



COCOBOD *News*

A publication of Ghana Cocoa Board May.-Aug. 2022



CÔTE D'IVOIRE-GHANA COCOA INITIATIVE EXPANDS

**AS TWO AFRICAN COCOA
PRODUCERS TAKE STEPS TO JOIN**



The Benchmark for World Quality Cocoa.

Decades of research, innovation, improvements in local standards and practices, have made us the Vanguard of the Benchmark for the Best Quality Cocoa Beans in the world.

We continue to redefine the World's Standard for Premium Quality Cocoa.

EDITORIAL BOARD

CHAIRMAN Mr. Francis Akwasi Opoku, Director Legal/Solicitor Secretary
CO-CHAIRMAN Mr. Stephen Fiifi Boafo, Deputy Director, Public Affairs

- MEMBERS** Dr. (Mrs.) Mercy Asamoah, Deputy Executive Director (CHED)
• Dr.(Mrs.) Esther Anim Kwapong, Snr. Technical Manager, SPD
• Dr. Edward Okyere Amporful, Chief Pharmacist, Cocoa Clinic

- Ms. Jane Yeboah, Public Affairs Manager
- Mr. Eric Owusu, Deputy Public Affairs Manager
- Mr. Benjamin Teye Larweh, Prin. Public Affairs Officer

- PHOTOS** Emmanuel Boampong Gyan, Snr. Public Affairs Officer
• Edward Kojo Asante, Asst. Public Affairs Officer

DESIGN Obed Aboagye-Frimpong, Public Affairs Officer



COTE D'IVOIRE – GHANA COCOA INITIATIVE EXPANDS

As two African cocoa producers take steps to join

Cocoa farmers in Africa get less than 6% of a **burgeoning** global chocolate industry estimated at \$150 billion. This situation has impoverished our farmers while creating billionaires within the value chain across the globe.

The need for bettering the incomes of cocoa farmers through strategic reforms became imperative and the governments of Ghana and Ivory Coast set the agenda in motion.

In 2018, Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire pursued a pricing trajectory to synchronize the cocoa trading policies of the two countries to improve upon the incomes of cocoa farmers in both countries in the wake of continuous plummeting prices of cocoa on the world market.

The initiative had as its core focus, the need for equity and fairness in cocoa prices through dialogue, discussions, fora, and meetings with relevant stakeholders with the view of securing decent incomes for cocoa farmers.

Consequently, the establishment of the Living Income Differential (LID) pricing mechanism for cocoa trade was conceptualized to fortify a floor

price for the crop against unfair prices on the world market. The mechanism projected to secure a price limit of \$2,600/mt out of which a minimum of 70% (\$1,820/MT) goes to the farmers.

But what in the view of Ghana and Ivory Coast was supposed to have been a welcoming news rather ended up facing serious opposition from some major trade houses who incessantly used allegation of deforestation, and child labour in cocoa communities in the two countries as weapons to thwart efforts at actualising the implementation of the LID. Nevertheless, the captains of the cocoa regulators of Ghana and Ivory Coast remained resolute, asserting strongly that, critical bottlenecks to sustainability which obviously include deforestation and child labour will be minimized in the long-run as farmers income levels improve significantly.

Four years after the two countries fully rolled out the LID to guarantee the farmer an additional \$400 on every ton of cocoa sold, cocoa farmers have enjoyed continued increased in producer prices. In Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana announced the incorporation of the LID into the

new producer at a durbar of chiefs and farmers at Sefwi Wiawso in the Western North Region.

'Nananom, beginning 1st October 2020, I am happy to announce the award of a new cocoa producer price of ten thousand, five hundred and sixty cedis (GH¢10,560) per tonne, equivalent to six hundred and sixty cedis (GH¢660) per bag for the coming 2020/21 crop year. This represents a hike of more than twenty-eight per cent (28 per cent) over the price obtained in the outgoing crop year of 2019/2020', President Akufo-Addo said.

He indicated further that by the new producer price, the government had kept faith with its commitment under the international arrangement with Cote D'Ivoire and global stakeholders, by awarding to cocoa farmers, the full \$400 per tonne Living Income Differential (LID).

Following the notable strides of the initiative, **Nigeria** and Cameroun have shown incredible interest in the accord, an indication that the advocacy for remunerative incomes for cocoa farmers in Africa has sunk well among regulators of cocoa in other producing countries in the continent. The decision

by both countries expands the scope of the alliance to 4 countries, with an estimated 75% of the global cocoa stock.

Engr. A. H. Abubakar Director of the Federal Department of Agriculture and Chairman of Nigeria's Cocoa Management Committee and Mr. Michael Ndoping, Chief Executive Officer of Cameroon's National Office of Cocoa and Coffee officially disclosed their intentions at the Steering Committee of the Côte d'Ivoire – Ghana Cocoa Initiative (CIGCI) at a meeting in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.



Ghana's Minister for Food and Agriculture and outgoing Chairman of the Steering Committee, Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto who welcomed the move by the two countries said CIGCI would take the prospective members through the processes laid down to admit new members. Dr. Afriyie Akoto indicated that the need for a better price for cocoa farmers could not be overemphasized, hence, any attempt to grow the alliance and strengthen its drive to improve farmer income was welcome.

What is gradually becoming an African cocoa trade bloc is well-positioned to address farmer-income gaps occasioned by price manipulation and volatility. But this does not mean all is well with the alliance as there are still hurdles to jump over. Within its three years of implementation, a combination of a persistently low price of cocoa on the international market and the adoption of various mechanisms by multinational cocoa buying companies to undermine the effect of the LID, particularly through the discounting of country origin differentials (for the quality of our cocoa beans), has reduced the inflows realized by the producing countries and ultimately, farmer incomes.

The CIGCI has therefore continued to engage top executives of multinational cocoa buying companies, chocolate makers, traders and processors in Accra to press home the demand for compliance.

At the most recent meeting held on

8th July 2022, Mr. Alex Arnaud Assanvo, the Executive Secretary of CIGCI, said it was important for all stakeholders to appreciate how actions taken on the market impact directly on the welfare of farmers and on the collective agreement to ensure sustainable cocoa production. The buyers, he insisted, must go beyond just agreeing in principle to improved farmer income and act towards its attainment.

Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, the Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), stated that, "to have a sustainable cocoa industry, it is imperative that we bring into focus the farmer, who is at the center stage of whatever we do. Once the cocoa farmer is weakened, the entire chain will collapse."

Mr. Ibrahim Kone Yves, the Director-General of Le Conseil Du Café-Cacao (CCC), also pointed out the need for all stakeholders to work together to address challenges which impact the cocoa industry. He emphasized the need to strengthen the LID as a mechanism which ensures that the price paid to cocoa farmers is reasonable and within the framework of sustainability.

A joint statement of intent toward an economic pact signed at the end of the meeting by senior executives of Barry Callebaut, Blommer, Cargill, ECOM, Ferrero, GCB cocoa, Hershey, JB cocoa, Mars, Mondelez, Nestle, Olam, Puratos, Sucden, Tony's Chocolonely and

Touton and the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire further deepened their commitment to securing sustainable farmer incomes. The pact opens a path to develop proposals for short, medium, and long-term actions to strengthen current efforts to attain living incomes for cocoa farmers in the two countries.

As the alliance expands its frontiers, the belief is that it will be more robust not only to consolidate the gains it has made within the three years but also attract the support of Togo, Uganda, Liberia, Madagascar, Guinea,

Sierra Leon etc to enhance its jurisdiction over equitable cocoa prices for farmers in the continent.

While this expectation, for now, remains a positive dream, producing countries are being encouraged as part of price guard-initiatives to consider boosting local value addition of cocoa to stimulate local consumption.

Ghana currently processes between 40-42% of its cocoa with a processing capacity of about 440,000mt, comprising about 13 processing factories. Ivory Coast on the other hand recently announced efforts to shore up its domestic processing through the construction of additional \$100 million factory as part of a broader strategy to process all cocoa produced in the country by 2030. In 2020, Cameroon achieved a local processing of about 25% against a target of 50% whereas Nigeria's cocoa processing market is expected to exhibit a CAGR of 7.2% during 2022-2027 according to the latest report by IMARC Group. These moves are positive to insulating the farmers' incomes against unpredictability in the price of cocoa and its concomitant effect on their living standard.

In conclusion, it is an undeniable that the CIGCI has come to stay, having its secretariat in Accra-Ghana. Its whole vision is encapsulated in the words of the Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board - "For us, we believe that the Living Income Differential was to let the farmer get a just share, not just a fair share, but a just share, of the price of cocoa on the international market."

GHANA, CÔTE D'IVOIRE TAKE STEPS TO REINFORCE LID AND FARMER WELFARE IMPROVEMENT AGENDA



Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo addressing participants present at the forum



A group photograph of participants present at the forum.

Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire have taken steps to reinforce their goal to achieve a living income for cocoa farmers in the two-leading cocoa-producing countries, by securing a renewed commitment from their multinational cocoa buying partners in a meeting held in Accra in July 2022.

The two countries established the Living Income Differential (LID), as part of a new cocoa trading mechanism to ensure that every tonne of cocoa beans sold attracts an extra \$400.00 which is paid to farmers.

The objective was to achieve a target floor price of \$2,600/MT, of which a minimum of 70% (\$1,820/MT) goes to the farmers.

Within its three years of **implementation**, a combination of a persistently low price of cocoa on the international market and the adoption of various mechanisms by multinational cocoa buying companies to undermine the effect of the LID, particularly through the discounting of country origin differentials (for the quality of beans), has reduced the inflows realized by the producing-countries and ultimately, farmer incomes.

On Friday, 8th July 2022, a high-level

meeting with senior executives of the multinational cocoa buying companies, chocolate makers, traders and processors was held in Accra at the instance of the Côte d'Ivoire – Ghana Cocoa Initiative (CIGCI) and championed by the governments of the two countries.

The Executive Secretary of CIGCI, Mr. Alex Arnaud Assanvo, said it was important for all stakeholders to appreciate how actions taken on the market impact directly on the welfare of farmers and on the collective agreement to ensure sustainable cocoa production. The buyers, he insisted, must go beyond just agreeing in principle to improved farmer income and also act towards its attainment.

The Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, stated that "to have a sustainable cocoa industry, it is imperative that we bring into focus the farmer, who is at the center stage of whatever we do. Once the cocoa farmer is weakened, the entire chain will collapse," he cautioned. "For us, we believe that the Living Income Differential was to let the farmer get a just share, not just a fair share, but a just share, of the price of cocoa on the international market."

The Director-General of Le Conseil Du Café-Cacao (CCC), Mr. Ibrahim Kone Yves, also pointed out the need for all stakeholders to work together to address challenges which impact the cocoa industry.

He emphasized the need to strengthen the LID as a mechanism which ensures that the price paid to cocoa farmers is reasonable and within the framework of sustainability.

At the end of the meeting, the senior executives who represented the multinational cocoa buying companies, chocolate makers, traders, processors and the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire signed a joint statement of intent toward an economic pact for sustainable cocoa. The pact opens a path to develop proposals for short, medium, and long-term actions to strengthen current efforts to attain living incomes for cocoa farmers in the two countries.

The companies that signed the joint statement were Barry Callebaut, Blommer, Cargill, ECOM, Ferrero, GCB cocoa, Hershey and JB cocoa. The others were Mars, Mondelez, Nestle, Olam, Puratos, Sucden, Tony's Chocolonely and Touton.



Mr. Charles Gyamfi, 2018 National Best Cocoa Farmer & 2019 National Best Farmer

BEST COCOA FARMERS, COCOBOD MEET TO SHARE IDEAS TO IMPROVE COCOA SECTOR

The management of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has met with the national executives of the Best Cocoa Farmers Association to deliberate on several matters within the cocoa industry.

The issues ranged from the supply of artificial fertilizers and other agrochemicals, and the progress of the National Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme.

Also discussed were access to **farm** implements, farm mechanisation, irrigation and the construction of cocoa roads, among others.

Speaking on behalf of the farmers, Mr Charles Gyamfi, the 2018 National Best Cocoa Farmer said the supply of fertilizers and agrochemicals should be taken away from private companies and made available at the district offices of the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) which are more accessible to the farmers.

He added that, in view of the forecast of global interruption **in** the supply of artificial fertilizers, COCOBOD should propose to the government, on behalf of cocoa farmers, a ban on the export of poultry manure from Ghana.

COCOBOD, he continued, should **rather** begin to facilitate the supply of poultry manure to cocoa-growing communities to meet the rising demand by cocoa farmers and ease the expected negative impact of the global fertiliser supply crisis.

On the rehabilitation of cocoa farms, Mr Gyamfi said the farmers' association had embarked on an inspection tour of rehabilitated cocoa farms and **had been** impressed. However, they also found that a few places needed some special attention.

He appealed to the Chief Executive and management of COCOBOD to make sure that the success story of the cocoa rehabilitation programme is expanded nationwide.

The 2018 National Best Cocoa Farmer, said many of his fellow farmers are eagerly awaiting the installation of irrigation facilities on their farms, so they can increase their production.

He suggested that COCOBOD should work with farmers who are ready to honour the financial obligations which come with the irrigation project, so that, they can speedily acquire and

have them installed on their farms. In his response, the Chief Executive of COCOBOD, Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, said frequent engagements with farmers, who are the most important stakeholders, are crucial for the development of the industry.

He commended the farmers for their visit and ideas to improve the cocoa sector. He urged the leadership of the association to engage with the rank and file of its members and bring their thoughts and concerns to the attention of COCOBOD, to inform decisions and interventions by the Board.

He, however, bemoaned the situation where some farmers retrieve the cut-down cocoa trees on rehabilitated farms to sell as firewood while others continue to apply weedicides on their cocoa farms despite efforts to stop the practice.

He appealed for assistance from the association to further sensitise farmers on the dangers of such practices.

He added that COCOBOD is open to further periodic dialogue as it will inure to the benefit of the farmers and the industry as a whole.



COCOBOD CE SWORN IN AS GAQHI BOARD CHAIRMAN

Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, the Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), has been sworn in as the Chair of the 16-member Board of the Ghana Association of Quasi-Government Health Institutions (GAQHI).

The association comprises some 54 autonomous and semi-autonomous state-owned institutions with independently managed health facilities, numbering over 400 across the country.

Performing the swearing-in ceremony, Hon. Kwaku Agyemang-Manu, the Minister for Health said the health facilities of GAQHI members are critical to the provision of quality healthcare to Ghanaians.

The institutions, he added were, especially helpful, when the government had to promptly set up facilities to manage infected patients during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

To ease future collaboration for the provision of quality health care, the government through, the Ministry of Health, will be working closely with the facilities of members of GAQHI and privately owned clinics and hospitals.

The collaboration, he said, would aid in the collection of vital health statistics to inform government policy, enable the integration of all health institutions



Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo signing the oath of office

onto a new government- led patient record management system, and as well help to properly role out upcoming health policy on non- communicable diseases, which are becoming the number one killer of Ghanaians.

In his response, the Chief Executive of COCOBOD, Hon Aidoo, thanked the minister for the trust and responsibility. He said the Board and members of GAQHI will live up to the charge to foster greater collaboration among stakeholders to improve healthcare delivery.

'We are there as a body to complement the government's provision of healthcare for the Ghanaian population. However, the critical thing about the association is that we are always looking for excellence at our health facilities, so, we always raise the bar for healthcare delivery for the benefit of the patients,' he noted.

"If we can team up to provide excellent healthcare, we should be able to solve all medical problems internally; and that is something that we should aim at," he advised.

The other members of the board include Mr Michael A Luguje, the General of the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA); Dr Charlotte Osafo, the Medical Director of the Bank Hospital; Mr Bice Osei Kuffuor, the Managing Director of the Ghana Post Company Limited; Mrs Emelia Agyei-Mensah, the Registrar of the University of Ghana, and Prof. Samuel B. Dampare, the Director-General of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission.

Others are Dr. Martha Gyansa-Lutterodt of the Ministry of Health; Rev. Prof. John Frank Eshun, the Vice-Chancellor of the Takoradi Technical University; Brigadier General Abugri, the Commander of the 37 Military Hospital; Commissioner of Police (COP) Dr Ebenezer Ewusi Emim, the Medical Director of the Police Hospital and Prof. Agyemang Badu Akosa, former Director-General of the Ghana Health Service.

The rest are Dr Moses Maclean Abnory, representing the founding fathers of GAQHI; Dr F. Kofi Asiedu, representing the past presidents of GAQHI, Dr Kabiru Koredele Azeez, the current President of GAQHI; Dr Vitus Victor Anaab-Bisi, the current Vice-President of GAQHI and Chief Maxwell Tidow, GAQHI's General Secretary.



Hon. Kwaku Agyemang-Manu, Minister of Health



GHANA, CÔTE D'IVOIRE AGREE ON MEASURES TO TACKLE COUNTRY ORIGIN DIFFERENTIAL EROSION



Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo and some Ivorian delegates addressing the press

Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire have agreed on measures to tackle the discounting of country origin differentials (premium differentials) on cocoa from the two-leading cocoa-producing countries.

At a press briefing held after a three-day meeting between the cocoa regulatory authorities of the two countries in Abidjan, the Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, said both countries have agreed to publish the names of their cocoa buyers and indicate the country origin differential payers and non-payers.

"In the immediate term, we are going to begin the publication of all the buyers of cocoa from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire who pay as well as those who do not pay the country origin differentials", he announced.

Hon Aidoo said the challenge of discounting country origin differentials (premium differentials) by buyers of cocoa came in response to the introduction of the Living Income

Differential (LID) which was instituted by the two West African cocoa giants to help improve the remuneration of cocoa farmers.

"We all know that we introduced the Living Income Differential with the hope to improve the remuneration of our farmers," he said, "but what we've also noticed is that, whereas the industry actors are paying the Living Income Differential, they are discounting the country origin differentials, which is very, very, damaging to us because once the country origin differentials are discounted, it weakens the price and for that matter the income which eventually ends up in the hands of [cocoa] farmers in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire", he bemoaned.

"So, we came here to reposition and then relook at the pricing mechanism, and we have come up with a number of measures which we are going to roll out", he added.

He said some buyers are discounting the country origin differentials by as

much as US\$270 to US\$300 per tonne of cocoa.

"Meanwhile, the price of chocolate in the consumer market is going up at a time when cocoa prices are falling. It cannot be the case. We ought to change this narrative to ensure that the consumer gets better chocolate with a high content of chocolate and while the consumer is paying, the money gets to the producers," Hon Aidoo said in his statement.

"We want to sound this to all the industry players to take note that from the end of May, which is this month, we are going to publish all companies that buy cocoa from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, who pay or do not pay premium differentials for both countries," he emphasised.

At the meeting, the Ghanaian delegation, and their Ivorian counterparts pledged to intensify their collective efforts to attain a sustainable price for cocoa and decent incomes for cocoa farmers in the two countries.



Dr. Eric Oduro Osae, Director General, Internal Audit Agency (IAA)



Mr. Peter Mac Manu, Board Chairman (middle right) and other dignitaries with newly sworn in members

HELP COCOBOD DEVELOP A ROBUST RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – IAA BOSS

The five-member Audit Committee of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has been inaugurated by Dr. Eric Oduro Osae, the Director-General of the Internal Audit Agency (IAA).

Mr. Oduro asked the committee members to be guided by the Public Financial Management Act, 2016 (Act 921) to creditably perform their mandatory, supportive, and advisory roles, especially, in risk management.

He said the committee should help the organisation to develop a robust risk management policy to anticipate risks, ensure constant awareness of the organisation's risk exposures and put in place mitigating measures.

He said, under the mandatory role of the committee, it is tasked to support the organisation so that its audit reports in future will give a better story of the state of the organisation.

"Under the law, the internal auditor is supposed to work with the audit committee to put things in order before the external auditors come.

If they come and raise a number of

issues, it means there is something fundamentally wrong with the internal control systems", he noted.

He advised the management of COCOBOD to make adequate resources available to the Audit Committee, so they can perform their duties timely and efficiently.

Mr. Peter Mac Manu, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of COCOBOD, who was present at the inauguration, assured the committee that the management of COCOBOD stands in readiness to work in harmony with them.

He acknowledged that such cooperation is essential for the proper administration of the assets of COCOBOD; ensuring that the organisation remains financially viable and continues to be a major contributor to the national economy.

"Internal audit is the ear, eyes, and the nose of management. So, management needs the assistance of the internal audit to be able to perform creditably," he stated.

Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, the Chief

Executive of COCOBOD, thanked the members of the immediate past Audit Committee for the work done over the past four (4) years and welcomed the members of the new committee.

He said COCOBOD will benefit from their diverse backgrounds and experiences, which will make the institution better. He also assured the committee of management's cooperation.

COCOBOD, he said, will be forthcoming in its response to requests by the committee, and positively respond to their recommendations to ensure compliance and adherence to best practices and procedures.

The Audit Committee is chaired by Mr Christian Tetteh Sottie, a former Controller and Accountant-General of Ghana. The rest of the members are Dr. Grace Bediako, a former head of the Ghana Statistical Service; Dr. Felix Kwame Aveh, a Development Finance Specialist and a Senior Lecturer at GIMPA; Hon. Kwadjo Asante, MP for the Suhum and Hon. Herbert Krapa, a Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

NIGERIAN GOV'T DELEGATION IN GHANA TO LEARN ABOUT GHANA AND CÔTE D'IVOIRE'S COCOA PRICING MECHANISM

A five-member Nigerian delegation, led by Engr. Abdullahi Garba Abubakar, Director for the Federal Department of Agriculture, at the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), has paid a courtesy call on the Management of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) at Cocoa House in Accra.

The team is in Ghana to understand the joint cocoa pricing mechanism, the Living Income Differential (LID) as well as other pricing policies used by Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire for the sale of their cocoa.

In a statement read on behalf of Dr. Ernest Umakhihe, the Permanent Secretary of FMARD, Engr. Abubakar said Nigeria is gearing up to partner with the two highest cocoa-producing countries through the Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative to create a stronger bloc to advocate decent incomes for cocoa farmers.

According to him, Nigeria is in the process of joining the LID system, a situation that will help boost the share (income) of the country's smallholder cocoa farmers in the over US\$100 billion global chocolate industry.

"Cocoa is the highest non-oil contributor to Nigeria's GDP and the country is ranked number four amongst cocoa producing countries in the world", he noted.

According to him, the Cocoa Farmers Association of Nigeria (CFAN), an organized umbrella body of smallholder farmers across the cocoa-producing states in Nigeria, seeks to improve the livelihoods of its farmers through the Living Income Differential of US\$400 per tonne.

He was optimistic that Nigeria will meet the requirements outlined in the Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative Charter in the country's quest to become a member.



Engr. Abdullahi Garba Abubakar,
Leader of Delegation

Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, Chief Executive of COCOBOD, commended the Nigerian team and the Federal Government for taking steps to align with Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to champion the interest of cocoa farmers in Africa.

The team was further briefed on the conditions which precipitated the creation of the initiative and the goals which underpin its operations. He briefed the visiting team on the structure of COCOBOD and the respective regulatory systems of the Ghanaian and Ivorian cocoa sectors.

"We are open to Nigeria and even Cameroon joining us", Hon Aidoo said. The two countries coming to join Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire will create an alliance of countries, **with a total production of about 75 per cent of the world's cocoa supply**, he stressed.

The Executive Secretary of the Côte d'Ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative, Mr Alex Arnaud Assanvo, said the organisation plans to expand its membership. "We will be glad to have others joining us to push forward with a more formidable drive to protect the incomes of our farmers".

He said Cameroon had also shown interest in joining the initiative and assured the Nigerian team of assistance as they go through the process of becoming a member.



CMS MAKES GAINS AFTER TWO YEARS

Over 600,000 cocoa farmers captured so far

By Edward K. Asante, Public Affairs

Establishing a credible database on cocoa farmers in the country became key on the agenda of Management of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) following the decision of Government to institute a pension scheme for cocoa farmers across the country. In 2019, the Cocoa Management System (CMS), was launched and became the machinery to set in motion, the processes of data collection on farmers, their farms and related operational activities across the seven (7) cocoa growing regions.

The CMS will, among other things, help strengthen policy decisions, promote transparency in the supply chain, and enhance sustainability in cocoa production through an integrated database of farm profile and farmer data in the cocoa landscape in Ghana.

The process will also lead to a proper management of cocoa production, development of cocoa farm data, sales and marketing transactions and payment platform for cocoa beans and cocoa inputs, development of National Cocoa Traceability System (NCTS), development of child labour monitoring system, development of deforestation monitoring system, and improving the visibility in the cocoa value chain.

The implementation process was structured and rolled out in two phases. The first phase involved the measuring and collation of cocoa farm sizes, whereas the second phase involved the capturing of the biodata of farmers onto the platform by enumerators and completed by issuance of identity cards (Cocoa Card) that would be used by

farmers to transact various businesses and activities along the cocoa value chain as well as access the Cocoa Farmers Pension Scheme.

Data available on the project so far indicate that some 664,529 farmers and their farms have been captured in six (6) of the cocoa regions - Ashanti, Eastern, Western South, Brong Ahafo, Volta and Central Region.

The Western North Region, noted for producing about 40% of Ghana's cocoa stock, is currently being captured. A completed exercise in the region will mean the full capturing of the required data of cocoa farms, except for a few challenging situations which raise the need for a mop-up exercise in some locations. It is expected that about one million farmers will be captured at the end of the exercise.

The CMS will help management of COCOBOD to plan, monitor and

evaluate information within the cocoa sector. Additionally, the system will improve transparency, traceability, and accountability.

This will help reduce social vices within the cocoa sector which include stealing of cocoa beans, smuggling to neighbouring countries and disparities in the distribution of farm inputs. The system will also help streamline the activities of Licensed Buying Companies (LBC) and other private service providers, among others.

With a comprehensive database of cocoa farmers and their farm sizes, a single transactional platform to support the internal cocoa marketing operations and the sales of cocoa inputs to cocoa farmers, the future of Ghana's Cocoa Sector looks promising. We call on all farmers and relevant stakeholders to rally behind this initiative to ensure a more sustainable cocoa sector.

COCOA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)

DEVELOPING ACCURATE DATABASE OF FARMERS FOR EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF THE COCOA INDUSTRY



WHAT IS COCOA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

1. CMS is a seamless technology platform that will help COCOBOD manage the cocoa industry.
2. A database containing the details of all cocoa farmers and records of their transactions in Ghana which provides real time information.
3. For the first time, every program, intervention, plan and projection shall be based on accurate and verifiable data.
4. CMS will assist in designing and executing an efficient and effective evacuation plan for the cocoa industry.
5. CMS will provide accurate district production

@ghccobod | @cocabodgh

Ghana's Cocoa sector has over the years enjoyed several interventions spearheaded by Ghana Cocoa Board on behalf of the government of Ghana.

Interventions such as subsidized fertilizer, mass spraying and rehabilitation of over-aged, diseased and moribund farms at no cost to the farmer have kept the sector on a sound footing.

Over the years however, road infrastructure within most cocoa growing areas has not received much attention, resulting in the deterioration of some roads, affecting cocoa production, mobility and the entire economy of the communities, most of which are located in remote parts of the country.

The situation in some communities has been so dire such that transporting tonnes of cocoa beans from farms after harvest has seen several delays; **leading to** major losses over the years.

During a tour of some cocoa farming communities months ago, farmers highlighted some of the challenges they face on a daily basis due to poor condition of roads in their areas to COCOBOD News.

A farmer and teacher at Sefwi Bonzain in the Western Region, Okokoampa Yebewu told COCOBOD news that the poor road network in his community has come at a bigger cost to farmers.

"When we harvest the cocoa, it is quite difficult to get the Purchasing Clerks to come here because they complain about the poor state of the road. For this reason, the tricycle operators also charge exorbitant fares to cart the cocoa to the sales depots", he lamented.

A resident of Nzema Akropong, Margaret Donkor said lives have been lost because the commute from her community to the nearest health centre is long due to the deterioration of the road from torrential rains.

"If someone falls ill, we have to prepare

COCOA ROADS PROJECT- OPENING COMMUNITIES UP FOR DEVELOPMENT

By Rhoda Onyinah, Public Affairs



Newly constructed Benchema-Adjoafuah Road, Western North Region

a makeshift stretcher with cloth in order to carry them downhill to the nearest hospital. About ten years ago, lives were lost due to torrential rains that destroyed all buildings and the road here."

In response to the plight of farmers, the government of Ghana, through Ghana Cocoa Board, initiated the second phase of the Cocoa Roads Improvement Programme to rehabilitate deteriorated roads and construct new ones to link remote cocoa growing communities to the buying centres.

The contracts awarded are for some feeder, urban and highways in all cocoa growing regions to be constructed to make mobility within growing areas easier and access to buying centres quicker and safer.

For years, the road linking Debiso, Essam and Asawinso was unmotorable until Ghana COCOBOD awarded a contract for construction in 2019, turning it into

a first class road, offering an outlet from the Western region into the Bono region.

Following the completion of the roads project, residents in the beneficiary communities say it is driving development in various sectors such as healthcare, trading activities and job opportunities.

"Cocoa beans used to waste away here but with the road constructed, we have trucks and passenger cars plying this route regularly. Accidents have also reduced since the road was constructed. Through the road project, the youth in the area gained employment in carpentry, masonry, security among others. The local food caterers also experienced high patronage during the construction period." - Anthony Eshun, Assembly Member, Akropong, Ellembelle District told COCOBOD News

With about 89.85KM of roads completed in the Central region, Kwabena Tieku, who is a farmer and truck driver at Twifo

Wamaso expressed relief that the risk to his life while driving and maintenance cost on his truck have reduced.

The excellent state of the road constructed through COCOBOD is bringing a new lease of life to the healthcare sector here. The community's CHIPS compound, established about ten years ago is getting an upgrade.

Chairperson of the Town's Planning Committee, Kwaku Anti told COCOBOD News that upon completion of the road, government announced plan to upgrade the only health facility in the area, a CHIP Compound into a clinic. The community therefore mobilized themselves to rehabilitate existing infrastructure and build a residential facility next to the clinic in anticipation of the arrival of medical personnel for the facility.

At Twifo Nuamakrom also in the Central Region where Patience Quarshie has been teaching for the past three years, poor roads meant that pupils in the remote villages could not benefit from the School Feeding Programme. The danger of trekking also affected lives and school enrolment.

She disclosed to COCOBOD News that the road has not only improved enrolment, but has reduced risk to lives and made it easier for students to get to school and teachers to commute to work.

In the Ashanti region, major works which included surfacing, sealing and rehabilitation on a 33.6KM Highway Project, 221.11KM Feeder Roads, and 41.79KM Urban roads have been completed.

Meanwhile, the Adomfe - Wiawso - Krofa road, which links numerous cocoa growing areas and offers an alternative route to the northern trunk road, is almost completed.

Also in the Ashanti Region, 6KM of the Poano - Ntinako - Adowa road was recently completed with another 6KM ongoing.

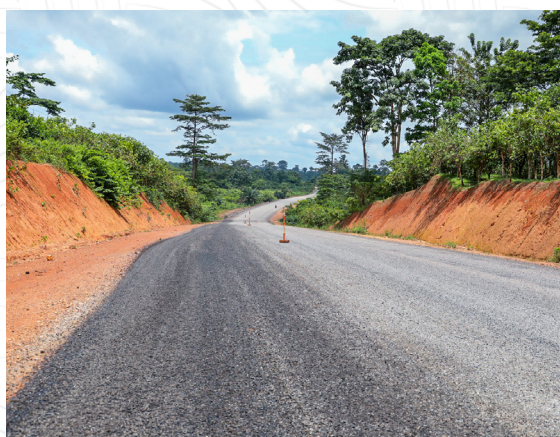
The road used to be dusty and a difficult terrain for drivers to navigate but even with the first phase of construction completed, residents say it has changed the outlook of their town. Residents

testified that the quality of their road has boosted the local economy.

In the Bono Cocoa region, initial works on the 26KM Techimantia - Derma - Asuoso roads that connect to key market centres for the predominantly cocoa and tomato farming communities are steadily progressing.

A total of about 543KM of roads have been awarded for construction in the region, which includes the Ahafo area.

Farmers and residents say a lot has changed since the project began. They



praise COCOBOD for facilitating easy movement and safety within their communities.

The Eastern region has also had its fair share of bad roads even though it is one of the largest cocoa producing regions in the country.

Here, COCOBOD is financing reconstruction, surfacing, spot improvement, and rehabilitation of about 320KM of roads across the region.

The completion of the Kade town roads, linking Akwatia, Osenase and Asamankese has brought relief to residents.

Kwadwo Osei, a commercial driver in this town says prior to the construction of the road, he spent a substantial percentage of his earnings on maintenance. With the newly constructed road, his car is in better condition and his earnings have significantly improved.

Several other roads under construction in the region including the Apenkwa-Gyenase road, New Abirem, and Nkawkaw roads are at different stages

of completion.

In the Volta and Oti regions, work is ongoing on 51KM of the Have - Hohoe road and 20KM of the Hohoe - Jasikan road leading to Buiepe, a major network that links the South of the country to the Northern part through the Eastern corridor. It is also an alternative to the main Accra - Kumasi - Tamale highway.

The Jasikan - WoraWora road, until COCOBOD's intervention, was a bumpy long journey on a dusty terrain for users. It is now asphalted and well-marked, giving beneficiary communities easy access to social amenities.

For farmers here, the improved state of their roads means a much quicker access to their District Extension Officer.

The Jasikan District Cocoa Extension Officer, Richard Nyahe confirmed that his contact with farmers has greatly improved.

Farmers in the region are reveling in the improved transport connectivity, especially to key trading centres within and outside the region.

Beyond facilitating mobility and safety within farming communities, the cocoa roads project is also creating job opportunities for youth within beneficiary communities.

While some have gained temporary employment at construction sites as masons, carpenters among others, some have taken to cooking, selling food, drinks and running errands for construction workers.

With the amount of work ongoing on roads across cocoa growing areas, farmers and residents across the country are hopeful that they can eliminate all post-harvest losses and boost cocoa production in the country.

Though not yet completed, the Cocoa Roads Improvement Programme has enhanced road and transport connectivity, spurred economic growth and reduced poverty in beneficiary communities.

With gains made so far, it is certain that once completed, post-harvest losses and other socio-economic challenges associated with bad road networks within Ghana's cocoa sector will significantly reduce, while boosting Ghana's drive to become the world's number one producer.

COCOBOD STAFF SENSITIZED ON THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT

Heads and staff of Divisions and Subsidiaries of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) across the cocoa regions have been trained on the Right to Information (RTI) Act for better understanding of the provisions to stimulate its adherence.

Directors, Heads of Departments, Managers and Senior Staff benefitted from the Training of Trainers Workshop, which will equip them to organize seminars to further sensitize their respective staff on the Act and its provisions.

The training sessions at the various Cocoa Regions were chaired by the Regional Administrators who informed participants that their selection was based on the trust management has in their capacities to facilitate sensitization efforts across board.

The Deputy Public Affairs Manager, Mr. Eric Owusu in his opening remarks at separate locations, indicated that an RTI desk has been set up at the Public Affairs Department as required by Section 3 of the Act.

Mr. Owusu urged them to attach seriousness to the training, as trainers would be expected to provide support in sensitizing staff on the Act.

Facilitator of the training Programme, Mrs. Josephine Dake-Abrahams, who is the assigned RTI Officer at COCOBOD explained the legal basis for the Act, its importance and meaning, application, exemptions, appeal mechanisms, and COCOBOD's mandate amongst other provisions. She urged the trainees to ensure the successful implementation of the Act.

Mrs. Dake-Abrahams briefed the participants on what 'Access to Information' is as defined in Sections 1 - 4 of the RTI Act and the provisions they needed to acquaint themselves with to promote RTI in their respective districts and offices.

The COCOBOD RTI Manual, which spells out the kind of information that should be given out to the public and what should not, was also discussed with the participants.

Each training session was interactive, allowing for participants to ask questions, make suggestions and recommendations on how to implement the Act successfully at COCOBOD.

In all, about 450 staff benefited from the two-week sensitization exercise across the cocoa regions.



Photograph of participants and trainers at COCOBOD Regional office in Swedru





Executives of NASPAC (2021/2022) with the Chief Executive of COCOBOD in a group photograph



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PROSPECTS IN THE COCOA VALUE CHAIN – CE ADVISES NASPAC

Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, the Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), has urged members of the 2022 year group of the National Service Personnel of COCOBOD (NASPAC) to take advantage of the numerous opportunities within the cocoa value chain as their service period comes to an end.

Addressing the NASPAC members across the Subsidiaries and Divisions at the COCOBOD Head Office in Accra, Hon Aidoo emphasized the need for them to identify potential business prospects along the cocoa value chain which can provide more income as they enter the job market.

"There are a lot of opportunities in the cocoa sector such as processing, service provision to farmers, baking, handmade chocolate production etc. which can give you more income than the one seated in an office", he stated.

"Do not sit at home and wait for a well-paid job. The skills and knowledge acquired during your stay in the industry should be the backbone of your working life and should be applied as you leave COCOBOD", he emphasized.

Touching on employment, Hon. Joseph Boahen Aidoo stated that the fall in the price of cocoa and other economic factors in the world market have made it impossible for the company to recruit new staff.

"It is otherwise the wish of management that, many of you would get the opportunity to serve in the sector", he said.

Hon Aidoo further expressed his profound gratitude to all National Service Personnel across the Subsidiaries and Divisions of COCOBOD for their immense contribution towards sustaining the sector.


"Management appreciates your contributions, and as well wishes you all the best as you leave COCOBOD," he said.

The Director of Human Resources, Mr. Randolph Adei, for his part, lauded the initiative where service personnel get the opportunity to interact with management before the end of their service period and praised their leadership for the skills exhibited during the period.

Some of the National Service personnel asked questions and shared experiences with management on their yearlong stay at COCOBOD during the Q&A session of the meeting.

Present at the event were some Directors and Managers from the Subsidiaries and Divisions of COCOBOD.





LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE REMARKABLE RESULTS - COHOSSA CHAIR

The Chairman of the Cocoa House Senior Staff Association (COHOSSA) of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Mr Michael Nkansah, has urged members of the association to work together to improve productivity in the cocoa sector.

According to him, unity is an important tool for every organisation or association for the attainment of goal.

Mr Nkansah made this observation during a fun trip on the 7th of May to Keta, in the Volta Region. The event was under the theme "Socializing for Higher Productivity".

The event was well patronised by the senior staff. There was a stopover at Fort Prinzenstein in Keta before heading to the final destination at the Eli Beach Resort, Keta.

Mr. Michael Nkansah, Chairman of COCOBOD Senior Staff Association (COHOSSA)

COHOSSA FUN TRIP IN PICTURES





COCOA FARMERS PENSION SCHEME FAQs

[1] WHAT IS THE COCOA FARMERS PENSION SCHEME (CFPS)?

It is a contributory insurance and welfare scheme that provides a decent pension for cocoa farmers.

[2] WHAT LAW MANDATES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CFPS?

The Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) Law 1984(PNDC LAW 81) gave mandate to the Board of Directors of (COCOBOD) to Institute the scheme.

[3] WHY THE DELAY IN INSTITUTING THE (CFPS)?

The lack of credible data on cocoa farmers, and other actors in the cocoa industry contributed to the delay.

[4] WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CFPS NOW ?

COCOBOD, through the Cocoa Management System (CMS) has successfully registered all farmers and captured other operational activities within the sector.

[5] HOW USEFUL IS THE (CMS) TO THE SUCCESS OF THE CFPS ?

Through the CMS, all registered cocoa farmers have the Cocoa Card. The card will henceforth be presented at the points of sale of cocoa. The card keeps record of all transactions on the CFPS and related activities.

[6] WHO CAN SIGN ON TO THE SCHEME?

Only cocoa farmers who have the Cocoa Card can register under the CFPS?

[7] HOW MUCH WILL A CONTRIBUTOR CONTRIBUTE ?

For now 5% will be deducted any time a farmer sells his/her cocoa. This will be transferred into the Farmer's Pension Accounts instantly and an alert received.

[8] CAN THE CONTRIBUTOR NOMINATE A NEXT-OF-KIN ?

Yes, contributors will be required to nominate beneficiaries. Opportunity exists for update of such persons nominated as beneficiaries.

[9] WHAT IS COCOBOD / GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCHEME?

COCOBOD will contribute at least 1% on every sale of cocoa made by a contributor. For example, if a farmer sells a bag of cocoa, he is expected to be paid Ghc660.00. Of this amount, government will contribute Ghc6.60 into the pension accounts while the farmer contributes Ghc33.00. The farmer will therefore be paid a 'take-home' of Ghc 627.00 for selling a bag of cocoa.

[10] WHERE DOES ONE PAY THEIR CONTRIBUTION?

Deductions are made at the point of sale of cocoa through the purchasing clerk's device or Application.

[11] AT WHAT AGE CAN A FARMER JOIN THE SCHEME?

There is no entry age limit. Once you have the cocoa card, you

obviously become a registered farmer who must enjoy pension.

[12] WHEN IS A CONTRIBUTOR ELIGIBLE TO RETIRE FROM THE SCHEME?

First and foremost, after 5 years on the scheme, a contributor is eligible to retire. However, the contributor can remain on the scheme for up to 55 years if he/she joined the scheme at an age lower than 50 years. Similar to all pension schemes, the more year and the higher your contribution, the better your pension.

[13] HOW DOES THE SCHEME SAVE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF FARMERS?

Two accounts exist. We have the Personal Savings and Retirement Accounts. 25% of the total contribution would be credited to the Personal Savings Account and the remaining 75% would be credited to the Retirement Account of the contributor.

[14] CAN A CONTRIBUTOR MAKE A PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL?

Yes, they may be allowed to withdraw up to 25% of their Personal Savings Account Balance after the initial 5 years on the Scheme. Again, they may also withdraw 20% of the same Personal Savings Account balance every 2 years after the first withdrawal.

[15] HOW DO CONTRIBUTORS ACCESS THEIR STATEMENTS?

Contributors can always download their statements or check their balances on their mobile phones using a simple Application.

[16] WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PENSION/ GRATUITY?

When a contributor is due for retirement, he/she will receive a Lump Sum equal to the balance in the Personal Savings Account. The contributor will then receive monthly pension payments from the Retirement Account which is guaranteed for 15 years.

[17] HOW SECURE IS THE CONTRIBUTORS' FUND?

The Scheme operates by the provisions of the National Pensions Act 2008(Act766). It is governed by a Board of Trustees Licensed by NPRA. There are two cocoa farmers' representatives on the Board. There is also a custodian that is independent of COCOBOD and the Government.

[18] ANY GUARANTEE FOR THE CONTINUITY OF THE SCHEME?

The CFPS is governed by Law and as long as the law exists, the Scheme will continue to operate. There will however be changes in the scheme's operations as the scheme makes progress.

[19] WHAT IS THE FAR-REACHING IMPACT

OF THE SCHEME ON THE COCOA ECONOMY? CFPS is part of efforts aimed at making cocoa farming attractive to the youth in the country.

[20] IS IT COMPULSORY FOR ALL COCOA FARMERS?

All cocoa farmers are encouraged to sign on to the scheme in their interest.

TOUR OF TETTEH QUARSHIE MEMORIAL FARM: CRIG ENCOURAGES DIASPORAN GROUP TO INVEST IN THE COCOA SECTOR



Mr. Lloyd Brobbey Adasi, Public Affairs Officer, CRIG, educating visitors at the Tetteh Quarshie farm

The Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) has hosted a 35-member Diasporan group of African origin who are reconnecting with their roots with a tour of some heritage sites across the continent, including the Tetteh Quarshie Memorial Farm at Mampong Akuapem in the Eastern Region.

The historic farm tour was organized by the Cultural Society of Africa (HACSA) Foundation under a programme dubbed **'The Sankofa Heritage Experience'**.

Discussions during the tour centered on cultural, educational and investment opportunities within the cocoa sector.

A Principal Public Affairs Officer at CRIG, Mr. Lloyd Brobbey Adasi who guided the group from HACSA Foundation on the tour urged them to explore the business opportunities within the cocoa sector.

Mr. Adasi cited that the sector has great prospects for investors in agri-business,

consumer products, tourism and pharmaceuticals among others.

He mentioned some of the specific areas with great potential for investors, "the husks of cocoa pods can also be used to produce cosmetics, marmalades, jams, alcoholic beverages, organic fertilizer as well as animal feed which creates extra income for our cocoa farmers."

As part of the tour, Mr. Adasi briefed the group on the history of cocoa production in Ghana and the production processes. Ghana, according to him, is noted worldwide as the leading producer of premium quality cocoa due to the natural techniques applied during the fermentation and drying of cocoa beans after harvesting.

He explained further the pre-production and post-production processes after taking them to the first two cocoa trees planted in 1879 by Tetteh Quarshie, the pioneer of cocoa production in Ghana,

after whom the farm is named.

The tour group also visited the Jubilee Farm at Mampong Akuapem to learn about some dignitaries who visited Ghana during the Country's Jubilee Celebration.

The Operations Manager of HACSA, Natasha Gordon led the tourists, some of whom are originally from Nigeria, South Africa, Turks and Caicos Island, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

She commended Ghana Cocoa Board for the strides made in ensuring environmentally sustainable production of cocoa and described the tour as illuminating.

The Heritage and Cultural Society of Africa (HACSA) Foundation is a non-governmental organization (NGO) with a mission to highlight the importance of heritage and culture for sustainable socio-economic development.

OHENEWAA BREAKS THE GLASS CEILING IN A MALE DOMINATED VOCATION AT COCOBOD

The gender roles in the workplace is being embraced by corporate organizations like COCOBOD, known to be an industry regulator of a sector mainly serviced by males.

Truth to be told; even though the Board subscribes to the Affirmative Action to which the Government of Ghana pledges and makes provision for its implementation across all sectors of government, implementing it on the ground has not come easily. The evidence of this challenge is seen in the ratio of headship occupancy of top leadership positions at COCOBOD and even more evident in the distribution of assignments at lower levels of work

Nevertheless, there seems to be a little flicker of hope for achieving a balanced male-to-female ratio, for tasks performed at COCOBOD's workspace. The encouraging news is that the glass ceiling has finally been broken, making history, in a male-dominated profession. Guess which?! It is not in the security services nor the civil works domain or the like. It is in the professional driving field

Esther Ohenewa Sakyi is a 34-year-old lady and professional license F driver working at CHED's Transport Department. Esther is that woman, who has dared to break this watertight barrier of an area which is a hotspot for male

To seal this record in the history of the Board since its inception; Miss Ohenewa Sakyi is the first ever female driver to be employed in the transport department, at any of COCOBOD's subsidiaries.

OHENEWAA'S FORMATIVE YEARS

Ohenewa hails from Lateh, Akwapim in the Eastern Region. She was born into a family of 8 and is the 2nd of six siblings. She completed her primary education at Teacher Mantey and Senior Secondary education in 2006 at Nsawam, in the Eastern Region.

She proceeded to De-Best Pre- University College, a private pre-University establishment in Dansoman, Accra to pursue courses in Basic Computing and Secretarial Practice.

She says this was the norm at the time for peers in her generation who didn't have the means to pursue further education in universities. It was during this experience that she developed the foresight to scan her environment and take advantage of what it had to offer her at the time. As a result, she ventured into rendering clerical and



secretarial services, landing her a gig at the Metro Mass Transit.

HER INSPIRATION

As a little girl, Ohenewa usually observed drivers as she sat in their vehicles on her way to school and she usually asked a lot of questions about driving. Seeing female drivers, manoeuvre the road in small and big cars, even stirred up the desire to see herself also drive a big car in the future. The sight of seeing female drivers, and the urge to be involved in something different from her peers was her major inspiration.

She believes that following that inner calling to dare to be different, has led her to realize some of her dreams today.

Despite facing the challenge of her father not believing in her driving skills did not deter her from pursuing her passion to succeed in a unique field.

"My father refused to sign my bond forms to enable me to pursue training to acquire my international driver's license. When some officials accompanied me to convince him to sign, he vehemently refused and said the kind of daughter he has cannot be a driver, she doesn't have the boldness to even hold a car's steering wheel." Ohenewa recounted.

'So I had to use another guarantor to sign my Bond. After my training and driving for 3 years, still, my father didn't believe his daughter to be a professional driver', she indicated. Narrating further, she disclosed that despite being used for the MMT adverts on television, her father was still not convinced it was his daughter, but concluded that it could be someone else who resembled his daughter.

According to her, one day on a trip close to her father's home town, she pleaded with her supervisors to just enable her to drive the car to her father's house, which was granted.

"It is only then that my father believed me as he saw me park in his compound in a huge 'Ayaalolo' bus", She recounted.

TRANSITION TO METRO MASS TRANSIT

Ohenewa got an employment opportunity with the Metro Mass Transit (MMT) department as a conductor and was later transferred to the ticketing unit of MMT where she developed her interest in driving from observing the bus drivers skilfully handle the buses.

In 2007 the opportunity for female bus drivers presented itself, and Ohenewa decided to take her chance, but she was met with a lot of challenges with regard to the physical requirements such as the height for the job.

Despite not having any driving experience, this did not deter her from asking for favours from her superiors to be granted just an opportunity even if it didn't turn out well for her. "I mustered the courage to speak with the Deputy Managing Director (DMD) at the time and expressed my interest to be a beneficiary of the new policies of government to empower women in the transport sector. The DMD at the time outrightly told me that my height wouldn't permit me to be part, and so I could not stand the chance of making it past the physical examination which was a prerequisite. Under this circumstance, I told him to use his power as DMD", She revealed.

Fortunately for Ohenewa, the batch of shortlisted candidates for the driving programme in Tokyo, Japan, registered massive fallouts and so there was a request for new applicants. Seizing the opportunity once more, she impressed the DMD who managed to slot in her name, bypassing all protocols for the job requirements.

Having made it on the shortlist, she quickly proceeded to ask for help from the drivers

available to identify the basic car components and their functions, she was taken through chair adjustment procedures, identifying the brake pedals, accelerator and clutch pedals to prepare for the test.

"When we presented ourselves for the training, the white man in charge upon seeing my height, asked me to get into the car to proceed with the driving protocols. I got into the car and adjusted my seat first to suit my height, so, that my legs would be comfortable to switch between the pedals. When the instructor saw this he was convinced and so asked me to step on the accelerator which I did. Finally persuaded of my ability and confidence he passed me." Ohenewa narrated. This stage marked the beginning of rigorous training at VALCO for her.

At VALCO, out of 75 female trainee drivers, only 30 were successfully passed as drivers of which she was part. Further medical exams led to the elimination of five more women, leaving just 25 who were passed to pursue the international professional driving course in Tokyo, Japan which lasted for six months.

Having acquired the International Professional Driving Certification, it required the successful trainees to proceed to the SOTRA institute in Ivory Coast for further training to get accustomed to the driving regulations suited to Ghana as the Japanese have opposite driving priorities.

After eight months in Ivory Coast, Ohenewa and her colleagues were officially appointed at Metro Mass Transit as Bus drivers in 2009. She was a constant driver on the Accra-Kumasi-Tamale routes and as far as Burkina Faso and is attested to have driven whilst heavily pregnant to remote destinations and only recused herself from work with just 3 weeks to delivery.

Ohenewa finally exited MMT in 2018 to pursue greener pastures with GIZ, a German development organization operating in Ghana as a chauffeur for a year where she was elevated as a driver trainee on the 'Miss Taxi' project for two years.

PRIVATE LIFE

Ohenewa is married and is a devoted mother to her four-year-old son. She loves to listen to music and watch movies in her leisure time. She also disclosed that she is a trumpeter and a lead singer at the Grace Presby Life Band at Nsawam, where she mostly embarks on singing gigs during weekends at parties and funerals. She revealed further that she has a love for the old-school genre of High Life music and has a love for doing renditions of the likes of the legendary Ewura Ama Badu, Dr Paa Bobo, Paa Solo and Gospel music.

THE COCOBOD EXPERIENCE

In the early part of 2020 whilst on official assignment in Accra's central business district, Ohenewa recounts that there were limited parking allocations and so decided



to park at the CHED premises where she decided to take the opportunity to establish contacts with the transport officers as she had developed the desire 4 years back to work with COCOBOD.

Luckily she was able to get the name of the Senior Transport Manager for CHED, Christopher Amofa Appiah and presented her driver's F license to him, but he appeared sceptical of her qualification and capability in driving; then requested for her CV to be brought for conviction. Fortunately upon several follow-ups and having won the admiration and confidence of the Deputy Human Resource Manager who coincidentally was a female, Ohenewa was able to secure an interview date where she was the only female participant among several males.

"When it got to the road driving test, I was the last person to be tested so I started shivering upon hearing my other male colleagues talk about their 'connections' with people in authority that serves as surety to be employed since I didn't know anyone in authority. Nobody brought me, I felt stranded, I prayed to God to favour me.

When I entered the bus, I discovered that there were no mirrors available in the car, I was then asked to move the car, and after moving the car to about 20km the test instructor asked me if I have driven a bus before. I laughed. Then the Transport officer seated in the bus revealed that I have a rich experience with bus driving as indicated in my CV. Immediately all the other CHED officials seated in the bus applauded me.

I safely drove without side mirrors from Trade fair Labadi to the CHED yard at Kingsway", She testified.

Finally after a few weeks of the test, early in April 2021, Ohenewa was called for her appointment and asked to proceed with medical examinations, which marked the beginning of her new job at CHED which to date remains a historic event.

CHALLENGES ON THE JOB

Joining the fold of men at the CHED transport department, the issue of being scheduled for treks out of Accra has been a challenging experience for Ohenewa, as her supervisors find it inconveniencing for a woman, more so married, to be scheduled for long journeys during weekends out of Accra.

"I have an added advantage, as I can drive a water tanker as well as all other heavy duty cars, whereas some of my colleagues are not capable of, but I am only limited to driving staff just in Accra", she revealed.

As a professional, she has worked hard to gain the confidence and trust of her colleagues and supervisors and so believes that she should be entrusted with more challenging tasks to complete since she's employed to execute that function. She seeks to be treated equally with her male colleagues.

SUPPORT OF CHED MANAGEMENT

The Executive Director for CHED, Dr Emmanuel Nii Takie-Otoo in an interview on Ohenewa's performance said he was quite elated at the inclusion of a woman in a predominantly male vocation and has lauded the consideration of CHED's Human Resource Management, leadership and Head of Transport to make an opening for female inclusion, thereby breaking the jinx of bus driving as the preserve for males in the industry. He commended the Senior Transport Officer, Christopher Amofa Appiah, for championing this course and setting the pace ahead of other divisions and subsidiaries of COCOBOD, which is worthy of emulation.

STAFF TESTIMONIALS

Several commendations of Ohenewa's professionalism in executing her responsibilities have been registered by senior management of CHED and staff who reside on the Accra-Adentan side of town and board her bus daily. Her male colleagues constantly praise her for fitting in so well with them within a short time and are pleased with her presence, as she brings on board some softness in their macho work environment.

It is reported that some female staff of the Board have been motivated to take on the challenge of learning how to drive as a result of seeing Ohenewa behind the steering of heavy-duty vehicles.

Barely four months into the job, has the "glass breaker" earned the trust of the Transport Officer, Christopher Amofa Appiah, who has promised to ensure a work-friendly environment for the likes of Ohenewa to thrive.

OHENEWA'S FUTURE OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Ohenewa hopes to pursue her tertiary education specifically in Transport Management as she was not able to pursue university education after Senior High School. She believes serving in an organization like COCOBOD that invests in the development of its personnel, she believes it is the right time, place and opportunity to acquire a university certification to enable her remain relevant and competitive to excel in her trade. She continues to be inspired by the famous slogan, "What a man can do, a woman can do better" to soldier on.

OUR PREMIUM QUALITY COCOA - THE THICK AND THIN TO A TASTE OF DIFFERENCE

Edward Kojo Asante, Public Affairs

The Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) was established by ordinance in 1947 to regulate activities within the cocoa sector. The cocoa sector in Ghana has not been an unmitigated success, after emerging as the world's leading producer and exporter of cocoa from 1911 to 1976, and contributing between 30-40% of the world's total output with Côte d'Ivoire being its main competitor.

Ghana experienced a decline in cocoa production in the 1960s and 1970s **which** affected the sector negatively early. Production figures, however, recorded a steady rise in the mid-1980s after the introduction of various reforms with production nearly doubling between 2001 and 2003.

Ghana's cocoa, over the years, has been regarded as premium quality due to a number of factors. The adoption and adherence to Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs), regular training offered to farmers and the immense roles played by stakeholders towards ensuring the country's multi-billion-dollar industry

is sustained.

COCOBOD, through its relevant subsidiaries, implements programmes to support Pre-harvest and Post-harvest activities that constantly promote the quality of the cocoa beans the country produces to feed the world's confectionery and pharmaceutical markets.

Two main post-harvest activities are key; the natural means of fermenting and drying cocoa beans have helped to keep the country's niche in delivering premium quality cocoa.

However, Good fermentation of Ghana's cocoa has unarguably remained the cardinal reason for which the country's beans have become the benchmark for measuring cocoa the world over. Generally, the country's position as the leading producer of premium quality cocoa attracts a country origin of price.

Aside from the above, post-harvest quality assurance activities ensure that Ghana consistently delivers cocoa

with low levels of debris and defective beans to buyers. Further to that, the high fat content of Ghana's beans helps to generate excellent cocoa liquor flavour for the confectionery market. This then attracts a substantial country-origin premium.

While striving to maintain the position of a producer of quality cocoa beans, COCOBOD continues to roll out key policies and interventions to sustain the industry and ensure a better livelihood for our prestigious cocoa farmers in the country.

Ghana must not be complacent due to its successes but instead demonstrate commitment to improve upon its value chain.

References

- Agrisystems Ltd. 1997, "Study of the Cocoa Sector to Define Interventions on Behalf of Ghana's Smallholder with Particular Reference to the Framework of Mutual Obligations." Prepared for the Stablex 1992 and 1993 Allocation.

COCOBOD TRAINS STAFF LEADERS ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has organised a seminar on industrial relations for leaders of its senior and junior staff **associations**.

The training was organised to equip the leaders with the skills to provide good leadership and manage relations between management and the staff they represent, said Mr Randolph Adei, the Director of Human Resources at COCOBOD.

"You are tainted to fit into the role that you are in at present and, periodically, because we are in a dynamic world, you are trained to keep pace with time", he noted.

"As leaders of both the Senior Staff Association and the Junior Staff Union, you have some constituencies under you and there is the need for you to have certain skills and certain abilities to stir your people successfully. With that knowledge, I think the whole system will benefit," he asserted.

The resource person for the training seminar, Mr Joseph Kingsley Amoah, who is the Director of Industrial Relations, at the Ghana Employers Association (GEA),

took the participants through the history of labour unionism in Ghana.

There were also lessons on the laws which govern the creation and management of labour unions in Ghana; best practices in negotiation, conflict resolution, and ensuring discipline, among others.

Mr Amoah said, the training is designed to ground the newly elected staff leaders in the essentials of industrial relations.

"Ultimately, the objective is to equip them very well, so that, they understand the industrial relations terrain; they know their do's and don'ts; they know and understand the legislation covering employment in the country; they understand the very functions which they were elected to undertake, so that, they can do their work well", he emphasised.

Mr Amoah said one of the biggest challenges with workers' unions and associations in Ghana is misunderstanding and mismatched



Mr. Joseph Kingsley Amoah addressing members at the Seminar

priorities. This is where workers have different aspirations and employers have different interests.

"When these interests and aspirations are not synchronized, we will have challenges. At least, once we are all working at the same place and want our personal development, we should also think about the stability and viability of the enterprise. Once we are able to align all these things, it helps us grow together," he noted.

Mr Amoah advised workers leaders to be agents of discipline at their workplaces by educating their union members on the rules of their organizations and the need to observe them.

Workers leaders, he added, must insist on workers going to work on time, help eliminate waste, eschew undesirable behaviour, and foster cordial relations between **workers** and management.



RETIREES CELEBRATED BY THE SEED PRODUCTION DIVISION MANAGEMENT



Madam Faustina Asamany receiving a Citation from Management of SPD

Five staff of the Seed Production Division (SPD) including the Division's immediate past Executive Director and her Deputy have retired from active service after several years of meritorious service to Ghana Cocoa Board.

Mrs. Faustine Asamany, Immediate past Executive Director, Dr. Mrs. Esther Anim Kwapong, Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Prosper Tsa, Audit Manager and Mr. Oduro Kwarteng, Estate Manager, Mr. William Adanya, Deputy Technical Manager have retired after various years of dedicated service to Ghana.

At a joint send-off get-together held in their honour at the SPD Head office in Accra, Mr. Lawrence Twum, the Acting Executive Director of the Division in his opening remarks commended the retirees for contributing their quota in diverse ways towards the growth and sustenance of the cocoa industry.

He hinted that it was the first time in the history of the SPD that the Executive Director and her Deputy are retiring at the same time and seized the opportunity to congratulate them for bringing their collective expertise to

the fore to enhance the fortunes of the division.

Mr. Twum urged them not to discontinue their relationship with the SPD and COCOBOD as a whole since Management will still fall on them for technical advice to improve the division when the need

arises.

Prof. Hans Adu Dapaah, the Chairman of the Management Committee of SPD on his part underscored some of the achievements the division has made during their tenure of office under his chairmanship and thank the retirees for their support.

"The Seed Production Division, for two consecutive years has achieved its set target of raising improved cocoa seedlings for distribution to cocoa farmers through your combined expertise and I am most grateful to you all", he added.

The outgoing Executive Director, Mrs. Faustine Asamany on behalf of the retirees expressed her profound appreciation to Management of COCOBOD and the entire staff of SPD for the opportunity offered them to lead them and also harnessing their expertise in building a robust SPD.

She reiterated their commitment to continuously offer technical support to Management for the growth of the SPD any time they are called to do so.



Dr. Mrs. Esther Anim Kwapong in a photograph with some management staff of SPD

SEND-OFF PARTY FOR SPD RETIREES IN PICTURES





AUNTY FATI RETIRES AFTER 40 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

Ms. Fatima Musah of the Office of the Chief Executive, Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has retired after 40 years of contributing earnestly towards the growth of the cocoa sector.

Aunty Fati joined Ghana Cocoa Board on 13th January, 1983 and was confirmed as a permanent staff the same year as a typist, working in the produce department of COCOBOD.

Following her hard work and commitment towards work, she was appointed to serve as the secretary to the management committee tasked to undertake staff rationalization and downsizing between 1983 - 1986.

Aunty Fati worked as a Central Administrator responsible for liaising administrative tasks between the Chief Executive (CE) and Deputies on one side and other directors who report directly to the CE.

She was transferred to the General Services Department and later made

the substantive secretary at the office of the Deputy Chief Executive in charge of Operations, sometimes taking up relieving roles any time secretaries at the offices of the other Deputy Chief Executives were not available to perform their roles.

Aunty Fati was promoted to Deputy Human Resource Manager in charge of Administration and transferred to Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), where she worked for 18 months.

Subsequently, she was transferred to COCOBOD Head office and stationed at the Chief Executive's office, responsible for administrative tasks until her retirement in 2018.

In a citation eulogizing Aunty Fati, the Chief Executive of COCOBOD, Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo described her as loyal, committed and a worker full of sacrifice.

Her send-off brought together her family, staff and friends who extolled her sense of friendliness and affinity.



MADAM ELIZABETH AMOH RETIRES



Madam Elizabeth Amoh, popularly known as Aunt Lizzy of the Research Department Ghana Cocoa Board, Head office retired from active service.

Her career, lasting 40 years, saw her progress to the rank of Principal Administrative Officer following her continued dedicated service.

Aunt Lizzy joined Ghana Cocoa Board in the year 1982 as a casual worker for 1 year and through her unwavering commitment and dedication towards her duties, she was made a permanent staff in 1983, a period which, ironically saw several staff being laid off under the restructuring programme.

She is well known for the unique manner with which she approached her work and praised for how she meticulously developed administrative processes to achieve organizational objectives, improved office efficiency, managed physical and digital files, monitored spreadsheets and updated reports to coordinate project materials at the Research Department.

She operationalized, managed internal communications, correspondence, record tracking and data analysis, monitored office inventory to maintain supply levels.

Aunt Lizzy's extraordinary leadership

characteristics earned her secretarial position in the Workers Union, during which she served as the treasurer for the Supreme Consultative Council for 6 years. She later became the secretary to the Ladies Club, and also, the Assistant Secretary for the COCOBOD Senior Staff Association (COHOSSA).

She served under some Directors of the Board at the Research Department which included C.B Ntim, Dr. Emmanuel Opoku, Mr Tei Quartey, J.E. Amoah,

Mr. Francis Osei Owusu, Mr. Kissiedu Kwapong and Mr. Vincent Okyere Akomeah and Mr Charles Benard Ntim. In an interview with Aunt Lizzy, she expressed her appreciation to God in these few words:

'I am grateful to God especially after 40 years in COCOBOD, and retiring in good health to God be the Glory'

The Management of Ghana Cocoa Board wishes her a restful retirement.



COFFEE: PRODUCTION, CONSUMPTION & POTENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS



Coffee is a valuable tropical agricultural commodity in the world economy which comes second only to crude oil in global trade. It employs nearly 25 million families and over 125 million people in developing countries. Additionally, it serves as the key source of revenue for many developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Two main species *Coffea arabica* (Arabica) and *Coffea canephora* (Robusta) form the bulk of commercial coffee production globally. Robusta coffee adapts well at lower altitudes (≤ 600 m above sea level) whereas Arabica coffee is restricted to highlands at altitudes of 1600 – 2800 m above sea level. Robusta which is the main type of coffee grown in Ghana prefers an optimum annual rainfall in the range of 1200 to 1800 mm for proper growth, although the crop adapts better to annual rainfall of > 2000 mm.

Active cultivation of coffee in Ghana started in the mid-eighteenth century when the crop was introduced by the early missionaries. It is mostly cultivated by smallholder farmers and in a few plantations scattered in the Eastern, Central, Ashanti, Western North, Western, Bono, Ahafo, Volta and Oti Regions. The coffee season in Ghana typically runs from October to September of the following year.

The planting period starts in May at the onset of the rains during the major

rainy season and harvesting starts in September. Currently, a number of clonal and hybrid varieties developed by the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) with high yield potential, good cup quality and tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses have been supplied to coffee farmers annually through CRIG and the Seed Production Division (SPD) of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD).

Coffee yields in the country are generally low; averaging approximately 0.5 t ha^{-1} , although yields of $> 1.5 \text{ t ha}^{-1}$ have been recorded on research experimental fields. Significant efforts are being made from the research standpoint to bridge this substantial yield gap.

In view of the great potential of the coffee industry to the Ghanaian economy, there have been major reforms by the government of Ghana to improve the coffee sector. Key among them include the Agricultural Diversification Project – This was initiated in 1991 by the government of Ghana to revamp the coffee industry through interventions such as improved pricing, liberalized markets, improved research and extension services which resulted in the highest level of coffee production in 1999/2000.

The four-year Coffee Rehabilitation Project (CRP), from 2011, expanded the area under cultivation and the national coffee production to 12,650 tons by

the end of 2015. Then in 2019, the coffee programme under the Planting for Export and Rural Development (PERD) focused on the development and distribution of improved coffee planting materials by CRIG (COCOBOD) to coffee farmers across all the coffee-growing regions of the country.

Coffee is the most popular beverage consumed by about one-third of the world's population in an amount larger than any other beverage. Although coffee has a long history of human food use for over 1000 years, until recently most of the studies on its health effects have focused on potential adverse and toxic effects.

Regardless of the vast amount of research, evidence to support a direct link of coffee with diseases has been limited and inconsistent. However, although not yet proven, recent scientific literature suggests the potential beneficial health effects of coffee and several of its constituents. Drinking coffee in moderation (2 to 3 cups) a day is associated with many health benefits across a range of diseases and conditions.

Coffee consumption has been inversely associated with the risk of cancer at various sites in the human body, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease. Caffeine in coffee serves as an important natural stimulant which has been shown to improve endurance performance in long-duration physical activities. A lower risk of cardiovascular diseases, coronary heart disease, and stroke, as well as, a reduced risk of liver damage are all associated with coffee.

Despite the general good outcomes, it should be emphasized that individual sensitivity to coffee and the biological effects of coffee among humans may vary because of personal variations at the molecular level. Additionally, some negative effects of coffee tend to emerge with excessive drinking, so it is best to avoid heavy coffee intake.

This write-up has focused on the coffee crop, its production in Ghana and highlighted a few of the potential benefits of a moderate intake of coffee. As further studies are carried out on the significant functional differences among persons, a better understanding of the effects of coffee on personal health would be realized.

By Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG)

COCOBOD PARTICIPATES IN GREEN GHANA DAY - JUNE 10, 2022



COCOBOD: A MACHINERY FOR FOSTERING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

By Sheila Irene Enchill , Public Affairs



For more than 75 years, Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has trail-blazed in its domain of contributing to Governments' efforts and commitment towards the realization of various international treaties and conventions which support sustainable resources and livelihoods. One of such blueprints is the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SDGs are a collection of 17 interlinked goals of the United Nations' blueprint towards achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. They address pertinent global challenges countries face, including poverty, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, security and justice.

The SDGs 2030 agenda rolled out in 2015 for sustainable development has been adopted by all member states of the United Nations to which Ghana, our sovereign nation is a member. At its heart are 17 goals which put urgent call for all member countries to initiate policies and programmes that support sustainable use of resources.

As a member country, Ghana, is dedicated to these pillars of development by executing this agenda through state agencies, ministries and Local authorities. Government regulators like COCOBOD, through its policies and programmes is directly aligning its core activities towards the realization of the SDGs.

In this episode which seeks to highlight the efforts of COCOBOD in the attainment of the SDGs, we take readers through how the Board is complementing government's efforts at achieving the UN SDGs. Specifically, goals 1, 9 and 12 will be examined alongside the strides made by the Board in its programmes.

1 NO POVERTY



This goal is aimed at ending poverty in all its forms by 2030 in all member countries. Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire together contribute about 70% of the world's cocoa stock but regrettably, out of an estimated 150 billion USD revenue accrued from cocoa trade globally, these two African cocoa-producing giants rake in paltry gains thereby impoverishing the producers.

The introduction of the Living Income Differential (LID) by the Board which currently guarantees a fixed amount of 400USD per tonne of cocoa has come as a major intervention to addressing income gaps of farmers in the country.

Cocoa farmers in Ghana are paid at least 70% of the net FOB price of cocoa annually as the producer price. This policy is non-negotiable even in times of serious economic meltdown.

In addition, on-going programmes such as the free rehabilitation of dead cocoa farms, subsidized fertilizer, free distribution of seedlings to farmers, and hand pollination programmes are all productivity enhancing and price-guard initiatives aimed at protecting farmers against income depletion. Under the cocoa rehabilitation programme, cocoa farmers have access to free plantains which they harvest and sell as an alternative source of income.



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



This goal requires governments to make investments in infrastructure and also adopt innovative ways to drive economic growth. COCOBOD has, over the years, shown greater commitment in supporting government to advance policies to align with this goal.

The ongoing roads projects across the cocoa regions are augmenting government's drive to make basic infrastructure available to boost economic growth. Again, the Board has constructed a number of Senior High Schools and health facilities across the country to make various services available to the citizenry. A major innovation which was recently introduced into the operations of the industry is the Cocoa Management System (CMS).

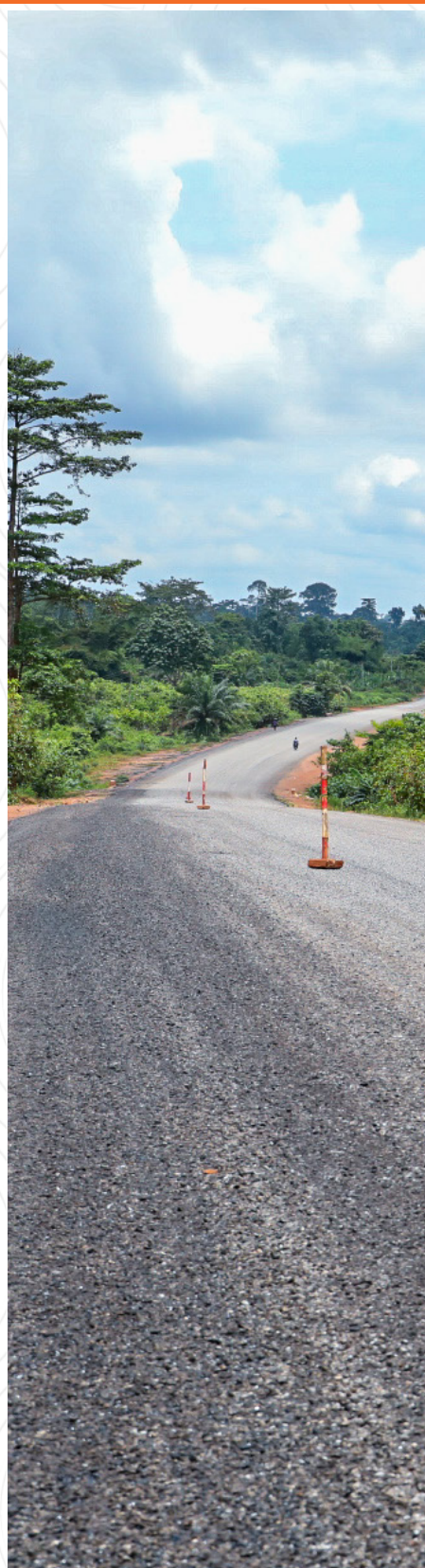
The CMS is an operational system that involves the registration of cocoa farmers onto a data management system that collates the biodata of cocoa farmers, farm sizes and ownership details. The CMS database is also synchronized with the data collated on buyers and approved payment platforms in the cocoa sector.

The CMS, when operational, will be the spring board for enrolling all cocoa farmers on to a mandatory cocoa farmers' pension scheme which provides a secure and decent pension for our farmers when they retire from active farming.

Another major initiative can be seen in how it raises seedlings for farmers. Traditionally, the Board has depended on top soil, bamboo sticks, palm fronds as media for the construction of cocoa nursery sites across its cocoa-growing regions. Obtaining these materials means tampering with the environment and the ecosystem. The

Board has innovated in this area of its operations.

The Board is currently monitoring the introduction of cocopeat as an alternative to the excessive use of topsoil. Again, galvanized pipes, shade nets and permanent structures, are being considered as alternatives to



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



the over-reliance on bamboo and palm branches for nursery sites.

This goal spells out the requirements for responsible institutions to adopt sustainable practices in consumption, production as well as ensuring the effective use of resources. In realizing this goal, Smart Cocoa has been adopted by the Board. This method of growing cocoa combines agro-forestry with cocoa cultivation.

The essence is to conserve biodiversity and promote the co-existence of forest and cocoa. Cocoa farmers in Ghana have been taught to avoid expanding their farms into reserved forests. Instead, farm intensification, which involves adhering to best agronomic practices have been encouraged in the cultivation of cocoa in an effort to increase yield without necessarily expanding into forest areas.

The introduction of the hand pollination for example, also significantly increased the number of pods from an average of between 45-50 pods per tree to as high as 1,200 pods without expanding acreage of land under cultivation. This practice ties into responsible use of resources.

Without any doubt, the Board's projects and programmes in one way or the other, fit into the realization of the SDGs which the UN enjoins member states to make conscious efforts to drive activities towards their achievement.

By these notable strides, COCOBOD as a state institution is significantly constituting towards the actualization of the SDGs

STAFF HEALTH - BLOOD PRESSURE; HOW DANGEROUSLY LOW CAN IT GO?

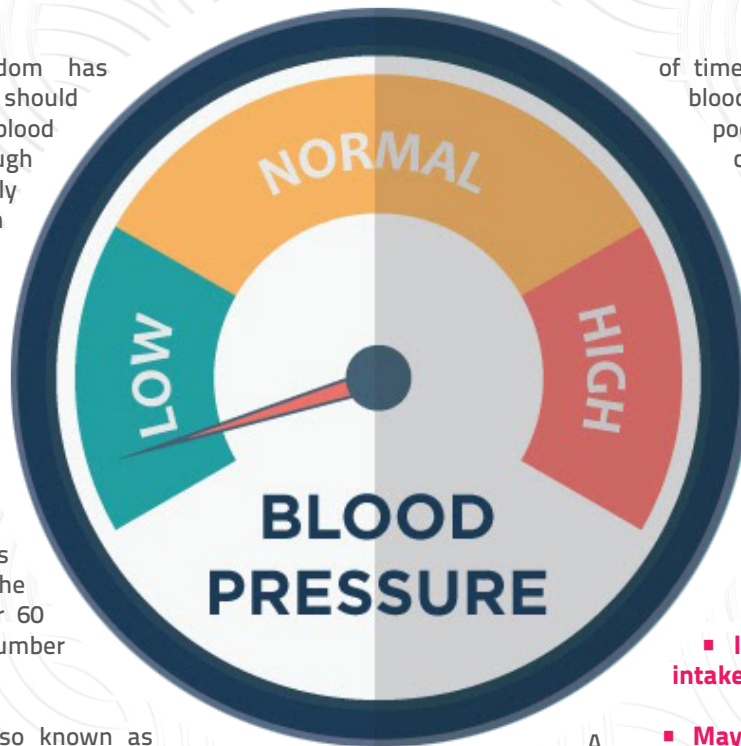
The conventional wisdom has always been that we should all strive to keep our blood pressure low. Even though this is true, having really low blood pressure can be dangerous, as it can impair your body's ability to absorb oxygen, resulting in damage to the heart and brain.

Low blood pressure is when your blood pressure reading is lower than 90 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) for the top number (systolic) or 60 mm Hg for the bottom number (diastolic).

Low blood pressure (also known as hypotension) can occur in anyone, though it may be more common depending on your age or other risk factors: genetic makeup, taking certain medications, and having certain diseases (diabetes, heart conditions).

The cause of low blood pressure isn't always clear. However, it may be associated with the following:

- pregnancy
- hormonal problems
- some over-the-counter and prescription medications
- heart failure
- abnormal heart rhythms
- widening or dilation of the blood vessels
- heatstroke
- liver disease
- loss of blood from bleeding
- low or high body temperature
- a severe blood infection
- severe dehydration from vomiting, diarrhea or fever
- a reaction to medication or alcohol



A sudden drop in blood pressure robs the brain of adequate blood supply to the brain. This can lead to dizziness or lightheadedness. Other symptoms include fainting, blurred vision, nausea, fatigue, lack of concentration, and in extreme conditions shock.

If you experience any of the above symptoms, seek emergency medical attention as it is important to determine the cause of low blood pressure so appropriate treatment can be given.

Some people are known to take alcohol in an attempt to increase their blood pressure but that is a path I will not recommend. Others opt for caffeinated drinks like coffee and tea. Dr. Kojo Essel often recommends that one engages in exercise which is your best 'weapon to normalise blood pressure.'

Quite often when one has low blood pressure, standing still for long periods

of time can cause a further drop in blood pressure due to peripheral pooling of blood and may cause complications. In such people Dr Essel highly recommends taking several steps even if standing in one place to help maintain blood pressure at a safe level.

Other ways of managing low blood pressure are:

- adding a little salt to food (do this with caution to avoid excesses and downsides of increased salt intake)
- Increase water (other fluids) intake to increase blood volume.
- May need to wear compression stockings in extreme situations.
- Some may require medication.
- Pay attention to body positions; do not move quickly from sitting to standing position for instance.
- Eat small portions of food at a time.
- Exercise should be a combination of strength training and cardiovascular exercise that increases heart rate)

Source:
Maureen Masopeh
Content Creator (Health Essentials Ghana Ltd)

References:
1. Dr Kojo Cobba Essel; *Unravelling the Essentials of Health and Wealth*
2. Mayo Clinic; *Low Blood Pressure (Hypotension)*
3. Webmd

Reasons to **Consume** **COCOA**



Provides the Most
Powerful Dietary
Antioxidants

Reduces Blood Pressure

Delays Physical Signs
of Ageing

Fights Dental Decay

Rich in Dietary Iron
which helps to fight
Anemia

Boosts Sense of
Well-Being

Has Aphrodisiac effect

Prevents Stroke by
improving Blood
Circulation

Fights Stress

Minimizes discomfort/
pain associated with
Menstrual periods

Protects Blood Vessels



GHANA
COCOA
BOARD





Ghana Cocoa Board
Poised to Maintain Premium Quality Cocoa