



Summary Professionalisation of Cocoa Farming

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Cocoa farmers mainly the smallholders are struggling just to survive the next day, finding themselves at a disadvantage due to poverty, climate change impact, high costs of farm inputs, no bargaining power and zero access to direct market for their crop.

A strong and stable cocoa sector depends on the strengthen and success of cocoa farmers and farm workers, it is therefore vital for cocoa farmers to be included in value chain activities, so they can play their role as an important stakeholder that will better and improve the present situation of the value chain.

At present, cocoa farmers are marginalised in the cocoa value chain which has led to a range of socio-economic and environmental issues in farming communities, and the hinderance of cocoa farming recognition as a professional sector.



Such issues faced by cocoa farmers include:

- Widespread of poverty among cocoa farmers and farm workers
- Lack of better farming knowledge on GAPs and human rights
- Lack of farm resources like inputs, hybrid seed, fertilizers, herbicides, irrigation and farm management
- Zero access to financial services such as loans, pension benefits and sustainable income.
- Limited value addition to cocoa products and risk benefits
- Insufficient cocoa farming manpower and skills
- Diseases and pests control treats
- Limited access to sustainable and quality input and output markets
- Marginalization of women farmers and lack of capacity building opportunities
- Emerging threats to create new cocoa farms as a result of deforestation.

Therefore, to tackle these issues, it is essential that farmer professionalisation is facilitated, through collaborative efforts from all stakeholders.

Through professionalisation, cocoa farming can become a vibrant and prosperous sector that provides young men and women with opportunities to generate income and support themselves in the development of their farming enterprises for the future.

To facilitate the professionalization of cocoa farming, that will also enable farmers to be better linked with the rest of the value chain, eliminating marginalisation, Farmgate Cocoa Alliance has developed four key steps to professionalization:

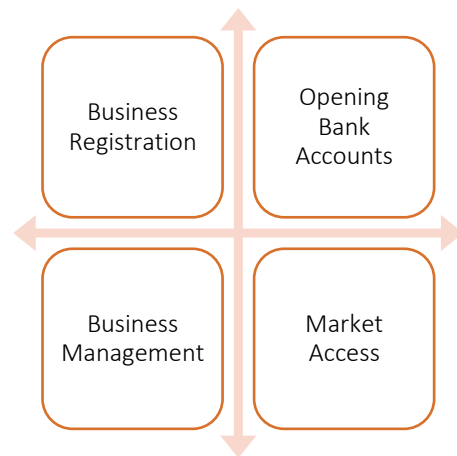
1) Register Farm as a Business

Farmers will be able to register their farms as a business at the local chamber of commerce, resulting in recognition such a farmer as a businessperson. This will make it possible for farmers to benefit from their profession as any other profession.



2) Access to Bank Account

Once registered a cocoa farming business, such farmer will have the necessary credentials to open a bank account and can build pension and access to other financial services as a cocoa entrepreneur. By opening a bank account, he / she will be able to develop partnership with cocoa bean potential buyer to negotiate a direct selling of cocoa bean in a transparent way. These direct transactions will facilitate fair business rules are applicable, stimulating better income generation and farmer can pay taxes to the government and become a responsible citizen.



3) Access to Market

As above, farmer will be able to conduct direct business dealings with a partner (buyer), financial transactions will be made through bank to bank payment. This reduces farmer reliance on middle-men to sell their cocoa crop and ensures that they are able to sell their crop at the correct value and therefore generate a fair income, reducing value distribution inequality.

4) Managing a Business

Practical literacy and basic business skills are two of the major obstacles preventing farmers from managing successful businesses and is thus impacting on the social and economic capacity of farmers, particularly smallholders. As such, we focus on building farmer skills through our comprehensive training programmes, which include literacy, numeracy and basic business and financial skills for the cocoa farmers who are engaged in our activities. With these tools, farmers are able to effectively manage their cocoa farming businesses in a professional and successful manner.

In addition, strengthening leadership and governance skills is essential to maintaining a professional cocoa farming business and resulting to a successful cocoa sector. Therefore, we train individual cocoa farmers, management staffs of cooperatives, associations, unions and organised farmers groups to uphold and implement democratic values in their activities.

Based on these four key elements, professionalisation activities undertaken by Farmgate Cocoa Alliance can include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting farmers in registering their business and engaging with cocoa farming as a profession, rather than an extension of household activities.
- Assisting young men and women in cocoa communities' secure access to lands suitable to for cocoa farming.
- Training and providing advanced farming methods to these young talented farmers to ensure proper implementation of GAPs and to manage a sustainable farming business.

Assess and provide farmers training, inputs and tools, Develop and provide training materials, organizing sensitization workshops, Facilitating exchange of visits between farmers and consumers.



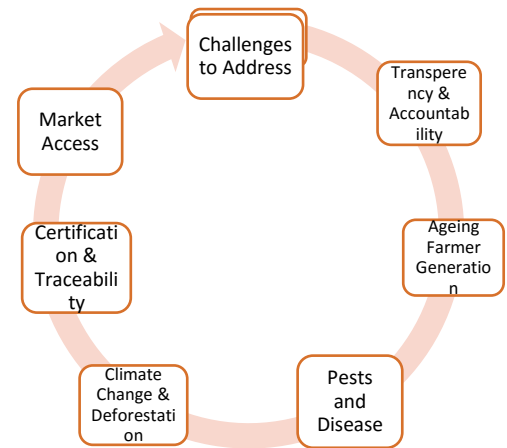
Areas of training include the following:

Organic production of cocoa crop, Soil fertility management in organic systems, Soil and water management, weed management in organic Agriculture, Post-harvest handling, conduct unplanned Internal Control and providing training to Internal Quality Management Staff

High Skills Trainer of Trainers

We also provide high skill specialized trainer(s) using experts from our members and partners organization from leading fine and flavour regions (Caribbean Community and Latin Americans) by such, providing and addressing specific needs in organic cocoa farming from experience team.

The training is offered to cocoa farmers at free as we continue to exploring new ways to improve livelihood and create employment in the cocoa sector for young people and promoting self-reliance in cocoa growing communities in west and central Africa.



In addition to offering subsidized services to farmers and farm workers such as:

- Training in organic cocoa farming
- Project management
- Organic market promotion
- Market linkages
- Designing and developing Internal Control Systems
- Designing and developing Internal quality management
- Training on organic production, processing, and marketing
- Feasibility studies
- Cost benefit analysis
- Value chain development
- Training needs assessment

Specialized and tailored made services are also provided to individual groups/companies after an in-depth evaluation of the specific group needs and constraints that may require a tailored response in any of the fields mentioned above

Training activities include:

- Modern organic production practices
- Locally produced organic farm inputs
- Technical advice on pest and disease management
- Training and advice on sustainable farm weeding and clearing methods
- How to conduct farm assessment and plan farm activities

Training, Research & Extension

- Farm post-harvest handling
- Training on standards and certification
- Training on market creation sustenance