

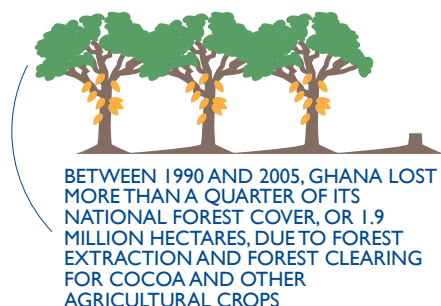
PROPERTY RIGHTS MATTER FOR COCOA CULTIVATION

GHANA, TENURE, AND USAID

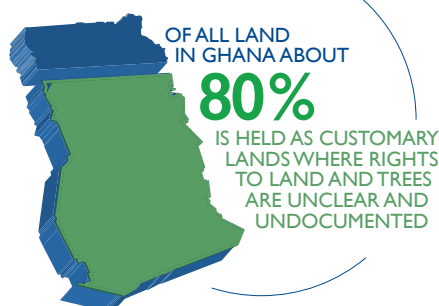
In Ghana, cocoa is a major contributor to smallholder livelihoods and export earnings, but is also a major driver of deforestation. The Government of Ghana wants to more than double cocoa output by 2026 to increase farmer incomes and export earnings while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the cocoa landscape. A large expanse of cocoa land is experiencing productivity decline. Small growers who once carved out cocoa farms from old growth forests now suffer due to diminished remaining forests. Replacing old and unproductive cocoa trees can increase cocoa productivity while reducing deforestation, but tenure insecurity impedes replanting of trees, and even farmers with tenure security often lack financial resources to rehabilitate. Through its Tenure and Global Climate Change (TGCC) program, USAID partnered with a licensed cocoa buying company, ECOM, and a major chocolate brand, Hershey's, to pilot tenure strengthening activities and access to finance to promote sustainable cocoa cultivation and decrease land use pressure on remaining forests.

WHY UNDERTAKE LAND TENURE AND COCOA REHABILITATION IN GHANA?

DEFORESTATION



RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION



COCOA YIELDS



HOW USAID HELPS



TGCC examined the land and tree tenure, cocoa productivity, and deforestation complex to identify interventions to meet Ghana's productivity and REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation & Forest Degradation) goals. The study also found that tenant (abunu) land sharing agreements created disincentives for farmers to cut trees. This constrains cocoa rehabilitation and contributes to vast areas of old, low yielding cocoa farms.



TGCC worked with private sector partners, ECOM and Hershey's, to develop a financial model to help farmers remove old cocoa trees and rehabilitate their farms. It also provided trainings on agroforestry and tenure to communities and company outreach and extension.



With assistance of a local survey firm, TGCC mapped 190 farms in Nyame Nnae community, and developed documented agreements between tenant households, chiefs, and landlords to clarify rights and reduce land and resource conflicts.



By improving rehabilitation of old farms and securing long-term rights, TGCC's intensification approach provided lessons that will help inform Ghana's national strategy for reducing deforestation. It also considered efforts to document tree ownership to incentivize keeping timber on farms.

IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER COCOA PRODUCERS, YIELDS ARE LOW BUT WITH COCOA REHABILITATION, THEY COULD BE DOUBLED OR TRIPLED

UNLOCKING BARRIERS

While financing and land rights are major barriers to farm rehabilitation, success requires a full package of interventions and their integration into private sector extension.



Securing Land and Tree Rights: TGCC mapped the boundaries of communities and farms, and facilitated a process of clarifying rights between land owners and tenants, documenting these agreements in writing and working with customary authorities on enforcing and safeguarding rights agreements. TGCC also provided alternative dispute resolution tools and training to help chiefs, farmers, landowners, and extension workers resolve any land conflicts that arose during adjudication.



Finance: TGCC supported ECOM to refine its financing model to support cocoa rehabilitation that reduced payback to three years and ensured food security during this time. Future extension of this work may focus on de-risking rehabilitation (e.g. by crop insurance or low interest development loans). TGCC's tenure analysis allowed ECOM to understand why many farmers rejected earlier financing offers.



Extension: Providing finance and documenting property rights will not be sufficient if farmers lack technical skills to succeed. Ghana is now moving away from sun cocoa to an agroforestry shaded intercrop approach. Ghana is now moving forward with programs emphasizing cocoa agroforestry systems (e.g. Cocoa Action) and improved extension services to help farmers adopt better farm management practices. TGCC broadened the skills of ECOM staff so they are better equipped to extend rehabilitation techniques to their member farmers.

GHANA PARTNERSHIPS TO SECURE RIGHTS

TGCC helped national government, Ghana's Forestry Commission, Cocobod, and the World Cocoa Foundation to pilot land, tree, and finance interventions, and to share lessons learned to build momentum for broader integration of tenure rights into future work.

A local survey firm carried out land surveying and documentation.

Ghana's Forestry Commission supported tree documentation for REDD+ while the World Cocoa Foundation spearheaded Cocoa Action and addressed cocoa productivity constraints.



LEARN MORE ABOUT TGCC ACTIVITIES IN GHANA AT LAND-LINKS.ORG