



The ACi News Bulletin 5th Edition on

“The Cashew Matching Fund”



For a shared understanding of the cashew sector!

Preface by Rita Weidinger



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 5th edition of the ACi News Bulletin.

Coming to the end of another year, I would like to recap our activities and share our combined successes in 2015. Thanks to your continuous support, our great collaboration and joint efforts, we can celebrate another cashew year of overcoming challenges and attaining achievements.

Looking back, the year 2015 saw continuous progress towards the vision of success:

"430.000 farmers increase their annual net income by at least \$110 per farmer per year from cashew production, creating a cumulative additional net income of over \$100 Million until April 2016, baseline 2010."

In a nutshell, we so far reached the following:

- **387,181 farmers** fully trained on two different topics, **22 % women**.
- **\$161 annual net income per farmer** from cashew alone in 2015, giving cumulatively more than **\$120 Million farmer net incomes in all 5 countries** (which is more than \$250 Million family income).
- In addition to the increase of \$161 in net income, over the baseline (2010) net income of \$144, and together with the farmer's labour cost of about \$300 (farmers use mainly family labour for farm sizes around 2ha), **the farmer today makes a total annual income of \$605 for his/her family from cashew alone**.
- **120 Master Trainers from 9 countries across West Africa** graduated from the 1st and 2nd Edition of the Master Training Program. They are equipped to apply the experiences within their work place and intensify the regional knowledge sharing and exchange.
- **Cashew Processing in Africa increased from 5 to about 10 %**, though processors the last 2 seasons faced heavy competition with RCN buyers. As a result, few processors across West Africa had to shut down processing operations completely (however they still engaged in trading), while most of them run below capacity.
- **About 5,800 jobs** created in processing factories, **75% women**, with accumulated wages of **\$3.6 Million** in all 5 project countries.
- **27 Matching Fund Projects** in all 5 project countries and Kenya with more than **30 Partners, €8.48 million investment, €5.07 Million partner contributions**. Additionally, **IDH funds 5 projects** in the ACi countries and Kenya, **with a grant component of about €1.0mio**.

The challenges in the processing industry to compete with traders for RCN, provided a wakeup call for governments and policy makers to step up their efforts in reviving the sector. Ghana and Benin are following the footsteps of Côte d'Ivoire in developing a national cashew strategy, an activity plan and policy framework to accelerate the growth of the sector. Both Burkina Faso and Benin, invited for review workshops to offer stakeholders an in-depth analysis of their joint achievements over the past three years and to discuss the strategic cashew way forward. A stable political environment supports these important policy processes: Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso held peaceful presidential elections, and Benin shall follow end of February 2016, Ghana in November 2016.

From June 21st to July 3rd 2015, the project evaluation of ACi Phase 2 took place with a special focus on Côte

d'Ivoire and Ghana. ACi was rated very successful with an overall score of 15 out of 16 points according to OECD-DAC criteria – Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact, Efficiency and Sustainability. The evaluation team recommended complementing ACi II by a follow-up project (ACi III) in order to allow consolidation and further extension of the results.

ACi has received a general commitment from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to enter a third project phase. Other funding partners – IDH and EU/ACP secretariat – intend to support the joint vision too. End of January 2016, a strategic planning workshop with technical staff and partners shall prepare the way forward, and the board meeting on 25th February in Accra shall then lead to defining the scope of cashew activities for the third phase of the ACi project.

On this note, I would like to encourage all partners to continue the good work done and congratulate all on our shared accomplishments as we look forward to a new year of more possibilities and successes. The ACi team wishes you and your families the best of the holiday season.

We appreciate the efforts of all contributors of this fourth Edition:

Monique St. Jarre - ACA, Dr. Esther Gyedu-Akoto - Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), Atta Agyepong, Cynthia Al- Benon, André Mahoutin TANDJIEKPON, Isaac Musa Bangura - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security (MAFFS), Sierra Leone, Alika Gnata Awourssime - Institut de Conseil et d'Appui Technique (ICAT), Achade Eggoh Christelle Ogougnimika - Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP), Benin, Jace Rabe - Tolaro Global, Mark van Sleeuwen - Afokantan, Jim Fitzpatrick-Cashew Club

Let's continue to share our knowledge and information to build a better and shared understanding of the cashew sector!

Thank you very much and enjoy your reading!



Rita Weidinger, Executive Director ACi

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Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



Cashew Experts graduate from Master Training Program – 2 Ministers and DG CCA honor the occasion

The African Cashew initiative (ACi) and the African Cashew Alliance (ACA), supported by the Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la Pêche (MAEP), the Programme de Promotion de l'Agriculture (ProAgri-GIZ) with funding from CORAF / WECARD / World Bank / Conseil Coton Anacarde (CCA) held its third session of the Master Training Program for cashew value chain promotion. The event which took place from the 9th to 13th November 2015 at the Sun Beach Hotel in Cotonou, Bénin.

Rita Weidinger, Executive Director of the African Cashew initiative/GIZ explains the rationale for instituting the programme: “We developed the Master Training Program to create a pool of experts in West Africa with in-depth knowledge on the cashew value chain. It is a unique and comprehensive training program linking theoretical knowledge to live demonstrations through expert presentations and peer-learning exercises. The Master Trainers have become the nucleus for country and regional networking.” 62 participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo took part in this learning program.

Rolling out in seven months, the Master Training Program is divided in three successive one-week sessions held in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Benin. The first session was held in May in Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso where trainees were introduced to the cashew value chain concept, cashew market dynamics and training material development for cashew farming. The second was organized in August in Sunyani, Ghana and focused on improved planting material development, pest and disease management as well as the Good Agricultural Practices. The third

and final session reunited all participants in Cotonou to learn and exchange ideas on harvest and post-harvest handlings, farm economics, monitoring and evaluation, market information systems and cashew processing. Each working session includes a field trip. This time around, the experts visited local roasters, commercial centers and supermarkets in Cotonou with the aim to sensitize participants on cashew product development, local marketing and consumption of cashew and its by-products.

This year's program was again crowned with a Graduation Ceremony. The African Cashew initiative, the African Cashew Alliance and various Cashew Sector Partners officially acknowledged the successful learning journey of all Master Trainers. In attendance of the opening and later the graduation Ceremony were Hon. Minister of Agriculture (MAEP) and Hon. Minister of Trade in Bénin, the Vice President of University of Abomey-Calavi, and the Director General of the Cotton and Cashew Council in Côte d'Ivoire, the Focal Person of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Bénin as well as the Team Leaders and Representatives of GIZ agricultural projects ProAgri/Benin and ProDra/Togo. The dignitaries presented certificates to signify participants' successful participation in the MTP and to acknowledge their learning journeys.



Source: ACi, MTP II

The first generation of 58 cashew experts from seven West African countries successfully graduated from the first Master Training Program already in July 2014.

For more information on the Master Training Program, please visit our website www.africancashewinitiative.org

Author: Ann-Christin Berger, Communication Manager, (ACi)

ACA Begins Workshop Series under USAID West Africa Trade Hub & Investment Project

From the 3rd to the 4th of November in Cotonou, ACA held the first workshop under its partnership with the USAID West Africa Trade & Investment Hub (WATIH). This project, funded by USAID WATIH and implemented by ACA, seek to strengthen the technical capacities for stakeholders within the West African cashew value chain. Ten cashew-producing countries in the region have been split into three zones where a total of six training workshops will take place on topics of food safety, environmental protection, business management, international competitiveness, and market information systems.

The first workshop in the series, which targets both cashew processors and market information system (MIS) professionals, was held for a series of two days and welcomed a total of 15 participants from Benin, Ghana and Nigeria. As will be the case for the other project zones, the first workshop focused solely on crucial issues of food safety, product quality, environmental protection and market information system basics. The trainings are kept purposefully small to allow for intensive and focused learning with ACA experts over a two-day period.

The workshop in Benin ran two different sessions for processors and market information professionals simultaneously. ACA Seal Coordinator, Dorcas Amoh facilitated the training sessions for the cashew processors on subjects of food safety, such as good hygiene practices, good manufacturing practices, HACCP implantation and the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, as well as environmental management strategies. Participants were able to conduct an HACCP simulation during the program to reinforce the information learned. These issues are crucial to the international competitiveness and sustainability for processing companies in the international market. As large buyers increasingly scrutinize the value chains of their products, ACA aims to improve the capacity of companies to excel under scrutiny. Food safety and environmental protection have thus become essential at every level of cashew processing.



Source: ACA, Workshop participants

At the same time, ACA MIS & Partnership Coordinator, Olivier Kabré facilitated the MIS trainings on international market behavior, market trend analysis, price trends, data collection and dissemination methods, cashew marketing and export policies, and overall economic development in the industry. Participants worked in groups to write their own market analysis based on current industry trends to present to various hypothetical stakeholders. The MIS and processors participants were then

able to gather together at the end of the workshop and discuss areas of overlap and possible partnership opportunities within the industry.

Throughout the workshop, the importance of diverse stakeholders' roles was emphasized. The trainings were well received by all participants who will return to their factories with increased technical knowledge and market linkages. This workshop will be followed by five more throughout West Africa in 2015 and 2016 to complete the workshop series under ACA's joint project with USAID WATIH.

Author: Monique St. Jarre, Communications Officer, (ACA)

Women as cashew leaders: Dr. Esther Gyedu-Akoto



Source: ACi, Dr. Esther Gyedu-Akoto at work

"I am one who believes that I can perform excellently no matter where I am. I believe with focus, determination and hard work, I have made the best of wherever God has placed me and I believe anybody can do same." This is the certainty by which one of the most accomplished women in the Ghanaian cashew sector lives by.

Dr Esther Gyedu-Akoto studied at the University of Ghana, where she graduated in 1992 with BSc Food Science and Biochemistry. She proceeded to

do her national service at the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) in New Tafo-Akim in the Eastern region of Ghana. After she had finished with her national service, she became an assistant researcher in the New Product Development Unit at CRIG. Between 1997 and 2000, Dr Gyedu-Akoto studied for and obtained an MPhil in Food Science at the University of Ghana. On completion of the course, she became a Research Scientist which is the same as a Deputy Manager of the New Product Development Unit.

Dr Gyedu-Akoto's career in the cashew sector began in 2002 when the agricultural sector in Ghana started a cashew development project and CRIG was appointed as the research wing. Dr Gyedu-Akoto was selected to be the food scientist on the cashew research team. As the food scientist on this team, she worked extensively on cashew processing, including researching into and developing new ways of processing cashew nuts and apples. Her involvement in cashew research led her to conduct more in-depth study into unexplored areas of cashew research in 2005 when she decided to continue with her education.

In 2005, Dr Esther Gyedu-Akoto enrolled in a doctorate degree programme in Food Science and Technology at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). "Researching on cocoa had become an exhausted topic and to me, it was time to sniff around for new areas of research," she said and thus did her doctoral thesis on the production and utilization of cashew tree gum. Her study revealed that cashew gum can be used in both pharmaceutical and food industries.

After completing the doctoral study in 2009, Dr Esther Gyedu-Akoto was promoted to the position of a Senior Research Scientist. In this position, she researched further into other uses of cashew as well as good processing practices to

aid the improvement of nut quality. In 2013 she was appointed as the Acting Head of the unit.

Since her appointment, Dr Gyedu-Akoto has made efforts to develop a link between research and industry. She has accomplished this through the organization of trainings for processors, her fellow researchers, business owners, agricultural extension officers, farmers and non-governmental organizations on cashew processing. Through these trainings, she educates them on new discoveries which research has made to help improve the profitability and quality of cashew and its products.



Source: ACi, Cashew products produced by Dr. Gyedu-Akoto

Her relentless efforts to maximize benefits from cashew have led her to produce cashew jam and juice from the cashew apple. She has also worked with her team to produce vinegar, wine, gin and brandy from cashew. The team also developed a new method of roasting cashew which gave the nuts a unique taste.

“The main problem I have had to face as a researcher and woman leader in the cashew sector and at CRIG is the domineering nature of some men. They think a woman’s views should not be taken seriously. They ridicule my ideas and don’t appreciate anything I do and accomplish,” she said.

In spite of this, Dr Esther Gyedu-Akoto stands tall and has made significant contributions to the Ghanaian cashew sector with focus, hard work and determination. To her, opposition is not a

reason to give up but rather a source of motivation to spur her on.



Source: ACi, Dr. Esther at the Lab

According to Dr Gyedu-Akoto, the cashew sector is a lucrative one. However, even though many women were involved in processing cashew in Ghana, very few of them were entrepreneurs. She attributes this to a generally low level of education of women in the rural areas in Ghana. She explained that educating women would equip them with skills like account keeping and documentation of information.

“Another reason which accounts for the low number of women in the cashew sector is the non-availability of financial capital for educated women who want to venture into cashew business,” Dr Esther Gyedu-Akoto added. She suggested that supporting women with financial capital and other incentives like shelling machines could help encourage women to become entrepreneurs in the sector.

As the head of her unit, Dr Esther Gyedu-Akoto aims at creating a strong link between research and industry so that discoveries made in the laboratory would be used to improve yield, quality and profitability of cashew.

Dr. Gyedu-Akoto is a mother of two and enjoys reading motivational and religious books. She aspires to own a food processing business someday.

Author: Julius Abagi, Communication Intern, (ACi)

Speakers Corner:

Name: Atta Agyepong

Position: Organisational Learning Consultant who loves to increase the impact of training and a 'dare-to-ask' facilitator who helps people kick-start their dreams and projects.

Name: Cynthia Al-Da Benon

Position: Training Officer

Company: GIZ / African Cashew initiative (ACi)

Name: André Mahoutin TANDJIEKPON

Position: Consultant

Company: GIZ / African Cashew initiative (ACi)



What is your professional background?

Atta: I have attained a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics from KNUST, Kumasi Ghana and a Master of Science in Development Planning and Management from the University of Dortmund, Germany. I also studied Regional Development Planning and Management at the University of Dortmund as well as Policy and Project Management at ISS in Den Haag, the Netherlands. I am a Gestalt Intervener (Gestalt Institute of Cleveland) and OISD Practitioner (OCIC / OD Institute of USA). I also did Financial Management and Budgeting at GIMPA, in Accra and Entrepreneurship Development at the University of Manchester, UK.

Cynthia: I have worked as a researcher and supervisor for two years, during a study on living conditions of households and on the Harmonised Index of Consumer Price (HICP). As a volunteer for the Ministry of Youth in Burkina Faso, I worked on the organization of the activities and of the National Youth Forum. This earned me an honorary medal of merit in youth and sports.

André: I'm an agribusiness professional with more than 30 years of specialized experience in African Agricultural Value Chains and the Cashew Industry. I worked in the public, private and non-profit sector.

The Master Training Program is bilingual – French and English – with participants from along the cashew value chain. How do you experience the moderation of such a diverse group?

André: Simultaneous translation in intensive training courses is always challenging for moderators and trainees alike. In order to accommodate all trainees, we used French and English speaking moderators. Atta, Cynthia and I are quite complementary in our skills and we did a lot of role sharing to leverage the high energy from the participants. My advantage is that I can communicate in both languages.

Atta: It is challenging and exciting. Challenging, because sometimes I wasn't sure whether key messages were delivered without dilution. Exciting, because it offered me a unique opportunity to question every assumption I am holding. Language was not a barrier.

Cynthia: This was my first time as a moderator. I really enjoyed the opportunity offered to me. Also with the guidance of experienced people like Atta and André, I learnt some moderation techniques and still have the desire to continue learning. With simultaneous translation each participant received the same information at the same time. Also I observed during session three that the anglophone participants said a few words like 'Good morning' and 'thank you' in French. There were also discussions between the Francophone and Anglophone participants during breaks. For me, this is proof of the harmony within the group.

Where do you see a difference between the 1st Edition and the 2nd Edition of the Master Training Program?

André: The big difference is that we profited from experiences gained during the first edition. In-depth reflection on lessons

learnt helped to run the second edition more smoothly. The Master Training Program has definitely improved the first edition to the second.

Atta: The 2nd Edition was a demanding group. They were hungry to learn and demanded for certain contents. We had to adapt the program to satisfy their learning demands. The program could have been even still better with higher participation of women.

Cynthia: For me, with the lessons learnt from the first edition, we were able to learn from our mistakes and were better prepared psychologically, physically and materially for a second edition.

What was your personal highlight of the 1st or the 2nd Edition?

Cynthia: The field trip to the agricultural research station in Wench, during the second session of the second edition.

André: The high interest and motivation of participants in each session. Something changes in the participants after they have completed the training. They are doing and looking at things differently. For many participants, attending this program changes their professional and personal behavior and life. It's been very interesting to observe that shift. It is an image I am carrying with me after both session.

Atta: The shift from content issues and discussions to training on self-awareness and believe.

What are the success factors of the Master Training Program?

André: We developed a comprehensive concept with precise goals. In the selection process, we chose participants and institution who are genuinely interested in cashew sector promotion. The success of the program builds on flexibility and taking into account interests and demands of the participants as well as leveraging their cashew expertise. The program combines theory with high emphasis on practical and experiential learning. Another success factor to the program is the professional complementarity and commitment of the resources team.

In the Master Training Program you apply Organization Development Principles / GESTALT approach. Could you please explain that?

Atta: The GESTALT approach looks at the bigger picture without losing the pieces and how to drill on the pieces without losing out on the whole. [The GESTALT based organizational development is a psychological theory stressing on awareness creation in individuals, whilst thus influencing a larger organisation]

How would you describe the development of the MTP program over the past 2 years?

Cynthia: When I met Ardiata [a participant of MTP 1st edition] during the shooting of the MTP promotional video, I realized and was able to measure the impact of this program on the professional and private lives of the Master Trainers.

André: In few words: The candle that had been lit in a cashew farmers' house provides light for the whole community.

Atta: It is transformatory and likely to have huge impact on the cashew sector.

You are involved in almost all processes: participant selection, hotel arrangements and moderation. What is your biggest learning from organizing this Master Training Program?

Cynthia: With the organization of the MTP I have learnt to work in a team. I like to compare this to a bicycle chain; if the chain cuts, the bicycle becomes useless.

Looking into the future, will ACi / ACA organize other Master Training Programs on cashew?

Rita: I am deeply grateful for the many appreciative messages from the participants, their organizations and the larger resource team about the uniqueness of the Master Training Program. I surely also witnessed a shift of participants from the 1st to the 2nd edition. Their expectations were high, as well as their eagerness to attain more knowledge and their learning abilities.

Depending on the upcoming funding, we will either continue to focus on West-Africa or even start a program in East Africa and outside of Africa. The call for applications starts in January 2016. Please visit our website for the application modalities. My personal wish is to have more women participating – maybe 40%?

Interviewed by: Ann-Christin Berger, Communication Manager (ACI)

Speakers Corner:

Name: Isaac Musa Bangura

Position: Satellite Coordinator, Cashew Component

Institution: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security (MAFFS), Sierra Leone



How many years have you been working in the cashew sector?

I have been working in the cashew sector for 3 years.

What are your responsibilities in your current job?

As a Satellite Coordinator of the Agriculture for Development (A4D) Project, under the Ministry, my main role is to plan, organize and coordinate the implementation of cashew project activities in the Northern region, including monitoring of the implementation of the grant contracts. I also ensure that relevant partnerships are developed and maintained to support project implementation.

Where do you see gaps along the value chain in Sierra Leone compared to others?

Generally, there is little knowledge and insufficient capacity in the sector. Many producers have inadequate knowledge on Good Agricultural Practices. They don't know how and when to apply them. Farmers also have little access to improved planting material to plant more productive trees. Moreover the cashew sector in Sierra Leone is not well organized. Producers find it difficult to get buyers for their raw cashew nuts. Processing is also a challenge. Most of the processing is done with crude equipment. Another major and most important gap is the lack of national policy on the cashew sector. Policies that should provide orientation, guidelines for strategic actions and clearly defined aims and, objectives as well as designed strategies to support the development of the cashew sector are absent. Developing cashew nut production in the absence of formulated national policy guidelines is a costly desideratum.

How do you plan to tackle these gaps?

My colleagues and I have already started after the second session in Ghana. When we went back home, we organized a training on cashew grafting. So far, in Sierra Leone, cashew grafting has hardly been successful. Applying the techniques, we have learnt from experts in Ghana, we grafted 45 cashew seedlings out of which 30 seedlings survived. It was much more successful than any other known training ever conducted on the soils of Sierra Leone. Participating in the Master Training Program encouraged me to speak to my boss about conducting a yield survey. We did it! Now we have the first quantified yield data on cashew in Sierra Leone! I was also able to initiate a relocation of the warehouse for raw cashew nuts. The location for the warehouse was already set, but I convinced them to relocate to a more suitable location from the knowledge I gained at the Master Training Program. There is more to be done, especially by persons in power! If I were in an influential position, I will first develop a national policy for the sector and train experts in production, processing, quality control and marketing. The sector will also be well organized and coordinated. I will encourage better planting as widely as possible. Finally, I will establish a germplasm plot and scion bank like the one we

visited in Wenchi, Ghana with a collection of all the improved varieties from the leading cashew producing countries.

What other areas require ACi's involvement in tackling these challenges?

Like I already said, in Sierra Leone, many farmers don't maintain their farms properly. They don't know about the recommended Good Agricultural Practices. Farmers and other stakeholders need to be trained on pruning, canopy substitution, sanitation, nursery raising and even transplanting. ACi can support by providing improved varieties to farmers, by organizing the sector and creating market linkages and promoting cashew processing.

How did you perceive the exchange of experience and knowledge with the various participants of the 9 countries?

Not one country has it all! They have their own challenges. However, it was a good opportunity to learn about what is happening in other countries. I relied on the experiences and knowledge of other participants when I didn't understand something from the presentations.

Now that you have almost completed three sessions, how would you describe your experience of participating in the MTP?

The training has enhanced my knowledge. Before, I was not very knowledgeable about the sector. I would say my knowledge on cashew was 10% and now I can say that it is 80%. Now people refer to me for information. My boss consults or refers to me for anything that has to do with cashew.

Can you describe if and how the Master Training program has shaped you professionally?

On 9th December, the ECOWAS Commission meets in Abidjan. Among a long list of people that could have been possibly nominated like those who owned large cashew farms, processing equipment and who have been in the sector longer. But due to my participation in the Master Training Program, it was me who got selected to attend this event. I will hold a presentation on cashew policy and processing. The presentation on the Kernel Outturn Ratio (KOR) had a big impact. There is a buyer in Sierra Leone who selects the raw cashew nuts using the water method. The raw cashew nuts that float in the water are rejected. Back home I educated farmers on the KOR method and made them aware that the water method is rather used in selecting seeds for seedlings.

Where do you see yourself in a year from now after this program?

If I continue working for the Ministry, I would like to provide training on Good Agricultural Practices, value addition, creation of market linkages and establish germplasm plots. Personally, I would like to go into developing a scion bank and develop high yielding varieties and sell improved seedlings. Within the next two years I would like become a local processor (like free cajou) in Cotonou.

Do you have a message to the organizers of the Master Training Program?

Thank you very much for your commitments and efforts! You have done a lot, especially for the people of Sierra Leone and for Africa.

Interviewed by: Alexandra Antwi, Consultant (ACi)

Speakers Corner:

Name: Aliko Gnata Awourssime

Position: Senior Agriculture Technician

Company: Institut de Conseil et d'Appui Technique (ICAT), Togo



How many years of professional experience do you have in the cashew sector?

I have been working in the cashew sector as a Senior Agriculture Technician for about 6 to 7 years now. I am responsible for the organization of farmers within an association known as ICAT.

You have almost completed the Master Training Program. What additional skills and knowledge have you acquired?

I have acquired a lot of knowledge from different topics especially on the establishment of plantations; the top-working technique and the use of improved planting materials really impressed me.

How will you integrate the knowledge gained from the Master Training Program in your current work?

As a trainer, my job provides a channel for passing on the information and knowledge I have acquired during the training.

Can you describe if and how the Master Training Program has shaped you?

The MTP has changed me. Honestly! My work involves the organization of farmers and in my country it has been hard to organize people, now I have arguments to convince them. I also see the cashew sector differently now; the sector provides an opportunity and we can gain at all levels.

What was your personal highlight in this training?

There have been countless highlights throughout the three sessions! In Bobo Dioulasso, the presentation on trainer's skills was a personal highlight for me. I reexamined myself, the perception I had of myself as a trainer. In Sunyani, the topic on research was impressive. Especially how involved the Ghanaian government is and how close they are to the producers. It isn't like that in Togo. In Ghana the vision is to make things happen. Finally in Cotonou there were even more impressive experiences. A personal highlight for me was the woman at the roasting plant using basic methods.

Which feedback are you getting from your family, friends, and/or colleagues since you have completed the Master Training Program?

Initially there was a sense of jealousy. With the knowledge I have acquired I can convince people to think differently. This is an asset that will benefit everyone.

What is the impact this program has on your professional and personal life?

During the visit at the roasting plant, I told myself that I could do it too. The costs are high, but as soon as I saw this woman I knew that I have the ability to do the same. I have a lot of capabilities and if she can do it with few resources, so can I.

To whom would you recommend to participate in the Master Training Program?

I recommend the Master Training Program to all those involved in the sector, working along the cashew value chain to experience the reality of the sector in detail.

Where do you see yourself in a year from now after this program?

My objective for the coming year is to show the Togolese authorities what I have experienced and learned during the three sessions. I am try to train those involved in the cashew sector and create awareness. The goal that I have set for myself is to become a cashew processor.

Interviewed by: Alida Toe, Intern (ACi)

Speakers Corner:



Name: Achade Eggoh Christelle Ogougnimika

Position: Technician specialized in crop production

Company: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP), Benin

How many years have you been working in the cashew sector?

It's been more than 3 years since I started working in the cashew sector.

What are your responsibilities in your current job?

Generally, I work as an extension officer at the municipal level at the Zakpota Municipal area. As a technician specialized in crop production, I am responsible for promoting crop production. Working at the municipal level, there are village agricultural advisers working under me. Before that, I worked at Dassa (2 departments together) with the cashew producers. I organize training sessions and inform the others on issues of production. I also work on a project on agricultural productivity in West African, which I support in developing a multi-stakeholder platform.

In which areas do you plan to support cashew actors in your home country?

I would like to support farmers in the area of production, good agricultural practices, harvest and post-harvest techniques and government in the organization of cashew actors, especially in the rural areas.

You have almost completed the Master Training Program. What additional skills and knowledge have you acquired and will you integrate your knowledge gained in your current work?

Before, I was more focused on production but the program gave me the opportunity to get a global view of the value chain. Now, I understand the topic of cashew marketing better; how prices are fixed etc. With this knowledge, I can better support producers not only in production but also in marketing of RCN. This includes how they can get better prices and how to interact with other players in the cashew value chain to get for example easier financing. At the departmental level, if I move to a higher level, I will be better equipped to support the sector.

Which feedback are you getting from your family, friends, and/or colleagues since you have completed the Master Training Program?

I talk to them a lot about cashew and try to convince my family to go into cashew production. I am myself interested in having a cashew plantation.

Interviewed by: Alida Toe, Intern (ACi)

Some scenes from the just ended MTP



Source: ACi, Woman frying cashew



Source: ACi, MTP participants performing KOR test

Speakers Corner:

Name: Jace Rabe

Position: Chief Executive Officer

Company: Tolaro Global, Bénin



The title of the Matching Fund Project is “Benin Market Oriented Cashew Initiative (BEMOCI)”. What is your vision for this initiative?

Our vision for this initiative is to re-enforce the work we have been doing for years whereby we have set out to create a solid cashew processing industry by establishing a solid cashew producer base. This initiative is multi-faceted. We are helping increase the farmer’s yields, which directly impact their income, and increasing the RCN KOR quality which directly impacts the profitability of the in-country primary processing facilities. More importantly, we focus on educating Beninese farmers about market knowledge perspectives. Farmers are learning how KOR is calculated to be in a better position to leverage their RCN stock when foreign buyers come knocking on their doors. They are also learning about how to access regional and world market information on cashew pricing which in the end helps stabilize the market and drive sustainable growth.

Who are the Matching Fund Partners that you are working with and what are their roles and responsibilities?

We are currently working with Self Help Africa and Intersnack. Self Help Africa assists with farmer education. We have outlets to Intersnack.

What activities are you promoting on the farming side?

Simple is better. Complex agronomy techniques simply don’t work in Africa yet. Even though Africa, West Africa and Bénin have tremendous potential in the cashew sector, we are still in the beginning phases of long-term viability. If we start teaching complex agronomy techniques, while farmers don’t understand the basic farming techniques, we are only working to keep the project alive, instead of implementing sustainable projects for a thriving cashew sector in Benin. As such, we teach simple farming methods that can have huge impacts. We focus on pruning, orchard floor maintenance (weeding and keeping underbrush under control), proper spacing and the use of natural fertilizers like organic compost. The typical wild crop variety tree in West Africa should provide at least 5 kg per tree. When we started our farmer projects almost 3 years ago, the average farmer in our project was getting yields of 1.5 - 2 kg per tree. Teaching simple farming techniques to get our farmers to 5 kg minimum per tree would increase their cashew yields threefold. We have established nurseries that produce these high yielding varieties. However, we don’t push those high yielding varieties until farmers master the basic, foundational farming practices that will actually support the high yielding trees. The common misconception is that these high yielding trees are somehow magical and they will yield high volumes regardless of how they are treated. Planting high yield, high performance trees with poor farming practices, will result in the same low yields we are seeing from the wild varieties. Focus on developing a solid foundation and understanding of how to grow and nurture cashew trees, will result in high outputs.

What are your achievements so far?

On average, the least performing farmer (a farmer who doesn’t implement all recommended Good Agricultural Practices) has generally doubled yields in the last 20 months. Our best farmers are seeing 4-7 times the yield from 20 months ago. We don’t teach anything special. In fact, we teach boring. I like to quote Henry Ford when he stated in his book that, “a successful and efficient factory is boring. Boring meaning predictable: No surprises”. We apply the same principle to our farmers and their orchards. The best orchards will be “boring”. That means farmers will predict their harvest by following the same procedures and practices each season to produce a good crop.

What are the challenges that you are facing?

Lack of financing for RCN. That is the BIGGEST challenge and barrier to true sustainability and viability to achieve long success.

What are your main lessons learnt?

Simple is better - being straight forward and honest with farmers. We tell them that we are not a project; we are not a non-profit organization. As a business we need to stay profitable to stay around. We want to help farmers increase their yields and improve quality because we hope to benefit from a strong, more secure, more stable market. When we both do our parts, we both win. Farmers get increases in yields that directly impact their income, we as processors get access to more high quality RCN. They appreciate the openness and this creates a solid foundation of trust, so that both parties are aligned and understand the needs and wants of the other.

What would you like done differently in the future?

Assistance should be given to the factories, in the form of access to RCN financing. That is the absolute hardest challenge.

What is your vision for the next 10 years for the cashew sector in Benin?

My vision for the cashew sector in Benin is to triple the cashew harvest to 300,000 MT and to process 100,000 MT in country.

How do you experience working in a public private partnership (PPP) for the development of the cashew sector?

I enjoy it. It keeps everyone honest and striving for the best decisions to grow an industry. When different perspectives come together for a common goal, awesome results can be achieved.



Interviewed by: Sylvia Pobee, Communication Officer (ACi)



Source :ACi, Cashew kernels being removed from shell



Source :ACi, Packaged Cashew kernels

“With cashew I can live a good life, even at my old age!”

Mr. SANNI Boukari is 70 years old, but he is still very energetic. He goes about his daily work as actively as someone half his age. After all, Mr. SANNI gains his livelihood from his 3.5 ha cashew farm to cater for 11 family members. He also has 2 wives.



Mr. SANNI detaching nut from apple using a string

Mr. SANNI Boukari is one of about 1,420 cashew farmers benefitting from the ACI Matching Fund project under the Benin Market Oriented Cashew Initiative (BEMOCI) project. The program is being implemented by Self Help Africa and DEDRAS, funded through a Matching Fund partnership between Tolaro Global and INTERSNACK. Beneficiaries of the project were drawn from the Daringa, Tourou, Komigüéa and Banhoukpo areas of Benin. The program seeks to address the problem of low productivity and poor farmer income by providing beneficiaries with trainings on bush fire prevention, weed and pest control techniques, proper spacing of cashew farms and other Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs). To ensure sustainability, 62 producers are trained as lead farmers. These farmers in turn train other farmers in their locality, thereby ensuring a flow of information and knowledge.

Prior to this intervention, Boukari and his colleague producers struggled from poor productivity of their orchards, bush fires, weed

and pest infestation. After having received and implemented trainings, producers have begun to see a positive change. Mr. SANNI Boukari explains it better: “With this BEMOCI project, I have received a lot of training on grafting, maintenance and management of orchard, making compost jute bags to store cashew nuts, etc. The economic benefits of this project are enormous. My production has increased a lot!” This year, Mr. SANNI Boukari harvested about 2,250 kg from his 3.5 ha cashew farm (643 kg/ha) and sold about 1,350 kg. His two wives received 4 bags of RCN each estimated at about 720 kg for working on the farm. He also gave about 180 kg to farm hands.

“This year I had a very good harvest as compared to previous years. Before the project intervention I had just about 1500 kg. Last year I got closer to 2000 kg and after the sale of nuts I bought an ox.” With proceeds from this year’s harvest, he has been able to make a good drain on his compound, contribute to the construction of his step son’s house and hire farm hands for his 0.50 ha cassava farms.

“I also organize several ceremonies (wedding, funeral, baptism), eat meat at home regularly and meet the needs of the family to ensure their happiness and be respected in society. My wives also have enough wood for cooking and selling to meet their own small needs”, he adds.

Mr. SANNI Boukari is very appreciative of the BEMOCI project and all the partners who made it possible for him to gain the knowledge he now has. He and other cashew farmers are beneficiaries of the success of the Matching Fund partnerships. “Today, through this project, I have realized that with cashew I can live a good life despite my old age. God bless the BEMOCI project and all partners.”

Author: Alain Kouma Kobena Adingra, Matching Fund Officer (ACI)

Speakers Corner:

Name: Mark van Sleeuwen

Position: Director General

Company: Afokantan



Afokantan is a first medium scale processing factory in Benin. Tell us your motivation for setting up this unit.

Our main shareholder Gerard Klijn - Director of the Trade & Development Group - fell in love with Benin in the mid-90 ties. Still a trader, he started forming farmer groups to buy RCN for export. He was able to obtain much better prices and channeled some of his profits to the farmers. At that time, he sold RCN to buyers who otherwise would not have bought a single nut from these farmers. Though, in 1999 export contracts were not taken off when the world market collapsed, leaving the company in dire straits. After visiting a cashew processing factory in Nampula, Mozambique in 2002, he regained confidence in the sector and changed his cashew business idea and decided to start cashew processing in Benin. He then changed his career path from being a trader to becoming an entrepreneur. At that time, buying RCN without having one's own processing unit posed a far greater risk. Also, adding value in the country of raw material origin and creating jobs to improve the livelihoods of local community – following the company's motto "development through economic incentive"- made perfect sense. Not only for his company, but for all actors in the value chain.

After working for several years the factory was closed for a few months. What were the reasons for closing the factory?

We closed the factory because we encountered many different problems at the same time, creating a negative spiral that could not be turned around in a few weeks. The main contributing factors were the low availability of workforce, mainly for the difficult shelling process, as well as various managerial issues and difficulties in timely sourcing of RCN.

How did you manage to re-open the factory?

Although we have only re-started operations less than a year ago, I can say that four key factors have contributed to our current success. First and foremost, we have remained active in Benin as a buyer of RCN during the time the factory was closed. This way we have continued to support the farmers and farmer groups, which we worked with over the past years, and with whom we have built a strong supply network throughout Benin. When we were re-opening the factory, it provided a stable network to procure sufficient RCN to process all year round. Secondly, 'fresh money' was brought into the company by inviting an impact investor to acquire a stake in the company. Securing sufficient working capital to procure RCN was critical to the successful re-opening of AFOKANTAN. The third factor is our revised production philosophy. Originally, AFOKANTAN was built as a predominantly manual processing factory, with limited mechanization and hence required large manual workforce. Recent developments in Vietnam and India have shown that mechanization in cashew processing is the future, and the company has invested in machinery to enhance RCN processing. Instead of reducing labor, the new technologies enabled us to increase production volumes, whilst keeping the existing staff. Ultimately, our successes depends on and is the result of the efforts made by the entire work force, meaning all 300 people working in AFOKANTAN, as well as the farmers and farmer groups linked to AFOKANTAN. Every day, we work on building an organization that enables our employees to gain a decent salary and to grow professionally. Finding professional and affordable staff for key positions is not always an easy task, but we have managed to train a good team. Looking at the currently projected growth, AFOKANTAN will be looking to add new people to the team regularly!

As part of the Cashew Matching Fund you are working with Intersnack, Trade Development International, and FairMatch Support. What are their respective roles in the project implementation?

Intersnack is a major roaster in Europe and one of the world's major snack producers. In this project they play multiple

roles. First of all, Intersnack is the ultimate client for a decent volume of our kernels. Secondly, they train and inspire us in terms of quality improvement, food safety and traceability programs. Intersnack acts as a role-model by showing us the standards that are applied in European food processing industries. TDI is a sister-company in our group, involved in the international marketing of our cashew kernels internationally. TDI is the practical business link between Afokantan and Intersnack. Providing the buying guarantee for all grades, allowing mixed containers, and indeed serving large buyers with straight containers is making TDI a crucial part of AFOKANTAN. Besides their business role, the TDI team has a lot of knowledge on cashew processing and sourcing since they have travelled throughout African cashew producing countries for the past 20 years or so. Information exchange with the TDI team and other processing companies in our group enables AFOKANTAN to improve its learning curve and be profitable a lot sooner. FairMatch Support has been involved with Afokantan for many years, and their work has strongly fed into our current success. They play two major roles. Internationally, they have an advisory role. Locally, FairMatch Support helps us to identify new farmer groups, trains farmers, lead farmers and farmer groups to act together as an economic entity, and provides support in linking Afokantan to farmer groups.

How did you build up and strengthen your relationship with Intersnack?

The relationship with Intersnack is very old. It dates back to the late 90's. We created good business relationships by visiting each other. Intersnack visited Afokantan's factory in Tchaourou several times and they invited us and TDI to visit Intersnack's factory in Doetinchem. These exchange visits created a common understanding of our work and really strengthened our relationship.

Common goals in developing the best processing industry at the raw material source and joint efforts to alleviate poverty in a sustainable way helped to make a swift and facilitated positive decision-making. We also took time to evaluate our progress regularly and ask Intersnack to assist us in improving food safety standards. The joint focus is paying off!

What are the achievements through the Matching Fund until date, since the re-opening of ABC/AGB?

Afokantan Benin Cashew (ABC) has outsourced the farmer training to Afokantan Genese Benin (AGB) to ensure even stronger focus on sourcing, farmer group development and quality improvement in the field.

Through the Matching Fund project, the procured volume of RCN has doubled. We currently source 47 % of RCN directly from farmer groups. Through the Matching Fund, AGB experimented with micro credits for farmer groups, which turned out quite successful. In our experience, farmers with early money take even better care of their crop and hence increase their volumes.

Which kind of trainings have you provided to farmers and how many farmers / farmer cooperatives have you reached?

We have provided various types of training, mostly on field maintenance, pre-harvest and post-harvest handling of RCN, but also on establishing farmer group. The last one is strongly focused on supporting farmers in acting as a group and to strengthen their bargaining position towards buyers.

What is the impact on quality, yields and farmer incomes?

In general, we see a steady increase in quality and quality awareness, which AGB and ABC stimulate with quality bonus systems. Most farmers, in the second year of their training, already start to see clear benefits: higher KOR, slightly better Nut Count, and surely more volume coming from the same trees. All this of course has a positive impact on their income. Furthermore, group selling means higher volume, lower pick up cost, and hence a better price paid to the farmers.

What are you doing with regards to traceability and adherence to food safety measures?

We are in full speed to create interfaces between our existing system and the "3S supply chain traceability system",

launched by the Sustainable Nut Initiative. We believe traceability can be a Unique Selling Point of African Cashew, therefore we have embraced this initiative from the moment of re-opening the factory.

Concerning food safety, we are working on our ACA-seal certification, which for ABC is the entry point to food safety. We expect to obtain the certification early next year. From there onwards, ABC shall be working towards even more stringent certifications, in striving to become top of the world processor in Africa. The ACi Matching Fund enables us to invest in hardware, software and people skills necessary for this change.

What are your main lessons learnt?

They are sometimes simple:

- Good RCN procurement ensures profit on the processing side.
- Drying is crucial to store RCN for approximately 11 months before processing.
- Placing confidence in our partners, be it farmer, service providers or buyers vital to establish common ground for long-term partnerships. Relationships are built over years.
- Establishing trust and control - securing relationships by putting critical controls at important parts of the chain.

How do you experience the public private partnership (PPP) approach for the development of the cashew sector?

For AFOKANTAN this has been a positive experience, though it was our first PPP and we had to learn along the way how this kind of cooperation works, for example from a reporting point of view.

As part of the Matching Fund Project of the African Cashew initiative, what would you do differently in the future?

Longer time frames. As mentioned earlier, relationship building takes a lot of time and the cashew trading season runs only four months a year. So in a two-year project, you basically have two chances of four months to test if trainings have yielded effects.

What is your vision for the next 10 years for the cashew sector in Benin?

A serious increase in local processing will occur with already new factories under construction. This enables us, the industry as a whole, to become stronger in the local environment and more competitive on the international market. Africa will become a dominant processor in the world as mechanization will rise. The need for technically skilled people is going to increase strongly over the coming 5-10 years. Africa will unite and put out a brand name for African cashews, and by doing so, become a leading example to the rest of the cashew world. Joint marketing programs will ensure stable (but higher) prices for cashew kernels, improving the price paid to farmers.

AFOKANTAN reopens the Tchaourou factory!

“We have always been determined to re-open the factory in time. Therefore we are glad to announce that we have started cashew processing again in Tchaourou”. After a brief closure in response to its challenges, Afokantan has bounced back and is ready for business.

Productive Partnerships

The African Cashew initiative (ACi) aims at promoting the quantity and quality of African cashew worldwide. In its bid to achieve this objective, ACi initiated the Cashew Matching Fund in September 2012. Under this fund, ACi partners with interested public and private institutions in the five project countries implement programmes to achieve its goals. This collaboration in turn has equal benefits for the businesses of these institutions as most of them are directly or indirectly linked to cashew production or consumption.

AFOKANTAN is one of many partners of the Matching Fund. With the help of ACi, Intersnack, and the Trade & Development Group, AFOKANTAN has been able to establish direct and sustainable link with farmer aggregations. This resulted in an increase of 300 % of the quantity RCN sourced compared to 2012. In 2014 AFOKANTAN has been able to source a quantity of nearly 850 Metric Tonnes (MT) of RCN directly from farmer groups out of a total quantity of 1170 MT RCN sourced for the factory. This means that more than 70 % of its planned processing capacity for the 2014/2015 season has been sourced directly from farmer groups. Early 2014 preparations for restarting cashew processing in Tchaourou started with visits to factories in Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin and Vietnam, in order to learn from their experience and varying production methods.

Based on the new strategy, the factory in Tchaourou is being modernized to enable AFOKANTAN to better control the quality of processing. New investments have been made in calibrating, shelling, drying, peeling and sorting equipment.

Furthermore, AFOKANTAN invests in competences of its personnel and has recruited qualified and highly experienced staff in key positions. Additionally, key quality management staff is participating in a special training program for Quality Management in food processing industry, during which a quality manual will be developed and implemented. The management team is coordinating the systematic implementation of quality food safety and social compliance improvement at the factory. Apart from maintaining quality, AFOKANTAN prioritizes food safety and social compliance in improving access to European Markets. Therefore, a contract with ACA was signed for implementation of the ACA-seal, even before restarting operations. The implementation process has started shortly after, all with the ambition to be certified by end 2015. To be able to achieve this ambitious target, ABC simultaneously sought external assistance by participating in an intense training program for development implementation of a HACCP program. Both processes are being harmonized in order to maximize their effectiveness and efficiency.



Source: Afokantan, Cashew Grading, RCN in store house

Author: Nunana Addo, Communications Intern, ACi

A Tale of Cashews and Honey: Merging Cashew Orchards and Beekeeping in Benin for increased revenue

“Train a cashew farmer on how to combine beekeeping with cashew production, and he will increase his income” In rural communities, farming families depend largely on the sales of their crops. Most farmers struggle to make ends meet, especially during the lean season. Cashew farmers, however, rely on their income from the cashew harvest when hardly any crop is reaped. Income from RCN sales allows farmer to buy food as well as farm inputs for other food crops, harvested later in the year. Intercropping is only one way in which farmers diversify their income ensure food security. Another income diversification approach is beekeeping. Integration of beekeeping into cashew orchards provides farmers with additional income through the sale of honey and other hive products. Moreover, bees are good tree pollinators and increase cashew yields when kept around the orchard.

Knowledge is power

The tale of cashew and honey is a story of a strong alliance and a step into sustainable income generation for cashew producers. The Union Régionale des Coopératives de Producteurs d'Anacarde de l'Atacora Donga (URCPA_AD), a farmer cooperative in the Atacora-Donga regions of Bénin, is committed to support its members to increase their farm productivity and revenue. Through the ACi Matching Fund, URCPA-AD organised trainings on beekeeping and hive manufacturing techniques for cashew producers. The Matching Fund is an innovative concept linking private and public sector partners to implement projects to increase quality and quantity of cashews produced, to enhance knowledge transfer between actors along the

chain, to strengthen value chain linkages between farmer, processors and/or buyers, to improve access to market information and, ultimately, to ensure sustainability and optimization of the cashew value chain. The URCPA_AD is geared to promote agricultural entrepreneurship in the cashew sector. For this endeavour, five municipalities in Benin were chosen and 72 cashew producers from Djougou, Kouandé, Bassila, Copargo, and Natitingou were trained in beekeeping and hive techniques. The producers welcomed the training as an opportunity to profit from both products – RCN and honey, thus diversifying their income sources. After the training, the producers installed 700 hives in their cashew orchards. So far, 413 out of the 700 hives have been colonized by bees and 3060 litres of honey collected since the training. On average, one producer harvested 42.5 litres of honey, priced at 1,500 FCFA per litre, yielding 63,750 FCFA (equivalent to \$106) of additional income alongside with the sale of cashew nuts. Furthermore, bee pollination of the orchards led to higher productivity per tree. The lucrative bee business even encouraged leaders of the Union Communale des Coopératives de Producteurs d'Anacarde (UCCPA), in the Kouandé and Bassila municipalities, to collaborate and establish the mould that enables them to build more hives for the rest of their orchards.



Source: ACi, Beekeeping in cashew farms

The URCPA_AD successfully joined cashew farming and beekeeping in the municipalities. The overall aim of diversifying sources of income for farmers and to increase productivity of cashew orchards has been achieved.

Author: Alexandra Antwi-Bosiako, ACi Consultant

Cashew transforms life – The story of Theophilus Oppong

Mr. Theophilus Oppong is a cashew nursery operator in Sunyani, Ghana. He lives in Nkwaben, a suburb of Nkoranza, in Ghana's largest cashew growing region, Brong Ahafo. Married with two children, Mr. Oppong was first introduced to the cashew sector in December 2009, when he started as a driver with the African Cashew initiative (ACi). As part of his duty as a field driver for the ACi Team, Mr. Oppong visited several cashew farms and attended many technical trainings and met various stakeholders along the cashew supply chain. Witnessing the cashew potentials first hand, he developed a much deeper interest in exploring the vast opportunities within in the sector. Instead of sitting in the car, waiting for the next trip, Mr. Oppong actively listened and participated in the training workshops for farmers, nursery operators and other actors within the cashew value chain. He also developed a good network with those cashew actors he came into contact with. In December 2014, when Mr. Oppong's contract as a driver with ACi officially ended, his curiosity and passion for the cashew sector led him to establish a cashew nursery with the knowledge he had gained from the training

programmes. In a quest to fill a gap, that of access to improved cashew seedlings, Mr. Oppong's then started a cashew nursery. With his acquired skills and knowledge and good network with farmers and actors of the sector, Mr. Oppong is set to become a successful nursery operator. He is already aware of the high demand for seedlings and is prepared to meet part of this demand. As a result of his good relationship with Master Trainers from ACi's flagship "The Master Training Programme", Mr. Oppong has received good advice and encouragement. He is well on course to finishing his first 10,000 pots of cashew seedlings. In the future, he plans to cooperate with NGOs for the distribution of cashew seedlings to farmers in the region.

Working with the African Cashew initiative for 5 years, Mr. Theophilus Oppong has witnessed at first hand, the impact of cashew especially in the lives of farmers. He is also well aware of the challenges to be overcome. Today, his work with ACi may have ended, but he has just begun to write his own cashew story.

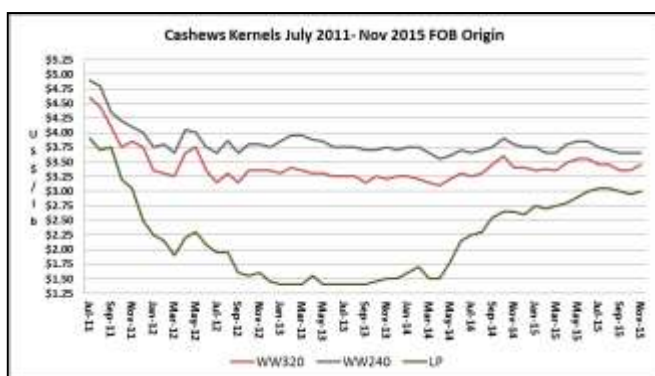
Source, ACi Mr. Oppong in his nursery



Author: Julius Abagi, Communications intern, (ACi)

The Cashew Market Update

Cashew kernels prices have remained relatively stable this year. Prices have firmed up a little in recent weeks following some buying for the first quarter, a good Diwali season in India and expectations of Chinese buying for the New Year. Prices for the main whole grades are right on the two year average prices (Averages WW320 \$3.36/lb FOB, WW240 \$2.72/lb FOB). Broken and pieces maintain their strong performance as a result of good demand in India, less breakage in processing and expanded usage of these grades as ingredients in all markets.

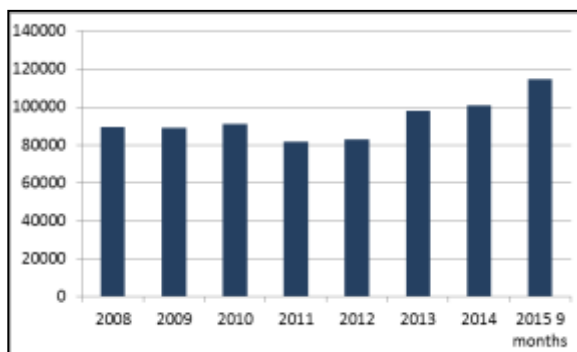


Cashew kernel demand looks positive with strong growth in US imports, moderate to good growth in Europe and very strong growth in India. The outlook for 2016 is good as demand in the main markets moves in cycles of 15-18 months so the next possibility of a major reversal in the trend would be third quarter next year. It is not just a single factor which drives demand up. The combination of healthy eating, with nuts viewed very positively, stable prices for cashews, high

prices for other tree nuts (impacting broken in particular) and in India growing affluence are all playing a part. It is not all good news of course with poor quality and especially issues on food safety causing concern for buyers especially with the introduction of greater auditing and traceability requirements in the US market.

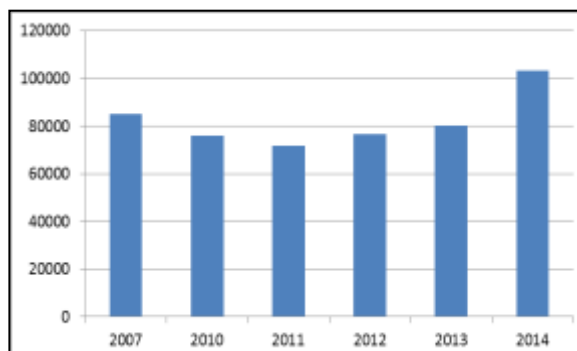
US Imports 2015 (9 months), in tonnes)

US imports of cashews continue positive growth based on stable prices, healthy eating and high prices for other tree nuts.



EU Imports 2007 - 2014

European imports have shown very positive signs since 2011 with indications of continued growth.

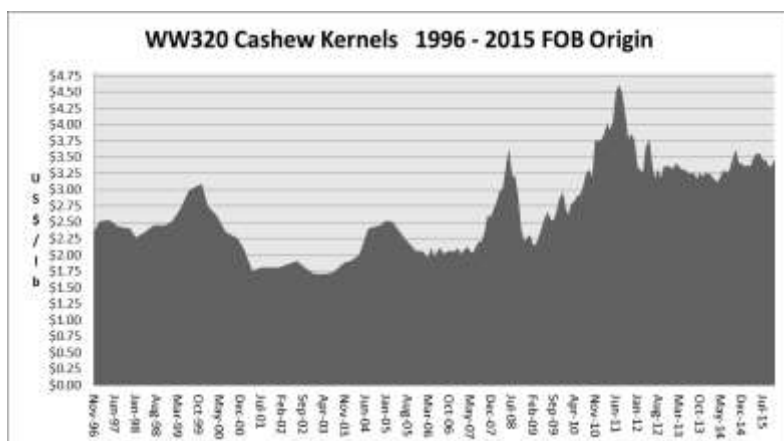


RCN has been much more volatile in 2015. Prices fell after the end of the season in West Africa reversing the trend seen from March to August. There are sufficient inventories in Vietnam for the next month or so

and surplus supplies from India are being sold in Vietnam, just as happened last year. This should not be interpreted as any sign of short supply but more as an adjustment of inventory and an outlet for lower quality stock originally shipped to India. Overall given that the high seasonal demand for kernels is long ago covered and that the window for “top up” orders has passed it seems unlikely that RCN prices can be pushed up by demand factors between now and new crop in the Northern hemisphere starting in February. The focus for processors in Vietnam and India will be on meeting their existing orders and keeping their factories running. They will look to Tanzania and Indonesia for supplies of RCN to do this. The high quality and outturn of those origins as well as the absence of other crops at this time of year causes them to trade at high prices with current levels ranging from \$1600 - \$1675 in India/Vietnam. At these cost prices, margins for processors are tight but they may buy to keep their businesses operating.

Crop news has taken a negative turn in the past two weeks. Tanzania seems likely to have a smaller than expected crop if we look at arrivals to the auction. Brazil has had some very hot and dry weather which will not be good for the crop prospects. The Tanzanian news could tighten raw nuts supply and impact prices whilst the Brazilian news is likely to make Brazilian processors more reluctant to commit to forward sales of kernels. It is interesting to recall that the price run up starting at the end of 2007 which culminated in record prices started in just such a scenario. There is better news from Mozambique where a good crop is predicted. Published predictions of 100,000 tonnes seem too high based on the number of productive trees in the country but a crop in the region of 75,000 tonnes is predicted by some local observers.

In the news on the major commodities such as coffee, cocoa and sugar, analysts are predicting a major impact of the El Nino climate phenomenon <http://www.elnino.noaa.gov/> in the coming year. This, they say, will reduce crops due to a range of weather events ranging from drought to flooding depending on the region. There is no scientific work on the impact of El Nino on cashews but we can recall that the last “very strong” El Nino was in 1997/98 which was followed by poor crops and high prices in 1999. The progress of crops in India and Vietnam in particular should be closely followed when making decisions for the coming year. Given good crops, kernels prices should remain in the current range perhaps tending toward the higher end of that range. However, with the supply/demand balance so tight and the reaction of demand to rising prices so slow, a disruption to any major cashew crop will impact prices substantially. Today there is a greater geographical spread of production than during any of the price volatility periods of the past. All going well, 2016 will mark the rise of Cote D'Ivoire to the largest producer of cashew nuts in the World and Africa is now the driver of increased production. Therefore the risk of a return of price volatility is less but nonetheless significant.



In the past periods of stable cashew kernels prices have been followed by extreme volatility. This volatility takes time to impact demand but once it does prices tend to come back down quickly. Within this volatility an overall upward move in prices can be seen. 2016 may have some of the elements which could give rise to higher prices again if crops are lower as happened in 1999 and 2004. Crop development should be closely followed in the coming months.

“The only permanent is change”

The thing about new beginnings is that they require something else to end. At this point we bid farewell to Judith Steffens, Director Operations, and André TANDJIEKPON, Director Production. Their decision to return to their family and friends in Germany and Benin is a new beginning - not only for them, but also for the ACi team and for our partners.

Judith, you joined ACi in the very beginning in 2009 from Germany. Your serious dedication to the cashew sector became even more evident when you decided to move your nucleus family to Ouagadougou in 2012. Combining family life and your passion for the cashew sector, you became to Director of Operation, responsible for overseeing and coordinating the implementation of project activities. For that, you brought along the same hardworking spirit and dedication from your previous work at the GIZ headquarters. We admire your enthusiasm and commitment. We have shared some challenging moments together, but even more moments of joy, excitement and celebration. What we will miss are your critical questions, your honesty, team spirit and much laughter we shared. As you are going on maternity leave but will be staying in GIZ, we hope to meet soon again!

André, you joined ACi in Benin also in 2009, after working extensively with research and development institutions. Your professional life has mostly centered on forest resources management and agriculture working as team member, team leader, coordinator and director for several projects. In your role as the Director of Study of the Forest Training Center of Toffo in Benin from 2006-2009, you made immense contributions towards adult education through courses for forest officers and rangers and has since 1997 been actively involved in cashew value chain promotion, authoring and co-authoring of over 25 publications and reports. André, your

long standing vision of a viable cashew sector in Africa, paired with your unique expertise on cashew research and farming as Director of Production has been invaluable to the success of the project. As you join the Programme de Cajou Intégré et Accéléré pour la Puissance Economique (CIAP) for the Catholic Relief Services in Benin, we trust that you will carry along the values and virtues you are well known for and continue to work in your position as Director of Production towards a sustainable African cashew sector. Since joining ACi both, Judith and André, have shaped the strategic direction of the project, implemented and monitored project activities and contributed tremendously to the success of the project. It has been a great pleasure working with you! We wish you all the best in your future endeavours and the best time coming home!

We also take the opportunity to announce the relocation of Johannes Peters from Ouagadougou to Eschborn, Germany where he continues his work as M&E Officer. We also like to welcome two new colleagues to the ACi Team: Maria Schmidt and Vanessa Langer. Maria Schmidt will work as Advisor for Sector Organization based in Ghana and Vanessa Langer as Project Controller in Germany. We look forward to fruitful working relationships with you both.



Source: ACi, Judith Steffens, Rita Weidinger, and André TANDJIEKPON with INRAB Director (middle) and researchers

Author: Rita Weidinger, Executive Director (ACi)

ACi Staff Profile:

Name: Ernest Mintah

Position: Matching
Fund Manager and
Business Linkage
Director



Can you tell us briefly who Ernest Mintah is?

I am very direct and pragmatic. I am also very independent minded and results oriented. I like to be an originator or inventor of new things and I can sometimes be a non-conformist in the positive sense. ("no creation without breaking")

What is your professional background?

I hold an M. Phil. degree in Agricultural Economics, and I am a trained banker and finance specialist. I am also a graduate from the Boulder Microfinance Institute for microfinance training.

How did you get where you are today?

I am where I am today through my hard work, excellent foundation and training in my area of expertise. I believe my commitment and drive to reach set targets has also helped to reach where I am. Additionally, my emotional intelligence and skill in management of frustration levels as they arise, and to transform them into new opportunities to feed my creativity, has been of great help.

What would you say motivates you to do what you do?

I find motivation to do what I do in my desire to make the world a better place for the less fortunate and to create personal fulfillment.

What are you most excited or passionate about?

I find passion in getting involved in new approaches and activities that allows me the freedom and opportunity to be creative.

What is the ACi Cashew Matching Fund about?

The Matching Fund is about leveraging private and public participation and resources towards the achievement of the joint vision of GIZ/ACi and their own vision, with the ultimate aim of contributing to the improvement of the incomes and livelihood of farmers.

What makes the Cashew Matching Fund a successful instrument?

I believe the financial and personal engagement of partners in joint visioning and creation of linkages that contribute to improved livelihoods, while at the same time allowing ACi to intervene actively and cost effectively in a facilitation role is what has made the Matching Fund a Success so far.

At the moment, where do you see the greatest potential for the development of the cashew sector?

The greatest potential for development within the cashew sector is in the creation of a transparent and traceable value chain, which will allow for reverse flow of investments to processors and producers.

What are some of the challenges if any, facing the Matching Fund?

A major challenge facing the Matching Fund is the steep learning curve for both private and public partners to understand and adjust to the requirements of prudent project management, and still avoid deviation of their focus from their bottom-line.

What do you like best about your job?

I love the flexibility offered me by my superior, to define the boundaries and dynamics of my work, which ultimately allows me to fuel my inventiveness

*Interviewed by: Julius Abagi, Communication Intern
(ACi)*

Along the Cashew Value Chain

Production

In collaboration with ACi national partners, farmer training on GAP has been organized in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. In total, 48,000 farmers were reached through these trainings (8,000 in Burkina and 40,000 in Côte d'Ivoire). Training reports compilation and data analysis are being prepared by the component. In Ghana, staff of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), in the Central region have also received training on nursery management and nursery mapping. Farmer training modules for Burkina Faso are currently being updated and printed. The component participated in the 3rd International Cashew Conference that took place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. A presentation on ACi Master Training Programme was given during the plenary session of this conference by ACi's Production Advisor.

Following a request from Kenya Nuts and Oil Crops Directorate, five (05) KOR kits were given to the Directorate and 35 extension officers from cashew growing regions were trained on how to use the kits. The Directorate is highly appreciative of this support from ACi and is looking forward to further technical assistance.

Author: Mohammed Issaka Salifou, Advisor Production (ACi)

Monitoring & Evaluation:

Yield Survey:

In cooperation with the Statistics Research and Information Directorate (SRID) of the Ministry of Food And Agriculture (MoFA), Ghana, the last cleaning up of data was undertaken in order to include the Ghana data in the Yield Survey presentation to be shared with project partners.

The presentation already contains data from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mozambique. Yield Survey data collection in Mozambique through FMS-Emalink in cooperation with INCAJU has started and will run until January 2016. The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at University of Chicago, charged with the Endline Evaluation of ACi phase 2, has started the impact analysis of data from the Yield Survey 2015 and has drafted a first country report on Burkina Faso. Final reports are expected in the first quarter of 2016.

Economic Case Study:

After final verification of the data on the economics of cashew production and other crops, that was collected in the five ACi countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mozambique) and Senegal by the Master Trainers who graduated from the first edition of the program, analysis of data is about to start.

Author: Johannes Peters, M&E Officer (ACi)

Processing

Processors with stock continue to process in preparation for the up-coming holiday (end of year), Christmas season. In Benin, Fludor, a new processing unit of the highest international food safety standard was established. It is located in Bohicon and has started processing this year.

Business Development Services:

The Business Development Service support offered by ACi, helps develop the skills of processing units in the implementation, effective and efficient management of administrative, financial and accounting procedures through training and coaching. It allows processing plants to establish an information system and reliable management.

In Benin, we have six (06) processing units that are beneficiaries of this support. They are

assisted by Elyon accounting firms and Dave Expertise. In Côte d'Ivoire, support for six (06) processing units and 2 consortia is accompanied by Forscot cabinet.

In October 2015, CAFEC-KA and ACi undertook a visit to Benin and Côte d'Ivoire to interact with the Conseil Coton Anacarde and ACi assisted processors in both countries. The objective was to analyze potential support required by the national consulting firms in building the needed capacity of the cashew processors.

Financing of start-ups and existing processing units remain a challenge. It is hoped that both banks and processors would benefit from the opportunities and benefits in cashew processing in the New Year.

Now is the time to take decisions regarding procurement of Raw Cashew Nuts (RCN).

We wish all African processors a good preparation for the 2016 cashew season

Author: Mary Adzanyo, Director Private Sector Development (ACi)

Supply Chain Linkages

The ACi through a matching fund instrument facilitates linkages downstream between processors and cashew producers, as well as upstream between processors and brokers/roasters to build a sustainable cashew value chain.

The creation of linkages downstream are made possible by processors facilitating training for farmers in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Harvest Post Harvest, the provision of loyalty packages in the form of improved seedlings and jute sacks to farmers, the payment of premium on the raw cashew prices to farmers. Processors monitoring premium payments to linked farmers had reported up to 5% average mark-up in prices they pay to their linked farmers. Processors are

able to pay premium prices to farmers since linked farmers are mostly selling in bulk and directly to processors thereby reducing the transaction cost of the processor or the processors' aggregator.

Upstream linkages occurring between processors and brokers/roasters are mainly in the area of training provision in factory level quality standards, support with the introduction and use of MIS and traceability systems, as well as the sharing of market intelligence.

These supply chain linkages are made possible through the use of business facilitators, such as SelfHelp Africa, DEDRAS, FairMatchSupport, among others who serve as brokers of the relationship among the actors of the value chain, as well as training providers.

Through these linkages facilitated by ACi, and with funding from the German Ministry for Development Cooperation (BMZ), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Dutch Sustainable Trade Institute (IDH), so far over 100,000 cashew farmers are linked to 15 processors in 6 countries and the processors are in turn linked upstream to 7 brokers/roasters (Intersnack, Gebana AG, Trade and Development Group, PEPSICO, UNILIVER, Cashew International, OLAM). These linkages facilitate sustainable supply of cashew (raw and kernels) and result in better incomes for farmers.

Author: Ernest Mintah, Matching Fund Manager (ACi)

Management

ACi has prepared its offer to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for a 3rd phase. With a budget provision of 8 million euros, the 3rd phase is schedule to start from May, 2016 and end in

December, 2018 and will focus on consolidating the achievement and interventions in existing countries.

Discussions are under way with the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) Secretariat and the European Union (EU) regarding potential co-funding of ACi Phase 3, through the 11th European Development Fund (EDF). In this regard, ACi Executive Director together with some selected project partners amongst which the Director General of the Conseil Coton et Anacarde shall be in Brussels in January, 2016 to meet with Ambassadors of the ACP countries.

Walmart has officially joined as a board member, and took part in the Steering committee and board meetings in Mozambique. Other companies and the Burkina Faso and Benin government have expressed their interest in joining.

Author: Rita Weidinger, Executive Director (ACi)

ACi promotes Cashew Sector Development Activities in Conference and Meetings worldwide

Cashew sector advocates protecting cashew processing industry

From 23rd to 24th November, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) held a stakeholder workshop on the development of a Cashew Master Plan. The workshop took place in Sunyani, Ghana's main cashew production region, and was organized with the support of the African Cashew initiative / GIZ and the Business Sector Advocacy Challenge (BUSAC) Fund, under Danish funding (DANIDA).

In a two-day moderated forum, farmers, research scientists, processors, associations, buyers, exporters, ministries and donors discussed key

issues along the cashew value chain and defined leveraging points for the growth of a viable cashew industry in Ghana. An inclusive and comprehensive cashew sector strategy shall lift Ghana's raw cashew nut production from 50,000 MT to 150,000 MT, while increasing the utilization of about 65,000 MT of installed processing capacity from 5 % to 75 %. This strategic planning workshop marked the first stepping stone of a 10-year Cashew Master Plan to accelerate the growth and competitiveness of the Ghanaian cashew industry.

A product of this public private dialogue is the establishment of a cashew sub-sector working group with public and private sector actors from along the cashew value chain, coordinated by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ghana Cashew Industry Association. In regular meetings, the cashew sector working group shall spearhead the development and monitor the implementation of the 10 year strategic roadmap.



Source: ACi, Men packaging cashew kernels

In the last cashew campaign, Ghanaian processors were racing with international traders to secure raw materials. The competition is still high and many Ghanaian cashew processors can hardly compete. Currently, only 2, out of 12 existing cashew processors in Ghana are operational. Together, Mim and the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) have processed only 5200 MT of RCN, most of which

they bought outside Ghana. This must change! Otherwise, some of the poorest areas in Ghana will face significant job and income losses.

Stakeholders suggested an export window for RCN, taxes on RCN exports as well as the reinforcement of trader licensing. The export window is an immediate reaction to the advantage of local processors for the next season. Everyone, local and international processors, traders and exporter can buy RCN from beginning until end of harvesting season. However, RCN exports are banned from January to March. The export window offers a head start for local processors without distorting market prices, or competition.



Source: ACi, Bags of RCN at the harbour

A positioning paper on options to regulate the cashew sub-sector in Ghana will be sent to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade and Industry for consideration of the next cashew campaign.

Network for Economic Development in Africa Workshop (NEDA)

The workshop was under the theme “Promoting Inclusive Development”. The two day event afforded ACi the opportunity to make a presentation on the topic “Scaling-up successful project approaches: The case of the African Cashew Initiative” key success factors for consolidating existing results and scaling up

project activities beyond the five project countries in Africa.



Source: ACi, Mary Adzanyo at the workshop of the GIZ Network for Economic Development in Africa (NEDA)

Exchange workshop of GIZ agriculture projects

Mary Adzanyo, Director of Private Sector Development of the GIZ/African Cashew initiative, together with Helene Widmer Project Manager of the GIZ/African Cashew initiative and Corinna Woellner, Junior Advisor GIZ Brussels represented ACi at a GIZ workshop in Bonn on October 13th 2015 (“FATA”). They presented on the theme ‘Employment in the Cashew Value Chain: The case of the African Cashew initiative’, emphasizing on employment opportunities which the cashew sector presented through farming, processing and service provision activities.

Brussels Briefing

The 43rd Brussels Development Briefing was held on October 27th 2015. The African Cashew initiative was actively involved in the second panel. Mary Adzanyo, Director of Private Sector Development of the GIZ/African Cashew initiative educated the audience on the South-South & Triangular cooperation in the cashew industry. She cited the successful exchange of expertise and goods between African cashew-producing countries and partners like, India, Vietnam and Brazil as reference for the immeasurable potential that such partnerships entailed.

View [ACi presentation](#): from 3h32min to 3h45min

International Cashew Conference Tanzania



Source: ACi, Participants at the International Cashew conference in Tanzania

The 3rd International Cashew Conference was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from November 16th to 17th 2015 under the theme “Cashew for health, wealth and environment”. In a plenary session, Mohamed Salifou presented on ‘The Master Training Program for cashew value chain promotion – A capacity building tool’. ACi, then discussed options to introduce the ACi Master Training Program to East Africa with local cashew stakeholders.



Source: ACi, Mohammed Salifou at the International Cashew Conference

Under ACi sponsorship
Mohamed I. Salifou,
Advisor Production
ACi/GIZ Burkina Faso,
Ernest Mintah,
Matching Fund
Manager ACi/GIZ
Ghana, Else-Marie
Fogtmann,

ACi/EMALINK/ Fairmatch Support Mozambique and two partners from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) Ghana, namely Mrs. Boamah, MoFA Director, Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD) and Mr. Freeman Konadu, MoFA Brong Ahafo took part in the conference.

Agribusiness Investments in Partnership with Farmers’ Organizations in ACP Countries

From 14th to 15th October, the European Commission in partnership with the Commission of the African Union, the ACP Secretariat, the Pan African Farmers Organization (PAFO), the European Investment Bank, COLEACP and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) organized a conference in Milan, Italy, on the theme “Agribusiness Investments in Partnership with Farmers’ Organizations in ACP Countries ”.

Benjamin KOUAZOUNDE, Technical Coordinator of the Federation of Cashew Producers of Benin (FENAPAB), Partner of the African Cashew initiative (ACi), participated in the conference which aimed at engaging stakeholders and partners to work towards a common vision for intelligent agribusiness investment in the ACP in partnership with farmers' organizations.



Mr. KOUAZOUNDE’s contribution to the discussion focused on competitiveness and governance in guaranteeing farmers' incomes in the Africa cashew industry.

Some key points raised during discussions include; determining factors for the success of the producers, challenges and opportunities of the cashew industry, scaling-up actions and promoting the African cashew sector.

Author: Ann-Christin Berger, Communication Manager (ACi)














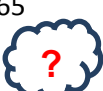





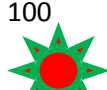


Cashew Game

Instructions

1. **Participants and materials needed:** 2 – 4 players. 1 dice. A token for each player. A print out of the board. Two piles of different coloured cards. Green for the chances. Red for the questions.
2. **All players choose a token:** This can be a small stone or a figure. Each player moves his/her token on the board according to the number on the dice.
3. **Goal of the game:** The goal is to move the token from square 1 to square 100 as fast as possible. Players start from the bottom and move up to the top.
4. **Order of players:** Each player rolls the dice once. Only when the dice shows the number 6, the player is allowed to move onto the board and starts on square 1. Throughout the game, players take turns in rolling the dice and move their token according to the number the dice shows.
5. **Start playing:** When a player gets a 6'er and enters into square 1 he/she begins moving his token according to the number the rolled dice shows. It means that there may be players who have not entered the field, while others are already in motion. Each player can only roll the dice once in turn.
6. **Keep playing. On the way you will find fields with a smile.**  Landing on this field means something has happened on your cashew farm. Pick up a card from the green pile to find out what it is. Read the instructions out loud and follow them. When the situation is positive, the card allows you to move forward. When the situation is negative, the card asks you to move backwards. You have no influence here, just follow the instructions.
7. **Other fields are marked with a question mark.**  Landing on this field means that you have to answer a question on cashew production. A player sitting opposite to you shall pick up a card from the red pile and read the question out loud for you. If your answer is correct, you can move as in the instruction. If your answer is wrong, you remain in the same square. It is enough to answer yes or no, the explanation on the card, is for your learning.

The winner of the game is the first player to reach the square number 100. A player can only win, when he/she reaches square 100 exactly. If, for example, a player stands on square 98, he/she must either dice a 2 in one go or 2x1 in two rounds in order to reach square 100 to win the game. The players keep on taking turns and try again in the next round. The game is finished when everyone is at home, exactly on square 100.

The Cashew Playing Field

1 	2	3	4	5 	6	7	8	9 	10
20	19	18 	17	16	15	14 	13	12	11
21 	22	23	24	25 	26	27	28	29	30
40	39	38 	37	36	35	34	33 	32	31
41	42	43	44	45	46 	47	48	49 	50
60	59	58 	57	56	55	54 	53	52	51
61	62	63	64	65 	66	67	68 	69	70
80 	79	78	77	76	75	74	73	72	71 
81	82	83 	84	85	86 	87	88	89	90
100 	99	98	97	96	95 	94	93	92	91 

Chances 😊

You prepared your new cashew field with organized lines and marked the planting holes with sticks. Well done!

(Move 3 steps forward)

You planted improved cashew seedlings at the very end of the rain season without a plan. You also did not ensure proper watering of the plants.

(Move 3 steps backwards)

You planted 100 grafted cashew seedlings and after one year 96 seedlings were well established in the field. Good job!

(Move 4 steps forward)

You did intercropping in your new cashew plantation in the first 4 years with groundnuts, sesame and beans and made extra profit. Super!

(Move 3 steps forward)

You did a nut count, counting the number of nuts from 1 kg of cashew nuts. The result was 240 nuts. Your nuts are very small with an average weight of 4 grams.

(Move 2 step backwards)

You had a good cashew harvest this year with 750 kg from your 100 trees.

(Move 4 steps forward)

You cut your cashew trees in the first year to make sure the canopy develops well in the shape of an umbrella. Well done!

(Move 4 steps forward)

You sprayed your cashew trees with a pesticide during the flowering in the middle of a hot day and killed the red weaver ants and even some bees. The pesticides killed all insects, also the beneficial ones. Don't spray when bees and weaver ants are present.

(Move 4 steps backwards)

You cut two of your unproductive cashew trees down, leaving half a meter of the stem. When the trees sprouted, you grafted the new branches with materials from good cashews, meaning the canopy was replaced and the tree got productive again. Great success!

(Move 4 steps forward)

You are keeping bees on your cashew farm and take good care of them by giving them water. In return, the bees pollinated your cashew trees and the yields improved.

(Move 3 steps forward)

You pruned your young trees removing the branches lower than 1 meter. This means it is easy to harvest under the tree.

(Move 3 steps forward)

You decided that it was a waste of time to create a fire belt around your cashew field and it caught fire.

(Move 3 steps backwards)

You sold immature, low quality nuts to the cashew buyer.

(Move 4 steps backwards)

You discovered that your neighbour made a fire in the field during a day with a lot of wind. You told him to stop.

(Move 3 steps forward)

Some of your old cashew trees are dying because they are attacked by the cashew stem borer. You cut the trees and left them in the field. Leaving the affected branches in the field spreads the pests. In this case the branches must be burnt

(Move 3 steps backwards)

The members of your cooperative are happy, because they took a joint decision after good a good discussion involving all members.

(Move 3 steps forward)

You sold your cashew nuts for a good price and went out to spend all your money celebrating, while your family was waiting at home.

(Move 5 steps backwards)

You dried the harvested cashew nuts for 3 days in the shade, turning them twice a day to make sure they did not “overheat” and prevent oil from entering the kernel.

(Move 3 steps forward)

You did not register your production costs. After selling the cashew nuts you did not know, if you made a loss or a profit. Registration of production costs helps the producer to keep a better control of costs and discuss prices.

(Move 3 steps backwards)

You discovered that many of your cashew trees were overlapping and taking away space for other to grow. You thinned your farm by removing unproductive trees. The yield improved because they were not in the shade.

(Move 4 steps forward)

You planted new cashew seedlings and eliminated the old unproductive cashew trees.

(Move 3 steps forward)

You are member of a producer group. Together with other farmers you sold your cashew nuts to a buyer and obtained a better price due to higher the quantity.

(Move 3 steps forward)

You let your goats graze in the field with new cashew trees and they destroyed your plants. You wasted your money!

(Move 4 steps backwards)

You applied the recommended harvest and post-harvest practices. You dried and stored the nuts well and the cashew nuts were of good quality.

(Move 3 steps forward)

Questions

Is the Cashew Powdery Mildew a pest or fungus?

A: The cashew powdery Mildew is a fungus.

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Does the cashew tree produce best when it is growing in a shaded area or in the sun?

A: In the sun

(Correct answer: Move 2 steps forward)

Which type of soil is most suitable for cashew farming?

1. Heavy clay soils
2. Sandy soils
3. In water logged soils

A: 2 (Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Does it make any difference in yields if you plant a grafted cashew seedling or the cashew nut directly?

A: Yes, the improved grafted seedling is made of material selected from a well performing tree, and therefore expected to produce high yields. Sowing a nut is no guarantee that the nut (seed) has good properties (Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Should the canopy formation of the cashew trees be done in the first year?

A: Yes, it is easier to form the canopy when the cashew tree is small.

(Correct answer: Move 2 steps forward)

If you plant your cashew seedling with a spacing of 10 x 10 meters, how many trees can you plant per hectare?

A: 100 Trees.

(Correct answer: Move 4 steps forward)

What kinds of sacks are appropriate to use for storing the raw cashew nuts?

- A: Jute sacks
B: Special strong plastic bags
C: Raffia bags

A: Jute sacks (Correct answer: Move 2 steps forward)

Why is it good to have the red weaver ants in your cashew trees?

A: The red weaver ants attack sucking insects that destroys the new shoots

(Correct answer: Move 5 steps forward)

It is very good to plant the cashew seedling on top of fresh chicken manure.

A: Wrong, it will burn the roots. Only use dry manure or compost mixed with the soil and the plant will grow well

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Intercropping with pigeon peas is one of the best crops together with cashews.

A: Wrong, the pigeon peas attract sucking insects that will attack the new shoots in the cashews.

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)



Which one of the following countries produces most cashew nuts: The Ivory Coast, Ghana or Tanzania?

A: Ivory Coast

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Does intercropping in the cashew field with ground nuts or beans help the producer to earn money from the field before the cashew trees start producing?

A: Yes

(Correct answer: Move 2 steps forward)

When you are planting a cashew seedling the planting-hole should be 20 cm deep.

A: Wrong, it should be at least 30 cm deep

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

When you make the planting-hole, you leave the top-soil in a heap at one side and last part at the other side. When planting the seedling use the top-soil first.

A: Correct, the top-soil is more fertile and good for the roots.

Should the grafting tape remain around the seedling forever?

A: No, remove the tape carefully when the seedling is well established and is forming new leaves.

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Why is it not good to leave the cashew nuts for drying in the hot sun for several days without turning them?

A: If the nuts are exposed to too much sun for several days the CNSL (the oil) starts to "boil" and badly affects the kernel. You will see black oily spots on the shell

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Why should you dry the cashew nuts after harvesting?

A: Because humid cashew nuts can rot in the store-room and compromise the quality of other nuts.

(Correct answer: Move 4 steps forward)

Explain how to remove the caterpillar from the cashew stem borer from the affected cashew tree.

A: Carefully remove the bark only around the affected area. Enter a wire e.g. bicycle spoke into the hole to remove the caterpillar.

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

It is not healthy to eat cashew kernels, so it is best to sell all your cashews and not use any in our own household.

A: Wrong, the cashew kernels are very nutritious and delicious.

(Correct answer: Move 3 steps forward)

Always burn the cleared weeds in the field.

A: Wrong, leave the weeds on the ground as a cover to decompose, burning destroy the organic matters in the soil.

(Correct answer: Move 4 steps forward)



Cashew Pinboard:

ACi Website

[ACi Cashew Matching Fund Factsheet](#)

[Analyse de la filière anacarde au Togo](#)

[GDI: How to Implement a Broad-Based Approach to Developing the Africa Cashew Market \(Case Study\)](#)

[GDI: How to Implement a Broad-Based Approach to Developing the Africa Cashew Market \(Quick Case\)](#)

[Le Programme de Bourses d'Etudes en Masters d'Olam pour les « Catalyseurs du Changement » en Afrique](#)

[LE PROGRAMME DE BOURSES D'OLAM \(pdf\)](#)

[Réussite de fonds de contrepartie - AFOKANTAN rouvre l'usine de Tchaourou!](#)

[Réussite de fonds de contrepartie - De la ferme au rayon du supermarché](#)

[Réussite de fonds de contrepartie - La culture du cajou - une assurance pour l'avenir](#)

[Réussite de fonds de contrepartie - La technologie et le cajou](#)

[Réussite de fonds de contrepartie - L'augmentation des revenus des producteurs de cajou au Ghana](#)

[Réussite de fonds de contrepartie - Sur-greffage Augmentation de la productivité agricole](#)

[Réussite de fonds de contrepartie - Un conte de noix de cajou et de miel](#)

[Success story - " Ways to increase farm productivity"](#)

[Success story - "From Farm to shelf, a nut's journey from Mozambique to the Netherlands"](#)

[Success story - "Researchers and farmers link up!"](#)

[Success story - "Sustainable Supply Chain Linkages increase revenue along the chain"](#)

[Success story - "Cashew makes me a role - model in my community"](#)

[Success Story - "With cashew I can live a good life, even at my old age!"](#)

[Success Story - A Tale of Cashews and Honey](#)

[Success Story - AFOKANTAN reopens the Tchaourou factory!](#)

[Success story - Raising Cashew Farmer Livelihoods in Ghana](#)

[Success story- From laboratory to farm: Small-scale cashew farmers benefit from DNA marker technology](#)

[SUPPLY CHAIN LINKAGES BETWEEN FARMER GROUPS AND PROCESSORS](#)

[THE ACi CASHEW MATCHING FUND](#)

News

[Buying into the future: Intersnack Sustainability Charter](#)

[Cashew Farmers Call For The Protection Of Cashew Processing Industry](#)

[Cashew nuts can fetch Ghana US\\$56m annually](#)

[Célébration des réalisations conjointes dans le secteur du cajou: Un atelier de restitution sur les activités du cajou au Burkina Faso - Sidwaya.](#)



[Célébration des réalisations conjointes dans le secteur du cajou: Un atelier de restitution sur les activités du cajou au Burkina Faso -Observateur](#)

[Côte d'Ivoire: la filière de la noix de cajou réalise un chiffre d'affaires de 337 milliards FCFA en 2015](#)

[Das Wirtschaftswunder an der Elfenbeinküste](#)

[Élection présidentielle ivoirienne de 2015](#)

[Faire de la filière Coton-Anacarde « la seconde mamelle de l'économie ivoirienne », prochain défi pour le DG du Conseil](#)

[Filière anacarde : Le projet Coraf pour booster le secteur et lutter contre la pauvreté](#)

[Ghana : un éventuel embargo sur les exportations d'anacarde divise producteurs et transformateurs](#)

[Ghana lauded for increase in cashew production](#)

[Ghana: Gov't keen on growing cashew sector](#)

[La 7e conférence internationale de la noix de cajou au Vietnam](#)

[Les coopératives de producteurs de noix d'anacarde se muent en association](#)

[Mitsubishi seeks Olam's sustainable approach](#)

[Olam in a very good place today: CEO](#)

[Production de bioplastiques avec la pomme de cajou : Un projet novateur pour propulser l'anacarde dans son rôle de deuxième mamelle de l'économie ivoirienne](#)

Events & Meetings:

International Events

US Peanut and Treenut Processors Association Convention

15th - 18th January 2016

Florida, USA

<http://www.ptnpa.org/?page=ConventionInfo>

Biofach

10th - 13th February, 2016

Nürnberg, Germany

<https://www.biofach.de/en>

World Cashew Convention

18th - 20th February, 2016

Dubai, UAE

<http://www.cashewconvention.com/>

Gulfood (CEPCI has organised an Indian Cashew Pavilion)

21st - 25th February, 2016

Dubai, UAE

<http://www.gulfood.com/>

AFI Convention

7th - 9th April, 2016

Florida, USA

Alimentaria

25th - 28th April, 2016

Barcelona;

<http://www.alimentaria-bcn.com/en/alimentaria-2016>

International Nut Congress

30th May, 2016

San Diego, USA;

https://www.nutfruit.org/inc_events/inc-congress-san-diego-2016/

SNACKEX

21st - 22nd June, 2016

Vienna, Austria;

<http://www.snackex.com/>

ACi Events

ACi Planning and Teambuilding Meeting

25th – 29th January 2016

Cape Coast, Ghana

Groundnut Value Chain Project Meeting

24th February, 2016

Accra, Ghana

ACi Board Meeting

25th-26th February, 2016

Accra, Ghana

Delicious & Nutritious








Cashew Tatale with Beans










Cashew Tatale with Beans

Photo: ACi

Ingredients for 4 servings

-  4 overripe plantain fingers
-  1 full teaspoonful milled pepper
-  1 full teaspoonful ground onion
-  75g hard flour
-  50g palm oil
-  50g cashews
-  Salt to taste

Method

-  Pound the plantain
-  Grind onion and pepper and mix with the pounded plantain
-  Add flour and salt to taste
-  Add broken chunks of cashews
-  Put a little palm oil on fire in a frying pan until hot
-  Using a ladle, fetch the plantain mixture into the hot oil in bits and fry
-  Keep turning to prevent burning and serve when ready

Serving tip: Tatale can be eaten alone, with vegetable sauce, gravy or with beans and gari or served with roasted cashew at the side.

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The sixth edition will appear in March 2015. If you are interested in contributing, would like to send your comments, please send a mail to ann-christin.berger@giz.de

