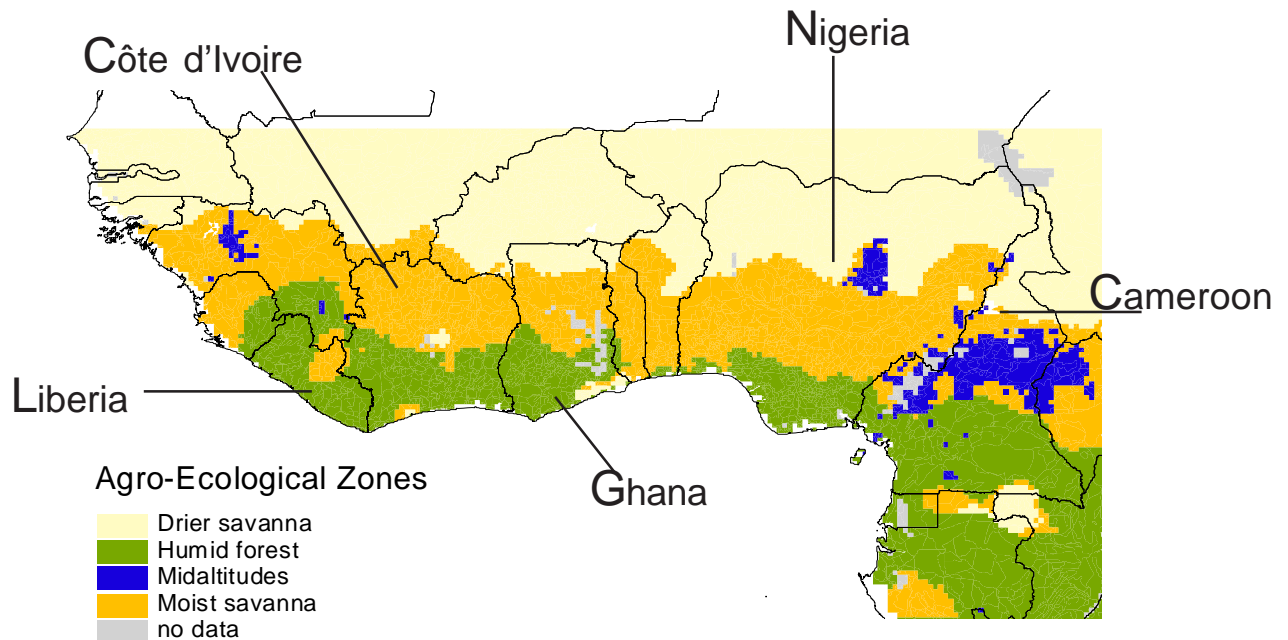




# STCP Summary

Version October 2009



**Project Dates:** Pilot Phase 2003-2006, Phase II: 2007-2011 (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria) 2006-2011 (Liberia)

**Core-Funders:** US Agency for International Development (USAID), World Cocoa Foundation and global cocoa industry, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

In recent years, widespread recognition among African governments and their development partners of the strong role agriculture in general, and tree crops in particular, can play in the fight against poverty and in promoting rural economic growth has led to a renewed commitment to promoting agriculture development. As a primary source of export earnings and foreign exchange for many African countries, perennial tree crops play a vital role in the region's economic landscape. West and Central Africa alone provide nearly 70% of global exports of cocoa, by far Africa's most important tree crop.

The Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) was launched in 2000 by West and Central African cocoa stakeholders, the global cocoa industry, the World Cocoa Foundation, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Managed by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), STCP is a framework for collaboration between farmers, the global cocoa industry, local private sector, national governments, NGOs, research institutes, and development investors. Since 2000, STCP has been

introducing production, marketing, and institutional innovations in the cocoa sector aimed at improving the economic and social well being of tree crop farmers. For instance, its training approach has led to farmers increasing their cocoa yields on average by 15 to 40%. The introduction of group sales and entrepreneurship, more transparent and direct transactions, and quality control have resulted in 5-15% higher farm-gate prices for farmers. Currently, STCP is engaged with public and private partners in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Liberia to identify the potential of the cocoa sector in contributing to rural transformation. These demonstrated accomplishments and innovations are being integrated into new development initiatives by national and regional authorities and the private sector.

## Illustrative Successes to Date

Working with partners, STCP has completed its first set of pilot activities. Some key successes have already been achieved:

- The STCP partnership has been identified as an important innovation “from which all stakeholders derive value. This unique partnership has never before existed for the cocoa sector....” (External Review, 2005)
- Bringing together national, regional, and international expertise, a high-quality, inexpensive and relevant farmer training approach was developed building on a farmer field school (FFS) based discovery learning concept. FFS on cocoa integrated crop, pest, diseases and quality management has been successfully validated for West Africa with 33,000 farmers in 5 countries over five years.
- STCP has been testing approaches to improve the effectiveness of FO as a mechanism to better integrate farmers with markets and to increase farmer income.
- The combination of improved production and marketing skills can lead to significant improvements in farmer remuneration. Studies show that the increase in household cocoa income in 2004, as a combined result of production and marketing interventions, was on average between 23 and 55% higher.
- STCP conducted studies in 4 countries and concluded in 2002 that children can potentially be exposed to hazardous forms of labour on cocoa farms. By combining social and technical messages, farmers have been sensitized on child labour in the FFSs. Studies in Ghana, for example, show that for every 1,000 farmers trained, 210 children are voluntarily removed from hazardous forms of work.
- National organizations/institutions have expressed great eagerness for integrating these innovations into their programs. For example, the FFS approach has been declared by the National Cocoa Development Committee as the primary cocoa extension mechanism for Nigeria and is implementing a national plan to this end with the backstopping of STCP.
- STCP is also an emerging platform for regional collaboration on research to address the genetic basis for improved cocoa plants, pest and disease management, and the rehabilitation and diversification of cocoa farms. At the same time, local research capacity is being developed across the region.

## CAMEROON

**Additional Funders:** US Department of Agriculture, Cocoa Buffer Fund of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture

**Implementers:** IITA (manager, production, marketing, policy), SOCODEVI (cooperative development), RIAS (Rabobank)

### Overview

There are three projects under STCP Cameroon: The “Tree Crop Production, Marketing and Livelihoods Project” focuses on the development of mechanisms for marketing and trade, processing of products, and productivity, as well as the building of institutional capacity. The project is active in the Center and South West regions. The UpCocoa project focuses on increasing the capacity of cocoa farmers and their organizations to create professional, sustainable cocoa businesses. UpCocoa will initially work with 8 cooperatives with a total of 1,600 farmers in the Center region. The West Africa Cocoa Livelihoods Program is to improve marketing efficiency, cocoa production and quality at farm level and farmers competitiveness on diversified cocoa farms.

### Program Objectives

- To increase rural income in an environmentally and socially responsible manner
- To promote policy, marketing, processing and production of two tree crops - cocoa and oil palm

- To assist farmers in the diversification of their sources of income
- To promote the production and marketing of cocoa and oil palm by-products and associated products such as plantain and non-timber forest products
- To develop farmer organizations’ capacity as agribusinesses and agricultural enterprises
- To develop local institutional capacity to provide production and marketing support services

### Achievements

- **5,586 farmers trained through Farmer Field Schools.** Farmers receive training through the participatory Farmer Field School approach which covers topics related to integrated crop and pest management as well as quality improvement. To date, 312 facilitators representing the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), 12 farmer cooperatives and 2 cocoa-related organizations completed training. An additional 12,393 farmers benefited indirectly through farmer-to-farmer dissemination of information.
- **Sustainable farmer cooperative-led seedling production & distribution system developed.** Experts from the National Agricultural Research Institute for Development (IRAD) provide technical supervision while STCP facilitates, leads data collection, and provides basic



nursery materials such as improved cocoa pods, pre-germinated oil palm nuts and propagator units for banana/plantain. Cooperative technicians were trained in management of cocoa nurseries (94 people), oil palm nurseries (70 people) and banana/plantain propagation (103 people). Additionally, 11 cooperatives set up oil palm processing, 2 set up mushroom production, 6 set up banana seed funds and 4 linked to oil palm and banana plantain national promotion programs.

- **10 local NGOs and public structures increased capacity of 12 cooperatives.** SOCODEVI's pilot project trained 10 local NGOs and public entities to assist farmers in developing cooperatives. So far quality control centers have been built in 12 cooperatives, tracking system tools are being developed and mini labs have been set up in 10 cooperatives. 8 cooperatives are linked to a market information system to receive price information by SMS. FIFFA, a microcredit institution, provided a total of \$400,000 in loans to cooperatives and their members. An additional 50 farmer groups have benefited from the project.

- **Research highlights.** STCP, IRAD and the National Forestry Agency (ANAFOR) are studying a farmer-developed cocoa agroforest model with 625 cocoa trees per hectare and 100 associated trees in Center Province. Biological control candidates against black pod disease have been isolated and participatory field trials are underway; preliminary results show a 30-50% decrease in disease levels.

### **Cameroon-A success story—Education has no age limit**

Mrs. Marguerite Ombga Andela is a cocoa farmer in her sixties and the mother of nine adult daughters, all of whom are married. She is a registered member of SOCAMAK, a cooperative society in the Mefou and Akono districts in the Center Region of Cameroon. When she inherited a 3-hectare farm from her late husband, she recognized that maintaining the farm independently was not going to be easy.



*Mrs. Andela on her cocoa farm*

Following local tradition, after her husband died, Mrs. Ombga Andela underwent a 2-year mourning period during which certain rites were performed and she was to abstain from work. During this period, the cocoa farm received minimal attention and, despite the use of fungicide, only 400 kg of cocoa were produced each year.

Then in 2007, Mrs. Ombga Andela heard about a farmer field school where she could learn new techniques in management and production of cocoa farms. **Believing that education has no age limit, she registered to participate in the farmer field school taking place in Ngoumou.** She was pleased with the sessions facilitated by Mr. André Fouda noting, **“Lessons were made quite easy and I could understand everything he taught us.”** She was impressed by the training methods and found a session on the duration of fermentation to be particularly interesting.



*Good cocoa pod*

Mrs. Ombga Andela began applying the techniques she learned on her farm. **“I was very surprised when in 2007, I could obtain approximately 700 kg of dried cocoa beans from the same farm area,”** she said. For the 2008/2009 season, she hopes to produce between 800 and 900 kg despite using 50% less fungicide than she used prior to training. As a member of SOCAMAK, she sells her beans to the cooperative society for CFA 875 per kilogram. Based on her increased yields, Mrs. Ombga Andela says, **“I will be able to draw some income of approximately CFA 700,000 (~US\$1,545) if the price trend is maintained.”**

## COTE D'IVOIRE

**Additional Funders:** FDPCC (Ivorian Cocoa Fund), Kraft Foods, TransFair USA, Mars Inc, FIRCA

**Implementers:** IITA (manager, production, marketing, policy); SOCODEVI (cooperative development); ANADER (Ivorian National Extension Agency/Cocoa Quality Improvement Project); Rainforest Alliance (Sustainable Production of Certified Cocoa Project), INADES, BFCD; GTZ, TechnoServe.

### Overview

The Sustainable Tree Crops Program in Côte d'Ivoire is active in 15 districts, mostly in the Eastern Region, and works with 20 cocoa cooperatives. The program focuses on promoting the sustainable production and marketing of quality cocoa, improving marketing channel efficiency, raising incomes for small-scale producers and creating environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and economically sustainable cocoa production systems. The Sustainable Production of Certified Cocoa Project which incorporates Rainforest Alliance standards into the FFS integrated crop, pest management and quality (ICPM&Q) curriculum began in 2006 in the Issia and Daloa Districts. The TransFair USA Cocoa Quality Improvement Project, which works with two cooperatives in the Daloa and San Pedro Districts, aims to increase incomes for small producers through increased access to the Fair Trade market in the US, Europe and Japan. The Mars Partnership for African Cocoa Communities of Tomorrow (iMPACT) project started in 2008 and works with one cooperative in 4 villages in the district of Soubré strengthening community leadership, improving cocoa productivity and marketing among others. In 2008, STCP began a 1-year partnership with FIRCA to train ANADER'S extension agents on FFS approach, training tools and post-training follow up. The West Africa Cocoa Livelihoods Program is to improve marketing efficiency, cocoa production and quality at farm level and farmers competitiveness on diversified cocoa farms.

### Program Objectives

- Develop farmer organizations' capacity as agricultural enterprises and improve marketing efficiency
- Integrate the production and marketing of certified cocoa
- Develop local institutional capacity to provide production and marketing support services

### Achievements

- **11,853 farmers directly trained through 376 Farmer Field Schools.** Through the participatory FFS approach, farmers were trained in integrated ICPM, cocoa regeneration techniques, and quality improvement. The curriculum also includes sensitization to child labor and HIV/AIDS. Training was conducted by 88 facilitators including 20 extension workers from ANADER and 51 members of the 20 cooperatives partnering on STCP core program and sister projects. Of the graduating farmers, 1,187 farmers from 3 cooperatives were trained in Rainforest Alliance standards and established 13 shade tree nurseries including 41,873 shade trees. Also amongst the graduating farmers were 672 participants in the Cocoa Quality Improvement Project and 501 farmers in iMPACT project. In addition, a total of 24,613 farmers were trained by the FFS graduates through guided farmer-to-farmer dissemination of information.
- **142 farmers trained through Video Viewing Clubs.** 16 videos covering similar topics in the FFSs were produced. The Clubs, designed for women cocoa farmers, were held in 6 communities facilitated by 2 women and 1 man.
- **690 farmers participating in mineral fertilizer study.** In partnership with Yara, FFS participants are evaluating the impact of mineral fertilizer on 22 demonstration plots.
- **8,528 farmers established cocoa nurseries.** After participating in nursery management training, farmers from 14 cooperatives established nurseries for 7,108 hectares of planting.
- **34 demonstration plots established.** 850 farmers received training in regeneration of deforested land on the 34 plots, and 425 farmers received training on rehabilitation and intensification on 17 of the plots.
- **Promoting of Collective marketing within one cooperative Union (6 cooperatives out of 8).** A partnership was established with a cocoa exporter, allowing the cooperative Union to organize collective marketing with the local partner through market-driven product tracking system.
- **Promotion of adoption of Quality Control Systems and MIS activities within one cooperative Union (6 cooperatives out of 8).** These activities include setting up a database on cooperative membership, setting up a management information system to facilitate financial management, quality control and market information on price.
- **Strengthening of 3 cooperatives using the systematized approach and capacity building tools developed by SOCODEVI.**

### Côte d'Ivoire-success story 1—*Learning about black pod:Roger's story*

Mr. Roger Zongo is a 25 year old farmer who lives in the village of Dioulabougou Carrefour in the sub-district of Grand-Zatry in southern Côte d'Ivoire. In 2004, he inherited a 2.5 hectare cocoa farm from his father who had returned to his native Burkina Faso.

The farm is about 30 years old and, at the time, was producing an average yield of 12 bags (65kg/bag) of cocoa beans per year, representing approximately 300kg per hectare.



Like many farms in Grand-Zattry, Mr. Zongo's farm had soil fertility-related problems as well as black pod disease. **"Like all farmers of my village, I thought that black pod was a curse cast on farmers by enemies,"** he said. To protect the trees, Mr. Zongo and his neighbors performed traditional rites to ward off evil. One of these practices (pictured above) included tying blue plastic strands on the trees and performing rituals referred to as "baptism." They also spread black pods destroyed by the disease in a circle around the base of the tree as a measure of improving soil fertility (picture right).



*A cocoa tree with a blue plastic*

Despite years of performing these rites, Mr. Zongo did not see any improvement on his farm. The yields kept dwindling and marketing such small quantities of cocoa became difficult. Mr. Zongo was ready to try a new approach.

In 2008, Mr. Zongo heard about a farmer field school taking place in the area and decided to enroll. There he learned more about diseases like black pod and how to improve soil fertility.

**"Ignorance is at the base of the misfortunes of many cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire,"** says Mr. Zongo, **"Now I know that black pod is a disease which is caused by a fungus and which spreads rapidly under wet and dense environmental conditions."**

He also learned that some of his techniques were actually spreading the disease noting, "Putting together healthy and spoilt pods contributed to the spread of the disease on my farm."

By implementing ICPM methods that he learned at the FFS, Mr. Zongo has increased his yields to 18 bags (65kg/bag).

## **Côte d'Ivoire-success story 2—FFS techniques helps Kambire**

Kambire Tiwete, a 44 year old Ivorian cocoa farmer was producing just about 1.5 tons of cocoa beans per annum from his 3-hectare land. His farm was attacked by diseases and pests, notably black pods disease but he had little information or knowledge on what he should do. "I began to get discouraged when last year, I heard about the Farmer Field School". He said he began attending the FFS in 2008 and was particularly attentive to diseases and pests control discussions in class.



*Mr. kambire in front of his house*

With the knowledge acquired, Kambire began work on his farm. He applied the techniques of sanitary harvest, rational use of pesticides, chuppons and mistletoes removal to control black pod and mirids acquired from the FFS sessions. However "my wife was very angry because she thought I was destroying our farm. In spite



*Mr. kambire poses on his cocoa farm*

of her disagreement, I pursued the applications in my field". When the results became evident with the harvest of 3 tons of cocoa the following cocoa season, Kambire's wife joined her husband and supported him fully.

Quality cocoa and higher production means more money for Kambire. "With the money I got, I was able to pay the school fees of all my seven children. Moreover, I could even sell cocoa in February, something I never did prior to joining the FFS" Kambire stated. Further more Kambire has been able to replace the old leaking roofing sheet covering his house. "Now, my family will no longer get wet in our room during the rainy season and of course I have a happier family". He concluded.

# NIGERIA

**Additional Funders:** Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development/National Cocoa Development Committee  
**Implementers:** IITA and national partners

## Overview

Decades of underinvestment in the tree crop sector affected the rural economy of the tree crops belt of Nigeria. Cocoa, a major export-oriented cash crop, suffered a serious setback. From 2003-2006, STCP-Nigeria worked with national partners to demonstrate innovative approaches to improve the productivity of cocoa farms. This was accomplished through farmer training using the Farmer Field School approach, and strengthening of farmer organizations for effective member services and profitable trade engagements. STCP-Nigeria Phase II seeks to improve the economic and social well-being of smallholder tree crop farmers by building on its prior successes and promoting a resilient and supportive policy environment.

## Overview

- To enhance productivity of cocoa farms in an environmentally and socially responsible manner
- To improve marketing efficiency in the cocoa sector
- To promote income alternatives in cocoa farming communities
- To promote improvement in policy environment for effective transformation of the rural economy

## Achievements

- **10 States have the capacity to implement Farmer Field Schools.** As a result of the successful Farmer Field School (FFS) approach in the Pilot Phase, the National Cocoa Development Committee (NCDC) commissioned STCP-Nigeria to develop the capacity of cocoa producing states to implement and manage FFSs through their extension services. Participating states include:

Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo, Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Kwara, Kogi and Osun. Five of them (Abia, Ondo, Edo and Akwa Ibom and Ekiti.) have implemented FFSs under the initiative while Cross River State has partnered with some communities to jointly implement farmer field schools.

- **5,961 farmers trained through Farmer Field Schools.** Graduates include: 2,204 farmers trained under the STCP-Nigeria core program; 300 farmers trained with funding from the Sustainable Practices in Agriculture for Critical Environments (SPACE) Project; additional 480 farmers trained with funding from SPACE, Cross River State extension services and farming communities jointly. Also in Cross River State, 985 farmers were trained by communities; while 1,992 farmers trained by the 5 states (Ondo, Akwa Ibom, Ekiti, Edo and Abia) implementing FFSs under the NCDC-led effort. A total of 12,906 farmers were trained by the graduates through guided farmer-to-farmer diffusion. In all FFSs, farmers received training on topics related to integrated crop and pest management, quality improvement, and farm safety (including safety of children).
- **4 nursery sites established, producing 49,063 seedlings.** STCP-Nigeria began a project with the state governments, the Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria, the National Cocoa Development Committee and the Federal University of Technology Akure, to develop a farmer organization/community-led seedling production and distribution system. Over a period of two years, (2007-08) four nursery sites were established in four states (Abia, Edo, Osun, and Cross River), and the selected communities were trained in nursery management.
- **3 Cooperative Unions adopt collective marketing arrangements.** The Tonikoko Farmers Cooperative Multipurpose Union (TFCMU), Cross River Advanced Cocoa Multipurpose Union (CRACMU), and Ituna High Quality Cocoa Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative Society (IFMCS) adopted collective marketing arrangements. IFMCS conducted their first trading activity in February 2009, selling 20 metric tons of cocoa and receiving an advance of over 3 million naira. In addition, STCP is working with 7 farmer organizations on organizational development plans.

## Nigeria- success story 1—*Farmer learns the spirit of sharing*

Mr. Ojong Simeon Onye (pictured with the manager of his business center) is a cocoa farmer from Akpara-bong, Nkanacha, Cross River State. Below is his story in his own words:

Before going into farming, I was a commercial driver. I inherited about 1.5 hectares of cocoa farm from my father in 1986. I went into full-time cocoa farming the same year following the dissolution of the Nigeria Cocoa Board to take advantage of the higher prices farmers were receiving at the time. Despite my hard work, I continued to face financial difficulties. I could not meet my household needs - children's school fees and medical care were difficult to come by. There was no support from agricultural officers. I handled the farm operations as I deemed necessary without any advice from experts. There was no means of also exchanging ideas or sharing experiences with other farmers. Our major concern was the price we got for our beans. I was harvesting about 300-370 kg from my farm. **Without knowledge on input and supply mechanisms and farm management, I did not keep records on my farm operations. Consequently, I could not say whether I was operating the farm at a loss or not. I was contemplating abandoning the farm at some point when the STCP [Farmer Field School] FFS Coordinator in Cross River State introduced me to the FFS program.**



**At the end of the FFS scheme in 2005, I was amazed at how much information on good farm practices I had acquired. It was like a mask had been removed from my face.** In the 2006 harvesting season, having adopted and applied good agricultural practices I learnt in the FFS, I realized 540 kg (about 8 bags) as against 275 kg (5.8 bags), I got in 2004. With this encouraging result, I purchased additional farms, raising my holding to 4 hectares. In the last cropping season, (2008) I harvested 1,800kg (27.6 bags). **With increased income from my farms, I went back to school in 2007 to complete my National Certificate in Education (NCE).**

While in school, I noticed the schools in my community could benefit from an internet café/business center. With our savings from the income from the sale of cocoa, my wife and I established a business center equipped with computer for word processing and photocopying machine as an alternative source of income. We employed someone to manage the business center under my wife's supervision while I focused on the farming business. Currently, we are negotiating acquisition of more farms. Indeed, things are looking good, thanks to FFS.

New ventures? I am not done yet. I am also exploring the production of pure organic cocoa as people are talking so much about it. In 2008, I produced some quantity of organic cocoa without using pesticides-not a single one. My beans now attract premium prices. I invited a soil scientist from the University of Calabar to



*Mr. Onye and assistant*

test my soil and he found no traces of chemical. I want to turn everything from my farm into money. 'Let me tell you, sir,' I now process mistletoe that I remove from my farms into herbal medicine for treatments of certain ailments like high blood pressure among others.

**Currently, I am more confident, bold and determined. I have also imbibed the spirit of sharing. Through my benevolent attitude, I have affected the life of others positively. For example, I give out polythene bags free of charge to other farmers (15,000 in 2007; 20,000 in 2008 and I am planning to give out 25,000 poly-bags this year 2009).** I am most grateful to the FFS team in Cross River State as well as STCP Nigeria for transforming my life so positively and rapidly. **I will forever remain an apostle of Farmer Field School.**

## **Nigeria- success story 2—A National FFS Conference established**

In order to provide a forum for FFS master trainers, supervisors and facilitators under the STCP program to interact, share experiences and exchange ideas on implementation FFS approach in Nigeria, a national conference was held early in the year at Oshogbo, Osun State, Nigeria. The conference was the first of its kind. 120 participants from 11 cocoa-producing States in Nigeria attended the conference. Five resource persons drawn from the Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN), universities and other relevant agricultural agencies assisted in the organization of the 3-day event. The conference was opened by the Osun State Governor, His Excellency, Prince Olagunsoye Oyinlola. Other dignitaries included the Osun State Deputy Governor, Erelu Olusola Obada and representatives of Deputy Governors of Abia, Akwa-Ibom and Cross River States.

There were three technical sessions. The first session considered the progress reports from each of the participating states with a focus on the achievements, challenges and the way forward. The second session looked at the new directions in the farmer training program of the STCP-Nigeria, particularly the Planting, Replanting and Diversification (PRD) training approach. The third session focused on Monitoring and Evaluation Action Plan which was emerged from an M&E workshop organized by STCP-Nigeria earlier in the year. Some of the points raised following the conference are the need to create an effective and sustainable environment for cocoa production through legislation, cooperatives, sustainable funding, effective management, public/private partnership, opening up more FFS schools and networking for opportunities.

At the end of the conference, a National FFS Conference was established and is to be held annually. Officers were elected and sworn-in to oversee the affairs of the conference. The Conference also has ex-officio members representing stakeholders in cocoa economy in Nigeria. The Conference agreed to publish a newsletter through which the public can learn more about FFS activities in Nigeria, new development in extension delivery and cocoa development in general. The venue for the Conference will rotate among the 14 cocoa-producing States in Nigeria.

# GHANA

**Additional Funders:** Mars Inc. and European Union (EU)  
**Implementer:** IITA; Participatory Development Associates-PDA (development of new institutional arrangements/community association development); Ministry of Food and Agriculture-MoFA (farmer training); SOCODEVI (farmer organization capacity development of local partners); Community Development Consult Network – Codesult (farmer training); Support for Community Mobilization, Project/Program - SCMPP (farmer training)

## Overview

The initial activities of the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) Ghana included farmer training through the FFS methodology, training cocoa farmers through Video Viewing Clubs, and research with active farmer participation. The success of these approaches 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. By 2009, STCP-Ghana is implementing programs under the EU's Cocoa Sector Support program Phase II (CSSP II), WCF/BMGF's Cocoa Livelihood Program (CLP), the Millennium Village Project (MVP) and the Mars Partnership for African Cocoa Communities of Tomorrow (iMPACT) project.

## 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

## Achievements

- **4,944 farmers trained through 151 Farmer Field Schools (FFS).** Training includes improved crop production techniques, as well as HIV/AIDS and child

labor sensitization through the participatory FFS approach. An additional 10,477 farmers have been reached indirectly through farmer-to-farmer (F-t-F) diffusion. A total of 165 facilitators have been trained to conduct cocoa FFS 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 PDA, Codesult, SCIMPP, PDA and Hope for Humanity.

- **864 farmers trained through 36 Video Viewing Clubs (VVCs).** 32 clubs were conducted for women cocoa farmers, and 4 were conducted for both men and women under CSSP II. The 8 technical cocoa videos for training cover pruning, black pod disease control, mirid control, harvesting/pod breaking and fermentation techniques. 2 new technical videos on planting, and replanting and Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease (CSSVD) have been developed and are being used for farmer training. Under CLP, a projected number of farmers will be trained through VVC.
- **Participatory Farm Level Studies by FFS graduates:** (a) Past FFS graduates completed a three year participatory field level learning in fertilizer use/cost-benefit at 20 trial sites in June 2009. Final analysis of the 3 year data will be completed by December 2009. (b) CRIG completed its testing of pheromone traps with STCP FFS graduates. This has led to CRIG developing new local pheromone traps for mass trapping in other parts of the country.
- **56 communities in 8 districts developing associations.** Working in partnership with SOCODEVI and under a contractual arrangement with PDA, STCP seeks to build the capacity of local institutions to train advisors to guide farmers/communities to better organize themselves to access services, farm inputs and credit for improved farming. PDA completed training of community development officers who will work to form associations in 8 CSSP II participating districts.
- **Cocoa Livelihood Program (CLP):** Through the CLP program, STCP has trained 49 farmer facilitators in planting, replanting and diversification (PRD). These facilitators have mobilized a total of 65 communities for training in PRD through the farmer learning group (FLG) methodology.

## Ghana-success story 1—*Farmers learn that sometimes less yields more*

**"They call me 'cash man', because they think I have lots of money. I love it and I intend to hold on to it for as long as I can,"** says Mr. Isaac Asamoah, "I am so thankful to STCP for bringing real change in my lifestyle and that of my family."

Mr. Asamoah is a 47 year old farmer who lives in Bebadour in the Atwima Mponua district in Ashanti Region. He is married with seven children. He began farming as a sharecropper in 1990 on a 14-acre (5.6 hectare) farm following the *Abunu* system under which farmers and landowners share farm produce in a 1:1 ratio. Although the income generated was not sufficient to support his family, Mr. Asamoah was still required to share his earnings with his landlord. In 2004, an FFS began in his area; he describes his experience as follows:



*My wife persuaded me to enroll in the farmer field school. Initially, I was skeptical because the program did not talk about credit facilities. Then also, the idea of going to sit in a classroom scared me. Later on, I acquiesced to my wife's wishes and enrolled. [After the first few sessions] I made up my mind to take the training seriously because I realized there were many key issues that the trainers brought out of which I was unaware. Not too long, I felt at home and settled down quickly because of the participatory nature of the training program which elicited contributions from the participants as well.*

Before participating in the program, Mr. Asamoah says he practiced the traditional *adotwe* way of farming. With this kind of farming, the cocoa seeds are planted directly into the soil rather than grown in a nursery. He explains:

*This is what I learnt from my father. I had well over 1,000 cocoa trees on an acre [0.4 hectares] of land which gave me only 3-4 bags [~64 kg per bag]. I was happy when the trainers used my farm as a case study. I realized I had too many trees on my farm. My farm was not well aerated as a result of the heavy planting. Now I have about 450 trees on an acre of land and getting between 10-11 bags. **This has significantly tripled my earnings because with the same piece of land, I am getting more money. I am also applying some of the cocoa techniques in my maize farm and that is also yielding good results to substantially complement my cocoa income.***

Mr. Asamoah says his family has moved from a makeshift house into a new house he has built in the village (pictured). He has started a 3-bedroom flat in his hometown of Abuakwa Maakrom near Kumasi – a feat he never dreamed of before participating in the program. He also says that he is able to pay his children's school-related expenses and recapitalize his wife's trading activities. Additionally, he is diversifying his income by purchasing a water pump machine for hiring out to others. "Why not? **I beam with pride when they call me 'cash man',**" he says with a smile.



*Mr Asamoah dries his cocoa beans*

## **Ghana-success story 2—No more “each for himself”: Cocoa farmers in Abodum appreciate farmers’ group**

Located in Sefwi Wiaswo District of the Western Region of Ghana, Abodum is a typical cocoa producing village where farmers grow cocoa using techniques passed down for generations from parents to children. Farmers in Abodum face many constraints. The major one being lack of access to improved planting materials and agrochemicals, which accounts for the relatively low cocoa yields. For instance farmers cannot easily access fertilizer and other agrochemicals as there are no reliable agrochemical shops near the village. Furthermore, few farmers use fertilizer because of the widely held belief that they cause cocoa trees to die prematurely.

STCP initiated farmer training on cocoa integrated crop and pest management (ICPM) and cocoa replanting in Abodum in March 2009. Thirty two farmers meet every two weeks to attend an FFS. Between FFS sessions, the same group works on a small plot every other week to learn about improved methods of planting cocoa, how to integrate food crops and forest trees with cocoa and manage a newly established cocoa farm. During the course of the FFS training, impressed by the results they saw on the plot where ICPM techniques were applied together with fertilizer, farmers developed a new appreciation of fertilizer. Farmers also realized that if they applied the practices learned in FFS, they could use less fungicide. One farmer participating in the FFS training indicated that by September 2009 he had only applied 1 round of fungicide compared with six rounds the same time last year.



*Fertilizer being off loaded*

Encouraged by the spirit of self-reliance fostered by the FFS, and with support from the Ministry of Local Government, participants established a cocoa farmers' self-help group, the first of its kind involving cocoa farmers in Abodum. The group is open to all but so far consist of only FFS participants. The group started collecting dues from each member and has opened a bank account. This money is lent out to members to address social problems such as funerals and illness. Upon hearing that the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) was willing to sell fertilizer to farmers if they organized themselves and paid for half of the cost, the Abodum FFS participants raised GHC 920 and with the help of Denis Ofori, the FFS facilitator, they rented a truck to transport 126 bags of fertilizer from the MoFA office in the district capital to Abodum. Excited by this new found sense of empowerment, Denis Ofori remarked: "in the past it was each for him. Now we will work together to help ourselves".

# LIBERIA

**Additional Funders:** US Agency for International Development (USAID), USDA (through ACDI/VOCA) and World Bank

**Implementers:** IITA (management, production, marketing, policy); SOCODEVI (farmers' organization development); University of Tennessee (marketing)

## Overview

Agriculture activities in Liberia are slowly but steadily picking up following years of civil crisis that disrupted many of its agricultural settings. Cocoa has traditionally been a key commercial and poverty reduction crop in Liberia. An estimated 28,000 hectares were planted with cocoa by 1987; however at the onset of STCP in Liberia, cocoa production average around 2,000-3,000 metric tons per year. With the introduction of the STCP farmer's training and farmers' organization strengthening, production has increased considerably (approximately 7,000 MT) and is expected to increase more as new hybrid seeds are provided for farmers and planted into the fields.

Rehabilitation of old trees and improved management practices, and replanting with appropriate planting material introduced by STCP are impacting positively on production, and farmers have begun to generate relatively high incomes from sales. A recent impact study of the 2006 FFS program indicates an increase in gross margin by a significant amount.

Building on its experience in the West Africa Region, STCP-Liberia is active in 3 major cocoa production counties of Bong, Lofa and Nimba. Under the Cocoa Livelihood Project (CLP), STCP-Liberia will expand into two new counties—Margibi and Grand Bassa.

## Program Objectives

- Implement technical packages to raise productivity and product quality
- Strengthen community groups to interface with markets, enhance democracy and ensure sustainability
- Develop efficient marketing options associated with relevant information systems
- Engage public and private stakeholders to address policy and institutional constraints

## Achievements

- **2,471 farmers trained through Farmer Field Schools.** Farmers received training on integrated crop and pest management, quality improvement, HIV/AIDS awareness, and farm safety. An additional 4,843

farmers were reached indirectly through farmer-to-farmer diffusion. 2006 graduates received 7.5 metric tons of seedlings from Centre National de Recherche Agronomique in Cote d'Ivoire. Through collaboration with the Ghana Cocoa Board and the cocoa Research Institute of Ghana, another 1.7 million seedlings were obtained from Ghana and distributed to 2,153 participants in the 2007 and 2008 farmer training activities.

- **63 farmer organization agents trained.** The agents (2 per county) were trained to provide support to 10 cooperatives. STCP is working with 3 additional cooperatives in Nimba County to provide support for the cooperatives' organizational development plans.
- **Policy dialogue – extension and cooperative development.** STCP-Liberia hosted several roundtables on extension options to support the Ministry of Agriculture as it develops extension policy and strategy. Roundtables and workshops were also held on topics related to the re-establishment of the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA). Results of the CDA workshops culminated into a draft cooperative law for Liberia.
- **Roundtables on Liberian cocoa sector held.** STCP hosted several roundtables on extension options to support the MoA as it works to enhance cooperative development and policy reform. STCP contributed in the review of the laws guiding establishment and management of cooperatives. Additionally, the two policy briefs developed following a number of consultations and workshops and a "quick wins" document produced by the Cocoa Sector Working Group, of which STCP-Liberia is a member, were received by the President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's office. Based on the documents, the President made some recommendations to revamp the cocoa sector. STCP-Liberia has since developed a draft cocoa development policy strategy and is being discussed by stakeholders including Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation (LPMC), CDA, the MoA and exporters/buyers.
- STCP assisted the Land Rights and Community Forestry Program (LRCFP), a USAID sponsored program working at the ENNR to establish community forest management committees, by contributing to policy documents for the Forest Management Committees set up in the communities.
- A GoL/GoG MoU for research exchange has been submitted to Ghana awaiting response.

## Liberia-A success story—Pruning is one farmer's key success

Mr. Peter Zangar is a 37 year old farmer with four children who lives in the village of Mabor in the Gbellay-Geh District of Nimba County, Liberia. He has a 1.5 acre (0.6 hectare) farm. Just prior to Liberia's civil war, he had started to receive training through the Nimba County Rural Development Project, but unfortunately the project phased out as the war began. Mr. Zangar explains:

**Prior to my joining the STCP farmer field school (FFS) in 2007, I held the belief that the more chupon I had, the more trees I had and therefore the more cocoa my farm would produce. Hence, my farm was heavily laden**



with old trees bearing large quantities of chupons. My annual production never exceeded one bag of dried cocoa beans. I produced about 50-60 kilos only. I thought the low yield was due to bad soil, and at a point I decided to abandon the farm. However, having given it a second thought, I mortgaged the farm for the sum of L\$2,500 (~US\$40) for two years with a promising note to pay back anytime I wanted. It was during this period that I enrolled in the STCP FFS. I was fascinated and drawn to topics such as thinning and shading, which also included chupon removal. Initially, I was doubtful – it did not make sense to me to be removing the ‘young cocoa trees.’ Though hesitant at first, I proceeded to systematically remove the chupons as instructed in one of the FFS sessions.



Mr. Zangar (right) on his farm

At the beginning of the next cocoa production season, Mr. Zangar says he could not believe the number of pods that his old trees began to bear. He was so excited that he began to visit the farm daily, just to make sure that he was not dreaming. He told his neighbors about the changes on his farm; several visited and were impressed with the results. With the application of the new techniques, his total yield was nearly four times the highest quantity he had ever recorded. Furthermore, as demonstrated during an FFS session, Mr. Zangar decided to ferment and dry the cocoa on a raised platform which he constructed at his home.

Mr. Zangar consulted with other FFS graduates in his village and they confirmed that their yields also increased tremendously. They decided to sell their cocoa as a group and went to contact a local buyer in neighboring Karnplay. At the end of the season, Mr. Zangar harvested five bags (50 kg/bag) which he sold with his friends for \$65 per kilogram. As a result, he was able to pay back the mortgage on his farm and send his four children to school. Now he is contributing to a group savings scheme to purchase basic inputs.

He has suggested that although some of the community's farmers did not participate in FFS, they should all be allowed to join the group sales arrangement. That way, the group will have a larger membership and more people can benefit from higher prices and reduced costs of inputs.

Additionally, the community has established a nursery that is considered to be one of the best in STCP Liberia. Of the 26,000 seeds planted in 2007, 95% successfully germinated into seedlings. The seedlings were then transplanted in 2008.

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