



Kuapa Mu Nsem

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The Official Print Publication Of Kuapa Kooko Farmers Union

First Edition



Madam Fatima Ali (KKFU President) receiving the co-operative Certification from Mr. Jerome Adopley (Acting Registrar of Co-operative)

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KUAPA KOKOO GOES CO-OPERATIVE

As part of Fairtrade requirement, Kuapa Kokoo has undergone restructuring exercise to ensure better services to its members.

In line with the Fairtrade arrangement, the Department of Co-operatives has registered 57 primary societies together with the Union as a unified co-operative. The Union will now operate under the name Kuapa Kokoo Co-Operative Cocoa Farmers and Marketing Union.

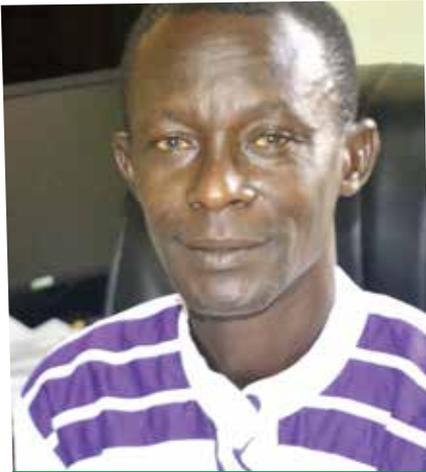
The restructuring comprising the three tier structure of National Executive Council (NEC) which will retain its identity and position; the Society Executive Council (SEC) and the Zonal Executive Council (ZEC) however will change to Societies and Zones - hitherto referred to as the small villages. Kuapa Kokoo has a total number of One Hundred Thousand, Five Hundred (100,500) farmers located in One Thousand Two hundred and Forty-Six (1,246) zones within Fifty Seven (57) districts.

Mr. Appau Abrampah the Executive Secretary of KKFU said during the launch, that this restructuring is necessary to fulfil the dream of Fairtrade, thus farmers become more empowered and have a say in their business.



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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY WELCOMES KUAPA "MU NSEM"



Mr. Appau Abrampah Mensah
(Executive Secretary)

On behalf of the national Executive Council (NEC) and the entire Kuapa Kokoo fraternity, I welcome the introduction of the organisation's Newsletter "Kuapa Mu Nsem".

The organisation has achieved many great feats since its establishment in 1993, so this Newsletter is a worthy endeavour to keep members and partners updated about our important milestones. I am particularly happy to be associated with our new status as a co-operative organisation, with 57 independently registered Societies (Districts) under the National Union. This will ensure that decision making will be better decentralised and members will have a better say on how benefits are distributed. Secondly, I am proud to be associated with the two innovative health projects, the Telemedicine and mutual health insurance projects. It is my belief that these two initiatives will improve both economic and physical access to health care among our members.

This year, the Union is ready to take on new challenges to move away from our sole dependence on Fairtrade premium to increase our capacity to deliver more benefit to our members. This is the maiden edition of this publication but certainly not the last. This Newsletter will be published twice in a year, and we hope to report many great achievements in the subsequent issues which will be published 6 months after this. By this newsletter we hope to improve information delivery within the Union and with our Partners.

I urge the editorial team to work diligently to deliver timely and good quality publications that comprehensively catalogue the major activities and achievements of the Union.

Kuapa papa paa!!!

ABOUT KUAPA KOKOO

Kuapa Kokoo was formed in 1993 after the structural adjustment economic policy of Ghana led to the liberalization of the internal trade of cocoa.

A farmer representative on the board of the then Ghana Cocoa Marketing Company, Nana Yaw Frimpong Abebrese gained the support of NGOs like TWIN, SNV, Christian Aid etc. and mobilized other farmers to register Kuapa Kokoo Limited in 1993.

Kuapa formed an umbrella organisation called Kuapa Kokoo Farmers' Union (KKFU) and gained the Fairtrade certification mark in 1995, to supply quality cocoa beans to the certified market. This made Kuapa the first Fairtrade-Certified small-holder farmers' organisation in west Africa and currently the largest Fairtrade-certified cocoa co-operative world wide.

The Union is mobilized around 100,500 smallholder cocoa producers who are organised into 1246 communities. Until 2015, the Union had a 3 tier governance structure with the Society Executive Committee (SEC) at the community level; District Executive Council (DEC) at the District level and National Executive Council (NEC) who are elected by a National Assembly operating at the National level.

In 2015, members resolved to change the structure of the Union to a co-operative model and the Union was duly recognized as such by the Department of Co-operatives in Ghana and called Kuapa Kokoo Co-operative cocoa Farmers and Marketing Union Limited. This was to devolve power from the centre to the members to further consolidate the gains made over the years. The union now has 57 independently registered Societies, which is the new term for Districts. What hitherto, was referred to as Societies is now known as Zones. (Refer to page ... for full story on new co-operative structure). Currently, the co-operative has 1280 registered zones

FROM THE DESK OF EDITORIAL BOARD

The idea of publishing a bi-annual newsletter for Kuapa Kokoo was a challenging but at the same time exciting one when it was first conceived in late 2015. It was challenging because it was the maiden issue and there was no reference point within the organisation. On the other hand, it was exciting because there is always so much positives to talk about Kuapa Kokoo. We are glad that the first edition has finally reached your desk.

The motive behind this project is to highlight the major projects, news, views and events to members and

partners of Kuapa Kokoo. It is our belief that several important achievements have gone unreported within the organisation in the past 22 years, and this project presents a good opportunity to rally around the idea of "making the world know about us". Based on this, 3000 copies of this publication will be circulated in all societies, offices and through partner organisations within and outside Ghana. This newsletter is also available for free download on our website (<http://www.kuapakokoo.com>).

Kuapa is a pioneering cocoa farmers' initiative which began in 1993.

The organisation continues to set the pace and break new grounds in

delivering socio-economic benefits to its members. It is therefore imperative that a dedicated newsletter is assigned to share the many important achievements of Kuapa Kokoo and to provide learning for other like-minded organisations in Ghana and other developing countries.

We are grateful to God almighty for the vision and strength he granted us to come up with this maiden edition of "Kuapa Mmu Nsem". We are grateful to the National Executive Council, Management and staff of KKL and KKFU for their support. We hope that we can continue to fall on your support in the future.

—Editorial Team, Feb 2016

Editorial Board

Esther Owusu – Mensah (Communications Officer)
Francis Kwakye Frimpong (Communications Officer)
Kwabena Addo (IT Officer)
Bernard Missedja (Administrative Manager KKFU)

Kuapa papa paa!!!

Kuapa Kokoo Goes Co-operative *Continued from cover page*

It will also ensure that farmers see development in their business. It is believed that the successful implementation of this restructuring will provide further enlightenment to farmers in the cocoa business.



DSEC meeting on the decision to go cooperative and adopt the new structure.

Establishment of control committee independent of the NEC would be instituted to monitor the distribution of Fairtrade income to member societies based on volume delivery. With the completion of this restructuring exercise, experts trust that Kuapa Kokoo organization and its members will have numerous benefits summed as follows: - improved compliance, improved ownership, improved commitment, increased transparency and increased accountability.

Other benefits to be derived from the exercise include; improved democracy, that farmers would benefit from the premium directly, enhanced capacity development for farmers, and lastly, that farmers would have independent organization.

In Kuapa Kokoo, the National Executive Council has a 13 member Executive body, the (District) Societies have 7 member executive body and the Zones have 5 member executive body. To ensure greater transparency and accountability, a larger percentage of Fairtrade premium would go directly to farmers in their Societies and Zones with a smaller percentage retained at the headquarters in a form known as the quota system.

The Ghana Co-operatives which was engaged to render training to Kuapa Kokoo members in this regard, on Thursday, November 12th, 2015 officially presented the co-operative certificate to the Union President, Madam Fatima Ali.

During the handing over ceremony, the acting registrar of the department co-operatives, Mr. Jerome Adopley intimated that becoming co-operative will empower the farmers and give them the administrative authority.



TELEMEDICINE & MUTUAL HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME

The Management and National Executive Council of Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Union have initiated two new health projects to complement the existing Mobile Clinic project for improved health services to members. The two projects, the Telemedicine and Mutual Health Insurance Scheme were adopted at the 21st Annual Delegates Conference held on the 21st August, 2015.

TELEMEDICINE

Telemedicine involves the use of modern information communication technology to transfer medical information between patients and health workers for diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases.



Dr. Fred Bedzrah

Dr. Fred Bedzrah, the medical doctor supervising the project said, **"the major aim of the project is to eliminate delays in health care as much as possible through the use of video links and other telecommunication channels to diagnose health problems and prescribe medicine"**.

Generally, telemedicine has enormous benefits which include improved access to health care by transporting healthcare services to patients in remote areas and to help improve the knowledge of health workers in such areas. Also, Telemedicine is a cost effective alternative as it helps to decrease the cost of healthcare because of relatively less costly infrastructure requirements. It increases efficiency through improved management of diseases and reduces travel times to hospital.

It is hoped that the project will provide convenience for members as it removes the stress associated with travelling to access health-care.

KUAPA KOKOO MUTUAL HEALTH INSURANCE

Health Insurance is a key component of health delivery for any individual or group of persons. The ILO in 1996 defined Health Insurance as "the reduction or elimination of the uncertain risk of loss for the individual or household by combining a larger number of similarly exposed individuals or households who are

included in a common fund that makes up the loss caused to any one member"

The Kuapa Kokoo Mutual Health Insurance project is modelled along the community based health insurance scheme which is a not-for-profit insurance scheme aimed primarily at the informal sector and formed on the basis of a collective pooling of health risks, and in which the members participate in

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Accordingly, administration of funds for KKHIS is governed by individuals appointed by members of Kuapa Kokoo. Membership of the scheme is voluntary and open to all members of Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Union. The project will complement and make up for the challenges within the National Health Insurance Scheme such as lack of cover for most disease conditions, Lab investigations, and drugs. Also, KKHIS will ensure that access to health to services in remote communities is improved. The scheme is the first of its kind in Ghana and will cover out-patient and inpatient costs like investigations fees, medicine, dental, surgery, deliveries, maternity etc.

The scheme will operate for the benefit of members of the Union and their dependents. Beneficiaries will contribute a collectively determined amount of money every year to be illegible to benefits. The scheme will be implemented through a network of health centres in direct communication with a Tele-consultation center at the Kuapa Kokoo clinic, manned by highly trained medical personnel. KKHIS will offer a comprehensive medical care package to members, which provides health-care cover for over 90% of in-patient and out-patient ailments.

MEET KKFU PRESIDENT



MADAM FATIMA ALI
THE PRESIDENT

Madam Fatima Ali was born in 1981 and became a member of Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Union (KKFU) in the year 2000. That same year she was elected as the Recorder of Alikrom Society. Alikrom can be found in the Western Region of Ghana, precisely in Akotom bra District.

Madam Fatima Ali joined Kuapa Kokoo after completing her senior Secondary School education. Her decision to become a farmer was met with disparaging remarks from peers who see farming as a backward profession. According to her "most of my friends tried to talk me out of my decision to become a cocoa farmer because in their view, farming was the preserve of illiterates. I must say that i was encouraged to join... the thought of farmers having a say in the way a company is managed actually intrigued me!"

The youngest Kuapa Kokoo president believes her decision to go into farming and choosing Kuapa has turned to be a very good decision "never in my wildest dreams did I think of holding such a position. I am a woman and also very young but because of the training I have received from Kuapa Kokoo; I know that I can achieve anything I put my mind to" Madam Fatima Ali was elected president to become the president of Kuapa Kokoo during the 2014 elections held in August at KNUST.

Madam Fatima Ali credits Kuapa for the improvements witnessed in her life and that of her community "thanks to Kuapa Kokoo, my society Alikrom has a borehole and for the past 12 years, we have been drinking clean water. Before we got this facility, we had to walk for miles to fetch water from a nearby stream.

"My ambition is to work assiduously for Kuapa to become better than I met it and to inspire the youth into farming." It is also my wish that during my tenure of office, Kuapa will scale up the formation of women groups in all its operational districts"

Fatima Ali advises all members and staff of Kuapa Kokoo to effectively work to improve productivity within the Organization

NEC MEMBERS



NICHOLAS KOJO DZOGBESE
VICE PRESIDENT
WELFARE COMMITTEE MEMBER



APPIAH KWATENG
NATIONAL SECRETARY
TRUST BOARD CHAIRMAN



MARY APPIAH
NATIONAL TREASURER
KKL BOARD



ISAAC BAIDOO
WALFARE OFFICER
CHAIR -WELFARE COMMITTEE



LINDA BERCHE
PORTER
KKL BOARD



ESTHER MIN TAH EPHRAM
PROTOCOL OFFICER
TRUST BOARD MEMBER



JANET OWUSU KUSI
ASHANTI REG. REP.
GENDER COMMITTEE CHAIR



SAMSON COBBINA
WESTERN SOUTH REG. REP.
KKL BOARD



SOLOMON OBENG
CENTRAL REG. REP.
WELFARE COMMITTEE MEMBER



KWAKU WIREDU
EASTERN REG. REP.
WELFARE



JOSEPH ATTAH
BRONG AHAFO REG. REP.
TRUST BOARD MEMBER



MARY KOSI
WESTERN NORTH REG. REP.
GENDER COMMITTEE MEMBER

KUAPA KOKOO LIMITED 2014/2015 OPERATIONAL REPORT

The 2014/2015 Crop Season re-opened on Friday 3rd October, 2014 where the producer price of cocoa reviewed upward from GHC 3,392 to GHC 5,520 per ton. The upward review revised price per bag of 64 kilos to GHC345 from the old price GHC 212.00. The increase represents 75% of the net free on board (FOB).

The government through the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) for the first time in the listing of the industry paid GHC5.00 bonus to farmers at the time of sale of their produce.

Target for 2014/2015 Crop Season

At the inception of the season, COCOBOD set a national target of 850,000m/t. it was further reduced to 820,000m/t after a careful research and advice from Cocoa Research Team.

At the close of the season COCOBOD target were reduced to 735, 000m/t (After 52 weeks of trading which ended on 30th September, 2015) Kuapa Kokoo Ltd initial target was 800,000 bags (50,000m/t)

In line with the reduction of the national target, KKL thus revised its target to 624,000 bags. At the close of the season KKL was able to purchase 779,750 bags (48,734.375m/t). We thus exceeded on the set target by 24.95%

KKL sustaining it Market Share

KKL market share from 2010/11 to date have been upward movement from 5% level to 6% level.

Year	COCOBOD Figure m/t	KKL Figure m/t	Market Share %
2010/11	1,000,000	46,982.87	4.23
2011/12	874,000	43,552.56	4.98
2012/13	835,410	48,257.69	5.78
2013/14	900,000	62,232.56	6.91
2014/15	735,000	48,734.375	6.63

It is the desire of management to work hard and put on strategies and structures to enable KKL reach the 10% market share in the near future.

THE CHANGING DYNAMICS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF FINANCES DURING 2015/16 COCOA SEASON

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) the government agency responsible for regulating the activities of operators within the Cocoa Sector introduced new regulations at the beginning of the 2015/16 Cocoa Season to Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) as follows:-

- i. Bank Guarantees to be valid for Four (4) Months from the date of issue and renewable quarterly during the year instead of (12) twelve months validity period.
- ii. Seed Fund would not be re-cycled for any CTORs submitted to Cocoa Marketing Company (CMC) for payment. The Producer Price shall be deducted from any CTORs submitted excluding Buyer's Margin and Secondary Evacuation Cost which shall be paid.
- iii. Subsequent Seed Fund Shall be released after satisfactory performance with delivery of between 70%-80% Purchased stock, based on initial Seed Fund released.

The new regulations brought about delays in the acquisition of the Seed Fund as it took the Banks some time to adjust in the issuing of the Bank guarantees. The implementation of the full recovery of Producer Price also adversely affected our cash flow and we have no option than to rely on our overdraft facilities with the banks to transfer funds to the field for Cocoa purchases.

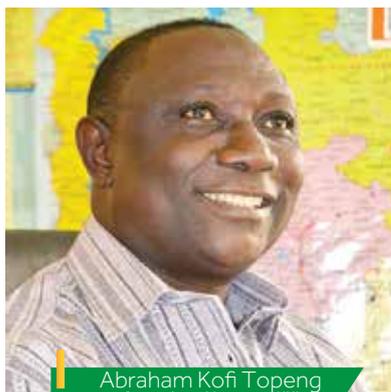
The good thing about the new guidelines is that upon the delivery of 70%-80% of purchased stock subsequent Seed Fund is released for further Cocoa purchases. We are thus appealing to all recorders to deliver all coca purchases at the societies to the depots on time to ensure prompt evacuations of Cocoa to the Ports to enable us meet threshold of 70%-80% to qualify for additional Seed Fund.

We wish to appeal to recorders and members to work hard whilst we are trying our possible best to adapt to the new changes to ensure that adequate funds are available for trading for the rest of the cocoa season.



Joseph Baba
Finance Manager - KKL

MANAGEMENT UNDERTAKES RESTRUCTURING OF OPERATIONAL STRUCTURES



Abraham Kofi Topeng
Operations Manager - KKL

The Management of KKL with the approval of the Board has embarked on structural changes in the operations department. The Operations department is the unit responsible for purchasing cocoa from the farm gate and evacuating to the port. The main aim of this restructuring activity is to enhance operational efficiency by maximising purchases and reducing losses/risks.

Mr. Kofi Topeng, operations Manager at KKL explained that profits from the cocoa business is based on margins, therefore, the company's profitability is dependent on the volume of cocoa they can purchase within any given season. It is therefore imperative that, appropriate measure are put in place to ensure efficient operations at all districts.

Per the new structure, the existing 57 districts have been clustered into nine (9) new sectors, headed by a sector Manager. Sector managers will be responsible for supervising the work of the clustered districts under its jurisdiction. They will also, monitor the activities/performance of districts against pre-determined performance benchmarks set at the beginning of the season. Sector Managers will also liaise between districts and head office on all operational matters.

Accordingly, nine District managers have been elevated to the position of Sector Managers. These include Mr. Benjamin Amoada, Mr. Robert Paintsil, Mr. Yaw Tweneboah, Nana Addo Karikari, Mr. Lawrence A. Effa, Mr. Eric Fiifi Cudjoe, Mr. Isaac Banfo Otto, Mr. Peter Acquah and Mr. Robert Akwei.

Our Voices In International Cocoa Trade

The Daily Telegraph Ghana farmer Mary Appiah raises a family on Fairtrade cacao

GRANT JONES TASTE CONFIDENTIAL THE DAILY TELEGRAPH APRIL 02 2015 12:00AM

MARY APPIAH A FARMER TRAVELLED TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND IN APRIL, 2015.



Fairtrade cocoa farmer Mary Appiah, 61, from Ghana, pictured at Josophan's chocolate shop on York Street in Sydney's CBD. Picture: Richard Dobson

She is a long way from home, but Mary Appiah is delighted to be in Sydney, sharing her chocolate secrets. Surprisingly, the Ghanaian cocoa farmer, a member of Fairtrade co-op Kuapa Kokoo, reveals she is not a fan of sweet things, including chocolate, preferring to use the cocoa she grows on her farm to make a savoury dish instead.

"I mash it with tomatoes, onion, pepper and I roast the beans and mash it with palm oil. I eat it with plantain."

Almost two decades ago she took over her elderly mother's three hectare farm and planted cacao trees. She now harvests more than 20 bags of cocoa annually, a huge improvement since joining Kuapa Kokoo, the Fairtrade certified cocoa farmers' co-op which has helped fund schools, a mobile clinics — handy when Appiah was bitten by a snake — and sanitary facilities in the Enchi district, in western Ghana. The Fairtrade Premium also helped fund two daycare centres, and has been used to purchase two mobile cinema vans for a farmers' education program.

Farmers who are part of Kuapa Kokoo are guaranteed a fair price, for their cocoa beans, with tools and training provided to ensure knowledge and practical resources are reinvested back into the farms.

MONICA GYAN VISITED DENMARK IN JUNE, 2015.



MONICA GYAN KUAPA KOKOO FAIRTRADE AMBASSADOR IN DENMARK

CHOCOLATE WEEK

Chocolate Week is an annual event in the UK that celebrates good chocolate. Divine Chocolate, Kuapa's chocolate company has sponsored and helped the event to grow since it started nine years ago. Divine creates events with partners all over the country, promotes exclusive Divine recipes, and takes part in the big Chocolate show in London with chocolate companies from all around the world.

Esther joined Divine at the Chocolate last year's edition & gave an excellent presentation about Kuapa Kokoo & the future of cocoa farming. She was interviewed by the Daily Telegraph newspaper in the UK.



ESTHER MINTAH EPHRAIM VISITED UK AS FAIRTRADE AMBASSADOR FOR KUAPA KOKOO

ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN COCOA PRODUCTION

The quest to support the elimination of child labour and worst forms of child labour is highly prioritised in the business of the farmer cooperative. With a dedicated unit and qualified personnel, practical measures have been put in place to ensure that cocoa production is child labour free. There are approaches like implementing full intervention components on pilot bases, activation of remediation processes when there are referral cases from the field and partnership with like-minded organisations locally and internationally to support the course of eliminating child labour in cocoa production. Key interventions implemented are proactive in nature to ensure that children at risk of entering into child labour are prevented. In an event where children have entered into child labour, remediation measures are activated to remove them. Interventions are developed

around prevention and withdrawal by removing and protecting children who have entered into child labour.

INTERVENTIONS IMPLEMENTATION:

Interventions like sensitisation and awareness creation through the use of tools like posters developed around 5 concepts on permissible and hazardous work, film shows in the evenings, playing recorded jingle on local radio stations, radio panel discussions on the concept, causes and consequences of child labour and worst forms of child labour, the use of community information centres to discuss child labour, community durbars, and general farmer education on child labour by field officers. These interventions are carried out in cocoa growing communities.

BUILDING OF COMMUNITY STRUCTURES:

Community Child Protection Committees are formed in times of need to serve as a watchdog in the absence of field and the unit's officers. This is also to ensure ownership and sustainability of interventions implemented in the community. A committee of 8 members is composed with all interest groups represented to ensure full participation. Opinion leaders, women, children, local government representatives, men, teachers are given representation on the committee.

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IDENTIFICATION AND MONITORING OF CASES:

Identification of suspected cases is done by committee members, field officers and the unit's staff upon visit to some of these cocoa communities. A verification/probing exercise is carried out after a report of suspected case by the unit. If it is proven to be a case of child labour, remediation plan is activated to address the problem. Monitoring of identified case is very critical and it is carried out meticulously to ensure that the child in question is fully withdrawn from the problem. Monitoring is done by committee members, field officers and officers from the child labour unit. There is always the collaboration from the social welfare departments of the district assembly hence some form of monitoring is done by their district focal persons.

BENEFICIARY SUPPORT TO CHILDREN AND PARENTS:

As part of the remediation process, children of school going age are put back to formal schooling if he/she is a dropout and is given educational supplies like school uniforms, stationary, bag, a pair of footwear to ensure that his/her interest in school is sustained. Children who have not registered yet onto the national health insurance are supported with the payment of the premium to access health care in the nearest health facility.

Children who have completed basic education and could not continue are also assessed and put into vocational skill training in their communities. Such children are supported with entry fee and tools to ensure effective training.

Parents of child beneficiaries are also supported with alternative livelihood activities to ensure the generation of additional income for their families. This is to ensure that families get additional income apart from cocoa income to support the education of their children. Community group project like corn mill has also been established to support family beneficiaries.

DOCUMENTATION OF INTERVENTIONS:

Critical protocols used in taking records are the Ghana Child Labour Monitoring System (GCLMS) tools 1 & 2, Direct Beneficiary Monitoring System (DBMR) which has the profile and monitoring forms are used. Activity reports are also generated after the implementation of interventions.

Kuapa Kokoo will continue to support every effort aimed at eliminating child labour and worst forms in cocoa production and hope that there will be child labour free cocoa forever in Ghana.

*Child Labour and Protection Unit
Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Union*

The GENDER PROGRAMME

Kuapa Kokoo Gender Programme was instituted in 1998 to address issues with gender inequality among members. According to a research report in 1996, women had low income because they owned small parcels of land. They invested more effort and time in the cocoa value chain but had the least benefit. Women produced better quality cocoa and 26% of members of Kuapa were women. The principal objectives of the Gender Programme was to promote social, economic and political empowerment among women; stimulate women's economic activities, break the vicious cycle of poverty among women and vulnerable groups; and cultivate the habit of savings among women and improve women's access to credit. The Gender programme is composed of four main projects including Sensitization and Empowerment Project, Micro-Credit Project, Group Income-generating activities and Adult Literacy Project.

SENSITIZATION AND EMPOWERMENT

This project aims at providing both leadership and skill training to enhance the capacity of women to take up leadership roles and open an avenue for extra income to improve the well-being of their families. Training modules includes "good agronomic practices" (GAP) and Capacity building workshops.

MICRO CREDIT

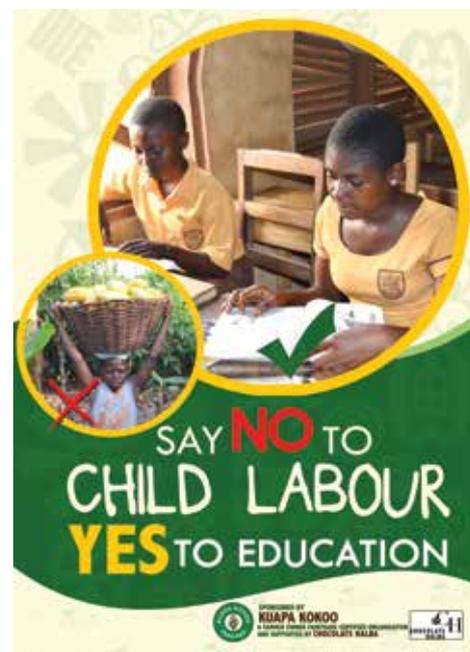
The micro credit project provides loans at concessionary rates to women groups to enable women access the needed funds for their income generating activities. The project also trains women on "records keeping" to track expenses and improve savings habit.

ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOOD PROJECT

This involves training to provide livelihood skills to women to create alternative source of income to complement income earned from cocoa. The project provides skill training in Batik-tie-and-dye, palm oil-extraction, soap-making, bread and pastries etc. The project also provides tools and equipment necessary to set the women up to begin production. So far 444 women have been trained in livelihood skills

ADULT LITERACY PROJECT

This project is aimed at providing basic literacy and numeracy skills to enhance the capacity of women to take on roles that require such skills. Anecdotal evidence from beneficiaries points to the fact that many learners feel more confident after completing the training and are more actively involved with Kuapa's activities. Ophelia Awusutor [insert picture here] of Aduyaakrom Zone said in an interview "My husband is a Purchasing Clerk. Attending the adult literacy has helped me to weigh and record cocoa. I can now help him purchase more cocoa for Kuapa"



Kuapa's achievements in the area of female empowerment are demonstrated by the composition of the current national Executive Council which has 6 female members which includes the second successive female president. There are 53 active women's groups in 13 District Societies trained in alternative livelihoods activities to increase their income and well-being. Women's share of the total population has increased from 26% in 1998 to 33% in 2014

CHOCOLATS HALBA VISITS KUAPA KOKOO OFOASE ZONE

Chocolats Halba an organization that uses Kuapa Kokoo's premium quality cocoa to produce its finest chocolate in Switzerland visited Ofoase zone to interact with farmers of Kuapa. Two members of the team Mr Daniel Boni the Head of cocoa purchasing and sustainability of Chocolats Halba and Fabran (Fairtrade) spent some nights with the farmers in their community before the general meeting on Saturday 14th November, 2015. The team was led by Joos Sutter of Coop (owners of Chocolats Halba) and Nadja Lang the director of Fairtrade Switzerland with a group of staff and journalist together.

Earlier on (Friday 13th November, 2015) the team met the national president of Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Union (KKFU) Fatima Ali, with the NEC members, Management of KKFU and KKL at Kuapa's head office in Asokwa Kumasi to discuss matters of mutual interest. Among issues discussed were projects that Chocolats Halba sponsors. The visitors first went to the chief's palace to pay homage to the chief and elders of Ofoase village. The people of Ofoase community welcomed the visitors with drumming and dancing in a grand style.

The visitors were taken to two farms belonging to two farmers of Kuapa. The first was a 3 acre farm belonging to Mr Kwame Owusu, he has received periodic training from Kuapa Kokoo field officers.

The farmer had received training on how to keep a clean farm free from pests, diseases and harmful agro-chemicals. The second farm visited belonged to Mr Stephen Okyere, he briefed the visitors on the fermentation process. Good fermentation and drying among others makes Ghana's cocoa to be of best quality.



Joos Sutter
Coop (owners of Chocolats Halba)
Nadja Lang
Director of Fairtrade Switzerland ▶

Quality checks are implemented by Quality Control Division of Ghana COCOBOD before it is bagged and sealed for export. The farmers realised the true meaning of the world being a global village based on the visit by the consumers since this is unusual.

As a consequence of extreme poverty approximately two million children are engaged in hazardous labour on cocoa plantations in West Africa. Therefore Chocolats Halba supports two projects: a programme to prevent child labour and a programme to empower women. Both projects are managed by Kuapa Kokoo. In Ghana, cocoa beans are grown mostly in monoculture. Unfortunately decades of this monoculture has leached the soil. Chocolats Halba initiated a reforestation project in the Kumasi region.

Over 150,000 trees have been planted so far. Chocolats Halba provides annual financial support to the programme and regularly monitors its activities on the ground. It was reported by Mr Kwame Banson from Fairtrade Africa (Member and partnership manager) that, in spite of the workload involved in cocoa

production, cocoa regions remain the poorest.

Fairtrade empowers farmers to take decisions for themselves, in view of this Fairtrade Africa provides certification support. This is done through developmental agencies, giving farmers a voice in production. Mr Banson shared his view that, fairtrade should move from a small niche market to a mainstream market and be considered as a developmental model for small producers and their market.

Finally Daniel Boni Head of cocoa purchasing and sustainability at Chocolats Halba gave the closing remarks on behalf of his team. He prayed for good partnership between Kuapa Kokoo with Chocolats Halba, the Coop and Fairtrade Switzerland. He also hopes that, Kuapa Kokoo would continue to improve the livelihood of farmers through environmental training and education. This will ensure a better future for everyone.



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