



COCOBOD NEWSLETTER

16 - 30 APRIL, 2021

Cocoa Processors & Chocolatiers Urged To Seize Trade Opportunities In Africa.



- Hon J. B. Aidoo, COCOBOD Chief Executive, addressing the cocoa processors and chocolatiers at the forum.

The Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo has called on local cocoa processors and chocolatiers to take advantage of the trade opportunities in Africa, facilitated by the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, (AfCFTA) to sustain the cocoa sector which is the backbone of Ghana's economy.

Hon Boahen Aidoo, at a forum organised to interact with cocoa processors, manufacturers, chocolatiers and other key stakeholders in Accra, informed participants that COCOBOD had seen a huge market potential in AfCFTA and had, therefore, set up a Committee to liaise with the AfCFTA Secretariat and local cocoa processors to promote the consumption of Ghana's cocoa products in Africa.

According to Hon Aidoo, as the world's number one producer of premium quality cocoa and the second-largest producer in terms of volume, Ghana is yet to fully benefit from the precious commodity because local value addition is relatively low. He said the committee had been established to serve as a liaison between processors, local chocolatiers and industry stakeholders to take advantage of the consolidated market and reduced tariff regime that the AfCFTA agreement seeks to achieve.

"Whilst we have managed to increase our per capita consumption level to 0.6kg, we are still a long way from achieving our target of over 1kg per capita consumption," he indicated.

The Chief Executive said the global market for processed cocoa was huge, adding that AfCFTA had the potential to strengthen and grow intra-Africa trade from the current base of 15% to 52%, if stakeholders are able to rise to the prospects it offers.

Hon Aidoo appealed to cocoa processors and chocolatiers represented at the forum to support the national cocoa consumption promotion agenda by making cocoa products available to every Ghanaian at all levels for consumption while aiming to further diversify into other finished products such as cosmetics and spices.

He further urged the processors and chocolatiers to make recommendations to help drive the cocoa consumption campaign to ensure job creation, increased revenue and ultimately, the realization of the Government's Ghana Beyond Aid agenda.

The Technical Adviser on Multilateral Regional and Bilateral Trade at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Mr Anthony K. Nyame-Baafi, stressed the need for stakeholders to consolidate and expand existing markets for Ghana's cocoa

products. He said it would be profitable to explore market opportunities in North, East and Southern African countries such as Egypt, Kenya and South Africa.

“There is the need to stimulate increased demand for made in Ghana cocoa products by providing timely and accurate information on market trends for Ghanaian businesses, which the Ministry is dedicated to facilitating”, he added.

Speaking on behalf of the Cocoa Value Addition Artisans Association of Ghana (COVAAG), Mrs Dela Austin, appealed to the Management of COCOBOD to facilitate easy and affordable access to cocoa beans and other cocoa-related raw materials to small scale artisans and manufacturers to feed the local market. She assured industry stakeholders that local chocolatiers would take up market opportunities by adding value to their products, and requested that conducive trade exhibition avenues should be provided regularly to serve as platforms for chocolate artisans to market their products.

Mrs Austin highlighted a number of challenges facing the association which COCOBOD Management promised to address.

Participants appealed to the government to review the huge taxes imposed on cocoa and its related products to make it easy for entrepreneurs in the sector to succeed.

Dr Edward Amporful, Chairman of the COCOBOD AfCFTA Cocoa Consumption Committee assured participants, particularly processors and chocolatiers that the Committee would work in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders to ensure the attainment of the common objective of promoting the consumption of Ghana's cocoa beyond Ghana.



A Survey To Assess The Environmental & Social Impacts Of COCOBOD's PEPs Takes Off.



- Mr. Faruk Nyame, Deputy Executive Director (CHED) in charge of PEPs, speaking on how to ensure sustainable cocoa production.

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) is set to commence a field survey exercise under the Environmental, Social and Management System (ESMS) in May 2021. The exercise aims at finding out potential social and environmental risk factors which may have occurred from the implementation of the Board's Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEPs).

As part of an entrenched clause in the AfDB Loan facility secured to fund the PEPs, COCOBOD is expected to conduct field surveys to find out whether the PEPs are negatively impacting the environment and social life in communities or not and where a potential threat is identified, take steps to eliminate or reduce its impact.

A two-day training programme has subsequently been organized to adequately prepare staff of COCOBOD's Research Monitoring & Evaluation (RM&E) Department and the Cocoa Health & Extension Division (CHED) ahead of the survey which is expected to be completed in two weeks.

The ESMS seeks to assess the implementation of the PEPs and how the processes conform to the best environmental and social standards in communities where such projects are being run.

Participants, numbering 30, will visit farming communities and administer questionnaires to about 2,730 respondents comprising, beneficiary farmers, disease spotters, pruners, sub-contractors, pollinators and weeding labourers on a wide range of issues bothering on environmental and social sustainability in their respective communities.

In general, respondents will share their views on issues such as pollution, accidents, loss of income, conflicts, disasters, child involvement in farming, threat to animal species, and forest degradation and indicate whether or not the implementation processes of the various PEPs sub-projects have contributed to their occurrence. Other issues that the survey will also address are matters relating to professional misconducts by officials; land tenure issues; wages of workers, among others.

Speaking at the opening session of the training programme held in Kumasi, the Deputy Executive Director (CHED) in charge of PEPs, Mr. Faruk Kwansah Nyame said environmental and social issues have far-reaching implications on the cocoa sector.

He further observed that such issues cannot be decoupled from production and called on the enumerators to take the training seriously.

Mr. Nyame regretted that COCOBOD is always being

accused by the international community of doing very little to address child labour and forest degradation issues although several interventions had been put in place by the Board to curtail the issues. He blamed it on the lack of reliable and creditable data to justify the efforts of the Board at addressing these thorny issues.

‘When we fall short of social and environmental issues such as child labour, deforestation, water pollution, health and safety issues, labour and working conditions, grievance and redress mechanism, stakeholder engagement etc, although we may be making remarkable strides in achieving targets set for our various PEPs, we will score low by sustainability standards and the world will see us as being insensitive to the plights of the society and environment’, he cautioned.

Mr. Nyame encouraged the beneficiaries to ensure due diligence in the exercise adding that, data obtained would be used to effectively communicate the Board’s position to change the world views about COCOBOD and its efforts at ensuring sustainable cocoa production in the country.

A facilitator of the training programme, Dr. Isaac Manu, Deputy, Manager (RM&E) COCOBOD disclosed that the findings from the survey will help COCOBOD’s Management to take some critical steps to mitigate shortfalls identified, adding that stakeholder engagements will be carried out to further discuss the findings.

He further hinted that a final report on progress made will be submitted to AfBD to indicate how the Board has fared in its efforts to eliminate or reduce the prevalence of some pertinent social and environmental issues that directly or indirectly affect sustainability.

Meanwhile, COCOBOD has over the past 4 years, committed resources to embark on projects such as Hand Pollination, Pruning, Cocoa farm Rehabilitation, Warehousing, and Promotion of Cocoa Consumption.

2021 MAY DAY MESSAGE

The leadership of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) Workers Union, the SUPREME CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, extends a congratulatory message to the Staff of the Board for their hard work, dedication and sacrifices over the past year.

As we celebrate the accomplishments and spirit of the Ghanaian worker, we are reminded of the words of the famous American business magnate of blessed memory, Steve Jobs, that "Great things in business are never done by one person; they're done by a team of people."

Indeed, you exemplified this over the past year when in spite of the challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, your collective sense of responsibility, dedication and professionalism kept the wheels of our great organisation moving on stronger than expected. Know that we greatly appreciate your efforts.

Even though we have some unresolved challenges on our labour front, we still have a reason to celebrate our phenomenal achievements over the past year. Be rest assured that the Supreme Council is working assiduously to address them and improve the welfare of staff. Greater times are ahead of us.

On this occasion of the May Day celebration, let us all rest, reflect on our achievements over the past year and come back with a renewed commitment to hard work and excellence for the good of Ghana's cocoa sector and the world we live in.

We wish everyone God's blessings.

WE SAY AYEKOO!
LONG LIVE GHANA!!
LONG LIVE THE COCOA INDUSTRY!!!
LONG LIVE THE ENTIRE STAFF!!!

EDWARD OKOH AMPOFO
CHAIRMAN

NASURU ISSAKAH
SECRETARY

Do Not Demand Monies From Farmers During Data Collection; COCOBOD Cautions Surveyors



- Surveyors looking on as Dr Emmanuel Opoku addresses them via Zoom.

The Deputy Chief Executive In-Charge of Operations, Dr Emmanuel A. Opoku has cautioned surveyors of the ongoing Cocoa Management System (CMS) exercise to desist from demanding monies from farmers during the data collection process as the act is a serious offence that attracts dismissal.

Dr. Opoku gave this advice at an open forum with surveyors to review, discuss and evaluate the exercise and performance of work in the Western South Region.

According to Dr Opoku, some staff who were recently found culpable in the act of collecting money from farmers before taking their farm details had been summarily dismissed. Describing the act as illegal, the Deputy Chief Executive said extortion has the tendency of thwarting COCOBOD's

good intention of establishing a reliable database for the smooth execution of its programmes and support services for farmers.

“...you needed a job and we created an opportunity for you to be engaged, so why would you extort money from them when you are paid at the end of the month”? he quizzed.

Dr. Opoku further urged the surveyors to put in much effort in the Ashanti Region in order to meet the set target of the Board.

“So much time was spent in the Western South and this needs to be corrected going forward. Let us stop lazing around because your performance may determine your future prospect in the industry”, he added.

“The CMS is here to stay, so when it is fully operational, some of you will be engaged because farmer data is needed to update the system”, he cautioned.

The Deputy Executive Director of the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED), Mr Faruk Nyame praised the surveyors for the strides made in other regions adding that, the CMS is central to operations of the Board.

According to him, management has set up parameters to ensure effective data collection exercise.

“We are looking at the quality of work done, the number of farms measured, your commitment towards work and your capabilities to exceed your target”, he disclosed.

Mr Faruk stated that, the Productivity Enhancement Programs (PEPs) the Board is currently running are key to the sustainability of the cocoa industry with the introduction of the Cocoa Management System being an equally a major agenda of management.



“I am optimistic that you can achieve and accomplish the set target given to you. Other interventions are doing well so we believe that the CMS too will do same starting with you”. He added.

Mr Edem Mensah, a surveyor, appealed to management to assist them with some outlined items to complement the work on the field.

GET INTERACTIVE



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DRINK
COCOA
DAILY

