

Sustainable Tree Crops Program - Ghana



Project Dates: Pilot Phase: 2003-2006, Phase II: 2007-2011

Country: Ghana

Funders: US Agency for International Development (USAID), World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) and global cocoa industry; Mars Inc., European Union (EU), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)

Implementer: International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (management); Participatory Development Associates (development of new institutional arrangements/community association development); Ministry of Food and Agriculture (farmer training); SOCODEVI (farmer organization capacity development of local partners); Community Development Consult Network – Codesult (farmer training); Support for Community Mobilization, Project/Programme - SCMPP (farmer training)

Overview

The initial activities of the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) Ghana included farmer training through the Farmer Field School methodology, training cocoa farmers through Video Viewing Clubs, and research with active farmer participation. The success of these approaches in the early years of the pilot attracted the interest of local institutions from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. In 2006, the institutions underwent training to develop the capacity to implement their own farmer trainings. These and other local institutions play a prominent role in scaling up farmer training. In Phase II, STCP-Ghana also addresses community organization development, alternative income opportunities for cocoa farmers, and policy initiatives for a sustainable cocoa economy contributing to rural transformation and growth.

Program Objectives:

- To increase cocoa farmers income through intensification and promotion of responsible labor use
- To contribute to rural transformation in the cocoa belt of Ghana
- To enhance environmental sustainability of cocoa through agroforestry and tree diversification
- To develop and validate models for improved self-organization capacities of cocoa communities
- To contribute to cocoa sector policy change through research and stakeholder dialogue

Progress to Date:

- **5,064 farmers trained through 163 Farmer Field Schools.** Training includes improved crop production techniques, as well as HIV/AIDS and child labor sensitization through the participatory Farmer Field School approach. An additional 10,477 farmers have been reached indirectly through farmer-to-farmer diffusion. A total of 130 facilitators have been trained to conduct cocoa farmer field schools at the community and institutional levels. Capacity for cocoa farmer training has been built at both the public and private sector levels. The public sector institution is the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), whilst the private sector institutions include Kuapa Kokoo Limited, Codesult, SCMPP, PDA and Hope for Humanity. The capacity development effort has been achieved in partnership with other development programs in the cocoa sector of the country e.g. Mars Partnership for African Cocoa Communities of Tomorrow, Millenium Development Project, International Cocoa Initiative.
- **864 farmers trained through 40 Video Viewing Clubs.** 36 clubs were exclusively for women cocoa farmers, and 4 were conducted for both men and women by a local partner. Eight (8) technical cocoa videos for training have been developed and cover the following topics: pruning, black pod disease control, mirid control, harvesting/pod breaking and fermentation techniques.
- **Farmer Field School graduates participate in 3 field studies.** 1) 60 farmers are working with a Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana scientist to test the use of pheromone traps for the monitoring and control of cocoa mirid, a common pest. 2) Farmers from 11 communities are involved in a participatory learning activity on tree diversification options; this will culminate in the design of a farmers' decision making protocol and training manual/farmers' guide on tree integration for cocoa systems. 3) Approximately 460 farmers from 21 communities are engaged in participatory research on the effects, costs and benefits of using inorganic fertilizer for soil fertility management to intensify production.
- **64 communities developing associations.** Working in partnership with SOCODEVI and under a contractual arrangement with Participatory Development Associates (PDA), STCP seeks to build

and develop the self organizing capacities of cocoa communities. Improved community-based associations will enable cocoa farmers to access services, farm inputs and credit for intensification.

STCP-Ghana: Video Viewing Club Helps Family to Achieve their Dreams

Mrs. Victoria Boadi is a 53 year old cocoa farmer from Bedemase in the Afigya Sekyere District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Operating a productive cocoa farm has long been a dream of her and her husband. Although the path to their goal has been difficult, training through a video viewing club is helping them to make their dream a reality.

In 1988, she and her husband pooled their resources together to establish a 3-acre cocoa farm in her hometown. When their farm was destroyed in a bush fire four years later, the family worked to reestablish the farm. Sadly, just as the farm was beginning to revive in 2000, a bush fire once again destroyed the farm. To support the family, Mr. Boadi left for a job with a cocoa licensed buying company in another district. Mrs. Boadi and the couple's five children remained in the village.

Despite these setbacks, Mrs. Boadi did not give up on the family's dream. "That is my husband's share of his family land and it is the only cocoa land we have," she explained. She replanted the farm and was able to harvest 50 kg for the first time in the 2005/2006 cocoa season.

In 2007, she joined a video viewing club to learn about integrated crop and pest management. She learned to remove chupons (non-productive shoots which compete with the cocoa tree for water and nutrients), weed effectively and spray fungicide correctly.



At the end of the 2006/2007 cocoa season, she had nearly tripled her yields with the harvesting of 128 kg of cocoa. During this 2007/2008 season, she has already harvested 160 kg of cocoa.



Madam Victoria with some of her grandchildren

Through the video viewing club, Mrs. Boadi also learned about intercropping and income diversification. **As a result, she has planted a few citrus, avocado, oil palm and banana trees to serve as shade trees and a source of alternative income. Environmentally, these trees serve as good habitat for red ants which kill some of the pests that damage cocoa.**

Mr. and Mrs. Boadi are pleased with the results of the video viewing club training. Her husband has asked her to continue maintaining their farm.

In addition, Mrs. Boadi has already shared her new knowledge with four other members of her community and looks forward to helping others.

After many setbacks, the family is now well on their way to achieving their dream of having the most productive cocoa farm in the village.

For more information on the Sustainable Tree Crops Program, contact:

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