

Strengthening livelihoods for food security amongst cocoa and oil palm farming communities in Papua New Guinea



Key details

Location

Papua New Guinea

Duration

Start Jan 2014

End Feb 2019

Budget

AUD 1,204,580

Commissioned organisation

Curtin University

Partners

Cocoa Coconut Institute of Papua New Guinea;
James Cook University; Oil Palm Research
Association

Project Leader

Dr. Gina Koczberski - Curtin University of
Technology

Program

[Social Systems](#)

Project code

ASEM/2012/072



Overview

This project gained a detailed socio-economic and cultural understanding of the farming and livelihood systems of cocoa and palm oil smallholders in Papua New Guinea to develop and evaluate suitable interventions to relieve the stressors making smallholders vulnerable to food and livelihood insecurity.

Food security among smallholder cocoa and oil palm growers in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is being undermined.

The recent arrival of Cocoa Pod Borer (CPB) has spread rapidly in the country, decimating the production and incomes of growers, while population and land pressures on the oil palm land settlement schemes are contributing to declining per capita incomes and land shortages for food gardening. For the majority of rural women in PNG, local marketing of garden foods is their most important income, even in areas where smallholder export crop production is dominant. Gardens maintain both food and income security and are an important buffer against fluctuating export cash crop prices.

There was a need to understand farming and livelihood systems to assess the status of food security in CPB-affected areas and the viability of smallholder cocoa holdings for meeting household income and food needs. This project was in response.

Project outcomes

- Adoption of a new oil palm replanting policy by Hargy Oil Palm for smallholders in the Biella District of West New Britain. Trial results show that the new replanting policy will improve food and income security of smallholder families.
- Completion and distribution of several industry working papers on the issue.
- More than 1,300 smallholder farmers have opened accounts with EduSuper (almost 20% of whom are women).
- Produced a report based on dietary recall surveys among smallholder households which provides detailed information on diet quality.
- Distribution and successful trial of a fuel-efficient stove (EcoZoom Dura Stove) among smallholders living in areas where fuel shortages exist.



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