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| **Project Title** : **Environmentally Sustainable Production Practices in Cocoa Landscapes (ESP) - Phase II** | |
| **Implementing Agency: Ghana Cocoa Board** | **Date: 1st January – 30th December 2018** |

| **1. RESULTS PERFORMANCE/ACHIEVEMENTS** | | | | |
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| **Project Results**  *State Project Results*  *(outcomes of outputs from approved project document or workplan)* | **Indicators**  *The project outcome or output indicators as stated in the M&E framework and/or AWP* | **Target**  *Targets agreed by the project team on each indicator* | **Update on Results**  *A brief analysis on any relevant changes pertaining to the outcome or output achieved with respect to targets* | **Comments** |
| **Outcome 1: Mainstreaming environmentally sustainable production practices into farmer level practices** | | | | |
| *Output 1.1.1*  *Farmers trained and equipped in environmentally sustainable production practices* | 1.1.1 Number of trainers (CEAs, Community Animators, Lead Farmers and Field Staff of other IPs) trained on environmentally sustainable production practices | 300 | ESP II is designed to provide technical support to farmers in focal Cocoa Life Program districts to adopt environmentally sustainable and climate change resilient cocoa production practices and to conserve ecosystems and natural resources in cocoa landscapes. One of the key strategies to achieve this is to mainstream environmentally sustainable production practices into farmer extension trainings. The main element of this strategy is to develop training modules on selected environmental sustainability practices and train Cocoa Extension Agents and other Cocoa Life Implementing Partners to enable them to also train farmers on the selected practices (using the trainer of trainer’s concept).  Two separate repeat Trainer of Trainers (TOT) capacity building works were therefore held for Community Extension Agents (CEAs)drawn from both mainstream Cocoa Health & Extension Division (CHED) of COCOBOD and those appointed by Cocoa Life (CL), Community Animators and staff of other Cocoa Life Implementation Partners (IPs) and Lead Farmers from all the CL communities in each District.  The first training built the capacity of the trainees and enhanced their knowledge and skills on the principal rudiments of ESP’s tree integration program that seeks to promote multiple benefits of enhancing tree & carbon stocks on farms and tree-tenure regulations that ensure farmers’ ownership rights of planted trees as well as silviculture practices in 5 Districts from Cohorts 3. Breakdown of Participation was as follows:   |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | ***Districts*** | ***CHED CEAs*** | ***Other CL IPs*** | ***Community Animators*** | ***Lead Farmers*** | ***Total*** | | | Sekyere East | 5 | 4 | 57 | 139 | 205 | | Ahafo Ano North | 6 | 5 | 36 | 129 | 176 | | Bia West | 14 | 8 | 80 | 162 | 264 | | Juabeso | 5 | 10 | 49 | 130 | 194 | | Awutu Senya | 5 | 4 | 46 | 141 | 196 | | **TOTAL** | **35** | **31** | **268** | **701** | **1,035** |   *(Note: 55% of participants were Females)*  Participants after the training acted as lead trainers in their respective communities and were able to also train other farmers in the following areas using peer teaching mechanisms.   1. Importance of overhead shade on cocoa farms 2. Shade management on cocoa farms 3. Tree selection – desirable and undesirable trees 4. Ecological basis of desirable and undesirable tree species in cocoa farms 5. Proper method of eliminating undesirable trees from cocoa farms 6. Planting techniques including space determination in both new and existing farms 7. Tree seedling planting procedures in newly established as well as in existing farms 8. Maintenance and care/nurturing of planted and naturally occurring trees on cocoa farms 9. Ownership right for planted tree and registration procedures 10. The right of the farmer over existing naturally regenerated trees on farms – among others.   These trainings have resulted in the willingness of over 10,000 farmers who have planted economic trees of the farms and the high demand for seedlings from the project. Monitoring and follow-up visits to most farms shows improvements in the condition and number of economic trees on the farmers. There is also noticeable improvements in the way the trees and planted and nurtured are providing shade as compared to the baseline situation where most farms had little or no shade.  The main objective of the second TOT was to build and enhance the technical capacity, knowledge and skills of the same group of extension trainers in selected environmentally sustainable production practices – the project is promoting. This time, they were selected from CL’s cohort 2 districts because new Community Animators had recently been appointed for Districts under these cohorts. The content of the training was based on the ESP supplementary training materials on sustainable practices – including the customized educational flipchart and the handouts we given to participants in addition to the main manual on sustainability practices.  Breakdown of Participation was as follows:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | ***Districts*** | ***CHED CEAs*** | ***Other CL IPs*** | ***Community Animators*** | **Total** | | | *Wassa East* | *5* | *2* | *88* | 95 | | *Amansie West* | *4* | *8* | *72* | 84 | | *Asunafo North* | *4* | *5* | *82* | 91 | | *Suhum* | *7* | *0* | *71* | 78 | | *Fanteakwa* | *5* | *0* | *30* | 35 | | *New Juabeng* | *5* | *0* | *15* | 20 | | *West Akyem* | *6* | *0* | *50* | 56 | | ***TOTAL*** | ***36*** | ***15*** | ***408*** | **459** |   *(Note: 54 % of participants were females)*  Again, the knowledge and skills gained as a result of the training enables the trainers to also train other farmers in cocoa productivity improvement practices (GAP with sustainability content); the need to avoid deforestation and not to encroach into forest reserves and other protected areas such as sacred groves; the need to protect wildlife habitats and how to manage waste on farms. Other key areas covered during the TOT that the trainers are helping to extend to other farmers include good soil conservation practices such as the use of organic and inorganic fertilizers and their impact on both productivity and the farm environment including soil erosion; water conservation and safe handling of agrochemicals.  Random interviews/focused group discussions and observations in 20 randomly selected communities in 5 Districts with farmers indicate the trainers are dutifully impacting the knowledge and practices to other farmers who are also practicing them on their farms – resulting in much improved management of the ecosystem of the various cocoa landscapes. For instance, as a result of what the trainers are doing, farmers are now has knowledge of the dangers associated with the excessive use of agro-chemicals and the harm such a practice does to the environment and biodiversity conservation. They relate this to the dwindling snail population and annual mushroom harvest and have adopted practices to minimize their effect on the environment such as ensuring the use the correct recommended dosages. | The target (300) has been exceeded. Unlike the other Cocoa Life (CL) Implementing Partners (IPs), ESP, as part of its objectives, is to mainstream environmentally sustainable practices into Ghana’s cocoa production system through capacity building of extension workers. The project has since been working with Community Extension Agents (CEAs) of the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) COCOBOD (and other CEAs employed by CL) and Community Animators who act as liaison for the project in each community. The project also decided to train Lead Farmers in each community to assist with its peer learning initiative. This led to an increase in number of trainers that were trained in 2018 (from 300 to 1,035). |
| *Output 1.1.2. Farmers enhance trees and carbon stocks on cocoa farms* | 1.1.2. Number of cocoa farmers trained in environmentally sustainable production practices. | 15,100 | Direct farmer training was spearheaded by the CHED CEAs, Community Animators, ESP Field Coordinators and field staff of the other CL IPs with technical back stopping from the PMU – based on knowledge and skills gained from the TOT sessions. Farmers are trained in key good agriculture practices (GAP) with enhanced sustainability content to promote natural resource management practices and sustainable eco-system management practices in cocoa landscapes. Trainings are held at both farm and community levels – sometimes on CL established demonstration farms.  Over **27,313** farmers have been trained in both sustainable 2018. The break down is follows:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Districts** | **Number of Farmers Trained** | | | | *Males* | *Females* | *Total* | | Bia West | 2,220 | 1,180 | 3,400 | | Juabeso | 2,100 | 1,004 | 3,104 | | Sekyere East | 1,102 | 980 | 2,082 | | Ahafo Ano North | 1,509 | 785 | 2,294 | | Amansie West | 1,122 | 765 | 1,887 | | Asunafo North | 1,140 | 923 | 2,063 | | Awutu Senya East | 1,323 | 640 | 1,963 | | Wassa East | 1,213 | 987 | 2,200 | | New Juabeng | 1,321 | 873 | 2,194 | | Fanteakwa | 973 | 629 | 1,602 | | Suhum | 1,200 | 774 | 1,974 | | West Akyem | 1,675 | 875 | 2,550 | | **Total** | **16,898** | **10,415** | **27,313** |   *Note: Number of cocoa farmers trained in environmentally sustainable production practices is compiled using the average of farmers who attend all training modules per community not those who attend just a particular session – in order to avoid double counting.*  Field observations and results from focused group discussions in 20 randomly selected communities in 5 districts involving 80 farmers have shown that farmers are adopting most of the improved practices they have received training on. For instance, farmers now understand and know why and how they should create buffer zones on farms with water bodies in order not to pollute them and cause harm to aquatic life and other living organisms. They are gradually moving from “sun” cocoa to shaded cocoa through economic tree integration on their farmers; their perception on climate change and its negative effects on the environments have improved and they now know they have to farm more sustainably in order to conserve the ecosystem for future generations. It is heartwarming to hear them talk eloquently about the need to work towards environmental sustainability – something that was missing at project inception/baseline. Overall, it has led to increase yeilds (as reported by farmers) as farmers now produce more tonnage than previously resulting in enhanced incomes and therefore improved standards of living. | Target exceeded mainly due to heightened awareness by farmers in environmental sustainable issues, their interest to acquire “new” skills and knowledge and the increase in the number of trainers.  ESP’s primary target is 15,100 farmers in the 447 communities where CL is working directly. ESP is however using the landscape approach and has therefore expanded beyond the CL registered farmers and communities. Current estimated coverage is about 27,000 farmers – in both CL and non-CL Communities. A rapid appraisal carried out in December 2018 shows a 65% adoption of environmentally sustainable practices the project is promoting. This would however be confirmed through a formal survey at the end of ESP II. |
| 1.1.3 % of farmers adopting soil improvement practices in Cocoa Life Communities | 20% | As a result of the extension package extended to farmers participating in the project, key soil improvement practices such as the application of organic and inorganic fertilizers, erosion control, and proper use of agro-chemicals to control weeds, disposal and management of farm waste, among others, are now being practiced by more than 70% of the farmers who participated in the training sessions (personal communication/focus group discussions. These have resulted in higher yields for the farmers who no longer depend on old tradition of “forest rent”- as a source of farm fertilization, but are now taking steps to combine the usage of both organic and inorganic fertilizers to improve soil fertility. Farmers now practice mulching and those with erosion problems on their farms have been trained in erosion control and prevention measures that they have adopted to minimize the loss of their fertile top soil. | Soil improvement practices are part of the environmentally sustainable practices package and estimated at 70% adoption. This percentage has been boosted by COCOBOD’s free fertilizer distribution scheme and the opening of agro input shops by the various unions that has increase access to the inputs. |
| *Output 1.1.2. Farmers enhance trees and carbon stocks on cocoa farms* | 1.2.1 Number of shade trees procured and distributed | 350,000 | A total of **275,500** economic tree comprising of 3 spp (Mahogany, Ofram & Emire) were procured from 3 commercial nurseries (225,500 seedlings) and from the Forestry Commission -under Forest Investment Project (FIP) (50,000 seedlings), supplied and planted by 11,689 farmers from 290 communities in all 12 Cocoa Life Districts as follows:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | ***Districts*** | ***# of Communities*** | ***# of farmers*** | ***# of seedlings supplied & planted*** | | Juabeso | 23 | 938 | 50,000 | | Bia West | 34 | 1,520 | 50,000 | | Wassa East | 17 | 1,100 | 20,000 | | Asunafo North | 16 | 514 | 15,500 | | Sekyere East | 20 | 900 | 20,000 | | Suhum | 42 | 1,330 | 20,000 | | Awutu Senya East | 20 | 1,200 | 20,000 | | West Akyem | 25 | 943 | 15,000 | | Fanteakwa | 15 | 871 | 10,000 | | New Juabeng | 42 | 856 | 10,000 | | Ahafo Ano North | 25 | 1,147 | 35,000 | | Amansie West | 11 | 370 | 10,000 | | **TOTAL** | **290** | **11,689** | **275,500** |   The distribution of economic tree seedlings to cocoa farmers to enhance the tree and carbon stocks on their farmer has become ESP’s flagship activity and has caught on well with farmers. Estimated adoption based on field interviews and observation is more than 60% of cocoa farmers in each participating District. The ESP tree integration program covers both CL and non-CL communities using the landscape approach. These landscapes, since the inception of the tree planting program in 2014, are gradually re-gaining their vegetative and tree cover providing the farms with better shade that is resulting in higher cocoa yields, creation of habitats for wildlife, and protection of water bodies – among others. Alternatively, the procurement of the seedlings has also generated indirect income to the private/commercial tree nursery operators and other businesses along the tree seedling value chain including transporters. | Contrary to earlier promises, the FC could only supply 50,000 seedlings that were given to the Juabeso District. Even here, ESP had to bear the cost of transporting the seedlings to the various communities. As a result, project funds had to be spread thin in order t ensure all 12 Districts are supplied with some minimum number of seedlings. The project was able to supply just 32% of the original request. |
| 1.2.2 Number of shade trees planted on cocoa farms in the project districts | 350,000 |
| 1.2.3 % of farmers with adequate shade trees on their farms to enhance biodiversity | 20% |
| 1.2.4 Number of hectares planted | 20,000 |
| *Output 1.3. Tree registration and tree tenure policies for the adoption of environmentally sustainable cocoa production practices developed* | 1.3.1 Number of CHED CEAs and farmer cooperative leaders trained on tree registration modalities | 200 | Assisting farmers to register both planted and naturally occurring economic trees in off-reserve landscapes has been one project deliverable that has seen a considerable delay in its implementation as a result of several inconsistencies and bottlenecks with the policy. ESP has been involved at several levels, working with other stakeholders to find practical and workable solution to overcome some of the challenges but with little cooperation from the Forestry Commission and its sector Ministry (Ministry of Lands & Natural Resources). Nonetheless, the project worked to explore ways that would make the registration easy for the farmers. Since tree planting has become generally acceptable to farmers who will continue to increase tree stocks on their farmers, the project decided to instead build local capacity for the registration by selecting, training and equipping Field Data Enumerators (FDE) from communities participating in the project in the use of a mobile application it has developed for the exercise. By that, the FDE who are community-based would and be available to continue the tree registration exercise even when the project comes to full term.  The project earlier hired ImageAd, an IT firm as a Consultant to develop a database management platform (web and mobile) to conform to the requirement s of the registration form approved by the FC. The web database comes with a dash board, modules and other features which allow users to add data directly on the web, filter, search, edit, delete and sort any type of the data. The web app has been built to connect to the database to retrieve, download and print data in formats such as XLS, CSV, XML and JSON. It can also be used to record the biodata of the farmer, coordinates of the farm and of the various trees on the farm - either planted or naturally occurring on.  The data collected with the mobile application can be synced with the web application to allow for data viewing. The web application provides a report displaying the land size and coordinates of the farms registered along with the trees planted/naturally occurring on a map for the user to view the activities being undertaken.  Project staffs – including the Field Coordinators and PMU– were first trained in the use of the database management to equip them with the knowledge and skills to effectively use both the mobile and web application to collect data on the field and manage the data collected (View, Edit, Add, Delete and Print). This is to enable them to also train and supervise the FDEs who were subsequently trained on the use of the application.  Due to time and funding constraints, the project decided to limit/pilot the registration exercise to the Suhum and Asunafo North Districts. It has trained 43 FDE (21 for Suhum and 22 for Asunafo North) who have since commenced work to assist eligible farmers to register their trees. The pilot is also to re-assess the tree registration process and to provide a basis for engaging with FC/MLNR | It has been very frustrating dealing with the FC on tree registration. ESP has been pursuing this agenda since Phase I and it remains an unfinished business. There is a lot of foot dragging from the FC coupled with constant shifting of the goal post. Notwithstanding the challenges, ESP has taken steps to commence the registration in 2 Districts. The others would be covered in 2019. Thanks to CL for their offer to provide the project with the essential materials – mobile phones, tape measures, wellington boots and the monthly allowance for the enumerators. |
| 1.3.2 Number of trees registered | 800,000 |
| 1.3.3 Number of farmers registered | 8,000 |

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| **Outcome 2: Natural resources and ecosystems management in cocoa production landscapes** | | | | |
| *Output 2.1. CREMAs established* | 2.1.1. Suitable areas for CREMA establishment identified, delineated  and 2 new CREMAs established | 1 | Work is about 95% complete on-going activities to develop a second project-supported CREMA in the Atobiase landscape CREMA – now known as **Pra-Suhyen CREMA**. All key activities leading the issuance of the certificate of devolution by the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources has either been completed or almost completed. As part of the process, the following key activities were carried out during the reporting period:   * Community entry, sensitization and awareness creation on the CREMA concept in all 39 identifiable communities in the Atobiase landscape * Election of the Community Resource Management Committees (CRMCs) in all the CREMA communities * Re-grouping of CREMA Communities/landscape into 4 main Clusters to facilitate easier management and organization * Election of the CREMA Executive Committee and the composition of the CREMA Management Committee (CMC) made up of unit heads of selected Assembly Decentralized departments and agencies * Finalization of the CREMA boundaries and the development of a map of the CREMA area showing all the communities * Participatory Development of draft CREMA by-laws and constitution in close consultation with CRMCs and Traditional Authorities in the CREMA * Meeting of relevant committees of the Wassa East District Assembly to discuss the CREMA concept and draft bylaws for adoption by Assembly as a bylaw – paving the way for its gazette publication. The bylaws are currently at the government press awaiting final publication   As part of the process the following studies are also completed and the reports submitted:   * An assessment of the preparedness of the CREMA for devolution by a team from the WD. It was used to examine the knowledge levels, leadership skills, cohesion – etc – of the various CREMA governance structures established during the development process and a report with recommendation submitted for the guidance of the Consultant working on the development of the CREMA. All recommendations has been complied with and implemented. * A socioeconomic study of the CREMA area * A biological study of the CREMA area * A draft CREMA Management and Action Plan   Due to contractual and timing challenges, the Consultant has been asked to discontinue work and the PMU will directly oversee the completion of the few outstanding issues and ensure the devolution of the CREMA. They include:   * Finalization of the CREMA management and action plan * Ensuring the bylaws receive gazette publication * Submission of the gazetted bylaws and other relevant documentations to enable them apply for the certificate of devolution from the Ministry of Lands and Natural resources * Inauguration of the CREMA   To date, all the CREMA governance structures are well established and the CREMA has adopted its Constitution. The participating communities through sensitization/education have so far demonstrated a high level of commitment and enthusiasm to ensuring the CREMA works efficiently and effectively in enabling the development and resource conservation agendas they have developed for themselves succeed. They are keen on ensuring they take advantage of its adaptive nature to collectively work towards sustainable natural resources management in the CREMA as the framework bestows credibility and authority to decisions and gives communities ownership of their resources, including management and economic benefit/rights. It lightens the burden on government law enforcement institutions and has made the communities their own “police/watchdog”. It also derives strength and experiences from the traditional decision-making instruments that gives relevance to the traditional authority while inculcating democratic practices in all segments of community decisions and actions.  The development of CREMAs in Ghana has not been a smooth endeavor, it is plagued with both administrative and operational challenges that need to be addressed by policy makers to enable the CREMAs achieve their goals. In order to bring the issues to the attention of the relevant stakeholders including policy makers, the project recommended to the UNDP country office and the MLNR to organize a National Dialogue on ways to improve the CREMA development process in Ghana.  Under the auspices therefore of the UNDP, the MLNR, the Green Livelihood Alliance (A Rocha Ghana, Tropenbos Ghana, Friends of the Earth Ghana), SNV, IUCN, Mondelez International Cocoa Life Program and the Shared Resources Joint Solutions, a national policy dialogue was organized to discuss the implementation, successes and challenges of CREMAs development in Ghana. The dialogue, held on 3rd October 2018 in Accra, was on the theme “*Empowering Communities to Manage Natural Resources Sustainably: A Review of Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) Implementation in Ghana*”. It brought together over 120 participants, including representatives of CREMAs, CREMA practitioners, representatives of state agencies, development partners, private sector actors and other stakeholders from all over the country. Key speakers at the event included the Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Mr. Benito Owusu Bio; the Omanhene of Mim Traditional Council, Okofrobuo Dr. Yaw Agyei II; Assistant Country Director of UNDP Ghana, Mr. Louis Kuukpen; the Coordinator of Green Livelihoods Alliance, Mercy Owusu Ansah and Mr. Abu Juam, the Technical Director – Forestry, MLNR.  Among other issues discussed and adopted at the dialogue is the recognition that:   1. CREMAs as an institutional framework for community participation in natural resource management in Ghana is slowly yielding good outcomes, with wide community and public acceptance as the way to go in securing Ghana’s remnant natural heritage. 2. CREMAs currently present Ghana with a highly workable/efficient option to ensure participation and transfer responsibilities and benefits to communities, in achieving emissions reductions for REDD+, addressing illegal logging and mining, and direct investment to support green commodity value chains critical for livelihoods, building resilience and prosperity in communities across the country. 3. The absence of a consolidated national legal framework, insufficient recognition and support from law enforcement and compliance agencies is limiting true empowerment of CREMAs and eroding the gains made and opportunities to achieve real reforms within the natural management sector.   The dialogue therefore adopted a communique which recommended among other things, the following action points for immediate considerations: *Policy and Legislative Support for CREMAs*  1. The Wildlife Resources Management Bill, which has gone through two rounds of parliamentary reviews under the past two Governments, should be passed into an Act with all urgency. The Act when passed will reinforce the legal authority and scope of CREMAs to exercise their mandate to take responsibility and share in the benefits of managing natural resources at the local level. 2. CREMAs by their nature are community led and so naturally a part of the decentralized local government system in form and structure. CREMAs should therefore be integrated in the planning, implementation, management and evaluation of all district development planning processes for greater recognition and support. 3. Responsibility to manage should come with opportunities to share in benefits. Benefit sharing schemes that address these challenges should be agreed and implemented to sustain community interest to take responsibility for natural resource management. Tree tenure benefits in particular need to be agreed and implemented as soon as possible to allow farmers who nurture naturally occurring trees on their farms to derive benefits. 4. There is the need for Government to carry out a comprehensive national evaluation of the implementation of the CREMA concept so far in Ghana. This is to help the implementers’ gain in-depth understanding of the challenges across different landscapes and build sustainable solutions to address them. It will also be an opportunity to identify success stories and share knowledge and experiences   ***CREMA Devolution***   1. Political and elite interference in the management and use of natural resources, such as side-stepping community consent, re-assigning timber concessions to individuals and companies, despite the issuance of certificate of devolutions to community members, does not promote transparency and inclusivity, derails interest and shared responsibility and must therefore cease.   ***Capacity Development of CREMAs***   1. The dialogue recognized that most CREMAs have been created through time-bound projects. One of the reasons for the collapse of some of the CREMAs is that their executives are usually not able to perform their functions properly when these projects end or when the agencies/organizations that promoted the formation of the CREMAs exit the communities. To ensure long-term sustainability and proper governance of CREMAs, implementing partners should adequately build capacities of CREMA executives to effectively undertake managerial roles when they exit. 2. Similarly, capacities of Traditional Authorities and landowners are to be built and they should be involved from the onset of the CREMA formation to ensure support and ownership of the process. 3. It is recommended that implementing partners periodically engage with law enforcement agencies including the Ghana Police Service and the Judicial Services on forest and wildlife policies to facilitate timely prosecutions of offenders and the protection of the rights of CREMAs. 4. Women in communities play significant role in natural resource management in Ghana, and efforts to ensure active and effective participation in decision making, management and sharing in the benefits of CREMAs should be deliberate and encouraged.  *Financial Sustainability of CREMAs*  1. Where they exist, CREMAs should be the frontline actors in the creation of jobs within the agriculture and forest development programs in Ghana and should therefore be integrated in national programs as they are developed from time to time. For example, participants strongly commend government in its effort to create jobs at the district level by engaging the youth in agriculture and afforestation programs. However, it would be more desirable if government works with CREMAs in areas where such afforestation programs are being implemented to enable the CREMAs generate additional funds and help promote conservation. 2. Furthermore, government and development partners should continue to prioritize support for CREMAs and factor them in the development of national interventions such as the Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and other REDD+ programs. This would bring financial returns to CREMAs and reward them for the trees planted over the years that are sequestering carbon. 3. CREMAs are encouraged to engage District Assemblies to discuss possibility of tapping into timber royalties they receive for community development 4. Achieving financial sustainability for the sustainable management of natural resources should be the central goal of all CREMAs and partners who support in their development. Facilitating agencies should support CREMAs to add value to community resources to generate revenue to ensure financial sustainability. CREMAs can be supported to identify marketable products, to develop business plans that ensure sustainable business practices. Private-sector led green investments for high-end and new commodities can contribute to changing the economic fortunes of CREMAs. |  |
| 2.1.2 Number of CEC/CRMC meetings held in the Ayum-Asuokow CREMA | 4 | The project continued to build capacity of the Ayum-Asuokow CREMA to enhance their sustainability and efficiency. The CREMA was assisted to hold its Annual General Meeting for 2018. It was attended by 2 representatives from each of the 36 Community Resource Management Committees (CRMCs) in the CREMA to deliberate and take stock of their performance on 2017 and also plan what they intend to do in 2018. A key outcome of the meeting was the development of the 2018 Annual Workplan and Budget for the CREMA. The plan covered 6 key thematic areas including capacity building; community mobilization; environmental management; information, communication & education (ICE); economic opportunities & fund raising and monitoring & meetings. Specific activities have been outlined under each theme to constitute what they want to do for the rest of 2018. Project staff continues to work closely with them to ensure the implementation of the underlisted planned activities:   * Election of new Officers for the CREMA in accordance with their constitution. ESP worked with the “old” CREMA Executive Community (CEC) to organize elections in all 36 CREMA communities to elect, first and foremost, Community Resource Management Committee (CRMC) members. Thereafter, all the Chairmen and one other member from each community met at Kasapin to constitute an electoral college and elected officers for the 4 Clusters and the also new CEC members. * Capacity building and orientation for all the newly elected CREMA officials to equip them for the new roles   In response to a request from the CREMA, the project donated some essential administrative equipment including the following to facilitate the efficient running of the CREMA:   1. One Honda S125 motorbike 2. One multi-purpose printer 3. One desk top computer 4. Some stationary   There were more than 5 CEC/CRMC meetings held in the Ayum-Asuokow CREMA during the period under review. These meetings are essential in developing cohesion and working collectively towards a common goal.    The main barriers that have become evident to a more sustainable management of the area are:   * Low cocoa productivity * Lack of community-based land use planning, and * Disconnect between the communities and forest management.   Thus, ESP’s core activities, which include the development of the CREMA, promotion of best cocoa farming practices and enabling community-oriented forest monitoring & conservation are providing opportunities to improve the long term sustainability of the landscape and to improve livelihoods through yield and income increase on, as well as associated climate-smart agriculture benefits.  Communities are gradually becoming primary users and decision makers on matters that affect the dominant natural resources (cocoa farms, forests, wildlife) within the CREMA area. There are several instances of communities now able to challenge and stop concessionaires from harvesting timber from the CREMA. They have been able to stop the annual ritual where water bodies are polluted and destroyed in order to harvest fish. Therefore, communities now have a significant impact on the sustainability of these natural resources; making them a critical stakeholder in any natural resource-based program and decision-making process. Within the CREMA, communities participate in and make all relevant decisions in a step-by-step process that includes the development of community-based committees and the recent election of CREMA officials. | Resource mobilization in form of cash to support the work of the CREMA still remains a key challenge that needs to be addressed. That notwithstanding the CREMA is on course to achieve its objectives of sustainably managing the natural resources within its boundaries. Successful community-based management of natural resources is an adaptive process that requires patience and a sustained commitment from all stakeholders as community consensus-building and decision-making do not happen overnight and can be fraught with complexities. It is therefore necessary to ensure CREMA governance structures are assisted to improve their managerial and mobilization capacities in order to provide efficient leaderships. To this effect the newly elected CREMA executives were trained in community mobilization, record keeping and facilitation skills to enable them steer affairs of the group with minimal support from Project staff. These kick-starts gradual weaning processes to enable the CREMA become sustainable. |
|  | 2.1.3 50% of Operational Cost covered by internally generated funds by the CREMA | 25% | The CREMA is yet to start generating any internal funds – especially in cash. CREMA communities have however contributed in-kind to the running of the CREMA in terms of time for meetings and other CREMA related events, communal work (eg. Afforestation along waterways), awareness creation among peers, among others. In quantitative terms, this constitutes about 20% of the operational cost of running the CREMA.  To address the issues of funding and sustainability, the CREMA has decided to levy all CREMA residents who are 18 years and above, a one-time levy of GHC 10 as foundation contribution to support CREMA activities. This has been endorsed by the Mim Traditional Council which have also pledged an unspecified amount to support the CREMA. |
| 2.1.4 Number of farmers practicing sustainable ecosystem management practices | 15,000 | Baseline estimates of the population of the 36 CREMA communities are about 25,000. It is estimated through field observations and other rapid assessment methods that at least 20,000 of them are practicing sustainable ecosystem management practices. A formal survey would be conducted at the end of ESP II to specifically establish the rate of adoption. |
| 2.1.5 Number and percentage of Water bodies in Cocoa Life Communities protected | 30 | 12 of the 36 CREMA communities have been identified as having water bodies on which the communities rely for water for household use. All the 12 communities have planted economic trees along these water ways to protect them from drying up during the dry season. The trees also act as buffers. |
| *Output 2.2: Three community fire prevention volunteer brigades established and trained in the CREMAs* | 2.2.1. Three priority fire-prone areas identified | 1 | Already, the Ayum-Asuokow CREMA area was identified as a priority fire-prone area and a Community Fire Volunteer brigade comprising 200 members drawn from all the 36 CREMA communities was formed, trained and equipped to lead on fire prevention and control efforts in the area. They were inaugurated in 2017 and have since been championing efforts to eliminate the incidence of both domestic and bush fires in the area. The strategy adopted here was to train selected individuals to work with other farmers and community member to prevent and control fires.  No additional brigade has been formed during the 2018 project period. Instead, the project used the period to monitor and evaluate the performance of the current brigade in order to decide whether to use the same strategy for the second brigade or there would be the need to modify it.  Based on this and with technical support from the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS), quarterly evaluation meetings were held with the volunteers to understand how they work and also the results/impacts of their work. This culminated in an annual review meeting of all the trained fire volunteers in the Ayum-Asuokow CREMA. The meeting discussed progress of work and challenges in carrying out their responsibilities. It also resolved certain outstanding issues that came up during monitoring round during the year. These included:   1. Team work among volunteers trained prior to the coming on board of those trained under the CREMA and their relationships with other CREMA structures at the community level. The need for them to see themselves as working towards the same goal was stressed at the meeting and it was agreed that both groups should be brought under the same “command” structure under the supervision of a zonal coordinator. 2. Acquisition and use of identity cards – the GNFS agreed to facilitate the acquisition of identity cards for all members to enhance their work.   Overall, the performance of the volunteers has been very satisfactory as there are no recorded fire outbreaks in the landscape since they began operations in 2017. An assessment of their performance on the field over the period and during a special focused group discussion at the annual review meeting clearly indicates they are very conversant with the roles and responsibilities that include the following:   * Awareness creation and education in their communities on the dangers of bush fires and how community member can prevent it * Practical firefighting and control techniques – these were demonstrated at the review meeting to illustrate their competency in these skill * Supervision and technical support to farms who want to burn their farms and also those involved in additional livelihood activities such as the burning of dry cocoa pods for potash used in the preparation of a local soap (alata samera) as well as those engaged in the distillation of a local gin (akpeteshie). They charge some minimum fees when they supervise these activities and the incomes so generated are pulled together by the rural fire unit of the GNFS to provide some basic tools for their operations. * Regular patrols in the landscape to ensure no unattended or naked fires are left in the landscape – such patrols are also used to interact with farmers and to educate them on how to handle fires   Based on the satisfactory results so far achieved, ESP would roll out a similar program in the Pra-Suhyen CREMA in 2019. | The Ayum-Asuokow CREMA benefited from the first CFV training of 200 members. Based on their performance, the concept would be extended to the others now under development. Farmlands protected resulting from the performance of the CFVs would be assessed after the 2018 dry season.  The target for training in sustainable ecosystem management practices has been exceeded. |
| 2.2.2 Number of community fire prevention brigade members trained | 0 |
| 2.2.4 Hectares farmlands protected from bush fires in Cocoa Life Districts | 80 Ha |
| 2.2.5 Number of farmers trained on sustainable ecosystem management practices | 400 |
| *Output 2.3. Enhance capacities of traditional authorities and community opinion leaders to enable them enforce traditional conservation practices to conserve biodiversity* | 2.3.1 Number of community dialogues and capacity building trainings organized | 3 | The community dialogue series are important forums to bring community members and their traditional rulers together to discuss common issues with respect to environmental sustainability and explore ways to work together to improve the management of the ecosystem – including their cocoa landscapes.  For the 2018 project year, the dialogues were organized for communities in the Ayum-Asuokow CREMA that is situated on lands belonging to the Mim Traditional Council. To make it more efficient and participatory, they were organized on two levels and combined with the training of the newly elected CREMA executives. The first level was at the cluster level at 4 different venues and the second level was with the Mim Traditional Council including all Chiefs from the 36 CREMA communities under the chairmanship of the Mim Omanhene – who has so far played a very supportive role in the development and progress of the CREMA. In all, 315 farmers and landowners including chiefs participated in community dialogue sessions at both levels.  The main dialogue with members of the Mim Traditional Council including Chiefs from the CREMA communities and CEC members was led by the Mim Omanhene who presided. It provideda forum for the Chiefs to discuss some of the time tested traditional norms and regulation that were hitherto useful in the conservation of natural resources in the traditional area and examined how they can be revised and enforced to help the CREMA achieve its aims and objectives. It was also used to build the capacities of participants on the gazetted CREMA by-laws and regulations including the roles and responsibilities of the Traditional Council and its members in the various CREMA communities. Additionally, it discussed the roles of Traditional Authorities in designing/developing land use agreements including sharecropping arrangements that can contribute to the conservation of the environment.  Overall, the dialogues has enabled the participants to enhance their knowledge and understanding of contemporary issues on environmental management and the significant roles they can play as the custodians of the land to help conserve the ecosystem as well as increase productivity in the cocoa landscapes that dominate the traditional council lands.  One major outcome of the series is the understanding reached on the need for both the Chiefs and especially the CRMC members to work together to ensure community members adhere to all traditional norms and regulations pertaining to environmental management. This is important because a number of the Chiefs complained they are not being effectively involved in activities planned for the CREMA. The Omanhene emphasized and entreated the CREMA leadership to endeavor to improve their collaboration with the Chiefs and vice versa.  Among other things, the Chiefs also agreed to also develop into bylaws, all the traditional norms and regulations in their jurisdiction and get it gazetted – just as has been done with the CREMA bylaws by the end of March 2019. They also endorsed the community levy to support the CREMA and pledge their support. | 36 communities participated in the 2nd dialogue.  150 farmers and landowners including chiefs participated in community dialogue sessions in Mim. |
| 2.3.2 Number of communities sensitized | 40 |
| 2.3.3 Number of farmers and landowners including chiefs who participated  in community dialogue sessions | 250 |
| **Outcome 3: Funding Mechanisms** | | | | |
| *Output 3.1. Investigate additional funding mechanisms and develop new proposals* | 3.1.1 Number of proposals developed | 2 | ESP has been working with the UNDP Green Commodities Program (GCP) to identify funding sources to supplement the current funding from Cocoa Life.  GCP is the main party responsible for this component in the Cocoa Life project. In agreement with Mondelez’ Cocoa Life team and UNDP/Ghana, GCP has invested a significant amount of time in developing a project proposal to complement ESP II, for funding with DFID through the Partnerships for Forests program. The proposal aimed at developing commercial economic tree seedling production to complement and later substitute subsidized seedling distribution by Cocoa Life as well as COCOBOD and others. The development of the 1M GBP proposal was extensive and also marked by changing requirements and unclear guidelines on behalf of the donors. GCP has developed three different concept and proposal document in different formats provided by the donor. The proposal is still under negotiation. The dialogue process with P4F and Mondelez has been actively supported by GCP’s Global Head, as well as GCP’s Senior Partnerships Adviser in London, in several face-to-face meetings with P4F’s head, Bruce Carbale.  GCP’s team has also supported fundraising by advising on project opportunities including for Italian funding in partnership with Lavazza through UNDP-REDD, a forest management pilot project with South Korean funding, and the team has pitched Ghana activities with SECO, World Cocoa Foundation, GIZ and others. GCP continues to monitor project development opportunities and support project development activities. As a part of the upcoming January 2019 mission GCP’s Senior Commodities Adviser will support UNDP/Ghana in the development of a more comprehensive fundraising strategy to strengthen its work in cocoa and other commodities in general and complement the ESP II project in particular. |  |
| *Output 3.2. Donor dialogues in Ghana and globally with the support of UNDP Green Commodities Programme to explore other funding opportunities* | 3.2.1 Number of dialogues held | 2 | 2 separate dialogues were held in Ghana  1) Discussions with the Forestry Commission, Mondelez and COCOBOD has led to the development of an MOU and action plan to establish a collaborative partnership to implement the Ghana Cocoa Forest Programme.  2) Participated in the national discussions under the Cocoa Forest Initiative to provide inputs into the development of a Joint Framework of Action to end deforestation and restore forest areas in Ghana. |  |

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| 1. **2.** **GENDER SPECIFIC RESULTS** *[Please report specific gender disaggregated results]* |
| * 32% of the number of farmers who planted trees in 2018 were females * 15% of members of the various CREMA governance structures were females * 50% of the Community Animators are females * 55% of the trainers who participated in the TOT on tree integration and silviculture practices were females * 52% of trainers who participated in the TOT on selected environmentally sustainable practices were females * 40% of farmers directly trained on sustainable natural resource and ecosystem management were females * 5% of the Community Fire Volunteers are females * 26% of participants at the community dialogue sessions held at the Community Cluster level were females * 6% of participants (Chiefs and CEC members) at the community dialogue with the Mim Traditional Council were females * 4% of the Tree Registration Enumerators so far engaged to assist farmers register their economic trees are females |
| **3. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES** *[Observed or experienced challenges that are generic, related or not related to any specific output, which have or could affect the project implementation and propose a way forward]* |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Challenge | Proposed way forward | | * How to align ESP field activities with the general Cocoa Life Program including activities of the other IPs * Farmers’ low perception and appreciation of environmental sustainability issues and their impact on their productivity. Majority of them do not consider most of their current practices as damaging to the environment and do not see the need to do something about it – to them it is business as usual. * Current land and tree tenure policies do not provide enough incentives for farmers to adopt environmentally sustainable production practices. The lackadaisical attitude and lack of commitment from state standard bearers to initiate meaningful reforms to incentivize farmers to adopt best practices is not helping the situation. * Weak capacity, especially of CHED staff to extend sustainable production practices to farmers * Donor fatigue on the part of farmers – too many cocoa sector projects all seeking the attention of the same group of farmers leading to farmer apathy. * Ownership of the project – the project was implemented based on UNDP’s direct implementation guideline which restricts COCOBOD to only administrative roles. Project finances are controlled by the UNDP and field level implementation by the PMU – limiting the involvement of COCOBOD as the national implementing partner | * ESP worked closely with the other CL IPs to institute regular quarterly review meetings to update each other on planned activities and to harmonize them as much as possible. This is necessary in order not to take too much of farmer’s time on CL related activities and to improve coordination. * Changing Farmers’ low perception on environmental sustainability issues requires some level of attitudinal and behavioral change – this is a slow process that requires time to occur. It also requires constant/regular farmer and extension agent or trainer contact. ESP has only 5 Field Coordinators while the project works in 12 Districts – leaving 7 Districts without any project representative and thus affecting project visibility in those districts without staff. As a way forward, additional staff should be hired for the “orphan” districts. * ESP is working with other key stakeholders to address some of these issues. For instance, the Community Dialogue Series with Traditional Authorities on land tenure and the enforcement of traditional conservation practices and norms are all efforts meant to educate the traditional authorities on their roles and responsibilities with respect to the management of the natural resources under their care. Also, the project has collaborated with the FC to look into tree tenure and tree registration. Series of meetings and consultations were carried out resulting in the design and approval of a tree registration form. ESP has gone further to develop a mobile application based on the form to make the registration easier for farmers. Field agents have been trained in the use of the application and are currently piloting its use in the Suhum and Asunafo North Districts – after which it would be extended to the other Districts. * An elaborate program was developed to build the capacity of CHED staff on sustainable production practices. Several training manuals were also developed to facilitate the process. * As much as possible, ESP collaborated with other donor projects in its focus districts in order not to duplicate extension messages and other related activities * The PMU endeavored to forge a close working relationship between the two institutions and it is holding for now but there is the need to entirely allow COCOBOD to handle the operational funds of the project to ensure its sustainability. | |
| **4. LESSONS LEARNED AND OPPORTUNITIES** *[Please describe new understanding or insights gained from project activities that can contribute to improving project implementation and future project design]* |
| **Lesson # 1: MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:** For now, COCOBOD has a major mandate to undertake most of the cocoa extension work in Ghana and for sustainable production issues to be adequately addressed by farmers through extension and on a wider coverage, ESP has learned that its activities would generate greater impact if they are mainstreamed with the work of CHED and the other Cocoa Life IPs. This was achieved using the trainer of trainers’ model by developing training modules and training Community Extension Agents (CEAs) and other field level staffs such as the Community Animators, in selected environmental sustainable farming practices. This has become necessary due to the large number of project participants/communities and ESP’s limited staff capacity to effectively reach out to all the CL cohorts.  **Lesson # 2: ABANDONED COCOA FARMS AND FOREST REGENERATION:** From the perspective of biodiversity conservation, it is more profitable for farmers to employ more intensive management practices on their cocoa farms for greater productivity rather than reclaiming abandoned cocoa farms, which may be on their way to forest regeneration in heavily degraded landscapes. Biodiversity conservation therefore provides a window of opportunity for farmers who engage in practices that promote the protection of abandoned old cocoa farms that are located near protected forest frontiers and corridors to be rewarded to serve as an incentive for farmers to avoid deforestation.  **Lesson # 3: Decision making in the CREMA:** Decisions taken within the CREMA framework are democratic, facilitated through a platform of community gatherings where decisions are initiated or endorsed publicly by simple majority. Decisions within the committees and the CEC are largely not prejudiced from the community perception because these committees and CEC are elected into authority by the people with consent of the traditional authority. The coercion of traditional authority to cede some authority to the committees and CEC is very critical to success. It is necessary to make provision to include committee representation from the traditional authority, with caution not to dilute effective decision making by a single representative.  **Lesson # 4:** **Power Play In CREMAs:** Outside institution such as ESP who are facilitating the CREMA process always need to look at the characteristics of each community and the “power plays” and “power brokers” who affect decision making. A thorough and honest assessment of community dynamics, as part of the CREMA process will enable the better participation and community decision making. It is important to note that there will always be the need for fine tuning of certain procedures in various ways to make project implementation a success. The PMU is working with the CEC to therefore draw-up a comprehensive strategy for the CREMA going forward. |
| **5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED ACTION**  *[Actions on any matter related to outcome, progress of outputs and corrective measure taken or to be taken with responsibilities time]* |
| To transform the environmentally damaging and unsustainable practices of cocoa agriculture and related land uses in Ghana in such a way that biodiversity is conserved, forest regenerated and sustainably managed, and farmers’ livelihoods improved, with a scaling up strategy, the following recommendations are made:   * Government, and for that matter, COCOBOD, traditional authorities and other opinion leaders and farmers support the integrated management and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity through appropriate discussion and decision-making institutions/bodies that decide in a participatory way on land use and resource management issues. In this regard, ESP recommends a landscape approach instead with dealing with individual farmers and communities. Similarly, land-use planning should be given much more prominence than what currently exists. * Current land tenure rights encourage forest clearing by both migrants and locals and do not encourage the adoption of sustainable practices by farmers. COCOBOD and other stakeholders in the sector should work to adopt a system of land use planning and tenure that incorporates natural resource management and biodiversity conservation objectives. Tenure issues related to migrants, women and other groups can be addressed by focusing on their implications for biodiversity conservation and mechanisms for the application of statutory and customary laws and regulations of relevance to biodiversity and targeted at the subnational level instead of a one-fit-all national framework – as demonstrated through ESP’s Community Dialogue series. * Cocoa Extension Services remains low resulting in the situation where Farmers continue to use poor cocoa production practices that reduce productivity and threaten biodiversity. CHED’s Extension staff numbers are low and with limited coverage. To address this issue, ESP was allowed to hire 5 Field Coordinators who, among other responsibilities, also perform extension duties. The 5 are however not enough as some are currently handling 2 or more Districts. We recommend that each of the 12 districts where the project currently works should at least have its own Field Coordinator – as is the case of other CL IPs. * The implementation of the CREMA concept is fraught with several field level challenges – key among them is the issue of sustainability. ESP has observed that most CREMAs are only active during the period when donor funds are available to support them both technically and financially. Several of them become defunct once this support dries up. In the light of this, we recommend that the entire CREMA concept be re-examined and re-designed if possible to ensure they outlive the donor support period. Closely tied to the sustainability issue are the role of the FC and its own internal understanding of the concept and willingness to allow it to work as envisaged. There seems to be some operational misconceptions between the Wildlife and the Forest Services Divisions of the FC – they don’t seem to be singing from the same page. We therefore recommend a follow-up to the national dialogue – this time with a fewer number of technocrats in a round table format to discuss and redesign the CREMA regulations. |

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| **6. KEY ACTIVITIES FOR 2018** *[Please outline key activities planned for 2018]* |
| | **No** | **Summary of Project Activities Planned for 2019** | | --- | --- | | **Outcome 1: Mainstreaming environmentally sustainable production practices into farmer level practices** | | | 1 | Continue to trained and equipped farmers in environmentally sustainable production practices with a greater focus on farm/community level trainings to be conducted by the FCs with support from the CEAs, Community Animators, Environmental Committee Members and the leadership of the various unions. | | 2 | Pilot the establishment of community-based nurseries to supply seedlings to farmers instead of buying from commercial ones. | | 3 | The registration of all project supported planting that are above 1 year in all Districts to serve as an incentive for the adoption of environmentally sustainable cocoa production practices improved | | **Outcome 2: Natural resources and ecosystems management in cocoa production landscapes** | | | 1 | Establish one additional fire prevention volunteer brigade in a priority zone to be identified | | 2 | Capacities of traditional authorities and community opinion leaders in the Atobiase CREMA enhanced to enable them enforce traditional conservation practices to conserve biodiversity build | | **Outcome 3: Funding Mechanisms** | | | 1 | Additional funding mechanisms investigated and new funding proposals developed | | 2 | Donor dialogues in Ghana and globally with the support of UNDP Global Commodities Programme to explored for other funding opportunities | |