GHANA’S EFFORTS AT SUSTAINING COCOA PRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

• Cocoa plays a major role in Ghana’s economy

• The sector contributed 3% of GDP and 20% of total export receipts in 2014.

• It supports the livelihood of a lot of people in the cocoa value chain.

• Provides about two-thirds of the total income of cocoa farmers.
• Diseases and Pests Control and subsidised Fertilizer programmes introduced in 2001/02 boosted cocoa production.

• Average annual production from 2008/09 – 2014/15*) is slightly above 800,000 tonnes.
MAJOR CHALLENGES

- Ageing and over aged cocoa trees – 23% of cocoa tree stock more than 30 years old.
- Pests and diseases (17% of tree stock infected with cocoa swollen shoot virus)
- Low productivity levels of cocoa farms – Improved hybrids constitute about 31% of tree stock.
- Ageing cocoa farmers – Average age about 55 years
- Declining fertility of cocoa soils
- Illegal gold mining activities on cocoa farms.
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES

• Increase productivity from an average yield of 450kg/ha to 1,000kg/ha.

• Make cocoa farming lucrative to attract and sustain the interest of the youth.
Specific programmes/Initiatives

- Cocoa rehabilitation programme
- Cocoa pests and diseases control
- Soil fertility improvement
- Enhanced extension support for farmers
- Youth in cocoa programme
- Child education support programme
- Research support
- Rehabilitation of cocoa roads
COCOA REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

• Cocoa Rehabilitation and Replanting Programme initiated in 2011 to assist farmers to rehabilitate and replant old, diseased and abandoned cocoa farms.

• In 2014/15 season, nursery sites were increased from the existing 27 sites to 87 sites to raise 50 million hybrid cocoa seedlings for free distribution to cocoa farmers.

• Provision of boreholes at the nursery sites to irrigate the seedlings and also serve as portable water for the communities.
Cocoa Pests and Diseases Control

- Diseases and pests account for about 20% of crop losses.
- Free mass spraying against pests and diseases started in 2001/02.
- Programme reviewed in 2013/14 season to make it more effective and efficient.
- Under the new arrangements, fungicides and insecticides are directly distributed to farmers.
Cocoa pests and diseases control

- National security agencies monitor the evacuation of the inputs to the Cocoa Districts.

- District and Local Task Forces established to monitor and supervise the distribution and usage of the inputs.

- This new arrangement has minimized pilfering and diversion of inputs and has made farmers actively involved in the planning and execution of the spraying exercise.

- For 2014/15 season, inputs worth about USD120 million were procured to control pests and the black pod disease.
SOIL FERTILITY IMPROVEMENT

• Subsidized fertilizers supplied to farmers since 2002/03.

• Distribution of free fertilizers to cocoa farmers started in 2013/14 season.

• In 2014/15 season, granular and foliar fertilizers worth about USD110 million distributed to farmers.

• Sulphate of Ammonia fertilizer supplied to farmers to boost growth of young cocoa plants (1-2 years old).
Extension Support Programme

• COCOBOD provides free extension services to cocoa farmers.

• In the 2014/15 season, Cocoa Extension Districts were increased from 41 to 60 Districts.

• Number of extension staff increased by 68% in 2014/15 to improve Extension Staff to farmer ratio.

• Cocoa Extension since 2011, has been operating under PPP with various innovative programmes to boost cocoa productivity.

• The traditional platforms for extension services augmented with the innovative “CocoaLink”.
Youth in Cocoa Programme

- “Youth in Cocoa Programme” initiated to attract young men and women into cocoa farming.

- About 30,000 young cocoa farmers are being supported with technical advice, improved cocoa seedlings and agrochemicals.

- An annual award instituted for the most promising young cocoa farmer since 2012.
Child Education Support Programme

• Child Education Support Programme initiated in 2014/15 to assist in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in cocoa growing communities.

• This programme seeks to gradually rehabilitate schools in deplorable state and also build new ones in deprived cocoa growing communities.
Research Support

• Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) has intensified research into the development of early bearing, high yielding, disease and drought tolerant cocoa varieties.

• Old trees in COCOBOD’s Seed Gardens are being replaced with new varieties.

• WCF’s African Cocoa Initiative is assisting in the establishment of 50 ha of new seed gardens with elite materials developed by CRIG
Rehabilitation of Cocoa Roads

• COCOBOD is constructing and rehabilitating roads in cocoa growing communities with support from Ministry of Roads and Highways.

• For the 2014/15 season, an amount of US$150 million was set aside for this purpose
COCOBOD INTERVENTION
CONCLUSION

• Ghana will continue to be a reliable source of premium quality cocoa to the global cocoa economy.

• Ghana Cocoa Board is therefore poised to roll out programmes that will ensure sustainable production of the crop to support farmer livelihood, cocoa producing communities and the global cocoa industry.