SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH FARMERS AND FAMILY NUTRITIONAL STATUS IN TWO COCOA PRODUCING COMMUNITIES IN CÔTE D’IVOIRE

Report prepared by Fair Labor Association
July 2015

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*Cover photo: Kevin Bosson*
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<tr>
<td>ANADER</td>
<td>National Agency for Rural Development Agence/Nationale D'Appui au Développement Rural</td>
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<td>BIT</td>
<td>International Labour Organization Bureau / International du Travail</td>
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<td>BMEL</td>
<td>German Ministry of Food and Agriculture/ Bundesministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft</td>
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<td>Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development/Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung</td>
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<td>Program of Agricultural Productivity in West Africa/Programme de Productivité Agricole en Afrique de l’Ouest</td>
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<td>Akressi Farm Operators Union/Union des Exploitants Agricoles d’Akressi</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In preparation for the launch of PRO-PLANTEURS, the sustainable development project implemented in collaboration with the Ivorian Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC), in October 2014 the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO), commissioned the Fair Labor Association (FLA) to conduct an assessment of the current situation of women and youth farmers and family nutritional status in two cocoa growing regions in Côte d’Ivoire. From October to November of 2014, the FLA research team studied five communities (Beniankre, Akressi, Offa, Anno, and Aboude Mandeke) in the regions of Aboisso and Agboville in Côte d’Ivoire.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were to inform the implementation of the PRO-PLANTEURS Project and more specifically to: (1) describe the current situation of women and youth involved in cocoa production in the project intervention areas; (2) analyse constraints and opportunities for the diversification of agricultural practices for crop and livestock production; (3) identify existing good practices; and (4) develop clear and practical recommendations for the implementation of the PRO-PLANTEURS project.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Primary data was collected through external information gathering from over 20 local, regional, and national stakeholders and through interviews and focus-group discussions with 264 men, women, and youth residing in the studied cocoa communities. Standardized tools and interview guidelines focusing on gender, youth, and nutrition were used for data collection. Data was analyzed through sorting, collating, and organizing of information using mostly qualitative methods.

KEY FINDINGS

Income and Livelihood

This report corroborates findings of previous FLA reporting— that while women and youth may substantially contribute to the production of cocoa, they do not directly benefit from the income generation thereof. In general, men work most closely with the cocoa cooperatives, and collect cocoa income for the entire family. Women and youth work to transport cocoa seedlings, weed the farm, collect cocoa pods, transport cocoa beans for fermentation and drying, and sort beans for bagging. A number of youth were found to be moving away from cocoa production to seek employment in the palm and rubber plantations that provides a steadier source of income than cocoa.

In the two studied cocoa communities, the production of food crops and rearing of animals (pigs, goat, sheep, and chicken) are predominately undertaken by women – and in some instances by youth – as their primary source of income. In addition to contributing to household family income, food crops managed by women are crucial to household food security, diversity, and availability. Furthermore, women perform core functions in all food crop processing, transformation, and conservation, but with limited technical expertise and technology. Fish production on a commercial scale is limited. Mostly adult and young men fish in the local ponds and rivers, with no women interviewed in the five communities mentioning an involvement in this activity. This report shows that current levels of livestock production and fishing in
the observed communities are insufficient to meet the demand. The intentional cultivation of fruit is not undertaken, but grows naturally in abundance.

Two major constraints faced by women in the food crop value chain are: 1) the remoteness of women producers to their consumers and the attendant physical strain of transporting products to market exchanges; and 2) the absence of a formal network and organized system for the marketing and sale of food products. This stands in contrast to the marketing of larger cash crops such as cocoa, which is largely dominated by men. These constraints prevent women from obtaining better profits and independent incomes. The study additional indicates that economic autonomy would allow women to enjoy a higher status in their families and communities, potentially expanding their role in decision-making processes.

**Nutrition and Food Security**

An analysis of the frequency and diversity of food consumed in the seven days preceding the survey showed that different food groups are consumed by natives (Abbeys, Sanwis), southern non-natives (Baoulés, Attiés, Gouro, Yacoubas), northern non-natives (Senufo, Mandingo, Abrons) and immigrants (Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Benin). Food choices and cooking techniques are largely governed by tradition and cultural practices. Often, individuals reported that they only valued meals from their own cultural repertoire as nutritional. As a result, despite the abundance of other food sources, households are willing to spend large sums of money to purchase their preferred food items, even off-season.

The food that is being consumed is neither diversified nor balanced. Grains and root vegetables are the dominant food in most rural households with cassava, igname, plantain, rice, and corn, the most consumed. Proteins sources such as milk, dairy products, cheese, eggs, and meat are largely missing from the diet. Most proteins are derived from the occasional consumption of fish, which is insufficient to meet the daily requirements. Foods that are rich in minerals and vitamins such as fruits and raw vegetables, despite their high availability, are not part of the daily menu. Green and leafy vegetables are consumed mostly in the form of cooked sauce or paste as an accompaniment, thereby reducing the nutrient availability due to excessive cooking. The visited communities are well supplied with potable water, with each of the five having a motorized pump that feeds all households and ensures the availability and accessibility of safe drinking water.

Interviewed families usually consume three meals per day. However, during the lean season from May to September, foods are scarce and families consume only two meals per day for children and one meal for adults. This occasional food insecurity could be explained by two main factors: 1) the exhaustion of food stocks between seasons due to weakness in food conservation and processing methods; and 2) the lack of financial means to obtain food at off-season prices. Furthermore, households rarely plan ahead to consume more perishable foods during harvest time and save less perishable for after harvest. This lack of organization can lead to a reduction of available food supply in a relatively short time and forces families to pay high market prices to cover family nutritional needs.

The study demonstrated that income from cocoa production, though relatively stable, is insufficient to support family needs. For basic food products, the paradox is that when producers have sufficient income (after cocoa
harvest), there is an abundance of food crops in their own fields as well as on the market (at low prices). But once the cocoa season is over, income goes down at the same time that food products become less available and more expensive on the market.

Constraints, Opportunities and Aspirations

The study identified several opportunities and constraints related to the development of agricultural production depending on gender and age. Some of the constraints that block women and youth from fully realizing the benefits of food crop production are; (1) limited access to land, (2) lack of public and private mentoring services (for better organization, financial management, and adding value to products), (3) lack of access to technical capacity-building programs (including those on production, processing, and conservation), (4) lack of coordination of food production activities so that the same food crop is not produced by all farmers during the same time; (5) lack of formal and organized supply chain network and market linkages; and (6) lack of access to credit. The support services currently in place for cocoa producers, usually male adults, only benefit women and youth marginally.

There are a number of opportunities to improve both cocoa and food crop production: 1) cocoa and food crops would benefit from the addition of high yield and improved varieties (both under-produced in Côte d’Ivoire); 2) cocoa and food crop producers need improved agricultural inputs in the form of fertilizer, nutrients, tools, and equipment; 3) producers need training on good agricultural practices; 4) producers lack knowledge about processes for the transformation of products; and 5) informal women’s associations that are emerging in the rural areas could better organize food production and distribution. The needs and aspirations of women and youth are essentially the same. Their production of food and derivative products would be more profitable if they had access to advice, support, and opportunities in the production and marketing of their crops.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations provided in the report are intended to promote women’s equality, provide targeted opportunities for women and youth, or to broaden access to agricultural opportunities for youth. Specific steps on how to achieve the following recommendations are elaborated in the body of the report.

1) Maximize PRO-PLANTEURS opportunities for women and youth – Some specific steps would include: a) encouraging cooperatives to register cocoa farms in the names of both a cocoa farmer and his wife; b) find roles for local women’s groups and youth associations in PRO-PLANTEURS projects; and c) explore ways for cocoa cooperatives to diversity and support food-crop cooperatives.

2) Define women- and youth-focused progress indicators – As the PRO-PLANTEURS project begins, project staff should record the representation of women and youth in farmer organizations, and target increasing their representation.

3) Help women and youth access cocoa production activities – PRO-PLANTEURS could facilitate access to land, financing, or training.

4) Involve women and youth in decision-making – PRO-PLANTEURS could host community dialogues with active participation by women and youth.
I. INTRODUCTION

The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO)\(^1\) is an initiative of the German federal government represented by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Bundesministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft or BMEL), the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung or BMZ), the German cocoa and confectionery industry, the German food trade association, partner NGOs and civil society organizations. In October 2014, GISCO contracted the Fair Labor Association (FLA)\(^2\) to conduct a study to “assess the current situation of women and youth farmers and family nutritional status in two cocoa producing communities in Côte d’Ivoire.” From October to November 2014, FLA studied five communities (Beniankre, Akressi, Offa, Anno, and Aboude Mandeke) in the regions of Aboisso and Agboville in Côte d’Ivoire. This report presents a qualitative analysis of study data.

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1. The German Federal Government, the German confectionery industry, the German retail grocery trade, and civil society have joined forces in the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO) with the aim to improve living conditions of cocoa farmers and their families as well as to increase cultivation and commercialization of sustainably managed cocoa production. The members are committed to project objectives in close cooperation with the governments of cocoa producing countries.

2. The FLA is a non-profit organization that combines the efforts of business, civil society organizations, colleges and universities to promote and protect workers’ rights and globally improve working conditions through adherence to international standards. FLA has been active in the cocoa sector since 2011 when it first conducted a comprehensive mapping study of Nestlé’s cocoa supply chain, results of which were made public in June 2012, http://www.fairlabor.org/report/assessment-nestle-cocoa-supply-chain-ivory-coast. Since then the FLA has visited more than 300 farms in all major cocoa producing communities and conducted community profiling, monitored working conditions, and reported on labor standards. Their most recent assessment involved assessing the role of women in Nestlé’s cocoa supply chain, http://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/nestle_gender_report_7-9-14_0.pdf. With a number of in-depth studies, ground staff based in Abidjan, and familiarity with cocoa producing communities, FLA was found to be well-suited to conduct this study.
In 2015, GISCO in collaboration with the Conseil du Café-Cacao (CCC), or Ivorian Cafe-Cacao Council, will launch a sustainable development project, entitled PRO-PLANTEURS. The objective of this project is to improve living conditions for cocoa-producing families in the project areas.

More specifically, the project aims to: 1) strengthen technical, financial, managerial, and entrepreneurial capacities as well as gender equality in producer organizations (co-operatives); 2) increase the productivity and quality of cocoa production and member cooperatives; 3) diversify food production and improve the consumption of nutritious food at the producer family level, and finally; 4) capitalize on lessons learned from the project’s innovative approaches and reproduce to a larger scale.

The target group will include approximately 20,000 producers and their families (100,000 beneficiaries) organized in cooperatives with particular attention paid to women and youth. The intervention areas are the East-Central (Yamoussoukro), Southeast (Aboisso), Eastern (Abengourou) and Southern (Agboville) regions in Côte d'Ivoire.

In order to create a solid basis for intervention, this study aimed to identify opportunities and constraints for women and youth in the selected communities, and present recommendations for activities that could be undertaken within the project framework.

In particular the study aimed to:

1. Describe the current situation of women and youth involved in cocoa production in the project intervention areas;
2. Analyze constraints and opportunities for the diversification of agricultural practices for crop and livestock production;
3. Identify existing good practices;
4. Develop clear and practical recommendations for:
   - The integration of women and youth as key target groups in project activities;
   - The integration of family food security into project activities, based on a good understanding of food consumption patterns and rates of malnutrition in selected families;
   - Identify priority actions that could be undertaken in the PRO-PLANTEURS project to ensure that Ivorian women and youth have fair access to resources, opportunities, and skills offered by the project and allow them to increase income through cocoa and crop production, and to improve family nutritional status;
   - Submit a concrete proposal (including budget) on the way in which recommendations from the FLA-Nestlé study can be implemented into the PRO-PLANTEURS project framework.

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3 Per GISCO, the project is aligned with the Ivorian National Cocoa Strategy 2QC and with the World Cocoa Foundation’s Cocoa Action strategy. PRO-PLANTEURS will closely collaborate with the German-funded project PROCACAO, the German bilateral cooperation programme PROFIAB and the Sustainable Smallholder Agri-Business Programme (SSAB) at regional level.

4 GISCO Annual General Meeting 2014_Documentation_EN

5 GISCO, professionalization of producers and their organizations for a sustainable cacao-culture, PRO-PLANTEURS, Project Document, January 2015


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II. HISTORY

A. Cocoa sector in Côte d’Ivoire

Numerous studies have been conducted on the importance of the Ivorian cocoa sector, which is currently the world’s largest producer of cocoa at 33 percent of total world cocoa production. Research also highlights key social, economic, and political issues which detrimentally affect the cocoa sector such as: 1) low productivity of cocoa plantations (300 to 400 kilograms per hectare/year, compared to 500 kilograms in Asia and 600 kilograms in Latin America) due to traditional cultivation methods, aging cocoa plantations, disease, a lack of agricultural inputs, and a lack of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP); 2) a rural exodus that is leading to labour shortages; 3) limited investment in the cocoa sector and Ivorian Government cocoa-bean export laws which restrict producer earnings to 40 percent (the current international cocoa rate is 60 percent); 4) a lack of access to information and market links; 5) human rights violations such as hazardous child labour and health and safety violations; and more recently 6) undervaluing the roles of women in cocoa production.

These issues constitute an imminent threat to the future of cocoa production in Côte d’Ivoire, with many producers disenchanted and new generations discouraged due to the intensity of effort required and low return on investment. Because of this, producers are turning to other means to support their families ranging from the establishment of alternative crops (mainly rubber trees due to their longevity, high yields, and low manpower needs), the search for more secure jobs in the private sector (production and manufacturing), and migration to more economically diverse areas. Lastly, most current sector reports indicate that cocoa production is still seen as a male dominate crop and does not recognize the current roles of women and youth (male and female) as well as their future roles in the creation of a flourishing cocoa industry in Côte d’Ivoire.

B. Women in the Ivorian cocoa sector

Recent reports by Oxfam and the FLA point out that the contribution of women in the cocoa sector remains largely unnoticed and unrecognized. This is in spite of the fact that 93 percent of women interviewed in this study are directly or indirectly involved in cocoa production. In addition, 98 percent of women are involved in tasks such as planting, weeding, and harvesting cocoa beans. Women also play a significant role in post-harvest activities such as grining, sorting, and storing the cocoa beans. However, they face significant challenges in accessing credit, land rights, and decision-making power within the cocoa sector. Women’s contributions to the cocoa sector are undervalued and unrecognized, which hinders their ability to access opportunities for economic empowerment and improvement.

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9 See publications of the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO), Oxfam, FairTrade, International Labor Organization and Human Development Institute.
10 http://seasofchange.net/file/downloads/2012/04/05.04-SoC-cocoa-fact-sheet-final_cover1.pdf
12 Dr. Joseph A. Yaro, Migration in West Africa: Patterns, Issues and Challenges, Center for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, Legon
15 Seas of Change (2012), Cocoa Fact Sheet developed by Wageningen UR Center for Development Innovation.

18 Remi Jedwab (2010), Agricultural Exports, Urbanization and African Growth: Cocoa and Cities in Ivory Coast and Ghana, Paris School of Economics and STICERD (LSE)
of women indicated that their income from these activities is too low to meet basic family needs. “Women work just as hard as men, but they also face certain cultural barriers related to gender, abuse, exploitation, land access, lack of access to credit as well as a general lack of recognition for their vital role in cocoa production.”

Women, however, remain the backbone of the rural economy and play several social and economic roles in agricultural societies, including cocoa-producing communities. These include: 1) family household management; 2) involvement in key community tasks and the assurance of a properly functioning community; 3) contributing to multi-income strategies to meet basic family needs; 4) providing labour for agricultural activities; 5) providing family food security by producing, purchasing, and preparing meals; and 6) the marketing/sales of agricultural products. Because of these varied roles, women must make choices about which tasks to prioritize in their daily lives.

According to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Sourcebook, “in rural areas, a woman’s time availability and management are key factors to determining a family’s access to water for good household hygiene, the collection of wood for cooking and energy, and regular feeding of children.” In a number of African countries, women often control the use or sale of food crops grown on small, self-managed plots. They are essential to ensuring family food security through their roles in the processing of agricultural products into food, the selection and preparation of meals, feeding children and overall family nutritional needs. Despite these contributions and women’s often important role in agricultural production, they do not always have control over their share of farm income and are often trapped in a cycle of low productivity and poverty, thus contributing to overall food insecurity and nutrition problems.

C. Youth in the cocoa sector in Côte d’Ivoire

The role of youth in the cocoa sector remains poorly studied. Very little literature and statistics on rural youth and their professional status exist for Côte d’Ivoire. The data that is available on country employment levels does not give detail as to location (rural/urban) and age group. Information on the status of youth in cocoa-producing communities is even harder to find, however according to Technoserve, “five million (25 percent) of young Ivorian under 40 years are unemployed. Each year, these unemployed are joined by a half million new job seekers, threatening to destabilize the nation’s path towards peace and economic recovery.” In general, youth aged 15 to 24 years coming from low-income, often rural, families pursue any income-generating activity they can find, including informal employment, or migrating to cities. According to the FAO and the International Labour Organization (ILO), “compared to adults, youth are more often employed under informal and casual contracts; they earn less; work more hours;

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23 Agnes R. Quisumbing, 1996.
25 http://www.technoserve.org
and have a leaner social network.” 27 Those youth who obtain jobs in the agricultural sector struggle against under-employment during the off-season28 with under-employment more frequent among youth than adults and more widespread in rural than urban areas.29

Although the FLA study focused on gender and adult women in cocoa-producing communities, it also brought to light key aspects of rural youth life. According to this study, young women are culturally regulated to more traditional roles of family caretaking and supporting their husbands. They care for siblings, help with household tasks, or work in the informal sector as hairdressers, waitresses, or domestic servants. Like their mothers, they are also involved in cocoa production, primarily in the transportation of cocoa beans for fermentation and drying. Young men were also observed working on family farms or plantations, particularly in the harvest and crushing of cocoa pods, or “écabossage”, as well as some of the more dangerous tasks of cocoa production.30 They also manage unwanted plant growth around the village and maintain general cleanliness of the community. However, to better understand their roles, a more formal mapping of tasks and activities carried out by youth should be undertaken within the framework of the project (see table 5). A number of initiatives for youth have been launched in cocoa-producing communities, ranging from educational interventions and technical capacity-building,31 to vocational training32 and enterprise promotion in the support of new business and sustainable job creation.33

D. Gender, Food Security34 and Malnutrition

Previous research has established a close link between gender and nutrition in developing countries.35 Specialists have demonstrated that malnutrition has multiple causes with interdependence between a child’s nutritional status, a mother’s education level, the price of food, household income, and the availability of public health.36 In addition, the behaviours, beliefs and attitudes of a family, in particular those of the mother are often crucial to preventing early nutritional deficiencies.37 A study by P. Agyare-Kwabi showed that the improvements that can be achieved on the health and nutrition of the children

27 FAO and ILO, Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country Activities, 2011.
28 According to the ILO, the visible underemployment includes persons who involuntarily work less than the normal working time for the activity, that seek or which are available for additional work during the reference period.
29 World Bank, Youth and Employment in Africa: the potential, the problem, the promise, 2009.
31 http://jacobsfoundation.org/project/ivory-coast-quality-education-for-cocoa-communities/
32 World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) Empowering Cocoa Households with Opportunities and Education Solutions (ECHOES) strengthens cocoa-growing communities by expanding opportunities for youth and young adults through education.
33 http://www.technoserve.org/our-work/where-we-work/country/cotedivoire
34 World Health Organization (WHO): The World Food Summit in 1996 defined food security as “when all persons have access at all times to adequate, safe and nutrition food to maintain a healthy and active life”. Food security rests on three pillars: (1) food availability; sufficient quantities of food available in a regular manner; (2) food access: dispose of sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet; (3) proper food use: based on knowledge of nutrition, water and sanitation.
by increasing the income of the women by US$10 would require a US$110 increase in the income of a man, thereby highlighting that women tend to devote greater portion of their income on their children and food.38

Malnutrition39 is a public health problem in Côte d’Ivoire affecting the most vulnerable groups such as children under five years, pregnant women, and breastfeeding women.40 According to the FAO, in Côte d’Ivoire, the greatest barriers to food security and nutrition for the most vulnerable households are: 1) insufficient quantity (the amount of food and number of meals per day), 2) lack of diverse food groups (a balanced diet including protein, carbohydrates, and fats), and 3) quality of food (macro and micro nutrients). In general, household food production is insufficient to meet family needs and food habits are often inadequate, in particular the weaning and feeding of young children. This is despite the availability of diverse food products in the market. This situation worsened following the 2002 crisis, which led to the mass displacement of populations, growing poverty, and loss of family farms and plantations.41 A recent study on food security indicates that 12.6 percent of rural Ivorian households are in a situation of food insecurity. The inaccessibility of food due to low purchasing power remains the principal cause.42

A demographic and health survey conducted in Côte d’Ivoire43 between 2011 and 2012 pointed out that among children younger than five years, 30 percent are exposed to delayed growth, 8 percent suffer from malnutrition and 15 percent are underweight. Three in four children aged 6 - 59 months are anaemic (25 percent mild, 46 percent moderate, and 3 percent severe). Among young women in the 15 – 49 years age group, 54 percent are anaemic (39 percent mild, 14 percent moderate, and 1 percent severe). An inverse relationship between the severity of anaemia and productivity is well established44 with anaemia and malnutrition affecting productivity in cocoa producing communities in several ways: 1) lowered production due to reduced physical productivity from disease, fatigue and other health related problems; 2) reduction of cognitive development and educational performance due to early life malnutrition; and 3) a loss of household resources due to an increase in healthcare costs. From this it can be shown that an investment in a cocoa-producing community’s nutrition can be economically justified45 as it improves productivity and economic growth and promotes public health.46

39 The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines malnutrition and chronic hunger as the inability of people to consume enough food to meet their energy needs food (2014).
41 FAO 2009, Integrated Program on Nutrition Education (PIEN)
42 FOA, World Food Program (2011), State of Food Insecurity in the World
45 GISCO Terms of Reference for this study.
III. METHODOLOGY

A. Primary data collection sources and techniques

Various sources of data were studied using qualitative data collection techniques. To better understand the expectations and needs of GISCO, the study team met with local GISCO representatives at the GIZ headquarters in Abidjan. This meeting allowed the collective review of the Terms of Reference and the development of a community selection strategy. It also provided an opportunity to gather pertinent reports, previous studies, and other documentation in order to gain basic information and guidance for the study.

As to external sources, the study team met with various stakeholders of the GISCO forum as well as key actors on gender and agricultural issues in the Ivory Coast. The following section will give an account of the complete list of stakeholders interviewed.

In addition to meeting with stakeholders, the study team sought input from other partners and actors as described in following sections. As per the Terms of References, the study was conducted in a primarily qualitative manner with the main objective being to better understand and define the position of women and youth, agricultural practices, and household food habits in the studied communities. Information was collected using the following methods:

Observation
This method allowed the study team to put themselves in the place of producers in selected communities to observe their daily practices during the period of the study. In addition, the team visited farms, plantations and households, recording their observations.

Individual interviews
Interviews were the main method of data collection, conducted either individually or through group discussions (focus groups). Individually, the study team met with youth, women, and elderly community members, the latter being the keepers of community traditions and other invaluable insights for the study. Discussions were either open or semi-directive with the aim being to allow participants to express themselves freely while ensuring that interviews adhered to the study framework and interview guide.

Focus group discussion
This method allowed the study team to interview several participants in the same place to collect information. It was predominantly used in meetings with the groups such as women and youth associations, cooperatives and unions.

B. Primary data collection tools

Various tools47 for the collection of information were used in the study. These tools are specified below:

Stakeholder consultation tool
This tool focused on the expertise and experience of stakeholders and was oriented toward issues of gender, agriculture, nutrition, and existing initiatives in the study areas. It served as an interview guide allowing the participants to express themselves freely on discussed topics.

Community profiling tool
This tool allowed the study team to collect targeted information on each visited community. It prompted the user in obtaining key data for the presentation of a studied community.

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47 All tools used for this study are available with the FLA and can be obtained upon request.
Interview guide focusing on gender and youth

This tool, adapted to the GISCO study, guided the team in conducting interviews with women and youth. It referred to the different themes inherent in the study and was built around questions of women’s community life, community agricultural practices, existing initiatives, self-analysis and interviewee recommendations. This guide was also adapted to the needs of group discussions.

Interview guide on nutrition

Designed primarily for the needs of the GISCO study, this tool allowed the team to collect household information for nutritional analysis. The accompanying questionnaire used a seven day and 24-hour recall method for food history.

C. Technical analysis and data processing

An analysis was then made on collected data, through the sorting, collating, and organizing of information using a purely qualitative method. The study team took detailed notes of all interviews, with some also being audio recorded and photographs taken of certain situations and elements.

All collected data was then cross-referenced to various sources to include: 1) comparing data collected from interviews with field observations; 2) comparing responses from different respondents; and 3) comparing data with information collected from stakeholders to documents obtained in the initial phase of the study. No additional verification system was used during this study.

D. Community selection and study targets

Community selection

Per the GISCO Terms of Reference, two departments in Côte d’Ivoire were selected through purposive sampling method, for the study: Aboisso and Agboville. Individual communities were selected based on consultations with seven GISCO partners and based on key criteria of vulnerability, existence of program partners and cocoa growing practices. From this, three localities in Aboisso and six in Agboville were pre-selected. Based on interviews with local stakeholders in these localities further criteria were defined, those being distance and of the existence of cohabitation between native, non-native, and immigrant populations, locally referred to as “autochtones, allochtones and allogènes”. From this, the villages of Akressi in

48 To evaluate the typical eating habits of participants, respondents are asked to describe the breakdown of daily meals (food category, composition of meals, eating schedule) in order to define a food profile and identify influence factors. The participant describes food preferences, usual characteristics (vegetarian, cultural), and habits (frequency of consumption in restaurants, pace of the meal, etc.) as well as other conditions likely to affect food intake quality.

49 Purposive sampling technique (a type of non-probability sampling) was found to be most effective in this case as the research was about a particular cultural domain with knowledgeable experts within.

50 Aboisso: In the Southeast of Côte d’Ivoire, Aboisso is located 120 kilometers from Abidjan and is reachable by driving in approximately three hours. Aboisso is part of the region of South Comoé and covers an area of 4250 km² bounded to the north by the department of Abengourou, to the south by the department of Adiake, west by the departments of Aboisso and Alepe and to the east by the Republic of Ghana. It has a relief of very rough terrain with hills and marshes and is characterized by a humid climate with a long rainy season and short dry season. It is served by several rivers and streams, the Bai, the Tanoe, the Eholie, the Songan, the Soumie and the Aby Lagoon. The village of Akressi is located 30 km away and houses communities of native Agni Sanwi, non-native Baoules, Abrons, Lobi and immigrants from Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mali. Akressi has approximately 6,000 inhabitants and is part of the Ayame sub-prefecture.

51 Agboville: The department of Agboville is situated in south Côte d’Ivoire about 87 kilometers from Abidjan, reachable in 90 minutes by road. Agboville is part of the Agneby-Tiassa region and enjoys good natural conditions for agricultural development (rainfall, vegetation cover, ocean, marshes, rich topsoil etc.). According to a population census in 1998, Agboville houses 244,865 inhabitants, including 125,339 women and a rural population estimated at 58 %. Agriculture remains the principal economic activity. The village of Anno is located 23 km of Agboville, and is home to approximately 13,000 inhabitants (according to 1998 census) and is part of the Loviguie sub-prefecture. It is home to the Abbeys, a native people, non-native Baoules, Agni and Lobi and Burkina Faso and Benin immigrants.
Aboisso and Anno in Agboville were selected for the study. In addition, based on feedback as to the existence of dynamic women in their communities, the study team also added the villages of Beniankre in Aboisso and those of Offa and Aboude Mandeke in Agboville based on stratified sampling, resulting in a total of five villages visited.

**Interview targeting**

The choice of external stakeholder interviews was based on their expertise and/or their intervention in the areas of gender, cocoa, food, or nutrition. Field study selections were made based on socio-professional category and the community’s involvement in cocoa production. In order to sample the respondents for all types of interviews, a combination of snowball sampling\(^{52}\) and non-probability\(^{53}\) sampling methods were used. Based on this, study participants included cocoa-producing families, women crop growers, women crop vendors or small shop owners (called “mama-loa”), women leaders and members of associations, youth labourers, youth working in local agricultural companies, and youth small shop owners. For households, the presence of a child younger than five years old was a criterion.

Apart from the associations, village chiefs or representatives who had been frequently encountered by GISCO staff, and other individuals meeting the criteria for the cocoa production were selected at random. In general, group discussions were carried out with the associations. The tables below detail the breakdown of stakeholders and community meetings.

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52 During the snowball sampling, research subjects were identified through social connections, then snowball from there.

53 Non-probability sampling was used since random sampling was not an option. Survey was conducted on all households that were producing cocoa to which the research team had access.
TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEWED ORGANIZATIONS</th>
<th>Abidjan</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GISCO local representatives, representatives of PROFIAB projects, PROCAÇAO (via Skype), EDE Consulting, Mondelez, World Cocoa Foundation, UTZ Certified, FAO, National Nutrition Program (NNP), the Support for Climate Change Project (PACCS) (via Skype), CCC, Nestlé, Solidaridad, International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), International Centre for Research on Agro-Forestry (ICRAF), ILO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aboisso</th>
<th>Regional Prefecture, Regional Director of Health, Regional Director of Agriculture, Regional CCC Delegate, ANADER Zone Director</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Agboville | Regional Prefecture, Regional Director of Agriculture, Regional CCC Delegate, ANADER Zone Director, Human Resources Manager - Eglin plantation, Nurse - Anno State University Degree |  |

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF ABOISSO AND AGBOVILLE COMMUNITY MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEADERS</th>
<th>FOCUS GROUPS</th>
<th>INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS</th>
<th>HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS</th>
<th>TOTAL INTERVIEWS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>MEN / YOUTH</td>
<td>WOMEN / YOUTH</td>
<td>YOUTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Béniankéré</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (27)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akressi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 (35)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 (69)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anno</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 (47)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboudé Mandéké</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (30)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>13 (208)</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>159</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E. Study Timetable

TABLE 3. STUDY TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meet with local GIZ GISCO team; discussion of modalities for community selection</td>
<td>6 - 10 October, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of existing documentations, reports</td>
<td>10 - 25 October, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of research tools</td>
<td>10 - 17 October, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests for Stakeholders meetings</td>
<td>13 - 17 October, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation with Stakeholders</td>
<td>20 - 25 October, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection in Aboisso</td>
<td>29 October – 2 November, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection in Agboville</td>
<td>3 – 7 November, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial report draft</td>
<td>10 - 30 November, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The study staff and analytical framework are presented in annex 2*
IV. RESULTS

This section presents an analysis of qualitative data collected from five communities (Akressi, Beniankre, Anno, Aboude-Mandeke, and Offa) in the departments of Agboville and Aboisso. Two general findings emerge from the observations and interviews: 1) the roles of women and youth remain strongly influenced by the traditions and culture of each community; and 2) roles are differentiated more by gender than age. Young women, from 18 to 30 years of age, assume similar roles to older women, while younger and older men likewise engage in the same activities. However, there are some disparities in opportunities and constraints based on age and sex. The result of this report describes the role of these groups in their communities, the similarities and the disparities they face.

A. Roles of women and youth in the community

In the five villages of the study, community leaders and officials are predominantly adult men with women and youth attending public meetings, but generally not publicly consulted on decision-making. Usually women and youth are satisfied to act on decisions taken by the male leaders.

Overall, women and youth are integrated into the communities and contribute to collective well-being in several ways: 1) village maintenance and security; 2) organization and participation in community events, such as setting up chairs and banners, and providing refreshments and water; 3) managing village cleanliness by weeding and cutting/pruning trees; and 4) sweeping and general clean-up. For the above-mentioned tasks, roles are designated as described in Table 4 above.

B. Roles of women and youth in cocoa production, processing and marketing

The various roles of cocoa production are largely determined by sex, rather than age, with the study rarely noting a difference of activities between youth and adults of the same sex. According to interviews conducted in the five visited communities, both women and men play multiple roles, concurrently in plantation set-up and production levels. In cocoa plantation set-up, women weed the field to accommodate the new crop. After this, they make “buttes” to house cocoa tree seedlings; they also plant plantain trees

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54 There is one reported female official in Aboude Mandeke.
55 According to elders interviewed in this study, men and leaders often ask the opinions of women the night before any important decision-making event. According to them, this is why often, important decisions are never made spontaneously during meetings.

56 Buttes: small mound of earth mixed with finely cut pieces of igname (yam).
(rejected from larger plantations), taro root, and other vegetable crops, which provide needed shade for cocoa seedlings. These crops also supply the bulk of family food. In fact, during the first three years of plantation development, small crops grown by women play a dual role providing needed shade and soil retention for the cocoa seedlings while at the same time providing a family food source. Once the ground is prepared, the women transport the cocoa seedlings from nurseries to the plantation. Once the plantation is fully planted, women maintain the field via regular weeding and cleaning to ensure seedling growth. As for men, both youth and adults, are charged with more physical tasks of clearing the land, in particular the cutting of trees and burning of unwanted plant growth, and the planting of grown cocoa trees. At the same time that women plant small crops, the men plant and stake igname, or yams, a key food source. Once the plantation is established, the men are responsible for maintenance of the young plantation, especially when the igname are dug up.

During the harvest and post-harvest season, men and women again have defined roles. While the men cut the cocoa pods from the tree, the women collect the pods and group them into small piles; the women then transport the pods to be cracked and opened, locally called the “écabossage,” where they form large assemblies. The day of the écabossage, women provide food and water for all the male workers who perform the écabossage. Once the pods are opened, the women transport the fresh cocoa beans to the fermentation area where they remove the fruit, or placentas, and shake the beans to ensure a drying quality along with men. The women then transport the fermented beans to the drying area where they ensure the beans remain in the sun or cover them in case of rain. After drying, the women sort the beans for bagging. Men harvest the cocoa pods, perform the écabossage, fermentation, drying, bagging and selling of finished beans. Some men also participate in the transport of the beans.

In the visited communities as everywhere else in the Ivory Coast, the handling or transformation of cocoa beans into other food products by local producers or cooperatives was not observed. The dried and bagged cocoa beans are sold to private buyers or producer cooperatives. The bagged beans are routed to purchasing centres that oversee the marketing and selling processes. These functions remain exclusive to adult men, except in unique situations where a woman or young man is the sole owner of a cocoa plantation. As a result, outside of a few rare cases, the management of revenues from cocoa bean sales is exclusively reserved for heads of families or, adult men.

57 Transformation into sub-products such as cocoa butter, paste or cocoa.
### Table 5. Mapping of Tasks Carried Out by Men, Women and Youth in Cocoa Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEP</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TASKS</th>
<th>ADULT WOMEN</th>
<th>YOUNG WOMEN</th>
<th>ADULT MEN</th>
<th>YOUNG MEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantation Set-up</td>
<td>Establish nursery</td>
<td>Construct nursery</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fill plastic seedling bags (with soil)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plant cocoa seeds</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transport water</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Watering</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply pesticide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clear field</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Burn cleared field</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weeding</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creating « buttes » and associated activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plant seedlings</td>
<td>Transport of seedlings</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Picking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dig holes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plant seedlings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seedling or new growth maintenance</td>
<td>Planting of rejected plantain trees</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance (weeding) of new field</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pesticide Treatment of new field</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance of full growth</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fertilization/pesticide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weeding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pod harvest</td>
<td>Pod harvesting</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pod collection</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Consolidation of pods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecabossage</td>
<td>Pod opening</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Refreshments and food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transportation of fresh beans to fermentation area</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fermentation</td>
<td>Preparation of fermentation site</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sifting and separation of placenta</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transport of fermented beans to drying area</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drying</td>
<td>Raking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sifting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sorting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Bagging of dried beans</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transport of dried beans to storage area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bean sale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Income intake</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Roles of women and youth in the production, processing, conservation and marketing of crops and livestock

In the five visited communities, women are primarily responsible for food production and form the backbone of this activity. Individually or together, women always seem to find an opportunity to cultivate small crops, which serve not only as important family food sources but also supply the market. In general, women grow small crops in association with large harvest, or cash, crops (cocoa, coffee, palm), on family fields/plantations. However, in addition to family plantations, women often grow small crops in home gardens with key crops identified as: cassava, plantain, corn, rice, igname, sweet potato, taro root, eggplant, okra, peanuts, tomato, chili pepper, cucumber, carrot, lettuce, cabbage, bean, zucchini, watermelon, and leafy vegetables (kplala, dah\(^58\), spinach). In general, crops grown on the family plantation are destined for household consumption with garden crops sold in the markets. Income earned from these sales is the primary source of income for the majority of interviewed women.

Only a few men and young men are engaged in the cultivation of small crops, mostly in the production of corn, rice, cassava, and tomato. With a few exceptions, the produce of young men is intended for sale. In family fields where igname is grown, it is usually the men who make the buttes, stake the igname, harvest and prepare for storage. Furthermore, they contribute to the planting of rejected plantain trees.\(^59\)

The production of fruit is not usually a planned activity, although avocado, pineapple or guavas are sometimes grown in more isolated or unintended situations. According to respondents, fruit grows naturally and does not need maintenance.

Regarding livestock, what little was observed is still largely dominated by women who raise small animals such as pigs, goat, sheep and a variety of chicken, called, “bicycle chicken” \(^60\). A few men are also trying, but women largely dominate this activity. Fish production on a commercial scale is negligible with no woman interviewed in the five communities mentioning an involvement in this activity. Nevertheless, with the existence of many natural water sources in the two regions, some young men are involved in fishing activities with the women marketing fish products. The study revealed a young fishermen’s association in Akressi, where a few young men practice traditional fishing by canoe or rod. The products of this activity are very marginal and are primarily intended for household consumption. If a catch is substantial, women usually sell the surplus in the market.

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Food production managed by women is crucial to household functioning: it produces the bulk of family food and contributes to household income through its sale in markets.

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\(^{58}\) The kplala and dah are local plants, common in all areas of the study.

\(^{59}\) In relation to the banana (dessert or sweet), plantain is usually bigger and longer; its flesh is denser and contains less sugar but is richer in starch.

\(^{60}\) Bicycle chicken is a species of chicken raised frequently in Africa, its name referring to the speed with which it runs. It is different from the egg-laying chickens and is generally smaller in size.
Processing and conservation methods for food products remain traditional and limited and do not necessarily guarantee a long shelf life, nor confer added value to the product. These techniques are different depending on the products, food habits, and traditions. For example, corn, beans, peanuts, eggplant, chili pepper and okra can be kept longer via drying, and the study shows that it is women who accomplish this task. In addition to conservation, food can be transformed into derivative products such as peanuts into paste, cassava into fresh attiébé, attoukpou, or placali⁶¹, and palm seeds into oil⁶² or soap – also activities performed by women. In general, women have a greater role in the transformation and conservation of food crops, however men do some processing such as the production of palm wine and a traditional alcohol from palm fronds (koutoukou), and as previously mentioned they are involved in the storage and conservation of igname.

The greatest disparity of roles between men and women in cocoa producing communities is in the marketing and sale of food products. Here, men oversee exclusively the marketing of cocoa while women dominate the marketing of small crops and food. Marketing of smaller food crops is done as follows: 1) crops and processed foods are transported by foot in baskets carried on women’s heads where they are sold in the local market; 2) collect crops and transfer to larger cities where they sell to small retailers; and 3) women small retailers sell crops and foods to other vendors in the city.

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61 Local names for foods made from cassava.
62 According to interviews in Aboisso, some women use palm oil as a method of savings and exchange. During harvest times when household resources are greater, the women prefer to barter in palm seeds, which they can press into oil, called “red oil”. The oil is then sold off-season to supplement household income.

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**TABLE 6. MAIN FOOD CROPS PRODUCED BY WOMEN, MEN AND YOUTH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPES OF FOOD</th>
<th>ADULT WOMEN AND YOUTH</th>
<th>ADULT MEN AND YOUTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Crops</td>
<td>cassava, plantain, corn, rice, igname, sweet potato, taro, eggplant, okra, peanut, tomato, chili, leafy vegetables (kplala, dha, spinach), cucumber, carrot, lettuce, cabbage, celery, bean, watermelon</td>
<td>cassava, plantain, corn, rice, igname, tomato, cucumber, carrot, lettuce, cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
<td>pork, chicken, goat, sheep</td>
<td>pork, chicken, goat, sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>traditional fishing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This value chain reveals two major constraints faced by women: 1) the remoteness of women producers to the actual consumer as well as the physical strain of transporting products to market exchanges; and 2) the absence of a formal network and organized system for the marketing and sale of food products. This is in contrast to the marketing of larger cash crops which is largely dominated by men. All these constraints prevent women from obtaining better profit and thus independent incomes.

D. Roles of women and youth beyond of cocoa and food crop production

The departments of Agboville and Aboisso are home to many large agricultural companies, which grow plantain, banana, lemon, papaya, palm and/or rubber trees. In addition, there are large individual rubber and palm tree farms. All these businesses require labour to conduct their activities. In the visited communities, youth - girls and boys - represent a key source of labour, and directly contribute to the production of these companies. Most are school dropouts or unemployed graduates with an immediate need to meet their living expenses. Some youth (mainly young men) are engaged as managers or overseers by the major operators, while others may work as daily or seasonal workers for small local producers. Some of the young men working for companies or individual farms also have their own cocoa plantation, or help from time to time on family plantations. According to one plantain producer, youth workers from native families represent approximately 27 percent of their total staff.

Some interviewed youth pursue income-generating activities in the informal sector; however their numbers are very few. Examples are young men who manage nightclubs, rent mobile cassava grinders, or

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63 Because of a long tradition of large or cash crop production in the departments of Aboisso and of Agboville, the economic status of populations living in these regions is quite high. As a result, the communities have a basic level of development and education. However, these two departments are prone to high rates of land conflict as the forest is increasingly rare and food security is compromised. In addition, with growth in the production of palm and rubber, it is becoming more and more difficult to integrate small food crop production, thus this important source of alternative production and diversity is diminishing.
Unlike cocoa production that generates seasonal revenue, income-generating activities by women represent a small yet continuous source of income. This is vital to family survival.

work in barbershops or call centres. Some young women indicated they are involved in small businesses selling food, clothing, or beauty products. Others cited working in hair salons or sewing shops.

Women and girls are occasionally employed by palm producers for seed collection during harvest. Some are paid in cash, while others prefer payment in seeds from which they can produce palm oil for sale and contribution to family income. Outside of agriculture, many women are involved in other informal income generating activities such as the sale of food crops, cooked food, production and sale of attiéké, and other food-related items (fish, meat, garlic, onion, pepper, seasonings, salt, and tomato paste).

All the women in the visited communities actively pursued other income-generating activities outside of the family plantation. Unlike cocoa production, which is seasonal and dominated by men, the women always seem to have savings. Although very limited, they contribute substantially to overall family survival.

**E. Household Nutritional Status**

An analysis of the frequency and diversity of food consumed over the last seven days preceding the survey shows several differences between native (Abbeys, Sanwis), southern area non-native (Baoulés, Attié, Gouros, Yacoubas), northern non-native (Senufo, Mandingo, Abrons) and immigrant (Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Benin) households.

**Menu composition**

Households were surveyed on a recall method based on the last seven days. While this method did not measure differences between household members, it did reveal notable differences between native and migrant households.64

Grains and root vegetables are the dominant food in most rural households with cassava, igname, plantain, rice, and corn the most consumed. Rice is the most-consumed grain

### Footnote

64 Except for children who sometimes eat other foods, such as galette (shortbread).
with 14 of the 23 surveyed households (60 percent) having consumed rice at least once during the last seven days. Migrant communities consume more rice than native communities that restrict their consumption to periods when igname and plantain are out of season or during the holidays (especially for children).

Approximately 80 percent of the 23 households consumed cassava, plantain and igname in the last seven days. One hundred percent of the people interviewed in native households consumed plantain with cassava at least once in the past seven days with plantain usually used to prepare a local dish called “foutou” 65. By contrast, more than 80 percent of households from northern rural areas and immigrant households consumed corn in the seven days preceding the study.

Other foods such as red beans, taro, and sweet potatoes were also reported consumed by households although their consumption appears to be erratic. Leafy and other vegetables often accompany the key grain and root, or energy, foods. The consumption of leafy vegetables is more pronounced in migrant and northern households with native households consuming vegetables such as eggplant and okra. In all cases, leafy and other vegetables were most often made into sauces that were eaten with rice, foutou or kabato66. They can also be processed into a paste to accompany steamed plantain, cassava, or igname.

Households derive most of their protein from a daily consumption of fish (smoked, dried, or fresh) with 100 percent of households indicating having consumed fish during the last seven days. Households also indicated that they sometimes eat beef, chicken, or pork and during Islamic holidays, some Muslim households consume sheep. Some households occasionally consume mushrooms or snails. However, according to interviews the amount of protein consumed by households is very low with an emphasis on carbohydrates or energy foods. The food pyramid below outlines the primary groups and types of food consumed by households.

The survey also showed that some essential food groups such as dairy products (milk, butter, cheese), eggs, and other sources of vitamins and minerals are absent from the household diet. In addition, fruit, despite its high availability, is not part of the daily menu with a majority of respondents saying

65  Foutou is a paste made from cassava, igname or plantain. It is usually made as a combination of one to the other and is eaten in association with a sauce.

66  Kabato is a paste made from corn meal. It is usually eaten with a peanut or leafy vegetable sauce (sweet potato leaf, dah, or other).
that, “fruit is not a food”. For them, fruit is consumed periodically and under necessity taken directly from the field during work. In general, fruits available in the direct environment are mango, orange, guava, papaya, watermelon, avocado, pineapple, tangerine, and sweet banana.

The supply of households surveyed is little diversified and balanced. The lack of consumption of protein, dairy products, vitamins and minerals could cause a deterioration of the nutritional status of populations.

**Nutritional Balance**

Study results showed that, at the time of the study, food was relatively available and accessible in the visited communities. However, an analysis of the composition of food reveals deficiencies in relation to food diversity and nutritional balance. Despite the fact household consumption of energy foods (carbohydrates) was adequate, foods required for body strength and protection are almost absent. This can lead to a deterioration of household nutritional status in the short and medium term. This non-diversification of foods may be the origin of nutritional problems for children and also for adults, in particular pregnant and lactating women. Table 8 gives an overview of household food consumption habits.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOOD NUTRITION INDICATORS</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
<th>HOUSEHOLD HABITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Varied</td>
<td>Foods from all groups providing all essential nutrients</td>
<td>Households rarely vary foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>Quantity to meet body needs for energy, strength and protection</td>
<td>Quantities of energy food needs are often met, apart from some anomalies during off-seasons. Quantity for strength and protection are rarely met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Meets expected tastes</td>
<td>Except during off-season, the households’ food tastes are met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Discipline</td>
<td>Eating at fixed times, not overeating, low in fat, salt and sugar</td>
<td>Households do not eat at a fixed time, eat too much (at a time), and eat enough fat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit and vegetables</td>
<td>Consume adequate fruits and vegetables per day</td>
<td>Households consume sufficient vegetables, particular through sauces (okra, eggplant, etc.). The consumption of fruit is not habitual. It is limited to periods of abundance (mango, orange, papaya) and is often eaten in the field to satiate hunger during work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balanced</td>
<td>Energy, strength and protection foods at each meal</td>
<td>Households do not eat a balanced meal. Menus focus on energy foods with strength foods under-consumed and protection foods almost inexistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Foods</td>
<td>Basic foods</td>
<td>Carbohydrates: rice, cassava, plantain, igname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Force foods</td>
<td>Fats: peanuts, coconut, shea butter, palm oil, avocado Sugars: sugar, sugar cane, honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength Foods</td>
<td>Plant Origin: beans, lentils, peanuts, soybeans Animal Origin: Fish, shrimp, eggs, poultry, meat, milk</td>
<td>Households rarely consume, peanuts and beans more present (native and non-natives) Fish is available and accessible, but is often consumed in very small quantity. Red meat and poultry consumption is rare (mostly holidays and special occasions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection Foods</td>
<td>Vegetables: leafy vegetables, okra, eggplant, tomatoes, etc. Fruit: orange, lemon, mango, papaya</td>
<td>Consumption of vegetables is frequent. Households rarely eat fruit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Regular consumption of drinking water</td>
<td>Households have drinking water through public wells (HVA) and regularly drink clean water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Equivalent to a half-hour walk per day</td>
<td>Farm and household work provide sufficient exercise. Youth often play sports.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
F. Food security in Aboisso and Agboville

This section reviews the four basic elements that constitute food security: 1) the availability of basic food in sufficient quantity and quality; 2) the accessibility of basic food, in all areas, at all times, for all, including vulnerable groups; 3) the cleanliness of food and nutritional balance; and 4) the stability of food supply in relation to time and area.

Quantitative and qualitative food availability

Agriculture is the primary economic activity in Agboville and Aboisso. All surveyed households derive most of their food subsistence from their own farms and gardens. In addition, because of their proximity to the city of Abidjan, the markets of Aboisso and Agboville are sufficiently supplied with other necessary foods such as meat, fish, salt, tomato and seasonings.

Outside of “energy” foods and vegetables, there are four main sources of protein, or “strength” foods. The primary source is smoked or dried fish that is sold in the local market. Within the five visited communities, trucks or motorcycles regularly supply the market. The second source of protein is fresh fish from the local fishing industry. Aboisso and Agboville have numerous waterways that offer opportunities for the local fishing industry. Fish obtained from this source is usually consumed first by fishermen households, with the surplus sold on the local market. In Akressi, a village in Aboisso, a group of youth has formed a fishing business initiated under a national project in 1998. Interviews with this group indicate a desire to expand production beyond local needs stating a need for equipment and hardware. This group constitutes a real opportunity to ensure a self-sufficient local protein source in the area. In addition to fish, households also have access to animal protein such as chicken (purchased in the village or raised at home), beef or pork (also obtained in the local market). Lastly, other available sources of protein are snails, wild game and mushrooms. However, due to current protection measures against the Ebola virus, the consumption of wild game\textsuperscript{67} is prohibited by the Ivorian government, resulting in a constraint to

\footnote{Wild game is an animal protein. Unlike other animal proteins, which are purchased, game is usually obtained directly by households via traps and hunting.}
potential opportunities during the ban. Regarding mushrooms and snails, they are either farmed in the region or extracted directly from nature.

Fruit grows in abundance and diversity in the two studied regions and is generally obtained without major financial or physical effort.

Given that varied and sufficient food is available in the studied communities, poor food habits appear to be the major constraint to the adoption of good household nutritional practices. In addition, the study revealed that women choose the household food menu based on culture and tradition. Often, only meals from their own cultural repertoire are valued as nutritional. For some native households for example, rice is considered “food for birds” and leaves “for rodents”. In native households in Agni Sanwi, Abbey and Krobou for example, only foutou (plantain/cassava, accompanied by sauce) is considered as good food. As a result, despite the abundance of other food sources, households are willing to spend large sums of money for the purchase of these items, even off-season.

Agni, Abbey, and Krobou natives rarely consume leafy vegetables, while non-natives and foreign homes use these foods as accompaniment to basic foods. However, overall, raw vegetables and fruits are not part of everyday consumption and households rarely alter their diet. According to plantain producers interviewed in Aboisso, production is difficult due to the tree’s vulnerability to weather. The same can be said for igname, which is greatly affected by weather. In contrast to these two crops, rice, corn, and beans grow easily and readily however the majority of native people prefer to cultivate plantain and igname at the expense of grains. The few who do grow grains, do so for sale and not their own consumption.

In Agboville, particularly Offa, the community celebrates an Igname Festival during which the only product consumed is igname. However, according to those interviewed, the species of igname used for this festival does not grow well in the village and therefore must be bought at a high cost from other communities. In fact, even though other products are available directly in their fields, some households buy large quantities of igname and store over the year to meet their desire for this dish. These are key examples of how household food habits pose two major problems to the community: 1) an outflow of valuable household income; and 2) a lack of food diversification.

In addition to the constraints mentioned above, the conservation of food products also represents a major constraint to food security. Most produced foods are relatively perishable with many products in the visited regions being seasonal. In addition, some products are difficult to conserve and thus affect their distribution. Limited conservation capabilities means households are not able to build up sufficient stocks of foods to last for the entire year. To further exacerbate supply, households rarely prioritize consumption such as consuming more perishable foods during harvest time and conserving less perishable for after harvest. This lack of organization can lead to a reduction of available food supply in a relatively short time and forces them to buy on the market at higher prices to cover family nutritional needs.

Added to this are also superstitions and stereotypes. In Aboude Mandeke for example, the goat is seen as taboo and cannot enter into the village. As a result, it cannot be used as a source of food. In some communities it is believed that if a child consumes eggs, they will become a thief, thereby preventing children from benefitting from this excellent protein source.
**Food accessibility**

The majority of respondents reported they generally consume three meals per day: in the morning, mid-day, and evening. Thanks to large crop production (cocoa, rubber and palm), the majority of rural households visited in Aboisso and Agboville have sufficient purchasing power to guarantee them a steady supply of basic food products. While parents are in the field, some children who come home from school at noon eat dishes prepared in advance by the mother. Or, in the cases where the children are old enough, they prepare their own lunches. In other cases, the children eat lunch in the school canteen or buy food on the market.

In regards to potable water, the visited communities are well supplied, with each of the five having a motorized pump that feeds all households and ensures the availability and accessibility of safe drinking water.

However, it should be pointed out that not all households have the same quality of life. For some households, usually single-parent and non-natives households, access to agricultural products is periodic. During the growing season from May to September, foods are scarce and the possibility for these households to consume three meals per day is compromised. In these situations, families consume only two meals per day for children and one meal for adults. This transitional food insecurity is explained by two main factors: 1) the exhaustion of food stocks between seasons; and 2) the lack of financial means to obtain food at off-season prices.

**Food seasonality and subsequent changes in purchasing power impact the frequency of family meals.**

The depletion of food stock is due to the practice of seasonal crops and a weakness in food conservation and processing methods. As well, foods representing the basis of household food supply, plantain and cassava, experience a sharp decline in availability between May and September in addition to higher prices (up to three times the price) on the market. As a result modest households who have little of income cannot eat foods of their choice.

**Food cleanliness and nutritional balance**

As explained earlier, local markets are filled with a variety of food products grown on community member plantations and farms where no fertilizers or pesticides are used (the respondents during interviews indicated no use of chemicals on food crops), therefore the impact of chemical and toxic substances is essentially zero. Foods grown are different kinds of root vegetables (igname, cassava, taro, sweet potato), grains (rice, corn), vegetables (eggplant, okra, chili, cucumber, carrot, zucchini), beans (kidney beans, peanuts), fruit (plantain, banana, papaya, orange, mango, guava, watermelon), leafy vegetables (spinach, dah, kplala, sweet potato leaf and lettuce) and protein (fish, meat, mushrooms). If these foods are prepared in a clean and balanced way, they can provide good quality food and ensure a balanced diet.

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68. During the rainy season, cassava dries up and can no longer be used for fofou or eaten steamed. As well, plantain trees are often destroyed by rains and the winds, dramatically lowering production. At the same time, grains are used for seed. In these situations, households must review their food habits with some preferring to refrain from consuming other foods as well as unable to buy desired foods on the market. As a result, they suffer food insecurity.

69. A modest producer owns an average of 3 hectares of cocoa, bringing in approximately 675,000 CFA per year, or $1350 USD. During the season, he must spend $500 CFA, or $1 USD per day to buy enough food to feed a family of 5 people. Off-season at least 1500 CFA or, $3 USD, is needed to acquire the same amount of food. In general, the male’s income is responsible for household food however; the contribution of women cannot be overlooked in this expenditure.
diet appropriate to the population. The diversity of food products identified in these communities also allows the preparation of varied dishes. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the previous section, in spite of the diversity of foods produced, the choice of menus remains limited with carbohydrates constituting the bulk of the diet in most interviewed households. In addition, cooking techniques are identical, thus producing similar daily food choices.

Observations made during the study also indicate an issue of uncleanliness - acute in some households - as well as in community markets. Food is often not covered and exposed to dust, flies, and other insects. Cooking utensils are unclean and domestic animals mingle in kitchens, sometimes competing with children for the same food. The presence of water runoff is fairly frequent, leading to stagnant pools. Lastly, children rarely wash their hands before eating and when they do, it is without soap.

**Stability of food supply**

According to data gathered during interviews in the visited communities, the supply of markets in Aboisso and Agboville is not very stable. During harvest periods from December to April, markets are well supplied and many foods can be found, in abundant quantity and at very good prices. However, from May to September, the markets experience fluctuations due to a fall in production. According to some interviewees in Aboisso, most of their basic foods such as plantain and the eggplant, come from Abidjan during this period, thus experiencing a strong increase in prices. In Agboville the opposite effect was observed, with food products produced in the villages directly re-routed to Abidjan, causing a shortage in the local market. It should be stressed however that whatever the period, there was always food available in the visited communities. Quantity and selection of foods may have varied, but never was there a complete absence of food.

**G. Contribution of women and men to food security**

From interviews and observations during the study, several agricultural practices were identified that have a positive impact on household food security.

In terms of food production, men (adults and youth) are responsible for primary family income via seasonal large crop production, such as cocoa, at the same time that women are involved in the production of small
food crops. The latter ensures a base level of household food and helps financially support the family during off-seasons, when men’s income is lowered. According to the survey, 23 households, or 100 percent, in the communities of Ano and Akressi households reported growing plantain and cassava while only 5 percent produce igname (due to its difficulty to grow in this region). Corn is grown by 80 percent of 23 interviewed households and only 2 percent produce rice. These energy food crops are usually grown on small plots of land varying from 0.25 to 0.50 hectares. As outlined in previous sections on the roles of women in food production, a large part of this production is done by women. In addition, the women grow other vegetables (eggplant, okra, peppers, etc.), which are the main source of accompaniment to energy foods.

Most households do not show an interest in cultivating rice although 60 percent report that they consume rice at all periods of the year, meaning that the majority of consumed rice is imported requiring substantial financial resources. In addition, igname is consumed by 80 percent of households while only 5 percent are able to cultivate, meaning it must be acquired on the market largely coming from Bondoukou.71

The survey shows that livestock production and fishing is insufficient, while demand is high. Livestock and poultry are usually tended by women but are intended mostly for sale, not household consumption. As a result, households often consume a deficiency of animal or fish proteins and have to spend income to acquire the necessary amount of protein.

A second way in which women contribute to household food security is via the conservation and storage of foods, which is done mainly through traditional and cultural techniques. Interviewed women also mentioned their involvement in the processing of crops into derivative products such as cassava into fresh attiéké, attoukpou, placali or gari; corn into dokloun; and plantain into alloko. These derivative foods offer households the opportunity to diversify menus even if the nutritional components remain the same. In addition, derivatives can be kept for relatively longer periods to be consumed later in the year.

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70 In the visited regions, the populations are more interested in raising seasonal large crops with smaller food crops grown to meet family nutritional needs. Native households prefer staple foods such as plantain and igname, eating rice only as a substitution. By contrast, non-native and immigrant households prefer to produce rice for their own consumption. However, respondents gave several reasons, which hinder the cultivation of rice. Some find rice production labor-intensive and time-consuming but most evoke climatic reasons, a lack of inputs, technical equipment and materials, which could guarantee a consequent adequate production in a reduced space. As these households are unable to access marshlands, they are forced to resort to extensive cultivation for which available land does not allow.

71 The region of Bondoukou is one of the largest producers of igname in the Ivory Coast.

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| TYPE OF PRODUCT | PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS ENGAGING IN PRODUCTION | PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS CONSUMING *
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantain</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassava</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iignore</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Based on 7-day recall method
A final mechanism by which both men and women contribute to household food security at the local, regional, and national level is the sale of surplus production to markets.

H. Opportunities and constraints for women and youth

The study identified several opportunities and constraints related to the development of agricultural production depending on gender and age; these are outlined in the following section.

Land access and exploitation opportunities

According to interviews conducted in Akressi, Beniankre, Offa, Anno and Aboude Mandeke, there are several possibilities to access land. In some cases, land is purchased directly from a landowner. In others, land can be given by a parent or husband. Lastly, land can be acquired by inheritance. All these forms of land ownership are available to men, women, and youth although interviews have shown that acquiring land by inheritance is more frequent with young men than women, especially in the villages of Agboville. Also, in the villages of Abbeys and Krobous, “women are not entitled to land”.72 Thus, in the case of the death of a father or husband, male inheritors are given preference over female children and wives.

However, the greatest obstacle to land access for all community members is land scarcity. Apart from state protected sites, little new land is available. Of new lands that become available, usually by inheritance, the current landowners - principally adult men - tend to sell inherited land to the highest bidder, to the detriment of the younger generation. Some new landowners agree to relinquish or lease a part of their property to women and youth, but it usually applies to fallow land or marshes, which are difficult to exploit. They are also forbidden to cultivate seasonal large crops. As a reaction to this land scarcity for seasonal crops, producers are increasingly turning to speculation in hopes of greater income. Even fallow lands once reserved for small crops are being exploited for larger crops with the aim of securing a more consistent income73.

But opportunities do still exist. In Aboisso, a new initiative has been taken to encourage farmers to grow small crops on land under electric power lines. This initiative is a result of the collaboration between

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72 Women in the study indicated that they do not have difficulties in accessing land plots to produce small food crops, their husbands provide this readily. However, women are not allowed to cultivate seasonal large crops as they do not own the land. In addition, plots allocated to women are fallow or marshes, which cannot be exploited for cocoa production.

73 Even with the current level of arable land dedicated to seasonal crops, there still remains substantial potential for small crop production in the visited villages. These crops can be planted on the outskirts of palm and rubber tree plantations, on hillsides, in marsh lands, under electrical power lines, and State declassified forest areas. Contrary to cocoa which is grown in forest areas, small crops can be grown on fallow land. Indeed, some households have significant reserves of fallow land that could be developed for small crop production, in Agboville for example, 50 marshlands with a total area of 1717.45 ha were identified. Of this area, only 559.75 ha or approximately 32.59 percent are cultivated and only 116 ha, or 6.75 percent are used for production.
the local administration and the Ivorian electric company. Lastly, in Agboville, the State occasionally declassifies certain forest reserves\(^7^4\) that are then assigned to producers. According to the local authorities, this is done by a simple request of interested persons and therefore, constitutes a real opportunity of land access for women and youth.

The geography and abundant availability of water constitute major opportunities for the diversification of crops\(^7^5\). Small crops could be heavily developed in sequence with seasonal crops, giving opportunity for a wide variety of food products. Similarly, lost forest areas due to a strong human pressure can be used to produce food crops.

A final issue affecting farmer productivity is deforestation, which has strongly influenced the ecosystem and created permanent climate change. Changes include rain scarcity or rain with violent wind and high heat. These climatic destabilizations also affect the harvesting of small food crops, which are highly dependent on natural factors, in some cases eliminating growth. For example, in Aboisso plantain trees are no longer protected and succumb to weather damage with producers saying that at some times during the year, all the trees are grounded and must be replanted. Igname, a key food staple, is also harder and harder to grow in the two regions visited. In Agboville, where an Igname Festival is held each year, residents
now need to buy igname from other regions. In general, the communities lack inputs and materials adapted to climatic change. In addition, due to land scarcity, previous techniques of soil conservation such as set-aside entitlement are becoming rare. Lastly, these producers are helpless in the face of the new parasite attacks that have occurred as a result of climate change and can destroy entire productions or greatly lower performance.

**Public and Private Initiatives for the promotion of women, youth and cocoa producing communities**

Interviews with local experts and residents in the five visited communities reveal that the status of women in the family as well as the community is largely determined by her economic independence. Indeed, the more economically independent a woman is, the more she is consulted and listened to by her husband and members of the community. This is without doubt due in part to a growing commitment of public and private actors to strengthening the economic power of women and youth. For example, the national Law No. 2013-33 on marriage enacted on January 25, 2013, created an institutional framework for the advancement of women. This act put an end to the debate on prevalence of one sex over another and confirms gender equality. In the private sector, some initiatives are emerging in the promotion of gender equality. For example, Mars, Nestlé and Mondelez recently published reports on

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82 EDE Consultants is replicating a couple’s seminar initiated in Uganda. This seminar unites couples and engages them in a participatory diagnostic of household tasks, responsibilities and levels of decision-making. The aim is to bring awareness to men on the importance of women and the need for them to be involved in decision-making. Couples then act as example for other couples.

83 Interviews with various stakeholders helped to enumerate initiatives at the regional scale, in the visited areas. The initiatives detailed here are summarized in the following box. More information for the area of Agboville can be consulted through the annual activities report (2013) of the regional directorate of agriculture of the Agneby-Tiassa.
The status of a woman in her family and community is largely determined by her economic independence. The more a woman earns, the more she is listened to and consulted.

young men, who receive mentoring from the Agence Nationale D’Appui au Développement Rural (ANADER) or, the National Rural Development Agency (semi-private rural development structure) via a dedicated agent who provides necessary technical support. As another example, the Akressi Farm Operators Union (UE2A) represents a union of young male food producers.

In order to sustain cocoa and coffee production, ANADER has developed accompaniment programs in all the visited communities in Aboisso and Agboville. In addition to its public mission, ANADER also runs private contracts signed with individuals, institutions and private companies. As an example in Akressi, ANADER runs the GIZ-Farmer Business School Project (FBS) within the Akressi Ehoulobo Coop (COOPEA), a cooperative of coffee and cocoa producers. This project aims to professionalize producer organization through training. Beyond the GIZ project, ANADER also assists producers in the same cooperative, in partnership with the Société Africaine de Cacao (SACO), on the Rainforest Alliance label certification project. This project seeks to train cocoa producers on good agricultural, social and environmental practices. In Anno, Aboude Mandeke and Offa in the region of Agboville, ANADER led a similar project with Cargill for the benefit of producers in the Ivorian Cooperative of Agricultural Trading and Producers (CINPA), certified by UTZ Certified.

In the visited communities, many initiatives were identified in the support of Income Generating Activities (IGA). In Akressi, the UE2A, formed by GIZ, received 1.5 hectares of rejected plantain trees for the establishment of a plantation as part of the Programme de Productivité Agricole en Afrique de l’Ouest, or Program of Agricultural Productivity in West Africa (WAAPP/PPAAO), piloted by ANADER. Also in Akressi, COOPYA received equipment consisting of a pump, a drip irrigation system, wheelbarrows, handplows, seeds and inputs on the part of IDD, a local organization. With this equipment, this cooperative, composed of women and young men, began agricultural activities with a part of income supporting the village primary school canteen.

The CCC has initiated a project called “Young Producers of Coffee - Cocoa” which aims to establish twelve young producers per year, over four years, in each of their regional localities. Also, according to corroborating sources, the CCC has initiated another project for twelve young producers of fish and farming. Lastly, the study identified another CCC project supporting women in the production of soap from palm oil. The study did not identify any specific livelihood initiatives for women and youth in the three Agboville communities, however discussions with stakeholders indicate that many initiatives also exist in the department.

84 The IDD is a local organization headed by Mrs. FOLOGO, the wife of the former president of the Ivorian Economic and Social Council. They provide environment related services for e.g. bio energy.
85 Annual Report (2013), Regional Directorate of agriculture in Agneby-Tiassa
Women themselves have undertaken numerous initiatives and activities, without outside support, with the study identifying approximately 15 women’s associations in the five communities (see Annex 3). These associations are fully operational and include action plans; however they would benefit from accompaniment and coaching to reach their full potential and be leaders of food security in their communities.

All community members encountered in the study welcome these initiatives, however it should be emphasized that most of these programs were focused on cocoa producers, therefore benefitting mostly adult men. Efforts for women and youth remain marginal. In addition, even if a number of ANADER projects exist in the visited communities, they are mainly developed and financed by the private sector and hence focus on adult men. As well, the remoteness of the ANADER representatives leaves many out who are not members of coffee and cocoa cooperatives, especially producers of food crops. Lastly, of all these initiatives, there are none focusing on nutrition education, in fact outside of a few women who benefitted from nutritional advice during prenatal and post-natal care, the majority of the population does not appear to have had any awareness on health and nutrition issues.

Despite the existence of numerous opportunities, a lack of support prevents producers from realizing their full potential. As one example, although many rivers, lagoons, and marshes exist in the visited areas, which can readily host small crop production, little is practiced. This appears to be due to a lack of knowledge and training but also the absence of necessary materials such as pumps, irrigation systems, or watering cans.

Women's associations encountered in Beniankre, Akressi, Offa, Anno and Aboude Mandeke lament the lack of support.
saying, “We are left to fend to ourselves.” In addition, the lack of access to credit for financing of activities further hampers efforts of women and youth. Those financial institutions that do exist are in large cities and require conditions, which are difficult for the rural poor to meet. Apart from a few organizations in Akressi who support some private initiatives, the majority of women and youth wait for aid that never comes. Or, as with many youth, they are turning away more and more from individual initiatives and seek work in large agricultural companies, which offer better opportunities for regular compensation.

**Marketing Networks**

Thanks to their high level of organization and stability, opportunities for producers in the cocoa and coffee sectors exist both for youth and adults. Indeed, the study revealed many cooperatives and individual companies operating in the visited communities. These structures regularly collect producer harvests, which are purchased at stable fixed prices and monitored by the government through the CCC. Because of this, cocoa and coffee producers -- adult males, mostly - enjoy a decent income compared to that of food producers, who are largely adult women.

For most women, their main source of income is the marketing of food products on the local market. The diverse populations of native groups (Abbey and Krobou in Agboville and Agni Sanwy in Aboisso), non-native groups (Attie, Sénoufo, Baoulé, Gouro, Yacouba, Malinke, Abron, etc.) and immigrant groups (from Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Benin, etc.) who live in the communities and surrounding areas constitute a viable consumer market for food products. In addition, the proximity of these two communities to Abidjan, the economic capital of Ivory Coast, represents a major opportunity. However, the gains of these sales remain limited due to a lack of diversity and the seasonality of products, with the same types of products present in the markets at the same time of the year. In addition, the perishable nature of these products further reduces their marketability. Faced with these realities and deprived of any processing capacity on a larger scale, these producers, mostly women and youth, are forced to accept market price which is often at low profit, notwithstanding the physical efforts and pre-financing required to produce crops. The isolation of some communities such as Beniakre and Anno also present real obstacles to distribution, with the poor condition of roads as well as the scarcity of transport options making products difficult to sell in other markets. What products make it to market are often in deteriorated condition and thus sold at extremely low prices.
In addition to market saturation and the isolation of communities, the unorganized nature of their activities and absence of a formal distribution network present further obstacles to the economic development of women. Unlike seasonal crops (cocoa, coffee, rubber, palm), there is no formal network for the marketing of food crops, which are the main activity of women. Very often they have significant quantities of products but they do not know how to get them to market. They also do not have a market index, which can be used to gauge prices. For example, food producers in Akressi who have large areas of cassava in production never come into contact with a buyer. In Beniankre, many crops such as eggplant and tomatoes perish due to a lack of buyers. This is in contrast to seasonal crops where buyers are identified in advance and prices are often publicly fixed and monitored.

I. Aspirations of women and youth

The needs of women and youth are essentially the same. According to women and youth interviewed in this survey, they feel that their production of food and derivative products would be more profitable if they had access to advice, support, and opportunities in the production and marketing of their crops. Although per the previous section of this report, many local organizations for women and youth have been initiated in Agboville and Aboisso, very real obstacles still exist. As well, this support is not always consistent in terms of supervision (training, counselling, and advice) and support (inputs, materials, and equipment) in order to increase their production capacity over the long-term. This is the case with the women’s cooperative TANGAN’NI in Beniankre, which unites several local women in the hard work of production and marketing of food products. There are also ten other women’s associations in Offa that support the promotion of member agricultural food crop production. In Anno, the association Agni-Baoule represents women coffee and cocoa producers and finally, the GBOSSOU Association for Development in Aboude-Mandeke supports women’s agricultural activities. However, all members of these organizations are in need of inputs and training to maximize their efforts in food production and hence community food security.

To further their aspirations, both women and youth would like to see a more formal organization of market access and the creation of central market for their food products. For the majority of persons interviewed, the most discouraging part of their work is the distribution and sale of crops. Therefore to maintain interest and encourage the continuation of this valuable activity, durable and reliable distribution channels guaranteeing a certain minimum of income should be established. In addition, other options for the transformation of food into derivative products would be a value-add.

The marketing of food products and their economic potential are severely constrained by several factors:

- Market saturation
- Lack of conservation and transformation techniques
- Isolation of communities
- Lack of organization and formal distribution networks
Seeing such organization and controls with seasonal crops, many women would like to become owners of cocoa or rubber tree plantations\(^\text{87}\). But to achieve this they face numerous challenges as mentioned previously in this report: lack of access to land, lack of access to production inputs, and management. As to membership in coffee and cocoa cooperatives, there do not appear to be any obstacles to women becoming members, seeing as all members (men and women) are equal in terms of opportunities. However, many women expressed little interest, indicating that participation on a cooperative board of directors does not mean receiving special consideration, despite their disadvantage in numbers and increased obstacles. For those who do not seek to become owners, they are happy to continue to support their families on farms in the production of food crops, but seek similar support mechanisms such as those for cocoa, coffee, and rubber producers.

J. Relationship between women, gender, nutrition and food security

Figure 4 illustrates the existing relationship between gender, women’s economic empowerment, nutrition, and food security. As previously discussed, the study highlighted a number of institutional and cultural factors which block women’s access to land, thus affecting their access to agricultural production resources (economic capital, inputs and training), income and economic empowerment. It has also been shown that economic empowerment directly affects a woman’s ability to be involved in family and community decision-making roles, resulting in greater respect and attention from family members and the entire community as her economic independence increases.

The study also revealed two key issues regarding the roles and activities of men and women in cocoa-producing communities. These two issues limit women’s economic empowerment and therefore increase inequality between the sexes: 1) a woman’s work in cocoa production on family plantations increases her husbands’ income, but not her own; 2) women’s work in food production is constrained by access to land, technology, level of organization, marketing, education and training. The food crops that women produce are not varied and generate little income due to market saturation.

Just as the production and sale of food crops in cocoa-growing communities are integral to gender inequality and thus food security, a relationship can be drawn between the physical environment and its effects on production and marketing of food such as seasonal climate changes, land availability (for agricultural use), and transportation (road infrastructure, etc.). Habits and food customs also affect food security and nutrition, with family food choices based on custom and experience rather than food availability and accessibility. However, overall, the primary contributor to food insecurity and nutrition is food production itself, as: 1) women are responsible for food production, but this production is seasonal, limited, and cannot currently cover all family food needs; 2) women selling food on the market do not make adequate profits due to a lack of crop variety and marketing constraints; 3) women do not generate sufficient revenues from the production and marketing of food in order to

\(^{87}\) Women indicate that initially, they did not aspire to working in seasonal crop production; however interest has grown as they see the advantages of cultivating these crops in terms of opportunities, organization and especially income.
SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH FARMERS AND FAMILY NUTRITIONAL STATUS IN TWO COCOA PRODUCING COMMUNITIES IN CÔTE D’IVOIRE

V. CONCLUSIONS

Roles played by women and youth in cocoa-producing communities in the two visited departments continue to be strongly influenced by tradition and culture. Young women between 18 and 30 years of age assume similar roles to that of older women, with young men likewise involved in the same agricultural tasks as older men. Some young men pursue new avenues for entrepreneurial development and remain prepared to take on the future responsibilities of men. There are, however, key disparities as to the level of opportunities and constraints based on age and sex.

The responsibilities of women and youth in cocoa production are largely determined by sex and age with all community members meet family needs. Income from men’s cocoa production is generally used to purchase a portion of family food, but this revenue is insufficient to guarantee food security.

Interviews with families in cocoa-producing communities indicate that the men are responsible for household expenses such as children’s tuition fees, healthcare, food and clothing. However, women contribute income when the household faces difficulty in meeting these basic needs, which is often the case due to the seasonal nature of cocoa production. There is no clear demarcation between who pays what with habits differing per family but in general, the man remains the main financial supporter of the family.

Figure 4: Gender, women’s economic empowerment, nutrition and food security
(men, women, and youth) directly or indirectly involved in various production tasks. Men (adult and youth) are involved in forest clearing, weeding, seedlings planting, field maintenance, pod harvest and écabossage, drying and bagging beans. Women (adult and youth) are engaged in the transportation of seedlings from nurseries, seedling planting, weeding after planting, collection of cocoa pods during harvest, transport of cocoa beans for fermentation and then drying, monitoring of beans during drying, and sorting beans for bagging. In addition, the women also provide refreshment and food for the workforce (mainly men during harvest and écabossage). In general, youth perform the same tasks of those of adults, except for the marketing of cocoa beans that is exclusively managed - in the context of family farms - by adult men, unless the task is delegated to another family member.

Although men’s income from cocoa is used to support family domestic needs (clothes, schooling, and food), women and youth do not directly benefit – economically, socially, or personally – from cocoa income, despite the fact that they provide invaluable assistance to the head of the family (the adult male).

Women play a crucial role in the production of food crops, essentially being solely responsible for the cultivation of small crops. These crops are grown on two types of plots: 1) in association with a family cocoa plantation; or 2) on fallow land acquired by lease, allocation, inheritance, or gift (of a parent or husband). Because of land scarcity, other previously neglected plots of land are increasingly coveted, for example the outlying areas of rubber and palm plantations, land under electrical towers, marshes, and hillsides. In general, small crops grown on a family plantation in association with cocoa are reserved for household consumption. Crops grown on fallow land or other plots of land are reserved for sale. Women are responsible for the marketing of food crops and income from these sales is used to supplement basic family food needs. As small crops are less seasonal, women can accumulate savings that are used support family needs when income from cocoa production is depleted. Men are seldom involved in the production, sale and marketing of food crops.

Additional household resources are obtained through the transformation of food – an activity predominantly managed by women. However, traditional and archaic processing techniques limit the value and longevity of these derivative products. The applied techniques are based on available raw materials, food habits of the community, and women’s traditional experiences. Men are marginally involved in the transformation of food crops; this involvement is usually limited to the production of palm wine and traditional alcohol (koutoukou).

Most of the food products (raw or processed) produced by women are sold locally or in the nearby markets where they can be carried by foot. The isolation of some communities, the scarcity of public and private transport, market saturation of similar products at a given time of the year, and the absence of organized and formal collection and distribution networks prevent the economic development of women. They do not generate enough income from their product sales, and what income is earned is unstable. This is not the case for large seasonal crops (cocoa, coffee, rubber, palm), most of them dominated by men, who enjoy an organized supply chain, marketing networks, and a predetermined fixed price index.

Key constraints which hamper the ability of women and youth to fully benefit from food production include limited access to land, lack of public and private mentoring...
services, access to technical capacity-building programs, and access to credit. There are a number of support services for cocoa producers, but as cocoa growers are usually male adults, women and youth only benefit indirectly. Although they are increasingly being taken into account in some agency and government programs, benefits to women and youth remain marginal. In addition, most of the initiatives on gender equality and the integration of youth are new with their long-term impact and sustainability on a larger scale yet to be seen.

Study interviews reveal that due to the low profitability of food crops, many women are choosing to disengage from these activities and are seeking to grow larger cash crops. Young girls are moving toward other non-agricultural vocations (trade, hairdressing, sewing, etc.). Young men are also attracted by other opportunities such as business or entrepreneurship, resulting in a general rural exodus towards cities. Those who remain, or are returning to their villages, often search for stable jobs with larger private plantations established in the region.

In spite of these constraints, food production remains the principal income-generating activity for women and youth and can serve as a key channel for their economic independence. Once economically autonomous, women enjoy a higher status in their families and communities, thus expanding their role in decision-making processes.

There are a number of opportunities to improve both cocoa and food crop production: 1) cocoa and food crops would benefit from the addition of high yield and improved varieties (both under-produced in Ivory Coast); 2) cocoa and food crop producers need improved agricultural inputs in the form of fertilizer, nutrients, tools, and equipment; 3) producers need training on good agricultural practices; 4) producers lack knowledge about processes for the transformation of products (food crop transformation increases value and generates higher profits, training cocoa farmers on better processing techniques could move them higher up in the product value chain); 5) informal women’s associations could better organize food production and distribution. A number of women’s groups have spontaneously formed in the five visited communities. Factors that differ between cocoa and food crop production are product transformation, supply chain structure, price controls, market links, and the coordination of supply and distribution. Unlike the cocoa and coffee, food crops lack a formal and organized supply chain network. If the latter could be established for food crops via existing cooperatives, farmers’ associations, wholesalers, or other organizations, women and youth could be assured of more stable prices for their products. In particular the coordination of food production activities could ensure that all farmers do not practice the same culture at the same time of the year. An increase in the variety of food products grown and marketed would increase the value of food and therefore benefits for women and youth who dominate this sector.

Some of the activities described above can also be linked to food security in the region. Household interviews revealed that food production does not always respond to the aspirations or needs of families. On the production side, problems are linked to seasonality, productivity, or a lack of variety that make food production insufficient. With regard to demand, families often have needs and desires beyond what they can produce. The study brought to light that, although
more stable, income from cocoa production is not enough to support family needs. For basic food products, the paradox is that when producers have sufficient income (after cocoa harvest), there is an abundance of food crops in their own fields as well as on the market (at low prices). But once the cocoa season is over, income goes down at the same time that of food products become less availability and more expensive on the market. During these periods, providing three balanced meals per day for the average household becomes difficult.

Food habits constitute the main obstacle to the adoption of good household nutritional practices. Women, responsible for the household menus, choose meal composition based on tradition and culture, not availability. These choices rarely change, even if a family must spend more money to get a desired food during lean periods or if a crop is not successful. There is an almost total absence of dairy products, eggs, and fruit in household consumption despite their availability and accessibility in the region. Finally, food hygiene represents an urgent need as food is often prepared and sold under unhealthy conditions.

The need for the coordination of production, processing, and conservation of food crops was highlighted throughout course of the study. Women, the providers of family food needs, should be educated on the importance of a balanced diet, the need to vary meals and issues of food security. A better production of food crops, in terms of better productivity, more efficient results, and better profitability would help to: 1) ensure a stable food supply for cocoa-producing families, and 2) increase the income of women, and thus their economic independence and social status in the community. Increased productivity and revenues can be used to purchase supplemental foods for families in need, and address issues of nutritional balance. Therefore key initiatives within the PRO-PLANTEURS project could target these areas: helping women access capital, resources and opportunities, thus giving them means to become economically independent and reduce gender inequality.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides recommendations that can be integrated into the framework of the proposed PRO-PLANTEURS project. These recommendations are based on: 1) researcher conclusions; 2) the aspirations of target beneficiaries, and 3) objectives, activities and indicators defined in the current PRO-PLANTEURS project framework. It is strongly felt that if these recommendations are applied together, they can be mutually reinforcing to the project.

The recommendations presented in this study are actions that can be added to the PRO-PLANTEURS project framework for

88 A table in Annex 4 summarizes these recommendations and links them to the main activities, beneficiaries, target areas, partners and objectives.
89 Project objective: The cultivation of crops on plantations/farms located in the project area provide additional sources of income to those currently produced from cocoa and improve the nutritional status of families. Farmer families in the project area work to increase the productivity and quality of cocoa and diversify food products. At the end of the project, 20,000 farmer families will have sustainably increased cocoa crop production by an average of approximately 40% in relation to initial performance, will produce cocoa beans conforming to market standards and produce enough food for a healthy family as indicated by the household food diversity indicator, with a surplus of production contributing to increased incomes.
90 2014-08-21 Annex PRO-PLANTEURS
the promotion of women’s equality\textsuperscript{91} and opportunity through existing good practices such as: 1) equal opportunity decision-making in family cocoa production businesses\textsuperscript{92}; 2) field-schools specifically targeting youth farmers for training and capacity building\textsuperscript{93}; and 3) youth access to agricultural activities.\textsuperscript{94}

Our study concludes that one of the fundamental aspects to consider in the design and implementation of the PRO-PLANTEURS project is a universal inclusion of men, women, and youth in all communities and all households where the project will be implemented. Research shows that in the agricultural sector of most developing countries, rural or urban areas, men still exercise a greater authority and hold the decision making power\textsuperscript{95}. Therefore, for the success of any project, the support of the village council (mostly composed of men) is crucial.

Working only with cooperatives can hinder initiatives as women and youth are rarely included in these institutions. As a result, PRO-PLANTEURS should make every effort to systematically engage all community members in discussions relating to the project and subsequent activities. To this end, the following specific actions could be integrated into the project plan.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Mapping and strengthening of women and youth capacities in the target communities. The first phase of the PRO-PLANTEURS project provides for the selection of up to 20 farmer organizations, cooperatives, and cocoa producers groups for a basic study and training for registration under the standards of the Organisation pour l’Harmonisation en Afrique du Droit des Affaires (OHADA) or Office for Unified Business Laws in Africa. The training should include the development of business plans in order to acquire professional business skills and perspective. Our study indicates that women and youth are rarely members of cooperatives and farmers’ associations. As well, in general, family plantations are recorded under the name of the head of the family who is usually an adult male, preventing women and youth from fully benefitting from project activities. However, the latter contribute enormously to family cocoa production. The same is true for producers who are not registered in a cooperative. To overcome this and provide equal opportunity, a two-pronged approach could be undertaken: 1) encourage all cooperatives to register plantations both in the producer’s name as well as that of the producer’s wife, in this way the latter can also benefit from activities planned in the project framework; 2) before the selection process, identify all existing men, women, and youth groups in each targeted community noting objectives, mandates, and organizational structures. As was noted during the study, 15 informal women groups were identified, each working independently of farmers associations or cooperatives. It is therefore recommended to explore the potential of these groups as possible service providers to cocoa producers. For example, given their knowledge of planting and cocoa production, women could play an important role in the establishment of community cocoa and shade-tree nurseries and/or be incubator
\end{itemize}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[93] Jacobs Foundation in partnership with the Foundation Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung in Uganda draft.
\item[95] Lidia Farre (2012), the role of men in economic and social development of women: Introduction to the Gender Question, Institute of Análisi Econômica and Barcelona GSE
\end{footnotes}
managers for plant distribution centres. Youth could be trained for the creation and management of demonstration plots, or centres of fermentation and drying.

Other areas of collaboration can be developed between identified groups and existing cocoa cooperatives. For example, in accordance with the OHADA Uniformity Act, it is stated that a person could legally participate in the social capital of cooperative organization. In the case of SCOOP-CA,96 (Société Coopérative avec Conseil d’Administration or Cooperative Company with Board of Director), the legal person may be a member of the Board of Directors. This provision could allow the many women and youth associations to merge with a cocoa cooperative. Cocoa cooperatives could also expand to include small crop cooperatives, both diversifying the activities of the cooperative as well as alleviating dependency on a single agricultural production. However, a case-by-case analysis should be performed and consultations should be undertaken with the various parties to assess feasibility of this proposal and the definition of implementation conditions.

2. Specify baseline survey goals and define additional progress indicators. Once an identification and selection of existing formal and informal groups is made, a baseline survey of the selected groups could be integrated into the PRO-PLANTEURS project framework. The current proposed project does not define the objectives and orientation of the baseline survey. It is therefore recommended to identify specific areas to be covered in the baseline survey with additional performance indicators related to gender and youth, such as: 1) the representation of women in farmer organizations; 2) the representation of youth in farmer organizations; 3) the number of men and women registered in the project; 4) the number and type of women and youth service providers identified97. Given that cooperatives include producers, indicators on women and youth representation in these cooperatives provide a measure of the rate of growth of youth and women plantation owners. Also, the project could better assess whether the support of cocoa cooperatives benefited these members of society, or not.

3. Encourage women and youth to be producers and/or workers in cocoa production. Our study noted that even if cocoa production is regarded as a male activity, women are also interested in the production of large crops including cocoa (taking into account the financial advantages). However, their aspirations are limited due to the difficulties of work, land access, lack of agricultural inputs, access to financing, lack of training on modern techniques, and a lack of necessary equipment to pursue these activities. In order to encourage women in cocoa production, PRO-PLANTEURS could facilitate their access to land, financing and/or provide training on advanced agricultural techniques for cocoa production in any type of soil (fallow land, hillsides, etc.)98. If more land is used for the production of cocoa, a new evaluation could be conducted to estimate the effects on production and supply of food crops.

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96 The OHADA Uniformity Act defines the Cooperative Company as an independent group of persons united voluntarily to meet their aspirations and economic, social and cultural needs, through a jointly owned and managed group and where power is exercised democratically and according to the cooperative principles (Article. 4 of the Act).

97 Complementary Performance Indicators to the PRO-PLANTEURS framework are added in Annex 6.

98 In visited villages, some households own plots of land and marshes that could be cultivated for food crop production. For example, Agboville has approximately 50 marshland sites, covering a total of 1717.45 ha. Of this area, only 559.75 hectares, or approximately 32.59 % are cultivated and 116 hectares, or 6.75% are operational.
A mapping of tasks showed that men perform some tasks, such as land burning and clearing. In addition, overall cocoa production requires a strong workforce. However, youth take very little interest in cocoa production as financial gains (if applicable) can only be realized at the end of the season, meaning initial investment funds are often unobtainable. If PRO-PLANTEURS could establish mechanisms by which women producers could be linked to young workers and vice versa, and also that cocoa purchasers (cooperatives and exporters), could pay an advance on production, youth workers could be paid on a more timely basis, thus reducing the potential of their exodus towards other labour markets. Finally, the project could investigate ways to create more incentives for women and youth by facilitating access to agricultural equipment, inputs and technology as mentioned in recommendation 7, see below.

4. Involve women and youth in decision-making processes. The study showed that no formal obstacle prevents women from participating in the decision-making process, however women and youth are kept out of decision-making bodies for cultural reasons and rarely intervene during public meetings. To encourage women and give them more confidence to participate in community life, PRO-PLANTEURS could introduce the concept of Community Forums as a platform for dialogues in which women and youth could be engaged in active communication, consultations, and negotiations. These Forums would have equitable representation of men, women, and youth who would assist in the identification of best strategies for achieving PRO-PLANTEURS project objectives in their community. These Forums would be an extension to existing administrative structures and serve as a platform for the exchange of ideas and the organization of community training. Women and youth volunteers who participate in these Forums could also take on certain awareness-raising activities on gender and age equity. PRO-PLANTEURS could consider introduction of the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) in these communities.99

5. Heighten community awareness. The main objectives of the proposed PRO-PLANTEURS project are the promotion of gender equality and awareness-raising about nutrition and food security. Awareness could be raised in several ways: 1) working with local social and theatrical groups, including youth, to create awareness through street performances and dramatic art in the course of community gatherings - these events would communicate specifically on questions of equality between the sexes, refusal of land inheritance for girls and women, the consequences of land sale for future generations, a balanced diet and hygiene; 2) organize seminars and workshops for couples in order to sensitize men on the role and potential of women, and the benefits of gender equality, identifying “Model Cocoa Couples” (husbands and wives who can serve as models for others); and (3) solicit young volunteers (male and female) for training on gender equality, nutrition, and food security and seek their assistance in raising awareness by door-to-door (household) visits.100

6. Reducing inequalities between men and women, building decision-making capability and creating economic empowerment for women and youth. The direct relationship between women’s economic empowerment,
their ability to participate in decisions and the reduction of gender inequality was demonstrated in the study. The study also revealed that an immediately available venue to create additional income for women and youth in Ivorian cocoa producing communities is the facilitation, promotion, and marketing of small crops and derivative foods. It also remains one of the greatest aspirations for the target beneficiaries. To expand on this, the proposed PRO-PLANTEURS project could: 1) work to organize informal women and youth and groups into cooperatives, women farmer groups, and mutual support groups that could coordinate production, processing, and marketing of raw and processed materials more effectively, over the year and at more profitable prices. Many success cases have demonstrated that “having structured groups can be an effective mechanism to help women collectively overcome obstacles related to the gender and decision-making power;”\textsuperscript{101, 102} 2) these groups can then be trained to produce larger crops, adopt good agricultural practices, and establish markets contacts. The PRO-PLANTEURS project is currently creating farmer field schools to strengthen certification capacity of selected cocoa producers. This training could be extended to encompass other groups producing food crops. Once trained, the same groups of women and youth could positively affect cocoa production activities in which they are involved.

7. Financial, technical and material support: PRO-PLANTEURS could aim to help increase access for women and youth to resources, land, finance, technology, hardware, and agricultural inputs. Some activities which could be implemented in the project framework are: 1) PRO-PLANTEURS could play a role through supporting awareness campaigns on land access and facilitating farmer access to credit agencies and financial institutions; 2) as was noted in the study, the intensity of agricultural work is turning youth away from the sector. To stimulate interest, PRO-PLANTEURS could help in facilitating access to new technologies and equipment to improve productivity and output. Other necessary equipment such as sprayers or atomizers, pumps, irrigation systems, watering cans, personal protective equipment, and first-aid kits could also contribute to making agricultural work more enticing. A number of agro-industrial enterprises (chemical products, agricultural machinery) operate in the visited areas; PRO-PLANTEURS could invite these enterprises to run workshops and exhibitions to raise awareness among farmers on existing opportunities. Given that there are few fishing activities in the communities, PRO-PLANTEURS could build or support fishing by building more fishponds or support the youth initiatives for fishing.

8. Redefine project activities (in particular, those related to food crops) in light of existing initiatives\textsuperscript{103}. PRO-PLANTEURS seeks to align its cocoa production activities with existing public and private social initiatives in the country. To facilitate this, collaborations with other agencies and partners should be explored to support food crop production. For example: 1) ANADER in Agboville is in the process of creating a platform of several stakeholders (technical institutes, producers,  

\textsuperscript{101} See Association of Women Independent Workers in India http://www.sewa.org

\textsuperscript{102} Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has funded the Sunhara project in India: the Emancipation of Women in Agriculture: Collective Action through the structures of Group http://www.asintl.org/Impact-Learning-Sunhara-India.pdf

\textsuperscript{103} Result 4 in the proposed PRO-PLANTEURS project derives from the Objective “Lessons learned and innovative approaches are shared at the knowledge platform level between partners and members of GISCO.”
transporters, retailers, etc.) to facilitate the exchange of information on the production, collection and distribution of food crops and harmonization of prices. GISCO and its partners could support and take advantage of these initiatives; 2) National agencies, such as the Direction des Productions Vivrières et de la Sécurité Alimentaire (DPVSA), or Food Crops and Food Security Director, and the Office National du Développement de Riziculture (ONDR)104, or National Office of Rice Culture Development lead a number of projects in the field. A workshop took place in July 2013 in Grand-Bassam to review the current national strategy for the cultivation of food crops (other than rice) and draft a coherent intervention framework for food crop development.105 PRO-PLANTEURS could take advantage of these initiatives by working closely with these organizations to carry out joint activities in the project areas; 3) the study identified many marsh areas and other unused lands in the project areas. These lands could be cultivated and developed to support the production of food crops during large crop off-seasons, in particular rice and igname106 that is widely consumed in the project areas. PRO-PLANTEURS could collaborate closely with the Projet d’Appui à la Relance des Filières Agricoles (PARFACI), or Project to Support the Revival of Agricultural Sectors, which manages marshlands (water irrigation plans, arable land development) and ONDR to implement joint programs; 4) The problem of post-harvest losses due to climate change threatens household food security in addition to having detrimental consequences to producer incomes. To help overcome this, PRO-PLANTEURS could organize women and youth to develop local processing of food products (for example, for tomato, a crop that is currently not being processed at all in the visited communities). These activities could counter against the short life of raw food crops and provide added value before marketing, which could in turn increase market value of these products. This is the case in the production of attiéké from cassava, palm and red oil into soap.

9. Improving nutrition and food security through education and awareness raising: The study revealed that in spite of the variety, quality, and availability of food in the visited communities, food habits and cultural practices constitute the primary obstacle to the adoption of good household nutritional practices. Diets lack dairy products, fruit and raw vegetables and contain very little proteins, which makes meals deficit in micronutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Solutions could be implemented within the PRO-PLANTEURS project framework objective to “train 5000 farmer families on the aspects of food diversification and nutrition,” by organizing awareness campaigns and training107 on the value of consuming varied food products as well as more diverse cooking methods to maintain the nutritional value of foods. One of the easiest ways would be to encourage families to eat easily accessible seasonal fruit and vegetables and integrate them into their normal diet. Women should be encouraged to include more raw fruits and vegetables in their diet and use adequate cooking techniques to preserve micronutrients. The consumption of vegetable proteins (beans, peanuts), eggs and dairy products should also be encouraged, as animal proteins are often more expensive. Awareness campaigns could also address issues of hygiene in food preparation to reduce disease transmission.

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105 Http://www.gouv.ci/actualite_1.php?recordid=3690
106 Using igname seed stocks that are better adapted to changing climate could help communities cultivate igname and reduce their dependency and expenditure in buying igname from the market.
107 SCB-Compaci Healthy nutrition of cocoa and cotton smallholder families
among families. This could include training on hand washing with soap before cooking or eating, washing fruits and vegetables before eating, covering cooked foods, and preventing live animals from entering into kitchens. Lastly, the introduction of new food crops could create opportunities for families to eat better and earn more. PRO-PLANTEURS could collaborate with the Société Ivoirienne de Nutrition (SIN), or Ivorian Nutrition Society, on the design and execution of an awareness raising campaign in the project areas. PRO-PLANTEURS could also play a role in raising awareness of the Ivorian government via training members of the Institut National de Formation Sociale (INFS), or National Institute for Social Training, and Institut National de Formation des Agents de Santé (INFAS), or the National Institute for Healthworker Training, on nutrition and best practices to advise populations on food choice based on nutritional value, diversification of crops, yearly food need estimates, transformation into non-perishable products, consumption and sale of perishable foods, etc. The implementation of these activities could help to generate regular incomes, enable local communities to continue successful cocoa production, and guarantee the supply of nutritious, good quality foods.

108 The FLA study on “The role of women in the Nestle cocoa supply chain in Ivory Coast” shows that women bear the weight of illnesses in the family as accompany family members to health centers and homecare the sick. All these activities cut into normal work hours.

109 The SIN organized the 1st day on Ivorian nutrition with a focus on “food security and nutrition” on November 19, 2014. This campaign aimed to raise household awareness on nutritional issues and was attended by nutritionists and communication experts. The campaign sought to promote the benefits of foods grown in the communities, overcome stereotypes and encourage food diversification.

10. Creation of gender and nutrition working groups within the Public-Private Partnership Platform (PPPP) of the coffee-cocoa sector:

The findings of this study served to highlight issues of gender and nutrition in cocoa production areas. Many observations evidenced the importance of the role of women in families and communities, even though women are generally marginalized in community hierarchy. At the same time, nutrition holds little value to the visited communities with few having knowledge on the importance and manner in which to meet family nutritional needs. To overcome these shortcomings, it is proposed that GISCO includes issues of gender and nutrition within its frameworks of exchange and partnership such as the PPPP on the coffee-cocoa sector in Côte d’Ivoire. This could ensure on-going consultation on these issues and promote a combination of multi-stakeholders efforts to increase awareness on these issues. For example, gender and nutrition could be addressed in working group 5 activities under “social aspects of sustainability / community development”. The activities on gender and nutrition listed in the table below could be a basis for working group discussions.

### TABLE 10: EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES FOR DISCUSSION WITHIN THE PPPP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>ACTIVITÉS</th>
<th>OBJECTIFS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender / Nutrition</td>
<td>Define a clear vision on gender and nutrition for all the sector actors</td>
<td>Develop a mutual understanding and synchronization of all the stakeholder activities in terms of gender and nutrition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Determine key performance indicators to measure the progress in gender and nutrition</td>
<td>Share with stakeholders to harmonize tools across projects in terms of gender and nutrition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>List all existing initiatives on gender and nutrition</td>
<td>Map all projects across stakeholders to ensure good field coordination and avoid potential overlaps</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide a mechanism for reporting on activities of gender and nutrition</td>
<td>Ensure a better visibility of results so as to popularize good practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design a methodology for concerted monitoring and evaluation of projects in terms of gender and nutrition</td>
<td>Ensure a synchronization of performance assessments</td>
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<td>Create a mechanism for financing projects on gender and nutrition</td>
<td>Develop procedures for gender and nutrition project funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Define funding methods between public and private sectors</td>
<td>Ensure the availability of financing sources on gender and nutrition projects.</td>
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