



Community Field Agent (CFA)
Role In Professionalization Of
“Small-Scale Cocoa Farming”

Cocoa Farming Entrepreneurship

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) Registering a Business

Farmers will be able to register their farms as a business, resulting in recognition of cocoa farmers as independent entrepreneurs. Community Field Agents¹, as trained by Farmgate Cocoa Alliance, will facilitate this registration.

2) Opening a Bank Account

Once registered as legal entrepreneurs, farmers will have the necessary credentials to open a bank account. Community Field Agents will also assist farmers in this process, using reliable Farmgate Cocoa Alliance partners who are able to provide local financial services to farmers.

By having access to a bank account, farmers are able to conduct direct, transparent and recorded transactions for purchasing inputs and for selling their crop. These direct transactions will facilitate the applicable taxes to be collected and ensure that farmers receive a fair price for their cocoa, stimulating better income generation.

3) Access to Market

As above, farmers will be able to conduct direct transactions with cocoa buyers through their bank accounts. These buyers are linked with farmers via the Farmgate Cocoa Alliance network, to ensure transparent transactions and that farmers have direct market access. This reduces farmer reliance on middle-men to sell their cocoa, 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 sector. Therefore, we train individual cocoa farmers, cooperatives, associations, unions and organised groups to uphold and implement democratic values in their management activities.

Based on these four key elements, professionalisation activities undertaken by Farmgate Cocoa Alliance and Community Field Agents 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.
- Training farmers in business skills and practices necessary to run a successful cocoa farming business
- Facilitating farmer access to financial service providers and securing means for transparent transactions and taxation
- Collaborating with partner to provide direct market access for them to sell their crop at fair price based on the expenses acquired and to realise profit.