

## SHORT DESCRIPTION

PRO-PLANTEURS is a project launched by the multi-stakeholder initiative German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, an association of the German confectionery industry, the German retail grocery trade and civil society with the German Federal Government, represented by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). With PRO-PLANTEURS, the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa aims to professionalize 20,000 cocoa-producing family-owned businesses and farmer organizations in the eastern and southeastern regions of Côte d'Ivoire. The objective is to improve the families' livelihoods by increasing their incomes and improving nutrition.



One objective of the project is, in particular, to provide women with opportunities to improve their income situation and create a better nutritional basis for their families, thus creating a positive impact on their living conditions. In addition, the project contributes to making cocoa production more attractive again to young cocoa farmers and female cocoa farmers, allowing them to earn a regular income from producing cocoa.

PRO-PLANTEURS contributes to the implementation of the National Cocoa Strategy of Côte d'Ivoire, 2QC (Quantité – Qualité – Croissance), and the CocoaAction Strategy of the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF).

The project cooperates with **35 selected farmer organizations** in three regions in the south-east of **Côte d'Ivoire**.

**Abengourou**  
15 organizations

**Aboisso**  
11 organizations and

**Agboville**  
9 organizations



## BASIC CONDITIONS

At the beginning of the year 2016, the initial situation of the project was examined by means of a study. The results provide basic insights into the situation of cocoa producing families and their farms in the project region.

### General Situation

- The average household consists of 10 people
- 90 % of the households are headed by men, 10 % of the households are led by women
- 75 % of the surveyed male farmers are older than 40 years, 48 % of the female farmers are over 40 years old
- 12 % of the cooperative members are women

## PROJECT PROFILE

### Project Partners

- German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO)
- Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)  
Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)
- Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC) as national authority for cocoa in Côte d'Ivoire

### Implementing Organization

- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

### Period

5 Years (06/2015 – 05/2020)

### Volume

EUR 5 million  
(Financed one-third each by the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa, the Federal Government and the Conseil du Café-Cacao)

### Contact Persons

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## Cocoa Production and Diversification

- The average age of a cocoa plantation is 22 years
- The average yield is 323 kilograms of cocoa beans per hectare and year
- Manioc and plantain are often cultivated in addition to cocoa
- The per capita income from cocoa amounts to € 19.60 per month (€ 0.60 per day) *(according to farmers)*
- A man earns a monthly income of € 15.80 (€ 0.52 per day) from other sources, such as diversified cultivation; a woman earns € 2.50 Euro per month (€ 0.07 Euro per day) *(according to farmers)*
- Men own 2 to 5 hectares of land; women own up to 1 hectare of land

## Nutritional Situation

- 33 % of the respondents stated that they did not have enough food throughout the year
- Dry season is characterized by food shortage and a limited selection.

## MAIN FOCUS OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The main focus of PRO-PLANTEURS and project activities are divided into four areas:

### **1. Strengthening Farmer Organizations**

In order to ensure that the organizations can meet the needs of the cocoa farmers, they must be professionally organized as a formal structure and work effectively and efficiently. This includes planning and control instruments such as business plans, production plans and banking books.

**>> PRO-PLANTEURS supports the farmer organizations** through training and coaching to improve their internal organization and the services provided to farmers and their families. Women are encouraged to take up more responsibility within the cooperatives, for example with starting so called Comiteés des Femmes.



### **2. Improved Cocoa Production**

The yield of cocoa farms often is very low. This is one reason that prevents an increase in income for farmer families. However, the application of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), the use of suitable fertilizers and selected plant material enables a more efficient farming and productivity increase.

**>> PRO-PLANTEURS supports male and female cocoa farmers** through direct advice and trainings. For sustainable improvement of productivity and of cocoa quality these are based on the curricula of the Farmer Field School (FFS), teaching Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). In Farmer Business Schools (FBS) the farmers are trained in better management of their budget and cultivation system. Around 5,000 producers developed their knowledge of Good Agricultural Practices in FFS and another 4,000 were trained in FBS. The trainings are conducted by experienced practitioners from ANADER (Ivorian National Rural Development Agency).



### 3. Improving Nutrition through Diversification

For many farmers, cocoa is an important source of family income. Yet, the cultivation of cocoa should not displace other crops, including essential food crops.

>> **PRO-PLANTEURS promotes diversification.** This component of the project focuses on women. By supporting them in activities such as production, processing and marketing, their income is to be improved. Five micro projects for the promotion of diversification and improved market access of women are currently being implemented. Project activities will also focus on overcoming seasonal food shortages and on year-round food security. This trainings are conducted in cooperation with the National Nutrition Programme of Côte d'Ivoire.



### 4. Promoting Joint Learning

In addition to their formal functions, farmer organizations play a key role in the exchange of knowledge and experience as central hubs.

>> **PRO-PLANTEURS fosters dialogue among farmers and disseminates best practices and success stories.** Dialogue and learning platforms allow organizations to jointly reflect and to disseminate knowledge and experiences to farmers. The project fosters this exchange among all project participants; it also builds upon existing platforms.



In order to harmonize with the National Monitoring System of Côte d'Ivoire and with the **CocoaAction Strategy of the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF)**, these four project priorities and their indicators were defined and specified in joint working sessions. Thus, the results of PRO-PLANTEURS can also visibly contribute to the implementation of these two strategies.

## PROJECT PROGRESS



PRO-PLANTEURS trained **18 cooperatives**, particularly 84 of their managers, till end of 2017 in an intensive **training and coaching program for professionalization**.

Also, more than **4,900 members of these cooperatives** were trained in Good Agricultural Practices in **Farmer Field Schools** to improve productivity, and **3,900 members** were trained in **Farmer Business Schools** to improve their management skills. About **5,000 male and female producers** received special trainings to combat plant diseases like "swollen shoot"; about **5,000 producers** learned more about quality issues. **10 %** of the farmers trained are **female**.

The **quality improved cocoa plant species "Mercedes"** was successfully planted on 273 hectares land. **17 further cooperatives** were included in the project in mid-2018 and were prepared for project participation in three regional kick-off workshops.

**Cultivation systems in the project region**

**Produced by men:**  
Cocoa, manioc (kassava), plantain, eggplant, pepper, yam, millet, rice, sweet potatoes, beans, groundnuts, onions, etc.

**Produced by women:**  
Cocoa, corn, manioc, plantain, groundnut, yam, eggplant, pepper, tomatoes, beans, etc.

*Source: Baseline Study PRO-PLANTEURS, 2016*

**41 female members** of cooperatives were trained as consultants ("**Animatrices Rurales**") and will implement the training program for improved nutrition together with the field agents.

**Training material** about **gender, diversification and nutrition** has been developed. Experiences from other development projects, such as PROCACAO, have contributed to this process. So far, **1,600 families** enjoyed these trainings.

To increase their income, **five micro projects** are currently in progress **with women groups**. The women are supported in producing and processing manioc and in production

and marketing of eggplants and tomatoes and also in their self-initiated fish and poultry cultivation. Both, the cooperatives and the women contribute to this.



## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PRO-PLANTEURS has two local committees: one responsible for the **strategic steering** and the other one for **technical monitoring** of the activities. The project is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ).

## NEXT STEPS

- Training of young entrepreneurs to become service providers for the cooperatives
- Continuation of trainings on crop diversification and launch of trainings on improved nutrition (jointly with National Food Programme)
- Continuation of Farmer Business Schools and (if necessary) of Farmer Field Schools
- Training of women from the additional cooperatives as Animatrices Rurales
- Continuation of pilot projects with women organizations on income-generating activities
- Conducting a study on the change in income initialized by PRO-PLANTEURS
- Ongoing project implementation in close cooperation with the local steering committees and continuously monitoring of progress on site

### PRO-PLANTEURS Milestones

1-3/2015	Analysis and selection of farmer organizations
1-5/2015	Study on Gender/Youth/Nutrition-
4/2015	Signing of the <i>Letter of Intent</i>
9/2015	Stakeholder workshop in Abidjan
11/2015	Regional Kick-off workshops
1-3/2016	Harmonizing indicators with CocoaAction and 2QC; Baseline-Study
4/2016	Kick-off of trainings for 18 cooperatives (TechnoServe)
4/2016	Training of 40 Animatrices Rurales
4-12/2016	Training of 1,600 families on diversification and nutrition
4/2016	Signing of the MoU with CCC
9/2016	Kick-off of Farmer Field Schools (ANADER)
12/2016	Regional workshops on diversification and nutrition
1-8/2017	Study „Access to Financing “
6/2017	Kick-off of Farmer Business Schools
9/2017	3 regional and 1 national workshop on learnings
9/2017	Conclusion of training of cooperative managers; 108 certificates handed-out
9/2017	External project evaluation by BMEL
12/2017	Training of 17 cooperatives to improve access to financing
3/2018	Gender-Workshop, especially for women
7/2018	Training of Animatrices Rurales in improved nutrition
7/2018	Inclusion of 17 additional cooperatives; 3 regional Kick-Off Workshops
9/2018	National Workshop on learning experiences (all cooperatives and project partners)



**Elvis Coré, local GISCO representative**  
*“PRO-PLANTEURS offers training to farmers. Here, they learn about business management, good agricultural practices and procedures aiming to improve the sustainability of cocoa cultivation. The objective is to achieve a higher family income.”*



**Cécile Bilé-Assama, female cocoa farmer from Aboisso**  
*“To me, cocoa is like a treasure. It is part of our culture. It was first grown by our ancestors, then by our parents. To grow it helps us financially. Even when we harvest only small yields.”*



**Marguerite Malé, female cocoa farmer from Aboisso**  
*“I want my children to have a good school education. I wish they could have their own cocoa plantation, so they can continue what I have begun.”*