

PRO-PLANTEURS

Professionalising cocoa producers and their organisations for a sustainable cocoa production

Introduction

PRO-PLANTEURS is a joint project of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO) and the Ivorian Coffee-Cocoa Council (Conseil du Café-Cacao). GISCO is an alliance of the German confectionery industry, the German retail grocery trade and civil society organisations with the German Government, represented by BMEL and BMZ. With PRO-PLANTEURS, the Conseil du Café-Cacao, GISCO and the two German ministries aim to professionalise 30,000 family farms and their cocoa farmer organizations in Côte d'Ivoire. The project is implemented from 2015 to 2025.

The project's objective is to improve the living conditions of cocoa farming households by increasing their income in the direction of a "Living Income" and by promoting a balanced nutrition. Activities have a special focus on women. In addition, the project contributes to making cocoa production more attractive for young cocoa farmers and female cocoa farmers.

In the first phase of the project from 2015 to 2020, the project worked with 35 farmer organizations in the regions of Abengourou, Aboisso and Agboville. In the second phase, the project aims to include 10-15 farmer organizations and their members in the regions of Yamoussoukro and Divo.



The project's four approaches

1. Strengthening of farmer organizations

PRO-PLANTEURS supports farmer organizations through training and coaching to improve their organization, their internal management and the development of effective steering and planning processes and instruments. This support includes enhancing quality services provided to producers and their families, while integrating training on effective communication and access to finance. Service units are set up and trained by PRO-PLANTEURS to provide quality technical support to cocoa farmers in the provision of labour and phytosanitary treatment.

2. Improved farm management



Low yields on cocoa plantations result in low revenues for producers who struggle to manage the little disposable income they have. Still, cocoa remains an important source of family income. However, the cultivation of food crops and vegetables to cover to an extent the nutritional needs of a household should not be neglected and overshadowed by cocoa. Seeking to optimise farm production and management and prevent food shortages, **PRO-PLANTEURS supports cocoa farmers** through direct advice and practical training.

Producers are trained in Farmer Business Schools and made aware of agroforestry systems and the new forestry code as of 2019 in order to improve economic and ecological management of their farms.



To diversify income sources and make farms more resilient, PRO-PLANTEURS offers trainings in vegetable, food crops and animal husbandry to the families.

In addition, the project promotes a balanced nutrition through raising awareness on nutrition and food hygiene.

3. Strengthening cooperation in the supply chain

PRO-PLANTEURS provides an opportunity for GISCO members to implement integrated projects with the aim of strengthening collaboration in order to better achieve the objectives of PRO-PLANTEURS and GISCO. The PRO-PLANTEURS Matching Fund co-finances integrated projects proposed by GISCO members (from the private sector and non-governmental organisations). These projects target more than 10,000 cocoa-producing households on the themes of *Living Income*, agroforestry, diversification and the prevention of child labour.

4. Promotion of learning and innovation

In addition to their formal functions, farmer organizations assume the important task to serve as a focal point for the exchange of knowledge and experience.

PRO-PLANTEURS promotes dialogue between actors and disseminates good practices and success stories. Platforms for dialogue and learning allow to share knowledge, experiences and promote innovations between partners, farmer organizations and producers.

Results of PRO-PLANTEURS I

During the implementation of the first phase of PRO-PLANTEURS from 2015 to 2020, the project trained 140 managers of 35 farmer organizations in four five-day training sessions. Coaching sessions with operational follow-up accompanied each farmer organization on site for 12 months. As a result, business instruments, such as business and development plans are available within all the farmer organizations that have been trained and access to financing has improved. Nine Service Units composed of about 300 young people have been trained to provide workforce and phytosanitary treatment services to the producers of the farmer organizations.

The project trained 13,000 producers, of which 3,000 women, in Farmer Business School (FBS) and 5,500 in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for cocoa cultivation. The project has redirected the focus of the trainings to FBS as most of the producers already have a good knowledge of GAP. Nonetheless, this knowledge is not sufficiently applied. In contrast, training in FBS increases the application of GAP. In addition, since 2019, PRO-PLANTEURS has made 14,000 cocoa producers aware of agroforestry systems and the new 2019 Ivorian Forestry Code. Concluding these trainings, the producers increased their productivity by 62 % compared to the beginning of the project to 523 kg/hectare on average.

In order to better diversify production and increase income from sources other than cocoa, 18,000 producers, of which 4,000 women, took part in technical trainings for food crops, vegetables and animal husbandry. In addition, the project has supported sixteen projects with 2,100 women in income-generating activities.

To promote a balanced nutrition, 76 rural women have been trained with the National Nutrition Programme (PNN). These then sensitized 23,000 persons. 62 % of women of the households having participated, consume at least five (out of ten) nutrition groups per day.

PRO-PLANTEURS is a joint project of



Le Conseil du Café-Cacao
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