



Women Cocoa Farmers in Ghana Have Something to Smile About!

Five video viewing clubs (VVCs) were launched by STCP in July 2006, in three villages in Ashanti Region, specifically to train women cocoa farmers on integrated crop and pest management (Photo 1). The video viewing club is a method for group learning using video coupled with guides, guided discussion and field activities. The VVC, led by a trained facilitator, provides a course of weekly training for 20 farmers on selected modules over a four-month period. Areas of particular interest to women cocoa farmers include disease and pest management and post-harvest activities. Videos used in the clubs were produced by a group of Ghanaian farmer field school graduates trained in video production techniques (*cf.* STCP Newsletter Issue 10). To date, five videos have been developed covering pruning, black pod management, fermentation, harvesting and drying.



Photo 1: Participants at the launching ceremony of the women Video Viewing Clubs in Ghana.

In West and Central Africa, cocoa is generally perceived as a man's crop. Although the involvement of women and other family members in cocoa cultivation is well established, little attention has been paid to promoting the crop as an avenue for empowering rural women. Yet, a 2002 study by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) suggests that "cultivating cocoa provides women with economic security and a more secure way to gain rights to land" (IFPRI: 2002 4). Since poor women, unlike men, spend most of their additional income on their children and household welfare, increasing the number of women who grow cocoa in their right is likely to increase food security, child nutrition and improve household welfare. Any effort aimed at

promoting cocoa production among women must recognize two distinct target groups: women who manage their own cocoa farms (independent women cocoa farmers) and women who contribute to cocoa cultivation together with other family members (non-independent women cocoa farmers). The number of independent women cocoa farmers in West Africa is unknown but could be as high as 20% of cocoa farmers in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire due to large age differences between husbands and wives (leading to a high number of widows), male mortality from AIDS and war, and male urban migration. Assuming that women in most cocoa growing households contribute to some aspect of crop production, not to mention their key role in other crops found in cocoa systems (e.g. non-timber forest products, indigenous fruits), the population of non-independent women cocoa farmers is significant. Training non-independent women on specific aspects of cocoa production is therefore essential for ensuring sustainable cocoa production.

STCP is testing the VVC method in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire as an extension method for training both men and women cocoa farmers. The project is supported by the Chocolate Manufacturers' Association (CMA) of the United States and Nestlé. In Ghana, for example, it is expected to train 100 women farmers in 2006. The Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) and the Ghana Cocobod continue to provide enormous technical support in the development of the video episodes and training of the facilitators in conjunctions with the STCP technical team. The project is also making good progress in Côte d'Ivoire.

Reported by S. David, I. Gyamfi (STCP/IITA) & Mary Adu Kumi (STCP/Kuapa Kokoo)

STCP/IITA Present at the WCF Brussels Meeting

The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) Partnership Meeting was held in Brussels on May 17 and 18. This provided an opportunity to discuss STCP's approach and achievements in two separate panels. Stephan Weise, the STCP Regional Program Manager, was on two panels and made presentations on "Measuring Impact in the Sustainable Tree Crops Program" and "Models for Farmer Support: The Approach of the Sustainable Tree Crops Program" (the latter in place of Jonas Mva Mva who unexpectedly did not make it). In addition, Richard Asare of Forest & Landscape Denmark participated in a panel on measuring environmental impact. Richard works closely with other STCP partners on neighbour trees in cocoa farms.

Reported by S. Weise (STCP/IITA)

STCP at the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Meeting in Washington D.C.

Upon invitation of the World Cocoa Foundation, the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) participated at the 2006 Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Civil Society Forum which was held on June 4-9, 2006 in Washington D.C., USA. STCP was represented at the Forum by Mr. Okaingni Okaingni Louis, STCP National Network Coordinator in Côte d'Ivoire.

The goal of the Forum was to facilitate discussion across a broad spectrum of civil society stakeholders on the role of AGOA in promoting sustainable growth and poverty reduction, both in rural and urban areas.

As a nationally known cocoa producer in Côte d'Ivoire and one of the Vice Presidents of ANAPROCI, the National Cocoa and Coffee Farmers Association, Mr. Okaingni spoke on behalf of African cocoa producers. At the AGOA Forum, among several workshops, Mr. Okaingni participated in the panel entitled "Voices of African Entrepreneurs" which was hosted by Mr. Kojo Nnamdi, a TV/radio commentator (Photo 2). Mr. Okaingni shared his first-hand farmer's perspective on cocoa farming. As the STCP National Network Coordinator in Côte d'Ivoire, he expressed his view on STCP achievements and future outlook.



Photo 2: Mr. Louis Okaingni Okaingni, STCP National Network Coordinator in Côte d'Ivoire (second from left), at the AGOA meeting in Washington D.C. (USA) in June 2006.

To the participants at the Forum, M. Okaingni was able to convey the satisfaction of Ivorian cocoa producer-partners of STCP as to the positive impact of the Program pilot activities. He mentioned the innovative "Farmers Field School" approach used to disseminate and transfer best practices for sustainable cocoa production.

He highlighted some important achievements of the Program over the three-year period of the pilot phase: an increase in yields (up to 30%) and revenue (up to 23%), and the raising of cocoa producers' awareness on worst forms of child labour so that producers can prevent their children from hazardous tasks in cocoa farms.

In conclusion, he advocated for AGOA's support to STCP activities in its second phase: "STCP trained us on the best practices and technologies to improve our farming system and to increase our yield. This is good and STCP should continue. And AGOA should support STCP's second phase. But what can AGOA do on the market so that the cocoa producers can receive better prices for their cocoa beans and improve their livelihoods?"

Reported by R. Yapo (STCP/IITA)

Second Steering Committee Meeting of the FFP05 Project Held in Yaoundé

The second Review committee for the "Food for Progress 2005" (FFP05) project met on June 22, 2006 at the Yaoundé Mont Fébé Hotel. It was chaired by Mr. Mbassa Ndime, Secretary General at the Ministry of Planning, Programming and Regional Development.

In attendance were the representatives of the Ministry of Commerce, the United States Embassy in Cameroon, the United States Department of Agriculture (FFP05 project sponsor) and also the STCP Regional Manager (Dr. Stephan Weise). The minutes of the first project's progress Review Committee meeting were read and adopted for deliberations. The STCP country manager, Mr. Jonas Mva Mva, presented a report on the preliminary activities carried out after the project's first steering committee meeting held in January 2006. He also presented a summary of the baseline survey that was conducted during the initial phase of the project, the action plan for the effective implementation of the project and the required budget. After some amendments and modifications, the committee approved the requested budget and gave the green light for the implementation of the FFP05 project destined for execution in the Centre and South west provinces of Cameroon.

Reported by Jonas Mva Mva (STCP/IITA) and Gilbert Ndimasa (IITA Cameroon)

STCP Opens Cocoa ICPM Farmer Field Schools in Liberia

STCP-Liberia opened 15 cocoa integrated crop and pest management farmer field schools (FFS) in the north-eastern region of Nimba County in April 2006. The schools, run by 15 facilitators, are situated in two districts (Sanniquellie-Mah and Gbellay-Geh). Mr. Jonathan Boiboi, Participatory Extension Specialist of STCP-Liberia, leads the FFS program. After nearly 16 years of conflict, cocoa farmers in Nimba County welcomed STCP with open arms. Most schools have 30 participants, with significant numbers of women and ex-combatants among the over 400 farmers enrolled in the first FFS training cycle.

At a program to launch STCP in Nimba County held on May 18, the county superintendent, Honorable Robert Kamei, expressed profound thanks to IITA for choosing to initiate STCP in Nimba. He promised profound support for STCP-Liberia and hoped that the program be extended to other major cocoa producing areas of Liberia. The launching program was attended by the mayor of Sanniquellie City, District Commissioners of Sanniquellie-Mah and Gbellay-Geh, clan, town chiefs from the two districts, the director, staff and students of the St. Mary's Agriculture Training Center (ATC), representatives of farmers' organizations and the business community, Mr. MacArthur Pay-Bayee, STCP Liberia Project Manager and Dr. Sonii David, STCP's regional participatory extension specialist. Dr David was visiting the project site for the first time to provide technical advice on FFS activities.

As most Liberian farmers abandoned their cocoa farms during the war, farms are overgrown and poorly managed. FFS focus on six technical areas: black pod management, farm sanitation, mirid and stem borer control, cocoa rehabilitation and cocoa quality. The training will also raise farmers' awareness on child labour and HIV/AIDS. The first Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop for FFS facilitators took place early 2006 and was lead by Dr. Innocent Okuku, Participatory Extension Specialist of STCP-Nigeria. A second ToT will be held in July 2006.

Reported by Sonii David, MacArthur Pay-Bayee and Jonathan Boiboi (STCP/IITA)

STCP Exhibits at Africa Cocoa Summit

Sonii David, STCP Regional Participatory Extension Specialist and Chris Okafor, Country Manager of STCP-Nigeria, represented STCP at the Africa 'Abuja Declaration' Cocoa Summit held in Abuja, Nigeria on May 6, 2006. The summit was organized by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with the theme, "Sustainable Cocoa Economy for Africa. The Summit was preceded by a Technical session and a Council of ministers' meeting May 4 to 5, 2006. The Summit focused on strategies to ensure that African

cocoa-producing states and indeed farmers receive fair prices for their produce while noting that real cocoa prices have declined dramatically over the last ten years and the decrease in revenue from cocoa exports has endangered the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative and made it more difficult to reach the millennium development goals. The summit brought together heads of states, high level government representatives and ministers from the major African cocoa producing countries including the host country, Ghana, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Uganda, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe. Key dignitaries attending the summit included President Menendez of Sao Tome and Principe, Prime Minister Edem Kojo of Togo, Foreign Minister Nana Akufu Addo of Ghana and the Minister of Agriculture of Côte d'Ivoire (Photo 3). Also represented were the head of COPAL, CEO of Ghana Cocobod and deputy governors of major cocoa producing states of Nigeria. An earlier ministerial meeting prepared a communiqué which was discussed and adopted at the Summit as the 'Abuja Declaration'.



Photo 3: President of Sao Tome and other dignitaries at STCP's stand, during the 2006 Africa Cocoa Summit in Abuja (Nigeria).

The Declaration noted the major decisions and agreements at the summit. Specifically, the Heads of State and Government resolved to:

1. Encourage harmonization and coordination of policies and programmes at the regional and international levels that will ensure a sustainable cocoa economy for Africa;
2. Support the implementation of a supply management program, which includes Production Management Plan; Production management should emphasize productivity growth in addition to expansion of area under cultivation. Policy measures to encourage and ensure intensification include availability of improved seedlings, agrochemicals, research and extension education, credit, and market information;
3. Improve quality control through effective public/private sector partnership;
4. Encourage the promotion and consumption of cocoa in

SOCODEVI and STCP Strengthen Private/Public Organizations in Cameroon

Africa, which is the most pragmatic way of reversing the long-term secular decline in real cocoa prices. Measures to increase domestic consumption include development of cocoa consumption habits, sensitization of the citizenry on the nutrition and health values of cocoa products, research and development;

5. Further encourage the commercialization of new cocoa and cocoa by-products through the private sector;
6. Pursue negotiations with the major cocoa consuming countries for improved market access for semi-finished and finished products from Africa without tariff and non tariff barriers;
7. Promote aggressive market diversification targeting emerging markets like China and India while strengthening our traditional markets;
8. Ensure that where competitive advantage permits, encourage the production of organic cocoa for the special niche market;
9. Ensure the availability of comprehensive data bases on markets as well as on cocoa resources;
10. Provide adequate funding for scientific, market and economic research, as well as technology transfer activities;
11. Build human and institutional capacity at national and regional levels with particular emphasis on training institutions, transferring appropriate technologies and knowledge to producers and processors and ensuring a rational and scientific basis for management decisions and design of programs;
12. Foster domestic processing of cocoa and cocoa by-products right from the primary production (village) level to the urban centers through the provision of economic incentives for private sector participation, south-south cooperation for information sharing and technology transfer;
13. Sustain national and regional support for value addition;
14. Condemn the worst forms of child labour and call for respect for the ILO Convention 182;
15. Promote intra-African trade in cocoa products and other agricultural products;
16. Encourage the improvement of Africa's competitiveness in the world market by reducing production and marketing costs. Investments in infrastructural developments through national and regional efforts should be stepped up in such areas as roads, ports, and cargo handling facilities, together with the removal of non-physical barriers to transportation;
17. Emphasize cooperation and collaboration among African Cocoa producing Countries in the areas of producing, handling and processing cocoa.

Reported by S. David & C. Okafor (STCP/IITA)

On May 8th to 12th 2006, SOCODEVI and STCP along side their local partner ODECO (a local non-government organization) organized a training workshop on "the creation and development of cooperatives". The workshop was held in Yaoundé, at the conference room of IITA-Cameroon, and was attended by the representatives of several local NGOs and also a number of government institutions such as the Community Development Specialization and Training School of Kumba (a public organization based in the south-west Province). This is part of the scaling up process of STCP, whereby the capacity of local institutions is developed.

The workshop had as purpose the sensitization and training of trainers through various activities, which included project timing, realizing a training program, training of trainers, work organization, organizational development plans, decision making. These were done in a bid to build and strengthen existing capacities of the workshop participants on the concepts of creation and development of cooperatives, who in time will become trainers within their different organizations.

The workshop organizer, Jonas Mva Mva (STCP-Cameroon Country Manager and "Food for Progress 2005" project administrator) was assisted by a number of resource persons including Pierre Tremblay (Training Adviser) from SOCODEVI-Canada, Banhero Douama (Adviser in cooperative development) from SOCODEVI- Côte d'Ivoire, Mario Boivin (SOCODEVI-Canada) and Sylvie Mbog (ODECO Cameroon).

Presiding at the closing ceremony of the workshop, the Officer in Charge of IITA Cameroon, Mr. Aboubakar Yacoubou hailed the participants for their patience and dedication during the training workshop and reminded them of the role they have to play after the workshop. He said workshop participants are expected to become project partners thus should not only sit and wait for STCP to give instructions on what to do but should also propose activities to the project.

Attestations were issued to the trainees at the end of the workshop (Photo 4).



Photo 4: Participants at a workshop organized by STCP/IITA and SOCODEVI in Yaounde (Cameroon).

Reported by J. Mva Mva (STCP/IITA) & G.. Ndimasa (IITA)

New Manual for Farmer Training on Tree Domestication: “Learning about Neighbour Trees in Cocoa Growing Systems”

A new manual¹ entitled “Learning about Neighbour Trees in Cocoa Growing Systems: a Manual for Farmer Trainers” and authored by Richard Asare of Forest and Landscape Denmark (FLD) has just been released. The 91-page manual, published by the Danish Centre for Forest, Landscape and Planning (KVL), was prepared in collaboration with the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), with funding from the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF). The aim of the manual is to provide an opportunity for adult learning and to contribute to farmer-based dissemination of information on non-cocoa trees (or “neighbour trees”) in cocoa establishments.

The manual provides technical information that addresses tree diversification through forest tree species identification, selection and propagation in cocoa fields. The manual also gives an insight into policy and legal implications of timber trees on farm, and gives a simple model for the determination of compensation due to farmers for felled timber trees on cocoa farms. This information is then followed by guided decision-making exercises designed to reinforce cocoa farmers’ observation skills, decision-making capacity and knowledge on timber tree species incorporated in cocoa growing systems in West Africa.

To test the applicability of the manual, a series of workshops were organised in July and early August 2006 for 21 STCP farmer field school (FFS) facilitators and 50 selected FFS graduates in the Atwima District in the Ashanti Region of Ghana (Photo 5). The objectives of the workshop were to develop a participatory learning approach for ‘tree domestication (TD)’ on cocoa farms and to develop, explain and translate terminologies involved in the concept. Workshop participants were taken through a framework (exercises) in identifying and selecting desirable forest trees for cocoa establishments.



Photo 5: STCP Farmer Field School facilitators at the workshop held in Kumasi (Ghana) working in groups to identify and select desirable forest trees for cocoa establishments.

In developing the framework for desirable forest tree species identification and selection, a rating system in the form of a matrix is used to enable facilitators/farmers decide on a desirable and/or undesirable tree with respect to cocoa (Photo 6). Their reasoning for selecting a desirable tree is treated as attributes or indicators, which are then rated (using a numeric scale from 1 to 10) against selected forest tree species according to their judgement. These judgements are debated upon, then accepted as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ attributes and later validated with research findings.



Photo 6: Farmers at the workshop in Nerebehi (Atwima District, Ghana) presenting results on desirable trees in cocoa after using the framework developed by Richard Asare.

This framework provides room for conceptualising facilitators/farmers’ description and/or reasoning behind their perceptions of “good/bad” trees in association with cocoa. For example, consideration is given to facilitators’ or farmers’ thoughts on shade, moisture, soil fertility, shedding of branches that might damage cocoa trees and acting as alternative host for diseases and pests.

Feedbacks from the workshop participants indicated a high applicability of the manual for farmer training on various aspects of neighbour tree learning in cocoa establishment. Selected farmers are currently involved in the ongoing STCP tree domestication process in Ghana.

Reported by Richard Asare (STCP/Forest & Landscape Denmark)

¹**Citation:** Asare, R. 2006. Learning about neighbour trees in cocoa growing systems - a manual for farmer trainers. Forest & Landscape Development and Environment Series 4-2006. ISBN 10: 87-7903-283-4 (print). The full report is available electronically from www.SL.kvl.dk or may be requested from SL-International@kvl.dk.

New Initiative with the Private Sector in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire on Fertilizer and Fertility Management Aimed at FFS Graduates

Declining soil fertility has always been mentioned as a major constraint to sustainable production by cocoa farmers of West Africa. To date, the majority of farmers rely on soil nutrient replenishment through the recycling of leaf litter. In collaboration with input producers and suppliers in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) has commenced a four-year initiative to conduct field demonstration trials on the use of organic or mineral fertilizers in these two countries.

Apart from engaging input suppliers as key partners in the cocoa value chain on the STCP platform, the ongoing fertilization work would expose farmers to the effect of fertilizers on cocoa production through demonstration trials. Through discovery learning exercises developed by the STCP regional Technology and Knowledge Dissemination specialist in collaboration with private sector expertise, the trials will allow farmers to conduct their own profitability analysis using modules developed in STCP and which enable participants to record cost of inputs, effect of fertilizer on weed growth and weed management, as well as pod production, among minor parameters. The private sector is involved in training the trainers.

In Ghana, the initiative is being implemented as a post-FFS activity with school graduates, in close collaboration with WIENCO, the local distribution agent for YARA – an international fertilizer manufacturing company. WIENCO has provided field level training to selected

STCP former FFS facilitators who are supervising the application and recording of data from the fertilizer demonstration plots with groups of post-FFS participants. Based on the skills already acquired by these farmers through farmer field schools, the graduates' ability to use participatory approaches in conducting trials and validating impacts is thereof enhanced. Twenty different on-farm trials are being conducted on old cocoa stands planted with a wide range of cocoa varieties. Selected FFS graduates meet bi-weekly on the demonstration fields to conduct pod counting and recording exercises. Farmers are using integrated crop and pest management techniques on the demo plots to manage other pests and diseases that may arise during the trial period.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the demonstration and learning trial plots are linked to 20 current FFS sites. This allows school participants to bi-weekly visit the fertilized fields in order to record agro-ecosystems analysis data. It is envisaged this activity will increase participants' knowledge of fertilizer and build related skills beyond the FFS sessions. This program is also being conducted in collaboration with YARA and its local input distribution network. A total of 10 facilitators were trained by fertilizer specialists from YARA in the recognition of the characteristics of different nutrients to be applied, and on how to set up the trials.

Reported by I. Gyamfi, R. Yapo (STCP/IITA) and J.-Y. Couloud (STCP/ANADER)

CONTACT:

This is the quarterly Newsletter of the Sustainable Tree Crops Program for West and Central Africa, produced by the Regional Office in Yaounde, Cameroon. The STCP Management would welcome any contributions/suggestions.

Edition and layout by Martine Ngobo and Stephan Weise. Website: www.treecrops.org.

E-mail: stcp-wca@cgiar.org

Tel.: (+237) 223 74 34 Fax: (+237) 223 74 37
Mail: STCP Regional Office, c/o IITA Cameroon,
L.W. Lambourn & Co., Carolyn House,
26 Dingwall Rd, Croydon CR9 3EE,
England

SUPPORT:

The core STCP Platform, which is managed by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), is supported financially by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the global chocolate industry and trade associations represented by the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), and Masterfoods. To get a full list of additional support provided by development investors and the private sector to specific STCP associated activities, please contact the STCP Regional Office through stcp-wca@cgiar.org.