The importance of cocoa in a diversified farm

Demystifying the cocoa sector in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana – Preliminary data from a large-scale study to test common hypothesis and uncover the realities of cocoa growing households


*International Symposium on Cocoa Research (ISCR), Lima, Peru, 13-17 November 2017*
Background

• There are many myths and assumptions about the (future of the) cocoa sector
• Data is often not shared, limited in scope or based on small sample sizes
• One of the risks is that programmes and policies are based on assumptions
• The aim of our study is to close part of the knowledge gap and share this data in the public domain
• The final research report, including the database, will be made publically available early 2018.
Research Approach & Questions

Large and reliable dataset (quantitative + qualitative) of households in cocoa producing areas in Ghana and Cote d’Ivoire:

1. Income diversification and crop choice
2. Diversity among households
3. Intra-household dynamics

Nutrition and gender are cross-cutting themes.
Fieldwork locations

Ghana
• Nov. 2016 - Jan 2017
• KIT and Agriculture and Lifecycle

Côte d’Ivoire
• Jan 2017 - March 2017
• KIT and Agricole Local Partner
Sampling

• Sample among rural households in cocoa growing areas.
• 1560 Ghana + 1485 Côte d’Ivoire
• Survey, 76 FGDs and 3 ethnographic studies
• 1 respondent per household
• 34% female respondents in both countries

• Cocoa producing regions
• Weighing according to cocoa production
• Villages per district
• Random numbers per village (Village with highest numbers were selected)
• Transect walk in villages (North, East, South, West) – 10 houses randomly sampled
Cocoa households and non-cocoa households

• **Our sample**: Rural Households in cocoa growing areas

• **Cocoa households**: Cocoa is their most important OR second most important crop → 73% of total sample
  - Ghana 84%
  - Côte d’Ivoire 61%
Income percentage from sale of cocoa for cocoa households

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“Need for income diversification”

• The impact of deforestation and difficulties of cocoa replanting (e.g. Ruf & Schroth 2015)
• Projected decrease in climate suitability of cocoa production for areas where cocoa is currently being produced (e.g. Schroth et al 2016;)
• The growing concerns about (periods of) foods insecurity and malnutrition that seem to coincide with dependence on cocoa;
• Macro-economic studies who point out that the majority of farmers' lives below the poverty line (e.g. Oomes et al 2016).
• Recent price drop and how this affects farmers’ livelihoods.
Understanding current diversification patterns

• Cocoa was found to be the most important crop, or second most important crop for the majority of farmers

• Cocoa is the most frequently produced crop in both Ghana (90%) and Côte d’Ivoire (69%), There were also other frequently produced crops.
Crop diversity

- Ivorian respondents have greater crop diversity than Ghanaian respondents.
- In both Ghanaian and Ivorian cases, cocoa households feature greater crop diversification than non-cocoa households ($p$-value <0.01).
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- **Beans**: Beans, other
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- **Coconuts**: Coconuts
- **Coffee**: Coffee
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- **Maize**: Maize
- **Okra**: Okra
- **Palm**: Palm
- **Plantain**: Plantain
- **Rice**: Rice
- **Rubber**: Rubber
- **Tomatoes**: Tomatoes
- **Yam**: Yam

**Current crop combinations**

### Ghana

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### Côte d’Ivoire

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What explains high frequency of pairing?

1. Cassava and plantain provide excellent possibilities for intercropping with young cocoa;
2. Pairing these crops provides additional income more regularly and in cocoa off-season;
3. Both cassava and plantain are nutritious product for household; and
4. The production of these crops in combination fit current gender roles.
The importance of cocoa

1. Cocoa is seen as a reliable source of income that consistently generates the highest source of income (both Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire;
   - High income
   - Stable income → guaranteed market and price
   - Bulk income
   - Long-term income

2. Farmers feel that it is a crop of national importance (particularly in Ghana)

3. Cocoa provides farmers with a high degree of land security (particularly in Ghana)
Understanding gender differences

In Côte d’Ivoire, about twice as many male headed households (73%) reported they produce cocoa as female headed households (36%) ($p$-value <0.01).

• Particularly in Côte d’Ivoire, cocoa is perceived as “a man’s job”; women are seen as “helpers”.
• Activities that stand out as “a woman’s task” are often not recognized as contributing directly to cocoa production.
• Men do the marketing, control the marketing and make decisions
• Decision-making depends on ownership: women have much more difficulty accessing cocoa land than men
First conclusions

• The study confirms some well-known processes such as the systematic intercropping
• Cocoa is not the sole source of revenues.
• Cocoa remains center of cocoa farmers’ concerns and priorities, for variety of factors, and particularly for men.
• Final results of this study can serve as baseline for future discussions on diversification, gender relations, nutrition, decent income etc
• We are happy to share!... And do this in more countries!