Thematic area N°12: Social Inclusion (including gender & human rights)

Abstract: Cocoa farming by women in Cameroon: A clear path

Cocoa is produced in forest areas in Cameroon and is dominated by smallholder farmers with cocoa plots of less than 3 hectares: an average low yield of 350 kg/ha. Organisation of cocoa farmers is weak; women and youth are less and less interested in cocoa farming. Recently the Government of Cameroon has taken a renewed interest in cocoa and various initiatives have been started up over the course of 2012. But cocoa is a cash crop the sector is dominated by men while food-crops are reserved to women. With the country ambition to produce 600 000 tons of cocoa beans by 2020, the challenge is really important if women and youth are not integrated. Their exclusion is not only a matter of cropping cocoa but also a matter of traditional/customary law which put many barriers especially on access to land by women, heritage process, limited access to credit by women and youth. In the frame of “Cameroon Cocoa-Eco Project”, Netherlands Development Organisation introduced cross-cutting thematic as female leadership programmes, nutrition, processing to interest more women and youth in to cocoa farming. This integrates mind-set shift in leadership trajectories to break stereotypes on men and women differences, perceptions of the society especially in cocoa farming. Women and youth are included in farmer Field Schools to learn cocoa planting; diversification, they are involved in nutrition programme for household food dietary diversity. Adding value to cocoa beans is a quite new activity that interest both men and women. This paper is to show that, contrary to the paradigm of cocoa farming by men, integrating women and youth can quickly contribute to the family revenue and the country growth. The method used is establishing this outcome is an action-research based on a combination of five pillars: i) Support of sustainable cocoa production, ii) cooperative development, iii) market linkage, iv) climate change REDD+, and iiiii) next generation cocoa farming. The results obtained show an improvement in revenues. Two cooperatives of cocoa farmers generated about € 3 000 000 in 2014 for men some women and youth. This suggest that, mixt gender cocoa farming could be a powerful instrument of social inclusion and gender balance.

Keywords: Women, Cocoa farming, income, youth
Cocoa is produced in forest areas in Cameroon and is dominated by small farmers with cocoa plots of less than 3 hectares: a low average yield of 350 kg / ha. Cocoa Producers Organisation is low; Women and young people are less and less interested in cocoa farming. Recently, the government of Cameroon has taken a renewed interest in cocoa and several initiatives were started during 2012. With the ambition of the country to produce 600,000 tonnes of cocoa beans in 2020, the challenge is really important if women remain in their current position is to say virtually excluded.

This exclusion is not only a matter of culture, but also a question of traditional / customary law that put many obstacles in particular access to land by women. There are also difficulties of women access to credit. As part of the "Eco-Cameroon Cocoa Project", the Netherlands Development Organization accompanied two cooperatives COCOA + Ayos and KONAFCOOP to improving producer incomes. The project was based on five components, namely: 1.) Sustainable cocoa production 2) Climate change and REDD+, 3) cooperative development, 4) market linkage, 5) Next generation of cocoa farmers.

In addition to these five components Cameroon Cocoa Eco-Project gave a chance for women to have access to the same knowledge that men had. The project also introduced cross-cutting issues such as women's leadership program, nutrition, processing to interest more women to cocoa activities.

This article shows that, contrary to the paradigm of cocoa farming by men in Cameroon, the integration of women can quickly contribute to the family income and achieve the objective of the Ministry of Agriculture at the same time.

The results show that both cocoa producer cooperatives generated approximately € 3 million in 2014 this for the benefit of men, women and youth unlike previous years that were focused on the production by men. This suggests that the cultivation of cocoa by the two human genders could be a powerful instrument of social inclusion, gender balance and economic development.

THE CHALLENGES
The challenges in this project is to involve women in cocoa farming in a context where cocoa is a perennial crop whose operation is linked to land ownership and where the management, allocation, the legacy of the earth from father to son the one hand, where women themselves have received the education that they have no right to the land they are associated to food crops that are not sustainable on the other hand. But in general, family burdens are placed mainly on men who do not always have the necessary means to meet them title alone and with only income from the sale of cocoa. The position of women in this new field is not easy but the case of the two cooperatives KONAFCOOP and COCOA + Ayos followed in this project gives great hope to women and Cameroon in general.

ACTORS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
The implementation of the Cameroon Cocoa Eco-Project requires the intervention of several actors involved at different levels. COCOA + Ayos and KONAFCOOP are two cooperatives of cocoa producers they are direct beneficiaries of the project. Located
respectively in the regions of Central and South-West Cameroon, the two recipients are from two agro-ecological zones and different cultural. But almost similar about cultivated land area, both cocoa producer organizations do not have the same history.

Established in 2015, COCOA + Ayos is a union of three federations and two cocoa cooperatives set up under the CCEP to align the requirements of the Cameroonian Government signed the Uniform Act relating to cooperative law society the Organization for the Harmonization of African Business Law OHADA. COCOA + Ayos is a young organization umbrella who debuted in the cooperative spirit. But it was built on the achievements of existing federations and unions with all cocoa stereotypes as perennial crop reserved for men.

KONAFCOOP, old cooperative of more than twenty years already has a strong experience in production and marketing of cocoa and coffee. This is one of the most respected cooperatives of Cameroon for its results in terms of cocoa production, service delivery to its members. KONAFCOOP is consisted of seven basic units which themselves are basic and in direct contact with growers. This cooperative was accompanied by various organizations, had various development partners, strategic, commercial and others. Today KONAFCOOP sells certified cocoa Traid Fair and has already received several awards. But as in most of the cocoa producing areas in Cameroon, cocoa production is considered as a perennial crop therefore linked to ownership of land and men.

SNV Netherlands Development Organisation intervenes in strengthening capacities of actors by providing contextualized solutions to enable them to break the cycle of poverty. With the Eco-Cocoa program jointly implemented in Cameroon and Ghana, SNV aims to contribute to improving the income of small producers by the production and marketing of cocoa high quality and in larger amounts. Cameroon in particular, the Cameroon Cocoa-Eco Project, SNV contributes to increased domestic production of cocoa in 2020 but also the development of cooperatives, access to markets and preparing the new generation of producers cocoa. In this momentum, SNV contributes to women’s empowerment in interest to the cocoa farming.

IITA International Institute of Tropical Agriculture is an implementing partner of the project with SNV sides. As a research institute IITA focuses on finding practical solutions for better productivity of cocoa, taking into account climate change and the reduction of emission from deforestation and forest degradation this conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

**LOGIC AND INTERVENTION METHOD**

Given the difficulties encountered by the two cooperatives, ambition knew Cameroon in 2020, SNV offers the Cocoa program implemented in Cameroon and Ghana. But the case of Cameroon can take into account the specificity of women and involve them in cocoa farming.

The CCEP funded by SNV is implemented in partnership with IITA. In its localization strategy, concerned about the sustainability of its action, SNV operates through national development organizations called Local capacity Builders. Cooperative development and preparation of the next generation of cocoa farmers by LCB FONJAK and CASACODE, market access by ACCFMO, leadership program CYMC, nutrition by NGOUWOUOU, processing by Évely & Col and Ets NGANGUEM the cooperative data base by Guy Kenmegne.
Sustainable cocoa production.
Under this component the project targets farmer training and information on eco-friendly products and intensification, participatory research to seek eco-friendly solutions to one of Cocoa's major pests (mirids) and farm rehabilitation and diversification.

Farmer training and information on eco-friendly products and increased
The Farmer Field School (FFS) model Will Be Applied to transfer knowledge and skills in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Integrated Crop and Pest Management (ICPM), Occupational Safety and Health and the Principles and Practices of Cocoa Farming as a Business.

Seeking solutions to mirid management through farmer participatory research
The project will look at new eco-friendly pest management technology in a bid to seek solutions to Current Concerns over cost and safety of Existing pesticides for "cocoa mirid" control. The Following Technologies Will Be field tested through the FFS: Cocoa farm rehabilitation and diversification

Through FFS training on farm rehabilitation technical will Be Delivered. Training will include planting, replanting, grafting and hand-pollination of Cocoa. Demonstration plots and farmer-based seed multiplication gardens Will Be set up in conjunction with IRAD / CIRAD using a mix of relative varieties known to Produce quality hybrid seeds of fairly Known lineage. Clonal trials with new cocoa genotypes (that are pest / disease resistant and high yielding) will ensure continuous improvement in cocoa varieties for the farmer seed gardens.

Climate change and REDD+
This component aims at developing capacity to arrive at zero deforestation through cocoa farming through the following sub-components: climate mapping, establishment of high carbon density agro-forestry systems for cocoa production, establishment of a participatory carbon stock monitoring system, study on REDD+ opportunity costs and building capacity to establish forest biodiversity corridors. Each sub-component is detailed in the sections below.

High carbon density agro-forestry system for cocoa production
By bringing together information from climate mapping, and activities implemented under the sustainable cocoa production component of this project, information will become available on farmer options to balance cocoa intensification with actions in climate adaptation and mitigation. Short and long term risks and benefits of each option will be identified. For this a participatory process will be applied whereby farmers and other cocoa stakeholders express perceptions on what they think works/does not work in their particular contexts of production levels, pest and disease loads, soil characteristics, shade levels and socio-economic realities. The objective of the exercise is to identify different cocoa farming systems each with their own levels of productivity and robustness (cocoa suitability predictions). Capacity will be built to establish a link between shading of cocoa and the creation of forest biodiversity corridors to maintain/establish forest connectivity

Cooperative development
Organisational development support will be provided to the existing cooperative in Konye, with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of its operation. In Ayos
current initiatives in moving towards cooperative organisation will be supported. In both sites integration of REDD+ in cooperative operation will be facilitated. The leadership capacity of cooperative leaders will be strengthened through the SNV Leadership for Change Programme.

**Market linkage**
Under this component the project will improve market linkage between farmer cocoa cooperatives on the one hand and input suppliers and buyers on the other hand. Activities will focus on improving access to quality inputs through collective purchase, strengthening grouped sales to limit unfair practices by middlemen and promoting direct linkages between cooperatives and buyers.

**Next generation cocoa farming**
Studies were undertaken, to determine the push and pull factors for young people to consider a future in cocoa. Factors that were investigated include land tenure practices, inheritance structures, land fragmentation and land markets. At the same time, under the auspices of the cooperatives

intergenerational dialogue were organised on the topic of succession. The dialogue considered the question of how youth and women especially can start to invest in their parents’, elders’ or employers’ farms (e.g. through rejuvenating plantations, planting trees, and introducing new laboursaving technology) with a view to reaping benefits over the years and decades to come.

**Cocoa farming by women with direct access to land**
Women are generally not owners of the land, can not make cocoa farming. To address this issue, the project chose to introduce inter-generation dialogue and gender sensitive in communities to reduce stereotypes, differences between men and women in families, allowing parents to open to women and Girls who wish to embark cocoa farming. These sessions were intended to identify the aggravating factors and cultural barriers triggers that could allow women and young people have access to land for the cultivation of cocoa.

The dialogues have highlighted different categories of problems: 1) The customary level. According to tradition, women do not inherit the earth because it is called to go to marriage. If she inherits from her father, then this is the family of her married will benefit. If left a widow, she cannot be the owner but the usufructuary. The heirs of the husband that the children especially boys have the land for them.

The woman and children are help for the husband. They are the workforce. The woman's urine do not cross the log to signify the limit of the influence that women have in society and decision making. This is the man who is the head of the family, he runs to his great interest.

In terms of management and the allocation of land, the village chief who has all of the land.

**Cocoa farming by women with indirect access to land**

The purpose of the general leadership program to a group of at least ten women in a trajectory of training and coaching during which they acquire knowledge allowing them to have more confidence in itself, to take charge and themselves as partner of man and important part of society. They manage to break stereotypes they have they own and the
look that society throws at them. Many women decide to engage in cocoa cultivation and return in peasant schools to learn good agricultural practices, create new cocoa plantations, renew old ones and join their husbands in the work of cocoa. The course consists of a series of three courses each followed by a coaching assignment to see how women practice the new knowledge, perceive the changes taking place in their lives.

**The nutrition program** was based on an action research to interest women indirectly in the cocoa business. We used the method of dietary diversity Household USAD Diatery Diversity Score. Indeed this method investigated hundred eighty dx women responsible for the composition of their household menu. For growers produce more adequate supply of the month during the year. The action was to investigate the household dietary diversity during the three important periods of the year. The investigation began with the period of abundance of food crops (August), then the months of November in December when the cocoa planters sold and revenues and during the lean season when there is more food crop abundant or income from the sale of cocoa.

**Cocoa processing** in cooperatives is an innovation in Cameroon. Again, women are associated with training on the processing of cocoa beans into chocolate spread, butter and powder. They are part of the management committees of processing units. Since their is still difficult to have access to land to grow cocoa, their integration with training on processing and marketing of processed products is a start. IN addition, they belong to 30% of the processing units of the management committees of cocoa u level of the cooperative.

**Results**

- Successful leader farmers and / or FFS trainers gradually Will Become Established as Cocoa Community Knowledge Workers (CCKW) ble to Disseminate knowledge to cocoa farmers of Their community upon request.
- Women members of farmer Field Schools
- Women members of the board of Director KONAFCOOP
- Women members of the executive of CACO + Ayos
- Women leaders formed
- Nutrition sensitized women surveyed dietary diversity score from an average of XXX to YYY with the change mentalized and woman perception
- Number of women included in the Management Committee of processing units in cooperatives
- Number of women who have engaged in the cultivation of cocoa through the project
- Number of women who have