



# GHANA FEDERATION OF FOREST AND FARM PRODUCERS (GHAFFAP)

## THE NICHE OF GHAFFAP IN THE COCOA VALUE CHAIN



### Deforestation-Free Cocoa Production – GhaFFaP Message

1. Cocoa production in Ghana is not as significant a cause of deforestation as some people say it is. Illegal logging for timber, the unregulated charcoal & fuelwood production and illegal mining (galamsey) are more important causes of forest loss.
2. To the extent that cocoa farmers are part of the problem, they would be willing to leave many more trees on their farms and to plan more if they had tenure and benefit rights over them.
3. It is impossible to change the cocoa sector without the farmer organizations at the table. Their voice needs to be heard loudly and they need support to change the status quo.

#### About GhaFFaP and its Members Strength in Cocoa Production

The Ghana Federation of Forest and Farm Producers (GhaFFaP) is a national federation of forest and farm producer organizations, drawn from three ecological zones of Ghana – *the Savannah, Transition and Forest ecological zones*. It has 1,042,880 members, representing twelve producer organizations, of whom 46 per cent are women and 20 per cent are youth.

Many GhaFFaP members in the forest and transition zones produce cocoa, in addition to other products such as cashew, black pepper, timber, etc. *In total, 130,423 GhaFFaP members produce cocoa, of whom 41 per cent are women. Collectively they have an estimated 321,306 hectares of cocoa and produce 157,044 tons of cocoa beans each season, which is*

*more than one fifth of the 800 thousand tons Ghana produced in 2019/2020. The Peasant Farmers Association (PFAG), Private Afforestation Developers Organization (PADO), Kookoo\_Pa Farmers Association (KKFA), Achichire-Sureso-Pebaseman (ASP) Community Resource Management Area (CREMA), Abrono Organic Farmers Association (ABOFA) and Kuapa Kokoo Farmers and Cooperative Union (KKFU) are the six main GhaFFaP member organizations that have large numbers of members who produce cocoa. Given the large share of Ghana's cocoa produced by GhaFFaP members, GhaFFaP and its member organizations are clearly key stakeholders for any discussion or initiative related to cocoa in Ghana. However, to-date they have not really had a "seat at the table".*

Cocoa is cultivated in ten of Ghana's 16 regions: Eastern, Ashanti, Bono, Ahafo, Central, Volta, Oti, Western North and Western. Due to fluctuating rainfall and decreasing soil fertility, cocoa production has been moving to the west. As a result, the Western region is now Ghana's main producer of cocoa. The GhaFFaP member organizations with the most cocoa farmers and cocoa production are *Achichire-Sureso-Pebaseman (ASP) Community Resource Management Area (CREMA)* and *Kuapa Kokoo Farmers and Cooperative Union (KKFU)*, which operate in the Western and Western North Regions where the country's cocoa production is increasingly concentrated.

## Deforestation and sustainable cocoa production

According to the Ghana Forestry Commission, almost 80% of Ghana's forest resources were lost to illegal logging between 1990 and 2016. This loss cannot be entirely attributed to cocoa production. However, cocoa production has been “branded” as a leading cause of deforestation. Lack of clear tree tenure that would ensure that cocoa farmers could benefit from their trees have created a long-standing incentive to remove tree cover and a primary cause of deforestation on cocoa lands.

**Tenure & benefit to cocoa:** Unlike the other trees on their farms, farmers are assured of tenure and benefits from their cocoa. Even though, like timber, the cocoa value chain is heavily regulated, their tenure rights and cocoa revenues from cocoa produced on communal or private land outside government reserves is guaranteed. This encourages farmers to invest in producing cocoa and has contributed to small holder cocoa production making Ghana a leading producer of cocoa. Cocoa production occurs mainly within the

The lack of tenure rights over timber trees and assured benefits from legal timber production, which has no sound legal basis, is a major root cause of deforestation in cocoa landscapes. It encourages farmers to cut trees on their lands and discourages them from investing in forestry activities. Even though farmers have been told that tenure rights over timber trees are vested in the State, they are free to cut the trees down and burn them or allow them to rot away, without breaking any laws. However, they are arrested if they use the tree for any timber-related activity, such as selling timber or using it to put a roof on their houses. This “bitter practice” has encouraged deforestation on communal or private lands.

The long-term effect has been to promote deforestation on cocoa farms. That, in turn, leads to lower yields, so farmers find it necessary to enter and clear additional forest lands to produce cocoa. Farmers plant cocoa on their land, rather than managing the forests, because they will lose their tenure and benefit rights and risk destruction of their cocoa during timber harvesting, unless they eliminate the trees. Farmers would still be growing cocoa on the same land if they had guaranteed tenure and benefit rights to the trees, but it would have many more timber trees in it. If farmers do not own the non-cocoa trees and have no right to harvest them, they have no incentive to maintain existing trees or plant new ones. If farmers had these rights, there would be much less forest clearing to plant cocoa.

GhaFFaP has developed its ten-year strategic road map focused on developing vibrant sustainable value chains that promote climate resilient landscapes, diversified livelihoods, and green production. Thus, GhaFFaP considers the unfavorable tree tenure regime as having greatly contributed to deforestation on cocoa farms. The extent to which cocoa farming is a driver of deforestation has been exaggerated and the criticisms fail to consider that the cocoa farmers adopt the practices they do because cocoa is the only product that current policies allow them to own and benefit from. Charcoal, galamsey, and woodfuel are direct causes of deforestation and a big threat to even cocoa production, these activities have invaded many cocoa forest landscapes and cocoa farms.

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