



PROGRAMME NEWSLETTER

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STREIT to revamp cocoa production

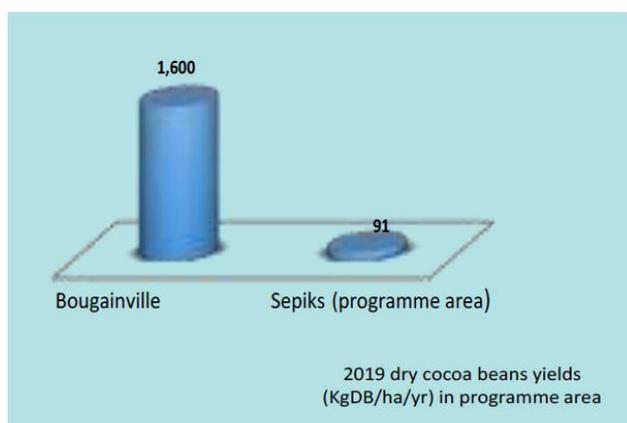
A preliminary assessment of cocoa farms in six of the eight major cocoa producing districts in the Sepik region by the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist shows that yields are 18 times lower than potential yields registered by farmers in Bougainville Province (PNG) as shown on the figure below.

These low yields are primarily explained by the fact that an overwhelming majority of the Greater Sepik cocoa farmers have not only abandoned their cocoa blocks but because farms are poorly managed, cocoa trees are old and are not tolerant to CPB.

The infestation of cocoa farms by CPB and the fluctuation in prices at the international market over the years forced them to shift from cocoa production to other alternative.

The STREIT programme, in collaboration with the Cocoa Board, has committed to teach the farmers sustainable management techniques and to introduce CPB tolerant cocoa seedlings for cocoa farm rehabilitation.

The cocoa farmers are therefore expected to seize the opportunity to revamp production up to a level similar to that of Bougainville and implicitly their income in the years to come.



First cocoa propagation training held

Two trainings on cocoa propagation were successfully delivered to a group of about 120 cocoa farmers from eight districts of East Sepik and Sandaun provinces. The training was under the Support to Rural Entrepreneurship, Investment and Trade in Papua New Guinea (STREIT PNG) programme co-financed by the European Union.

The STREIT PNG programme launched its practical activities immediately after the Project Steering Committee inaugural meeting held in February 2020 and establishment of the programme office at Provincial Department of Agriculture and Livestock (PDAL) in East Sepik province.

This four-day training event focused on cocoa propagation. Farmers from Angoram, Ambunti, Yangoru Saussia, Wasera Gawi and Wewak Districts of East Sepik and Aitape-Lumi, Nuku Districts of Sandaun provinces attended. In addition, the training equipped them with necessary tools to propagate cocoa. Farmers were provided seedlings, allowing them to rejuvenate cocoa blocks with varieties tolerant to cocoa pod borer (CPB).

The training was led by Rabi Rasaily, a cocoa expert from FAO and supported by specialists from Cocoa Board. This training was organized in a cocoa nursery to allow hands-on experience for the farmers and direct distribution of seedlings. Selection of farmers for future trainings and activities is ongoing and is managed by STREIT PNG, who will approach respective local representatives in the East Sepik and Sandaun provinces to organize its future beneficiaries.

STREIT FACTS

Full name: Support to Rural Entrepreneurship, Investment and Trade in Papua New Guinea

Co-Financed: European Union

Budget: EURO 81 300 000/USD 89 470 440

Duration: 1/JAN/2020 31/MAY/2024

Implementation: United Nations joint programme

Administrative Agency: FAO

Partners: ILO, ITU, UNCDF, UNDP and Government of Papua New Guinea



Google Earth

Mapping of Cocoa & Vanilla Blocks initiated

The STREIT programme team, working in collaboration with Provincial Department of Agriculture and Livestock (PDAL) and Cocoa Board, initiated mapping of the selected cocoa and vanilla blocks in Wewak districts. To understand the existing situation of Cocoa blocks, the STREIT PNG programme with support from Cocoa Board and PDAL conducted a field survey by walking along the perimeter of Cocoa and Vanilla blocks in Wewak Rural district and map the area using Geo-Logger mobile application and later laid the map on Google Earth Pro.

Twenty five Cocoa blocks of various sizes and two vanilla blocks were mapped and from the observation and discussion with farmers around 95% of Cocoa blocks are mainly infested by Cocoa Pod Borer (CPB) and by fungus (Black pod). The mapping exercise lays foundation for the general data collection for STREIT PNG programme and will continue across the Greater Sepik as more cocoa, vanilla and farming communities will join the programme.

Inaugural programme steering committee

The project steering committee for the Support to Rural Entrepreneurship, Investment and Trade in Papua New Guinea (STREIT PNG) programme held its inaugural meeting at the Department of Agriculture and Livestock office in Waigani. National senior representatives from the participating government agencies and key partners attended the meeting. The PSC will oversee the overall direction and progress of the programme in delivering on improved and sustainable economic development through a value chains approach and focused on cocoa, vanilla and fisheries.



Distribution of cocoa pod borer tolerant seedling

Distribution of clonal seedlings starts

The distribution of cocoa pod borer (CPB) tolerant clonal seedlings to participants from Nuku district, in Papua New Guinea, has commenced.

After the pilot training, 5000 clonal seedlings were distributed to 117 cocoa farmers' initiative to cocoa blocks rehabilitation and replacement of infested trees with CPB tolerant seedlings.

The clonal seedlings were collected from various cocoa board registered nurseries located in Wewak and Yangoru Saussia district.

FEEDBACK?
Any praise, gossip or grumbles you may wish to share?
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