

Leadership Training: Reinforcing the leadership capacities of cocoa cooperative women's committee members

Gagnoa, Côte d'Ivoire, March, 5th – 7th 2018, March, 9th 2018

The leadership training for the members of the Women's Committees of cocoa cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire brought together **37 female leaders of newly formed Women Committees** of 12 cocoa cooperatives collaborating with the [PRO-PLANTEURS](#) project.

The workshop aimed at:

1. Building **awareness on gender equity notions** and its integration within the cooperative.
2. **Strengthening leadership capabilities** and familiarizing participants with the women's committee structure.
3. **Building capacities** in developing individual action plans for the Women's Committees.
4. Preparing the Women's Committees to **support PRO-PLANTEURS in reaching better impact** on nutrition, diversification and communication.
5. **Reinforcing collaboration** of the cocoa cooperative board with the Women's Committees.

The participants at the training learned and discussed about organizational structures, planning needs and instruments as well as about links with the cocoa cooperatives. The committees developed descriptions for the positions of their teams, prepared a short-term action plan as follow up to the workshop and a long-term strategy as a guideline assisting the group in becoming economically empowered.

BACKGROUND

Women's full benefits from cocoa are often compromised by a lack of gender equity within the cooperatives and the cocoa sector in general. This existing gender imbalance has significant socio-economic consequences as women are missing out on key opportunities due to limited access to ownership, land and information. Women's lack of involvement in decision making at the cooperative and household level can have detrimental effects on cocoa farming homes in terms of food security and nutritional status of the household members.

PRO-PLANTEURS addresses these problems with the creation of Women's Committees within the partner cooperatives in order to provide women more opportunities in decision-making and better capabilities for responses to household needs.

Additionally, during the restitution workshop on March 9th, the **cocoa cooperatives made a commitment to support and develop the Women's Committees**. A detailed activity list for each Committee and Cooperative endorsed the general commitment and a mechanism managing the collaboration of the board of the cooperative with the Women's Committee was designed. Cooperatives will support the female organizations especially with awareness-raising activities and the engagements of the husbands.

After the workshops, **participants indicated that they now feel more confident** about their ability to effectively carry out their role as members of the Women's Committee. **Their understanding of gender notions has significantly increased**, providing them with the capacity to raise awareness on gender related issues within their cooperatives.

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