidence-based model that quantifies viability, sustainability, and social impact — enabling the Foundation to communicate measurable outcomes to potential funders and improve project decision-making.

Methodology

- Designed an **Economic Evaluation Framework** integrating cost–benefit analysis, unit economics, and sensitivity testing across input, production, and market stages.
 - Built a **KPI System** aligned with SDG-related livelihood metrics — productivity per hectare, income uplift per household, and training cost efficiency.
 - Applied **econometric modeling and scenario analysis** to test the project's resilience under $\pm 10\%$ market price shocks and varying productivity assumptions.
 - Created visual templates for quarterly **M&E cadence** and reporting frequency to align with donor requirements.
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Key Findings and Outputs

- **Financial Viability:** Project remains sustainable under moderate price volatility, with breakeven achievable within two harvest cycles.
 - **KPI Dashboard:** Enables quick tracking of impact indicators — income increase, training completion, and cost efficiency.
 - **Adoption:** Framework and KPI matrix adopted by Awaken Foundation's leadership for internal planning and donor submissions.
 - **Deliverables:** 19-page technical report + KPI matrix (Excel) + executive summary (white paper version).
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Impact and Significance

- Enhanced Awaken's capacity to attract donor partnerships by quantifying social and economic outcomes.
 - Introduced an applied-econometrics layer to decision-making, improving rigor and transparency.
 - Serves as a transferable model for evaluating agricultural livelihood programs in emerging economies.
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Authorship and Recognition

This work represents an **independent applied-economics contribution**, authored and led by Vamakshi Chaturvedi for the Awaken Foundation (Ecuador). The framework and findings have been formally acknowledged by the organization and are being used for donor presentations and impact tracking.

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