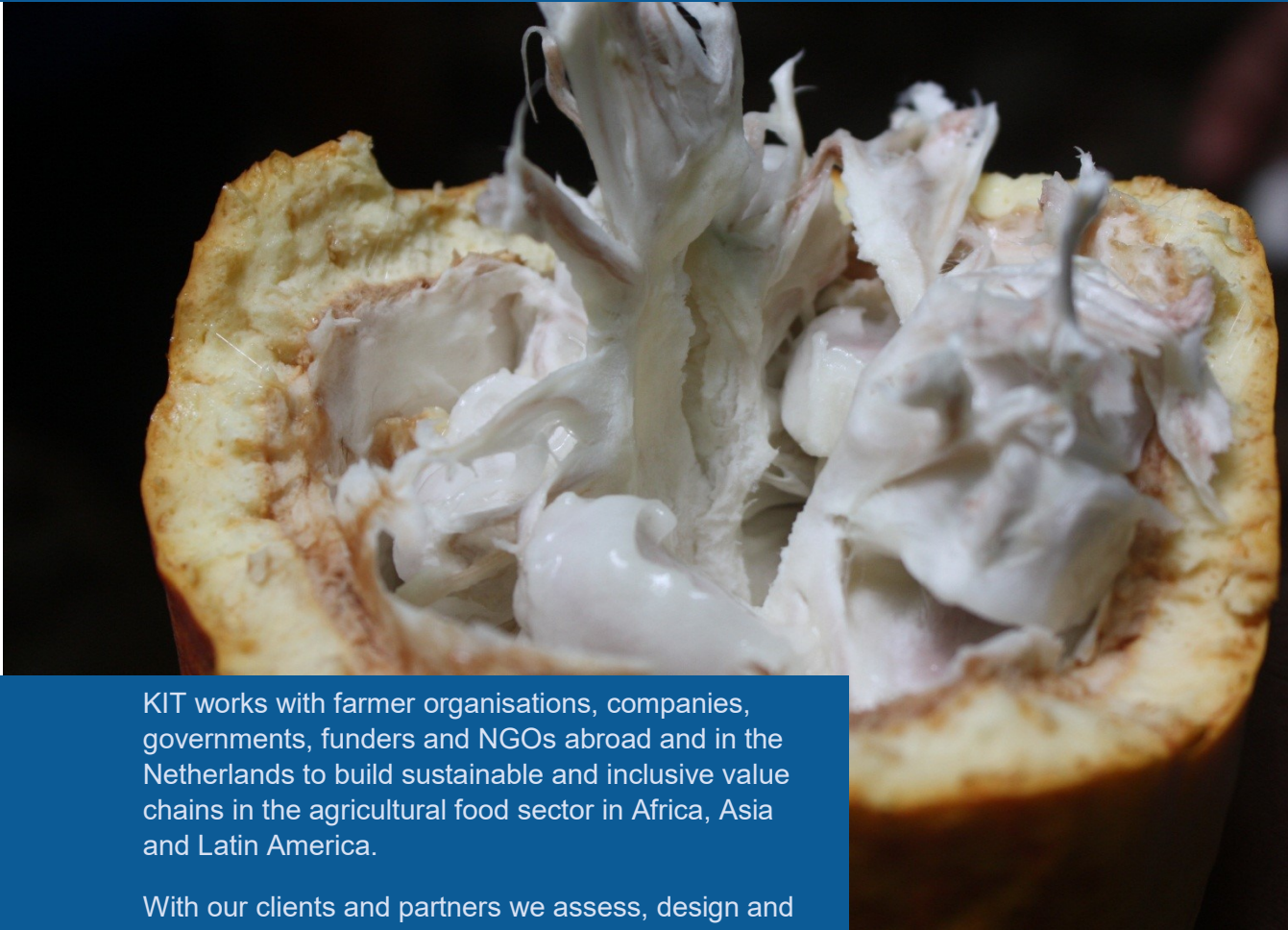




# Demystifying the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

Field report, Anthropological Research Ghana 2017



KIT works with farmer organisations, companies, governments, funders and NGOs abroad and in the Netherlands to build sustainable and inclusive value chains in the agricultural food sector in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

With our clients and partners we assess, design and study the required interventions and approaches for making value chains more sustainable and inclusive. The aim of the work is to realise development benefits along the entire value chain – especially for smallholder farmers and the labour market – alongside increases in trade and empowerment.

Moreover, KIT has a strong expertise on research design and implementation including data analysis & results documentation. Expertise includes baseline surveys, feasibility studies, impact assessments & participatory action research methods involving capacity building for national researchers and experts.



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## **Field report, Anthropological Research Ghana 2017**

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## Introduction

In September 2016, KIT initiated a large-scale research in partnership with Südwind Institute, CIRAD, the Jacobs Foundation, IDH, UTZ, the Lindt Cocoa Foundation. The aim of the research was to demystify many of the myths and assumptions about the cocoa sector in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The researchers investigated three research areas, and their interlinkages: 1) dominant and subsidiary crop & livelihoods options; 2) differentiation of farming households in cocoa regions; and 3) intra-household dynamics, gender and nutrition. The mixed methods research involved a systematic desk-study of 200 research papers, a household survey conducted with 1500 households in cocoa growing areas in Ghana, and 1500 households in Côte d'Ivoire (>30% female respondents) and 76 focus group discussions.

To complement this already rich data set, further anthropological research was conducted in 2 communities in Ghana, and one in Côte d'Ivoire. The rationale was that taking an ethnographic approach would contribute to the original objectives of the study and enrich the data set by allowing for more illustrations (cases/stories) and would complement the overall research by giving more explicit attention to issues around mobility, particularly of youth, and by taking a 'life-cycle approach' (where we have selected households that belong to a different age group, and looked at how their age, certain life-events and the composition of the household influences income choices among household members). The life-cycle approach also allowed us to observe in more detail intra-household dynamics.

This fieldwork report focuses on the anthropological research, and shares the methodology of the fieldwork, information about the research locations in Ghana and a summary of the research outcomes, related to the main research questions. All research data has been codified and put together in a separate pdf.

This additional research was financed by the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO).

## Methodology

The methodology will discuss how the research aim is being achieved, the different methods and tools that have been utilised, the sampling strategies and methods of data collection. Each type of tool, objectives/purpose, who done with (e.g. respondent type, and any issues arising) are described in the following section.

### Research aims and objectives

The aim of this research is to understand the composition of different households and major life-events shaping income diversification strategies and choices, the role of social relations and the underlying norms and values, affecting the movement of (young) individuals in and out of cocoa production and cocoa growing communities. In the research, attention is being paid to the range of



economic and social activities that household members pursue in cocoa production and in other activities. External factors, such as the role of extension, market access, cocoa prices and marketing have also been looked at.

The objectives of this research are to complement the original objectives of the overall project, which are:

- Produce and avail a large and reliable dataset (quantitative & qualitative methods) of smallholder cocoa farming households in (CDI) Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, to investigate three research areas:
    - o Dominant and subsidiary crop & livelihoods options.
    - o Differentiation of farming household in cocoa regions, and
    - o Intra-household dynamics.
- Gender and nutrition will be cross-cutting research areas.
- Develop scenarios and project future population of cocoa farmers.
  - To make clean and high quality data sets available in the public domain

## Research questions

This anthropological research contributes to answering 4 research questions:

1. Why do (young) individuals and households move in and out of cocoa production and cocoa growing communities? How is this linked with availability and affordability of key resources: land, labour and financial services?
2. What are specific aspirations with regard to cocoa growing for youth (17-25 or 26-35; m/f). And what are challenges in relation to cocoa and what role does education play in young people's ambition to move in and/or out of cocoa?
3. How does the composition of the household and major life-events (looking back 10 years from now) shape members' daily activities and income (diversification) strategies? How do age, marital status, ownership of land and migration play a role?
4. What is the role of social relations (intra household dynamics), and the norms & values underlying these relations, in shaping daily activities, life-events and income (diversification) strategies/choices (both at individual level: 'individual strategies', as well as for the hh 'working together'?)

## Research team

The research team consisted of the author, Bas Buurman (MA Anthropology and Development Studies, Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands), with fieldwork experience in Ghana in the cocoa sector, supported by an experienced local research assistant Emmanuel Jesse Sarbeng (Master of Philosophy Social Forestry and Environmental Governance, University of Energy and Natural Resources, Sunyani, Ghana). Anna Laven (KIT) supervised the research, and co-developed the research methods. After the necessary preparations in the Netherlands, the research team did fieldwork for a period of two months, in two cocoa communities, in two different cocoa growing regions.

## Sampling

This section explains how the sampling was done, who the target respondents were and how they were chosen. Considering the sample size in this qualitative study the sampling continued until





information redundancy or saturation occurred. This is the point at which no new information emerged in the data.

The purposive sampling strategy has been used for the respondents of the household interviews. In this type of sampling, these target respondents (both male and female) are selected based on a pre-selected diversity of households (which will be elaborated on in the tools section). Also for the *Focus groups Discussions* (FGDs) a purposive sampling strategy have been used, based on pre-selected criteria, e.g. of a proportional amount of male and female participants, certain age groups (youth 17-25 years and 26-35 years), or members of a community council making up the participants in the discussion groups. The last purposive sampling technique used was expert sampling for the expert conversations. The research needed to collect knowledge from these individuals with a particular expertise (e.g. chiefs, extension agents, chief farmers) on key resources related to cocoa activities.

## Locations & respondents

The fieldwork was conducted in Biemso No2, Ahafo Ano South District in the Ashanti region and Asanteman, Edwinase District, in the Western region. The research team spent one month in each community. The population size of both communities was similar: between 1500-2000 inhabitants). In both communities, the main source of income is cocoa.

When choosing communities to sample, the researcher had several considerations:

- 1) The community should be large enough to walk around for 4 hours (transect walk)
- 2) find the necessary variety and diversity of types of households in five age categories.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) Households needed to have migrated here recently or lived permanently.
- 4) Had to grow cocoa and other crops, and have other income sources.
- 5) The population size should not transcend 2000 inhabitants.
- 6) Distances to the farms should be walkable.
- 7) The distances to major roads should not be close, especially looked for more remote places.
- 8) There had to be an housing or lodging opportunity to stay within the community.

In the Ashanti Region, three communities were visited, with different characteristics. Two communities were too small, with only 6-10 households in total, or too close to the main road, which would not characterize them as the cocoa growing community necessary for this research. The research team decided to stay within the selected community (Biemso No2) and have accommodation among the community members to meet the main requirement of this anthropological study.

For the Western Region another one of the contacts of the researcher was asked to find a place with the similar aspects compared to the previous one in the Ashanti Region. Visiting in advance gave the assurance that this research location was also meeting the location expectations, and was a similar village type as the one in the Ashanti Region according to earlier explained considerations.

## Biemso No2<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> age category: 17-25 years, 2<sup>nd</sup> age category: 26-35 years, 3<sup>rd</sup> age category: 36-45 years, 4<sup>th</sup> age category: 46-55 years, and 5<sup>th</sup> age category: 56-65 years.

<sup>2</sup> Biemso No2 is one of the two communities that is called Biemso. Biemso actually means on the river Biem,



The community of Biemso No2 is about 4 miles from the main road to Sunyani. Most people's livelihoods depend on agriculture and cocoa is the main source of income. Within the community there are some small shops for food and other household items. The main shopping (or selling) is either done in a bigger community (Aduyama) on the main road or in Kumasi (the Ashanti capital). Kumasi is only 45 minutes' drive away, but it is difficult to find transport; only one taxi a day is going to the main road. Because Biemso No2 is relatively close to Kumasi, it brings some opportunities. The city has the prospects of either selling or buying items, that are not available in the smaller rural areas.

The people of Biemso No2 are mainly migrants, they migrated from Ohwim in Kumasi in the Ashanti region. The people from Ohwim were the first settlers in Biemso No2. Now also other people reside in the community due to farming migration. The land of Biemso No2 belongs to Akyempemhene in the Ashanti region. Akyempemhene is a royal title, it's one member of the kingship. Apart from the Royal King there are other minor chiefs and the Akyempemhene is one of those smaller chiefs. The land was given to the families that settled in Biemso No2, this is so-called 'family land'. Besides the family land, there are also plots of land that belong to the Royal Family which are called "Stool lands". Even in the case of family land, families cannot sell any land or go into any land arrangement, without the consent of the Royal King.

In Biemso No2, 30 lands (family land) were registered 'by hand of the chief (king)' in the community. Registered land, normally means 'registered for cocoa production'. For other crops, like rice, documentation does not make sense as it takes less time before you can harvest the crop.

In terms of volume of cocoa production in the village, it is difficult to estimate the total amount that is produced in Biemso No2. What makes estimations difficult is that some farmers would sell their produce not to the purchasing clerks (PCs) in this community but to PCs in neighbouring communities. The number of PC's working in Biemso No 2 is 4 or 5. In Biemso No2, the actual number of cocoa bags the chief farmer, who is also a Purchaser Clerk (PC), bought was ranging from 211 to 262 cocoa bags in one year. This is only the amount he bought, but is the bulk of cocoa bought, because of his influential position and respect in the community many sell their cocoa to him.

### **Asanteman<sup>3</sup>**

On the other side in the Western Region close to Edwinase District, you can find Asanteman. This community is even more remote and isolated than Biemso No2. Asanteman is a 45 minutes' drive away from the District Edwinase; Edwinase is a reasonable city within its own respect. The road towards the small community is completely unpaved and therefore difficult to reach. Moreover, from Edwinase towards Kumasi it takes you at least 4 to 5 hours by local transport.

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where this community is located.

<sup>3</sup> Asanteman literally means scattered group, because they were scattered during migration over several regions in Ghana.





Figure 1: Research Location Biemso No.2 (AR)



Figure 2: Research Location Asanteman (WR)

The main occupation in Asanteman is farming, especially cocoa. Apart from cocoa production and agriculture you find some small shops in the community, selling food items and agrichemicals. The main shopping (and selling) is done in a slightly bigger community, Nsawora some miles away.

Around 45% of the current population of Asanteman comes from the Northern region. Some of the Sefwis how they call themselves, took another direction than the Western Region. Therefore, they couldn't settle as a group. A few elders settled at the old town, which was previously named 'Nyamie De So' (meaning god is in control). From there they moved to the present place called Asanteman. In the Sefwi language Asante doesn't mean Ashanti as tribe or people of Ashantis, but it stands for something that has been scattered. So Asanteman means scattered group. Part of them went to the Brong-Ahafo Region. They have more than 10 communities in the Sefwi area. The main reason they migrated to the Western region was for cocoa production.

In Asanteman you find 4-5 PCs. Together these PCs buy far larger quantities of cocoa than in Biemso No2. According to the opinion leaders in Asanteman, PCs would buy up to 5000 bags of cocoa a year.

For this research, the researcher strived for as much balance of both male and female respondents. Therefore, we always put attention that both sexes would participate in the FGDs. For the interviews, a couple selection criteria were necessary, one male and one female from each household. Apart from this a variety in occupation, both cocoa farming, non-cocoa farming and non-farming respondents. We haven't included children under 17 years old in the research, because the target group age lay between 17 and 65 years.

## Research Design/Approach

The approach of the research is how the researcher planned to go about the research. This descriptive



research describes what existed at the time to uncover new facts and meanings in light of demystifying the cocoa sector in Ghana. It involved the collection of data that provided an account of groups (age categories) of two communities in two different regions. The study focuses on the household as unit of analysis. Comparing the members of each different type of household. It provides a knowledge base that provides and complements input for the overall project.

The design is a mixed methods sequential design. Therefore the output of the earlier phase gives the input of the successive phase. First phase was an exploratory phase, second an in-depth phase and third phase wrap-up phase. Each phase strengthens the data of the other phases and the wrap up phase gave room for cross-check of the earlier collected data. The characteristics of this study contained participatory and observatory approaches to signpost the difference between what people say and do. This is based on a holistic viewpoint, open for influences, perspectives and findings that in first instance don't have the focus of attention or being thought of, although have a crucial impact.

## Research Tools

The Research tools are how the data was collected with the previous explained approach. The following qualitative tools were used for answering the different research questions.

1. Transect walk
2. Community sessions
3. Meeting with community/opinion leaders (**Question 1&2**)
4. Focus group discussions (**Question 1&2**)
  - a. With youth category 17-25 years
  - b. With youth category 26-35 years
  - c. With opinion leaders
5. Household interviews (**Question 3&4**)
  - a. Life-cycle approach
  - b. 24 hour-Calendar exercise
6. Participatory observations
  - a. Accompanying respondents in daily work/activities
  - b. Field notes/diary
7. Atlas-ti
  - a. Systematic coding of fieldwork data

Subsequently, the following section elaborates on these research tools. When interested in more background information, particularly on the tools and guiding questions, you can consider the fieldwork guide that was prepared for this mission. This guide can be made available upon request<sup>4</sup>.

## Introductions with community leaders

The fieldwork started with an introduction in the community. It is custom to introduce yourself to 'opinion leaders', before pursuing the research and start engaging community members. The opinion leaders are influential members of a community, group or society to whom others turn for advice,

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<sup>4</sup> Contact [a.laven@kit.nl](mailto:a.laven@kit.nl)



opinions and views. People that are opinion leaders, are the chief, male and female chief farmer, linguists of the king, royal king, best farmer among others.

In this introduction with opinion leaders, it was important to clarify the purpose of the research and ask in a formal and traditional way for consent of the community leaders and chief. The introduction was also a way to familiarize with key informants and build trust and commitment towards follow-up stages of the research. The researcher made sure that we were paying attention to local customs, and live 'by the rules' of the community. For example, before entering the community the chief and linguist made an official announcement, which was the formal start of our engagement with community members.

The author already had established contact in Biemso No2 (field research for thesis in 2016). These contacts were instrumental in the preparations and in organizing the first meeting with the opinion leaders. To show appreciation it is good practice to give the leaders a gift. Often this is a bottle of Schnapps, but in this research the leaders received a typical gift from the Netherlands, *porcelain wooden shoes*. This because the author is from the Netherlands and it allowed for a small story about how farmers in the Netherlands used this footwear on the farms. These wooden shoes have been given out to all important key informants and respondents of the households involved in the research. After having the formal approval and consent the introduction to the community took place, which started the actual data collection. Because of the established contact no issues arose with these introductions in the communities.

### Community meeting

The *Open meeting community*, or public meeting, was used to gather information on community issues that pertain all members of the community. The members of the community were invited to this open meeting at a convenient location. Normally, these kinds of meetings take place in the chiefs' *Palace*. However, in Biemso No2, because of discussions about the succession of the stool and chieftaincy, the palace was not suitable, so it was held in the church. For Asanteman the meeting was held in the Chiefs Palace.

The focus during the community meetings was on getting more information on the community's view about why people are "moving in and out of cocoa production" and income choices for different types of households, and for different members within same household (hh). The opinion leaders were asked to have an active role in the research project, which led to community members' participation in the research. A couple of general topics were discussed with the participants. The aim was to make sure community members were feeling comfortable to speak their minds, and that they would understand the purpose of the research and how they would benefit from this. At first it seemed difficult to explain the benefits on the long term of the project to the participants. Eventually they were interested in participating, as they saw themselves as people that could make a difference. They now had the voice to talk and discuss, what will eventually will be an example to other cocoa farmers in Ghana. So, the general objective of the community meeting was to create the opportunity for the research team to meet the community members and build a sense of trust. The buy-in of the community members is important to get their support and a certain solidarity with the research team and research in general.



The community meeting was an easy and efficient way to collect community based information (discussion groups go more in-depth), and it created the opportunity for their commitment; during the meeting, we asked participants to be involved in the follow-up stages of the research project. We made sure we explained well the selection procedure on who could actively be involved in the research, and how the research would benefit both cocoa farmers and others. As the research not solely focused on the cocoa farmers, the findings strive to support the cocoa growing communities. We made sure we wrote down all the names of the people that were present, and noted their names and age, educational background, their profession and phone numbers, which already created a feeling of involvement, and supported us in making a first selection of households.

To make sure all community members were invited (and avoid that some community members were excluded) we used the local communication system, using a central microphone. This inclusive approach was important for the selection of respondents. The aim was to get a representation that would reflect the diversity of the population. Therefore all community members were invited. Which tackled the issue to not get a biased attendance. This meeting was scheduled on a Sunday, therefore also the farmers could attend the meeting. Eventually up to 100 people attended the community meetings, of all types of people, rich, poor, influential or not, men and woman, young and old. The meeting took place at a central community building explained above and was maximum 1 hours long.

### Participatory observation

*Participatory observation*, participate and accompany in daily routines allowed the research team to observe daily community interactions with other community members. One of the tools used was a *transect walk*. This is a systematic walk along a defined path (transect) across the community/project area together with the local people that helped us in doing a situational analysis of the community. The information collected during the walk has been used to draw a community map (figure 3 and 4).

The objective for the transect walk and mapping was to get an idea of the importance of cocoa production in the village, other important income generating activities, the available infrastructure for cocoa production, how people go about their daily activities, including food grown around the homestead and the condition of water, hygiene and sanitation in the community.

The best time to do the walk is after the community meeting, as all members of the community already are familiar with the purpose of the research. This strategy was executed in the second community. In the first community, the transect walk took place before the community meeting and after the formal introduction with the chief, which gave the opportunity to already invite people to the meeting. The walk was carried out with a well-respected person within the community who led us around. The pictures below show both community maps from Biemso No2 and Asanteman.







whether there is enough variation to enable the range of households. The walk also gave an indication of the rural area and whether the size and variety suits the purpose of the research. One criterium was that it should be possible to walk around for 4 hours with enough variety in activities.

### Focus group discussions

*Focus group discussions* (FGDs) enabled the communities to share, develop and analyse their own knowledge of life and conditions. For this technique, we aimed at an average of 5-10 participants. The focus of the discussions was slightly different for each group. But overall, they all contributed to getting a better understanding of the movement of individuals in or out of cocoa production, and how this is linked with the access to key resources. In case of both youth groups, an additional focus was to understand the role of education in the choices these young adults make.

FGDs were used to interact with three different groups in the community:

1. The Opinion leaders
2. Youth of the age category 17-25 years
3. Youth of the age category 26-35 years.

The FGDs took place in a neutral place. In Biemso No2 the discussions with the opinion leaders took place in the church, in Asanteman the FGD was in the Palace. Although the FGDs were already announced during the community meeting, it was still necessary to announce the FGDs officially through the megaphone. To ensure we had the required number of participants it was common to knock on doors to gather some of the people ourselves. It was particularly challenging to gather the youth. Eventually the minimal number of necessary participants were accounted for.

Guiding questions were used to start the discussion (see fieldwork guide). The FGDs allowed room for follow-up questions and open discussion on other related topics. The researcher explained that we would record the sessions, by using our mobile phones. A detailed report was transcribed after each FGD from the recordings, and any observations during the sessions is written down in the field notes book. After every discussion, we had a refreshment for the participants. We also used this as a back-up when there were more people interested than necessary, the first 10 would get the refreshment. We always asked the participants to introduce themselves and ask for relevant demographic details of the participants.

The FGD was a good way to gather people from similar background or experiences to discuss the topic of interest, which was introduced by the research team. The aim was to facilitate a participatory session that creates space for lively and natural discussion, allowing the participants to agree or disagree with each other. This gave the researcher a better idea on the range of opinions, beliefs, ideas and experiences, and the inconsistencies and variation that exist between and within the groups.

### Interviews

The aim of the in-depth, *semi structured interviews* (SSI's) with 5 different households (two members per household, one male and one female) was to gain insights in household members' future aspirations and considerations on both the short and longer term. The focus was to learn more about how people in households of different ages/genders think about decisions/investments/risks etc. The certainty was that the respondents were comfortable and gave their consent to use their stories for





our reports, including the guarantee that the data was used anonymously without using their names.

10 households, 5 in each community, were selected for semi-structured in-depth interviews. Interviews took place in the second phase of the research. developed interview guidelines to structure the conversations. Participatory observations was used as inspiration for additional questions, particularly in the more daily atmosphere of activities.

The selection of the households started already during the open community meeting. In this meeting, the purpose of the research was stressed and that the researcher was looking for households in 5 different age categories from 17-65 years old (17-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and 56-65 years). Targeting at a variation in both female and male headed households. The third criterium was based on ownership of land; a variation in the land tenure arrangement (land owner, Abusa or Abunu). The last criterium was having variation in the migrant status of the household (mix between migrants and people that were born in the selected communities)

The FGDs were used to weigh the options in terms of household selection, and observe how to get sufficient variety among the households.

### Household composition timeline exercise

The *household composition timeline* exercise (HHCT) was an additional tool used with each household head in two communities, including another household member. This exercise was conducted separately from the household interviews. The HHCTs have been carried out with 5 household types per community to capture changes in household composition over time. The aim was, by taking households that represent 5 different age groups, to capture the entire life cycle of a household unit for identifying labour and consumptions patterns, which shape livelihood strategies.

The HHCTs is a tool that incorporates time as a dimension into kinship charts. Kinship charts show the relationships between individuals within large kinship groups, beyond the household level. As the objective was to capture dynamic changes in household composition over time, the focus was solely on relationships among members of a household unit (Hammel and Laslett 1974).

In this study, this tool was used to understand the composition of the household, changes over 10 years' time, the influence on daily activities and income (diversification) strategies and the role of gender/social relationships in making choices related to these activities. The exercise started with the household head and the date of birth. From there the timeline started and represents the time of period of interest and was drawn across the top of the diagram. The household started either by formal marriage or some other form of adult union. Each person is represented by a symbol (indicated in figure 5) which was located beneath the year he or she entered the household. Dotted lines (still living) drawn from the right of symbol to indicate the continuance in the household (D means diseased and M means that the person migrates). And children of are represented by a vertical line.

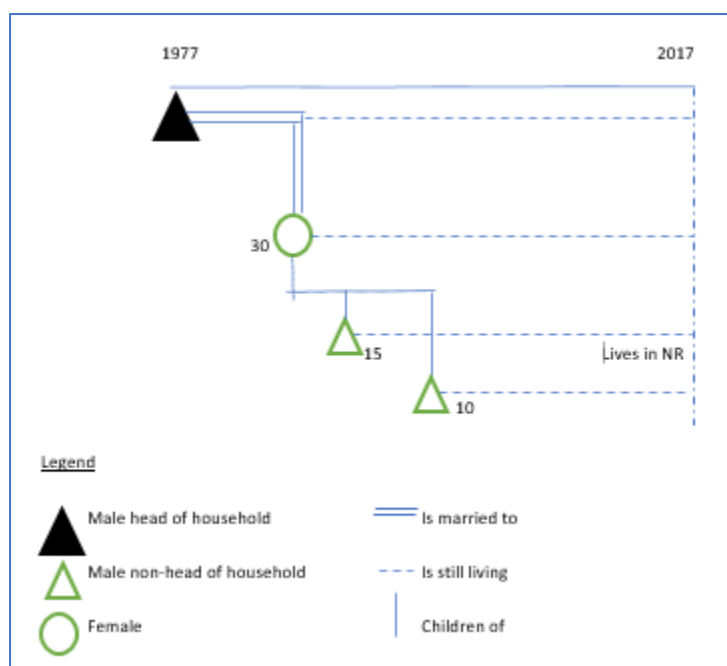


Figure 5: HHCT household 5 Biemso No.2

## 24-hour calendar

Another interview tool was the *24-hour calendar* on household activities. This tool was used in each household as a single interview (apart from the hh interviews) with two household members separately (one male and one female hh member). The objective was to understand daily activities of different hh members and to facilitate a discussion on gender relations. This gave a better understanding of the division of tasks within the household, the value given to this division and the underlying norms and values influencing this division.

Firstly the calendar was filled in in the frame of 24 hours and indicated for each potential activity the length of time. By asking for explanations and elaborations insights were collected on how a 'normal day' for these households would look like. The strength of this exercise was to learn more about what people say they do, and what they do. By joining them in their daily activities a far better understanding was gained of their daily lives, compared to if you are only talking. Also interesting, were their perceptions on why certain tasks were considered male or female tasks. This gave more insights in the tradition and cultural background and how male-female relationships were being perceived.

Lastly the *closing interviews*, were also semi-structured interview with each household: with the head of the household and one other household member (at least one female). The objective of this closing session was to share and validate some of the emerging findings of the hh interviews. This closing session also allowed for a discussion on aspirations of the hh, both shared aspirations and individual aspirations. And eventually also discussed potential strategies that hh members individually and together intended to use to fulfill their aspirations. The strength of these interviews, was that they gave insights in some of the joint decision-making processes of certain households. Especially if a more harmonious hh had different aspirations and strategies in coming 10 years than a hh with more diversity in their task division.



## Expert conversations and informal conversations

Some additional *conversations* with experts were carried out (e.g. with the chief, extension agent, chief farmer). The objective of these conversations were understanding land-tenure arrangements ; understanding labour market in the community; mapping the financial infrastructure in the community, and key-resources related to cocoa activities:

- Land
- Labour
- Capital/finance

During the whole length of the stay in the community, additional conversations were held with many people in *informal conversations* and *small talk*. Basically, to gain trust and to figure out how to move forward and where to find certain willing respondents. The strength of small talk is that you don't have any visual instrument to work with, which allows for more open dialogues. Being part of the community means that even the smallest interchanges can give you the most valuable information.

## Limitations

We realize that our participatory and observatory approaches do not allow for generalizations. However, the insights complement the research methods used in the research on demystification the cocoa sector and enrich the findings with illustrations and stories. It will also provide input for further analysis. Moreover, this approach has value of its own to tell a more detailed and in-depth story independently.

One other limitation could be that respondents answer to certain level of what they thing is a satisfactory answer, or what they expect they should answer. Socially desired answers do not hold in anthropological research. Anthropologists are trained to investigate and discuss what seems so obvious at first. Especially being open for the other, makes the respondents open up more compared to brief contact. Through observation, the actual earlier stated answers can be cross-checked in the actual execution of the activities. Especially the added value of an anthropological approach is that the person is trained, to be critical about and investigate what seems normal or logical in more depth.

## Research findings

This section describes the main outcomes of the research, and answering the sub questions.

We use a framework that shows push and pull factors to better understand the complexity of both factors for moving in or moving out of the cocoa sector. It is not necessarily a movement towards another region or town. It gives mainly insight in moving in or out of cocoa production and thus choosing an alternative income source or not. On the other hand, it also gives understanding of which individuals do move physically towards the city or another region.



## The choice to grow cocoa or not

*Why and how do (young) individuals and households move in and out of cocoa production and cocoa growing communities? How is this linked with availability and affordability of key resources: land, labour and financial services?*

### Moving into cocoa production

The Diagram shows a circular flow, that explains that the situation of moving in and out of cocoa growing communities is created when one factor causes another factor, and increases the effect of either being pulled in or pushed out of the cocoa sector.



Figure 6: Visualisation of push and pull factors of moving in and out of cocoa growing areas

### Key reasons for being pushed into the cocoa production

The following reasons are general motives for all different age categories from 17 to 65 years. Three main push factors in the cocoa production came up.

First, no or limited access to education is a key reason for being pushed into cocoa production. The youngsters in both communities explained this in FGDs by elaborating on the differences between them and their parents' generation. Especially the older generations did not have access to education as the younger generations now.

*"In the older generation, education was not accessible to all. You would have to travel miles away to school which made a lot of them lose interest in education. But for our generation, there is availability and accessibility of education. The schools are now closer to the various communities. Also, now in our generation, students get easy access to information, books, journals etc. due to our phones."*  
(FGD youth26-35, 24-02-2017).

Also, the youngest youth in Asanteman claimed that there were differences between their educational opportunities and those of their parents, which basically pushed these elder generations into the business of cocoa.



*“At first, my father said he never stepped foot in the classroom. The reason being that the mother said he was handsome and didn’t want the teachers to punish him. My father said that at first they didn’t regard or value education. Now if you don’t go to school or have a skill or trade, life is going to be very difficult for you.” (FGD 17-25 Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

The realization of the parents that education is necessary is present, however the lack of access to education is one of the reasons for the youth required to get involved with the cocoa production.

Secondly, cocoa production is seen as their best choice of income; people are pushed into cocoa production because of no alternatives. This could be caused by lack of fertile land in the North of Ghana i.e. which pushes these people into (cocoa) farming in these regions (WR and AR) and finding their salvation in this business. Also, the older youngsters say that a lack of alternatives is the reason for being involved in cocoa production.

*“We are engaged in the cocoa farming because we have no other alternatives in life.” (FGD 17-25years Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

However, being it a best and only choice of income, but also seen as something to rely on for the future, which will be elaborated on in 1.2.

A elaboration on the first reason for being pushed into the cocoa sector is not having the means to invest in children’s education, this is related to the first push factor. If you haven’t had the opportunity as a youngster, and you inherit a cocoa farm, you are required to go into the cocoa business. Although you can cut down the trees and grow something else, sell the land or put a caretaker on it, it is not certain a child inherits cocoa land from his or her parents.

*“For the inheritance it even depends on the family you belong. When my father died, the children inherited his cocoa farms because the children financed the burial. So, the family allowed us to take the farm land. For other families, the family members will fight with the children over inheritance of the land.” (FGD 17-25years Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

It is particularly a struggle with big families, with a lot of siblings “No, I won’t inherit it. I have older siblings who will. We are 13 in total, so I have 12 siblings and I am the 11<sup>th</sup> born.” (FGD17-25 Biemso2, 22-01-2017).

### A variety of pull factors for moving into cocoa production

There several pull factors that attract people to cocoa. The first factor that attracts people is that cocoa production is seen as a long term investment. Important to distinguish here is that it is mostly the generations from 26 and older, who see the cocoa farming as an interesting investment.

*“My mum died at an early stage so I wasn’t able to go to school and I didn’t learn*



*any skill as well. So, I went into the farming as an investment so I can take care of my children in school. My first child is in primary 3 so by the time she reaches JHS my cocoa will be due for harvest so I can take care of my children in school.” (Young man, FGD 26-35 Biemso2, 08-02-2017).*

Another example that people are attracted to cocoa production came from semi structured interview with an older head of the household.

*“He stopped the driving work because prospected for the future and can make something in a kind of project [investing in cocoa farming], to get something when he’s old. In the city, the expenses are very high, they are too much. The small amount he made for driving was not enough, to sustain his family.” (SSI HH2 Biemso2, 27-01-2017).*

Also for people in Asanteman cocoa seems an interesting investment, which is illustrated by the following example, asking a female cocoa farmer about the reason to be involved in cocoa farming:

*“That’s because when my husband married me that was what he was involved in and I have no other business as well. It’s a life-time investment that is why I engaged myself.”*

A second factor that attracts people to cocoa production in these community is the fertile land compared of that of their own region in the North of Ghana.

*“The rain there has been changed. Which has been a major reason or moving to Biemso to find some more fertile land. (HHCT HH5 Biemso No2, 30-01-2017).*

With being able to purchase land comes another benefit, to get loans when saving at a bank. These savings could be re-invested in the cocoa farming for example.

*“He has a savings account in Techiman at the bank. At this moment, he saved around 900 Ghc. The main reason for saving at the bank is that he is afraid of thieves. The purpose for his savings are when he needs the money for the farm, he will have some to spare. Even for certain projects, it will get him a loan because of the savings.” (SSI HH5 Biemso2, 30-01-2017).*

*“The main benefits from cultivating the farms, is that he gets food to eat. When he doesn’t get money, the alternative is that he can sell the food crops in return for cash, which is the second benefit. Another benefit is that when his children are sick, he can go for a loan [...] [and] use the land as a leased property. He can also bring cassava or plantain in exchange of money. However, it is not the same case as*





*Asantewaa, they don't take the land for certain years and take the yield. He will use the land as a guarantee or collateral for a loan. The loan is not big, just around 200 Ghana cedi." (SSI HH5 Biemso2, 30-01-2017).*

Another pull factor mentioned was that there is a growing investment in the sector and industry, and training and certain incentives are being given out by the government. It came out that farmers are more and more aware of the injection of the government and many organisations into the cocoa industry, which makes it a much more interesting sector to invest in. Especially the awareness to form associations to get more voice than a single-handed attempt to move up in the cocoa chain.

*"In some years ago, our grandfathers made up their mind not to sell to the Europeans. They destroyed most of the cocoa that year and in the following year; the price of cocoa was increased. So, if we form the associations it will help us to discuss with the government about the price of cocoa." (FGD opinion leaders Biemso2, 07-02-2017).*

In for example Asanteman they are aware of training programs.

*"There are trainings in this community but it is regarding the buying companies you trade with. The trainings are in groups and not the entire community. There have been trainings but not so much." (FGD opinion leaders Asanteman, 13-03-2017).*

There is thus a demand for more training programs it seems.

*"If you get more inputs to apply you get more yield. If you can get labourers to work on the land, they will maintain the land. However there [is a] need for more training programs, that teaches and give them the knowledge and knowhow about cocoa farming in general" (FGD closing interview HH1 Biemso2, 09-02-2017).*

A last pull factor for people to come living in cocoa producing areas is that the living costs in the villages are low, particularly when you can live in the family house. However, the living conditions in the cocoa growing communities are generally basic. One of the male youngster in Biemso No.2 said the following:

*"I will not stay in this community but will love to travel out because looking at the state of living of the older ones who are involve in farming, it's not encouraging and I neither have a room nor a child here so there is nothing binding me to stay behind. Moreover, I am a young man and I need to start making a family of my own and I think going to the city will be the best decision to make." (FGD 17-25 Biemso2, 17-01-2017).*



## *Moving out of the cocoa production*

### Key push factors for moving out of the cocoa production

Some of the respondents also explained why they want to move out of cocoa, and for example move to the city. There is however a difference between the two communities selected for this research. Biemso no2 has easier connection and situated closer to the big city Kumasi. Asanteman is situated much more remote.

The first key factor for migration are poor economic activities and limited job opportunities in the villages. In both rural villages (Biemso2 and Asanteman), the labour opportunities, for example as wage labourer are limited. There are no diverse economic activities in the rural areas compared to the financial motion in the city.

*“No, I won’t stay in this community because even if I stay here there are no job opportunities. So, I will travel to Accra or Kumasi because I have family relatives over there.” (FGD 1 age17-25 Biemso2, 22-01-2017).*

Another push factor in this same line of economic activities is to the interest among youth in factory work.

*“For the cocoa, you will get money but the money is annual. So, during the lean season, you will go through a lot of difficulties in terms of finances. Also, the cocoa when you grow them, at least from 5 years then it dies off so the cocoa doesn’t guarantee a sustainable life. With the factory, every day you will receive something small and although its small but it is sustainable.” (FGD 17-25 Asanteman, 14-03-2017).*

A second key push factor is the difficulty in accessing land, due to already cultivated land. Moreover, without any income there is no chance to finance the purchasing of the land. It is both the lack of availability and the affordability of the financial resources and land. This is not only the case for cocoa but for farming practices in general. Most importantly without land, certain sustainability programs don’t consider these people to be part of the target groups. But especially the land tenure arrangements are a huge obstacle for people living in rural communities like Asanteman or Biemso No2 to be involved in cocoa production, as well as in other farming activities. This example of a youngster in the age group of 17-25, explains the thresholds to overcome, and how this withholds them from participation in cocoa production.

*“In this community, not all of us own land. So, if you want land to farm, you must go and hire [land] from someone. Before you will be given the land, you go into agreement; whether the food crops will be divided into 2 (Abunu) or 3 (Abusa). For crops such as rice and maize, some of the owner’s demand for some number of bags at the end of the harvest. So, if you are not able to get that yield, you will have*



*to go for a loan to pay back. Others too ask you to do mixed cropping and during harvest, they share the crops with you; supposing the mixed crops are maize and plantain, the owner will choose between the two crops; so, it's either he/she takes maize or plantain and the farmer takes the other. Sometimes due to lack of the rain and stress of the land (infertility due to excessive farming), you don't get enough yield and this is the reason why people don't want to go for lands from others.” (FGD17-25 Biemso2, 22-01-2017)*

A third push factor out of cocoa production, is the lack of attractiveness of the cocoa farm work and the fact that it is 'uneducated work'. Particularly the youth (17-25 years) indicated that the work is too hard, and they complained about the physical labour and tough conditions. The overall image of the profession of cocoa farming is getting less attractive for younger generations. There are no incentives that make the cocoa production more attractive, and therefore the interest shifts towards other activities instead. One of the female participants in the Youth FGD in Biemso No.2 shared the following opinion with us.

*“I am interested in trading. I don't like cocoa production because the job is difficult, tiresome, require a lot of strength and it produces less income.” (FGD 17-25 Biemso2, 22-01-2017).*

Another quote from the older youth was that

*“farming is difficult; you have to cover a long distance before reaching your farm and the activity itself isn't easy. It requires hard work and hard labour. Also, the return is low that's why the youth wants to travel out of the community and seek other opportunities which are more comfortable.” (FGD 26-35 Biemso2, 08-02-2017).*

The last factor for being pushed out of cocoa production is the environmental issues and dying crops (issues mentioned were the soil fertility, rain fall, minerals in the ground). These environmental issues were mentioned to complicate the situation for cocoa farmers even more, and make it unattractive to be involved in this business.

*“I am not interested in cocoa production. When my father went into the cocoa farming, it didn't help. I can't tell if the problem is the land because most of the cocoa [trees] are dead. Also in the dry season, when the cocoa is exposed to extreme sunshine, most of the crops die. “(FGD 17-25years Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

A variety of pull factors for moving out of cocoa production

The first reason that pulls individuals out of cocoa production is quick money, which could also be generated by getting involved in illegal income activities. Getting quick money is basically seen as the



way out of poverty, which allows for investments in any business of choice. The risks that might be involved in engaging in illegal activities seem to be taken for granted. The next quote illustrates how a youngster (24yrs) became involved in illegal logging. His friends were already involved in this activity, which made it easier for him to get involved. However, the biggest incentive is the quick money he can earn in just a couple of weeks.

*“For the logging, I was initiated into the work by my friends at Adugyama. They told me how the job looks like and asked me to join if I am interested. So, when I decided to join, they came here and picked me up with the mini trucks for loading stuffs. For this work too, I didn’t pay anything. My friends are the drivers of the trucks. So, when we get there they take their money and when they load the logs (tree trunks) on the trucks we take our money.” (SSI HH4 male head hh, 02-02-2017).*

So, work that gives immediate (or monthly) payment attracts people. When you sell something in the city, you will have a direct transfer, which is atypical for earning money in cocoa production, which is seasonal oriented. Many of the individuals in a diverse range of age categories mentioned this as a reason to leave (or avoid) the cocoa business.

Another factor that attracts people to migrate to the city is because of education. Secondary and especially tertiary education is found in the cities, which is especially for the younger generations an important pull factor. If the prospect of continued education arises or presents itself, the youth sees it as an opportunity to get a better future, although this means they pursue another career path. The group discussions revealed some gender related differences:

*“For those that have completed the SHS both the men and women; most of them travel out of the community to look for job opportunities. But comparatively it is the men that travel most out of the community. Even the young women leave leaving the old ones behind. The old women stay behind because they are involved in the cocoa farming and that they can’t leave.” (FGD opinion leaders Asanteman, 08-02-2017).*

Also, the parents sometimes anticipate that their children will move to the cities, which is illustrated by the following quote:

*“Because education is poor in this community, when people work here and get some amount of money, they prefer to build their houses in the cities and send the kids over there for good and quality education so the kids can attain white colour jobs. (FGD opinion leaders Biemso2, 23-01-2017)*

Besides the parents also the extended family is a factor that can pull youth and children out of the cocoa growing areas. For example, some households have difficulties to take good care of all their



children, and extended family members take the responsibility for some of the children. Or like a participant explained in the focus group discussion:

*“I have a sister in Kumasi who is pressuring me to join her. The reason being that in the cities whatever activity you involve yourself you see progress unlike in this community where buying and selling is on a slow pace. So, I see my family to be in support if I want to travel out of the community.” (FGD17-25 Biemso2, 22-01-2017).*

A related factor is that of the state of housing and other aspects are more attractive in the city. The fast life in the city means fast money. With money, you can buy clothes and other things to improve your appearance.

*“ We want to stay in the cities and be descent and change our looks unlike staying in this village. (FGD17-25 Biemso2, 22-01-2017).*

The last factor worth mentioning is the infrastructure, particularly related to transportation. In the small communities, there are not much people having the finance to purchase goods and there is little trade. Even if there is an opportunity to trade some products there is too much competition. Because the roads are poor and the access to highways is limited, also the access to markets is constrained. So, making a living out of trade is difficult, one of the youngsters in Biemso2 said that

*“For you to break through as a youth, you have to travel outside the community and look for other opportunities. Also, because the community isn’t close to the road side it makes selling and buying a lot difficult.” (FGD 17-25 Biemso2, 22-01-2017).*

The older youth also complained about the condition of the roads.

*“There is also a bad road network around this district. Conveying farm produce to market becomes a problem.” (FGD 26-35 Asanteman, 17-02-2017).*

### *The link of moving in/out of cocoa production with key resources.*

Availability of key resources influencing the movement in or out of cocoa

#### Land

The availability of land differs between the two research areas Asanteman (WR) and Biemso No.2 (AR). In the WR there is much more mono-cropping (focus on cocoa) compared to the AR, where there is more income diversity. In both regions, some food crops are being cultivated. The other difficulty in obtaining land (and getting ownership) is that most of the lands belong to families, which is the case



in both communities. The official way to get access to land, is to first agree on a land tenure arrangement with the family to whom the farm land belongs to. The next step is that the chief (king) needs to verify the agreement by formatting an official document with Kings signature. The difficulty lays in the land tenure arrangements.

*“The land is being cultivated for let’s say 7 years (most of the time the case with old cocoa trees). Then they divide it in to two (Abunu), which is always the case for cocoa. When you go for a fresh (uncultivated) land, which means without anything growing on there and must plant the trees yourself. When this is the case, after the Abunu sharing the land becomes your own property (ownership).” (Expert conversation Biemso No.2, 2-2-2017).*

So, if you need any of the Stool land in this community Biemso No2 Ashanti Region, for developmental projects or personal use, you must consult the King. Also, if you purchase a land or go into any land tenure arrangement with any family, the two parties involved (the one purchasing the land or going into the agreement and the family head or members of the family) must come to the King for documentation. If they fail to do so it is termed as stealing and could attract sanctions. Aside that, if any problem or matter arises concerning the land in question, without proper documentation the King cannot defend the negotiations. Generally, in Ghana, lands are strictly not for sale even if you purchase a land, it is termed as “lease”. In Ashanti region, all the lands are leased for 99 years, so after this period you should renew the agreement. In the Western Region, specifically Asanteman, every 50 years the arrangements are renewed.

For cocoa land arrangements, before you can get into a land arrangement, you must pay an agreed amount of money called “tiri nsa”. The land is normally given out for a period of 7 years. It is assumed that after 7years, the land will be due for harvesting. After the 7years, the land is shared into two equal parts (Abunu). The owner takes one part as well as the one who have been working on the land. After the sharing, the part of the one who worked on the land becomes the owner of the land from thereafter. There is also another arrangement where the owner gives the land to a caretaker without taking any amount. The caretaker takes charge of the farm. He becomes virtually a permanent labourer on the farm. During harvesting the income is divided into three (Abusa). The owner of the land takes two thirds whiles the caretaker takes one third of the income.

### Labour

In Biemso No2, labourers are mainly coming from the North of Ghana. This is different than what we see in the Asanteman. According to the interviews it seems that in both communities the availability of labourers in the main season is less than in the lean season. Because the main occupation is farming in both communities (especially Asanteman), it especially difficult in the peak of harvesting to find other fellow farmers to help you out on the farm

*“There are arrangements made for labour in this community [Asanteman]. So, when you come as a labourer from other communities you must adhere to it. The community members have also agreed to this fix prices for labour. When you hire*





*a labourer to work for a day; the charge is 15 Ghc. This arrangement is done for weeding and harvesting as well. Also, sometimes we measure the area by 24m length × 24m width and then you pay 70Ghc. When the labourers work for you on credit, you will have to pay 80Ghc. So, there is an increase or interest of 10Ghc for the delay in payment. This arrangement is mainly done for weeding” (FGD opinion leaders, 16-02-2017).*

### Capital/finance

The availability of financial services is limited. We observed that access to loans is limited in both communities. Mainly the seasonal income character of farming makes it difficult to get access to loans. However, with land as collateral you can get access to a loan, this under the condition that you have some savings with the bank.

A new interesting financial service is that of Cargill, using mobile banking. Whenever they collect the cocoa they can transfer money through the mobile banking system. By introducing this system, the actual purchasing process of cocoa is done by financial transactions through phone or payment by the company directly, instead of going through the purchasing clerks (PCs). The PC gets another role, instead of trader the PC plays a social role to connect farmers to Cargill and create trust.

### Affordability of key resources and the effect on involvement in cocoa production

#### Land

The affordability of land is different for different age groups, particularly between youth (17-25) and older age categories. Particularly the younger youth has no means to purchase land, and they have no savings compared to their elders and older siblings for example. The ‘Tiri Nsa’, pre-payment before you can get into a land tenure arrangement, is a threshold that makes it more difficult to start up in the cocoa business. The youth lacks these financial means to pay this pre-payment.

#### Labour

In the communities, we did not encounter a direct shortage of people. There is an actual system of labour in Asanteman, arranged around fixed prices for certain activities as explained earlier. However, this labour is in generally perceived as expensive. It is difficult to pay these labourers when the income is not sufficient enough.

*“I don’t go for labourers because it is expensive and I can’t pay for it. So, I depend on my strength with help from my wife” (FGD 3 Opinion Leaders Biemso2, 23-01-2017).*

In the high season, it becomes more difficult to find labour. The farmers don’t have time to help others, as they must cultivate their own farms. The need for external labourers is higher in the main crop season. Therefore, migrants from the North seem to be welcomed.

*“The labourers’ in this community are mainly from the North. To me it’s a positive*



*change towards farming because the youth who travel out of the community (between the ages of 20-35) wouldn't do the labouring work even if they were to stay in the community. The youth don't want to engage in farming activities. Those Northerners', who come to this community, come here purposely to work."* (FGD 3 Opinion Leaders Biemso2, 23-01-2017).

### Capital/finance

Some of the loans are 'inherited' by the children, which gives a burden to start with. These debts have a huge impact on the youth. It happens that because of these debts they must take more loans to pay of the debts. (FGD youth 17-25, 14-03-2017). These loans are not with the banks, but with private money lenders, such as businessmen and traders.

### Mobility of young individuals

*What are specific aspirations with regard to cocoa growing for youth (17-25 or 26-35; m/f). What are challenges in relation to cocoa and what role does education play in young people's ambition to move in and/or out of cocoa?*

#### *Future Aspirations. (choice to grow cocoa)*

There is a small variety in the future aspirations and ambitions among the youth. Some of the long term ambitions the youth has (for the next 10 years) are to learn a trade or a skill.

*"I want to be a trader. I will like to go to Kumasi and get the utensils and bowls to sell in this community."* (FGD 26-35 Asanteman, 17-02-2017).

*"If you must invest the money into farming, you won't be able to repay. Within 2 years or so I will travel out of the community and engage in business like selling of pomade and cream. So even after the 2 years you will get profit and able to repay the money (FGD 17-25 Asanteman, 14-03-2017).*

As we have seen education is a main driver for not being involved in cocoa. The aspiration by a lot of youth is to educate themselves. This could be in military or police school, and pursuing higher education. The main difference between Asanteman and Biemso No2 is that in Asanteman there are a lot of teachers included in the youth (26-35) discussion groups. This might have influenced some of the findings on youth wanting to continue their education. However, some youth would choose to go into cocoa production.

*"If I get a sponsor I would love to go into the cocoa production. I have seen a couple of people who are okay in life due to the cocoa. The way they are able to take care of their kids in school and their general standard of living is okay."* (FGD 17-25 Biemso2, 22-02-2017).



On the short term (or as soon as possible), most of the youth wants to make money; *“Quick money and fast returns”*. They don’t think you can make fast money in cocoa farming, and therefore they want to move and travel. Especially because cocoa farming generates money on a seasonal basis, compared to work in illegal mining/logging or wage labour that would give more regular income, weekly or monthly or even directly with a direct transaction.

*“I want to quit farming and invest in a business and later further my education. I also want to travel to U.K in the next 10 years.” (FGD 26-35 Biemso2, 08-02-2017).*

One of the youngsters (26-35) in Biemso No.2 sees the farming as a step up to invest in his own business and even further his education. This education would eventually help to continue his business better.

*“After completion of S.H.S., there was no money to further my education, so I went into farming so I can get money to further my education to the next level and set up my own agro-chemical shop.” (SSI HH1 Biemso2, 31-01-2017).*

*“If only there was more support”* seems a general perception of the youth, this would make it more interesting to start up a business in cocoa. A young guy who has his own business in selling seedlings to farmers, puts this as follows.

*“If I get money to invest in businesses so I can employ others, then I will stay in this community” (FGD 17-25 Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

### Challenges for youth to get involved in cocoa production

There are different challenges for youth to get involved in cocoa production. The first challenge is the lack of support to do something differently than farming in life, and the lack of support to become educated.

*“I am involved in the farming because I did not get support from anywhere to either further my education or to learn a skill. So, I had to go into farming.” (FGD 3 Youth 26-35 Asanteman, 17-02-2017).*

The second challenge is a start-up capital.

*“Farming indeed is a good investment but it requires a lot of finances. If you compare farms of rich men to poor men, you could see the difference. So, if we get financial support to invest in the farm, it will motivate us to get involved.” (FGD5 Youth 17-25 Asanteman, 14-03-2017).*



Another big challenge is the access to land (land is already cultivated).

*“All the lands have been cultivated so if you will get access to a farmland it is these old farms that you convert. You are not going to get an entirely new land to cultivate. Due to that, for the food crops particularly, we normally practice shifting cultivation. There are no extra lands so we have been shifting on the same farm land.” (FGD3 Youth 26-35 Asanteman, 17-02-2017)*

The next challenge given by youth to get involved in cocoa is the framing of educational institutions, namely, the image of farming as punishment. Farming is seen as hard and hazardous work. Schools would frame work on the farm in the same length as punishment after misbehaviour on school, it is also presented as a job for the un-educated. Therefore, you would not want to be involved with this kind of work. What is being promoted is to be educated and find prosperity through knowledge. In the following example, this is explained.

*“In our schools when you are being punished, they normally ask you to weed on a piece of land. So right from their youthful age, the young ones acquire that mind-set that farming is a punishment. So, with that kind of idea, it restricts them from involving in the farming or cocoa production. So, after completion of school or when they drop-out from school, they try to look for other opportunities other than farming.” (FGD4 Opinion leaders Biemso2, 07-02-2017).*

Another challenge that came up was the limited bargaining power. The youth in Asanteman face this challenge mainly because the prices aren't right.

*“I am not interested in the cocoa production because the price of cocoa isn't encouraging. The government do not set good prices for cocoa. So, the farmers labour for nothing.” (FGD 17-25 Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

The opinion leaders in the Ashanti Region also shared a similar thought.

*“Cocoa production is very difficult. The price of cocoa is not encouraging especially this year. Prices of cocoa is set and fixed by the government and the farmer has no bargaining power. Whether the price is good or not, cocoa farmers can't do anything about it.” (FGD opinion leaders Biemso2, 23-01-2017)*

### Role of education in young people's ambition to move in and/or out of cocoa

According to some of the opinion leaders in Biemso No2, the involvement of youth in the future of cocoa is not promising.



*“The future of cocoa production is difficult. When you speak to the youth of today only 1 out of 10 of the youth are interested in cocoa farming. This is because the youth wants quick returns and moreover the pricing of cocoa and other farming produce isn’t encouraging (“the price of cocoa is fixed, and there should be negotiation with the price of cocoa”). (FGD opinion leaders Biemso2, 07-02-2017).*

The current generation of cocoa farmers doesn’t set a good example for the youth. They have no bargaining power, and their lives aren’t encouraging. This restricts the youth to enter (or aspire) cocoa production. It was also said that

*“the cocoa business might come down or even collapse” (FGD opinion leaders Biemso2, 07-02-2017).*

*“One of the reasons why people move out of the community is that the youth lack interest in the farming because right from infancy the parents did not involve them or train them in the farming due to education. Whilst the parents will be on the farm, their children will either be home or in school studying. So, they lack the will-power to even involve themselves in the farming. So, the youth even lack the basic principles of farming” (FGD 26-35 Biemso2, 08-02-2017).*

However, the opinion leaders in Asanteman don’t seem to see the future generation to be a problem. Maybe the youth is not that specific generation, but, according to them, there is always somebody willing to fill in the gap.

*“It doesn’t matter whether you are educated or not. When your dad is dead and you inherit his cocoa farm, you won’t allow the crops to die. So even if the child doesn’t want to go into farming directly, he can hire labourers or perhaps a caretaker to take care of the farm. So, cocoa has a future.” (FGD opinion leaders Asanteman, 13-03-2017).*

The youth’s own ideas about participating in the cocoa production are diverse: some see this positively, and some negatively. The main difference lies between the younger and older youth. It seems like that the older youth is more involved than the younger youth.

If you do want to get involved, education is always good to have as a backup plan.

*“Education or training is very important. If you are engaged in any skill, it will serve as other source of income aside the cocoa production. So, when the cocoa isn’t productive you can rely on the skill you are practicing.” (FGD 17-25 Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*



Some would even come back after education to keep investing in cocoa.

*“As for me I am interested in farming. So even if I further my education and I end up in the office, I will still come back and buy some of the cocoa farms”. (FGD 17-25 Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

Lastly, it came up, that if you are not able to further your education or purchase land, not much is remaining to keep you from finding your luck elsewhere. The following example is about cocoa farming and the lack of access to land and the difficulties they face.

*“The youth moves out of the community because of lack of access to land for farming. If your parents do not own a land and you are not able to further your education, you end up travelling out of the community to look for other opportunities. This is because they don’t have the capital to purchase or go into a land arrangement.” (FGD opinion leaders Asanteman, 16-02-2017).*

Another lack of interest in cocoa comes by the lack of know-how and understanding about the industry in general. From the olden days, the youth was much more involved in the cocoa industry right from young age.

*“My decision was based on the training and skills I learnt about the cocoa farming right from infancy. In the olden days when your parents give birth to many children, they don’t take you to school but rather to join them on the farm. So, through that I also gain the experience and the know-how about the cocoa farming.” (SSI HH3 Asanteman, 01-02-2017).*

The youth themselves explain they don’t have the knowledge about farming, as there is no interest in the job at first place and secondly, they are not involved in training programs.

At this moment, there is an increasing attention again for youth to get involved in cocoa production. Through more government programs and attention of buying companies for the youth to be involved.

### Composition hh and Life events. Income diversification strategies and daily activities

*How does the composition of the household and major life-events (looking back 10 years from now) shape members’ daily activities and income (diversification) strategies? How do age, marital status, ownership of land and migration play a role?*

#### *The effect of the Composition of the household*





## Characteristics of the household

In each of the age categories at least one household per community is included. In some cases when there was a single parent household and no other members could be included in the selection, the choice was made to include an extended household member.

### Households within the age 17-25

Within this household in Biemso No2 the decision was made to be involved in a risky job and illegal activities. This head of the household was 24 years old, he had two wives' (both were pregnant), and the latest wife is 19 years old, they have two sons (3 years and 3 weeks old) together. He dropped out school at primary 5 and she finished Junior High school (JHS). The family used to live in the Zongo community (where most migrants from the north live in a separate community within the larger community), but are now living in their own house inside the main community. The household 17-25 in Biemso No2 had no access to land and even no knowledge on how to farm in general. The main income generating activity is the illegal logging in the Brong-Ahafo region, which provides the household occasionally with money.

The other household in Asanteman was involved in three income generating activities: teaching, trading as purchaser clerk (PC) and cocoa farming. The head of the household was 30 years, and his wife was 19 years old, and she was pregnant at the time. The head of the household finished Senior High school (SHS) and his wife finished JHS. Both were from Asanteman and lived here permanently. The main income generating activity is the PC work of purchasing cocoa. The PC work is still in an early phase of development, and he expects to earn more from this work in the years to come. Apart from this, he works on the cocoa farm on Saturdays, and on taboo days, because during the week he works as a teacher.

The composition of the household, especially double marriage for the husband of Biemso No2 (17-25 household), had huge implications for daily activities and income strategies. In the other community Asanteman, the household in the same age category was clearly diversifying the income strategies. Not only is he a teacher, but also a PC and a cocoa farmer. His young wife is pregnant, which gives a lot of new responsibilities. According to the male head of the household he will be able to handle these responsibilities easier when he is diversifying his income generating activities. The biggest difference between the two households is that the one in the Western Region is involved in cocoa, and the hh in Ashanti Region is not, because they have no land or knowledge on growing cocoa in the first place.

### Households within the age 26-35

Within the household in Biemso No2 the head of the household was a female of 35 years old, finished JHS, married once and divorced and is now officially living apart. The other hh members were children as she is a single parent. The other household representatives that were interviewed were the uncle and aunty, where she lived in a room on the compound. The daughters were 9 and 2 years old, too young to interview. Her first born son (17 years) is in boarding school, but considered part of the hh. She used to stay in Techiman in the Brong-Ahafo region, with her ex-husband. However, she moved to Asanteman to inherit the cocoa farm. The main income generating activity is cocoa farming, which she complements with maize farming.



The uncle and aunty are an additional hh as they both take care of their own income generating activities. The uncle is 53 years old, finished his Bachelor in Education and the aunty is 47 and not educated. His background is in teaching but his main income generating activity is cocoa farming. He has been involved in other employment, like being a former District Chief, teacher and running a transport business. Now, he has a lot of resources that are helping him to continue his farm work. They have 4 children, one son (25) and three daughters (23, 20 and 16 years). The oldest is currently in university and the others or finished SHS or still are in SHS. The household is from the Western Region, he originally came from Asanteman, his father is also the community chief, his wife came from small village near Edwinase. They take care of two additional people one female 18 years old and male 22 years old. They not live in the compound houses, but are part of the hh.

The household in Asanteman consisted of a 32-year-old man, head of a single household. He finished SHS but was looking to continue a degree in IT. The other representatives that were interviewed were his father and mother. His father 63 years old, lost his first wife (44), and the biological mother died. The father had 6 other children with the first wife, that were all younger than the interviewed household head of 32 years. The second and current wife (45), has 5 children with the father, 3 daughters and 2 sons. The father came to this community to take care of the family land from New Edubiase, also in the Ashanti Region. The father is taking care of 20-26 acres of family land, which he shares with 5 other siblings. He also gave his son a small plot of land to grow some maize, okre, pepper and other food crops. Father and son are both farmers, farming is the main income generating activity. The son is not involved in cocoa farming, but in other kinds of farming and the father is involved in cocoa farming. The son sees the farm which he got for three years as a stepping stone to go back to school and invest in a shop. The father (63) has a lot of farms of the family and has been taking care of them. Because of his age and condition, he is looking for another business like a shop, that gives less hard work and still income for his retirement.

This second households, fall in the slightly older youth category of 26-35 years. Both households that were interviewed in Asanteman and Biemso No2 were single (parent) households. To begin with the similarities, they are both farmers and not married. The head of the household in Biemso No2, took care of his siblings, who therefore are part of the household. The other household in Asanteman was a single mother and female head household, taking care of herself and her children. Although she has some help from her uncle, she is mainly dependent on her income from the cocoa farm. She is using the food crops for food intake, and most of the money she will make from producing cocoa is going to her first-born son that is in school and spends the money on the tuition fees.

### Households within the age 36-45

The household in Biemso No2 consisted of male head of the hh, 40 years old, with no education. His wife is 30 years old, and has received no education. They have two sons together of 15 and 10 years old. The wife was the other representative that was interviewed. The family originally came from the North and just recently moved to Biemso. The youngest son is still living in the North with his grandmother, as they don't want to disrupt his school progress. The main income generating activity is the cocoa farm. Previously he was working at the groundnut farm of his mother, where he learned the skills of farming, and has been working abroad in Libya for non-farming activities.

In Asanteman the head of the household is a male, 45 years old. He dropped out of school after form



4 (old educational system, equivalent to O-level). He has a wife, who is 46 years old, who is the other representative who was interviewed. She also dropped out of school after form 4. They have 8 children together who all live in the same house apart from the two oldest daughters that live and work in Accra. They also take care of a nephew (26) who also is a caretaker on the farm. The husband of the third daughter also eats at their house. The main income generating activity is cocoa farming. They moved here from the Brong-Ahafo region where he first worked in a hospital. They used to live in a small village closer to the farms, but just recently they have built a house within the community. The wife used to have a small shop and sells and makes brooms for the market. In the end, the whole household relies on the cocoa farming, which they complement with food crops, if these food crops are abundant will also be sold.

The third age category 36-45 years involved two male headed households. The two household both have cocoa farming as their main income. Both their wives complement the hh with their small earnings of selling items, like brooms or food. What is interesting is that both households moved from a different region to work in the current regions specifically to seek salvation in the cocoa production. Both households grow food crops for own consumption and to complement the overall income of the households. This creates room to invest more money back in the business of cocoa production. They do see cocoa production therefore as a good future investment that can give them more security in life.

### Households within the age 46-55

The household in Biemso No2 consisted of 13 members. First, the head of the household, a 54-old male, was a primary school dropout. His wife, the other representative who was interviewed, 55 years old, was also a primary school dropout. They have seven children, 6 daughters and one son. The fourth daughter had 2 children (5 and 1,5 year) of her own also living in the house. The fifth daughter also has two children (7 and 3 years old), who are again living in the same house. The third daughter (30) is not living in the house, but her child (14) is. The last two hh members are the twins (17 years) of the sister of the wife. The first two daughters (34 and 32 years) are living in Kumasi with their husbands. The hh head worked in Kumasi for a cargo company and as well went abroad to Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso for this job. He came here after he and his wife saved up enough money to pay for the farm. They are now in a land tenure arrangement, which is for 40 acres of land, after the harvest they divide the land into two (Abunu) and half is becoming his own land. The main income generating activities are therefore the cocoa farm. They complement cocoa with food crops to eat and for his wife to sell in the shop of her own.

In Asanteman, the household head was a male of 48 years old who dropped out of school after primary 6. He was married two times. With his first wife, he had 4 children. With his second and latest wife, he has one child. The current wife is the other representative that was interviewed. She dropped out of school at form 4. The child they have together is just 3 months old. The other children are a son of 13, two daughters of 12 and 9 and another son of 6. The two oldest children are living in Togo with their grandfather. Also, the brother of the head of the hh is living in the house, but works in Diaboso another community. The main income generating activity is the cocoa farms he has. He has in total 5 cocoa farms, he complements this with food crops. Also, his wife has a cocoa farm of her own.

In this category, we had two male headed households, these households are involved in cocoa



production. The two hh see their farm as a business or project opportunity that give them the necessary safety in the future. They want to extend their farms and build on that. The bigger difference is that of the Biemso2 hh has clear diversified income strategy combined with the wife. The wife brought in most of the money to start up the cocoa business in the first place. Another interesting aspect is that also both male head households have worked previously in completely different sector and some even abroad to found alternative job opportunities, this gave them their initial start-up capital to invest in land and to come with the price of the 'Tiri Nsa'. This does not necessarily mean they see the cocoa production as a last resort, but at least as a valuable investment to rely on for the future.

### Households within the age 56-65

We stretched the age category to 65 and above. The Biemso head of the household is a female of 85 years old. She had no education. Her husband died, but they had 4 children together, one daughter (50) and three sons (45, 40, 35). They have 25 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren. All of them are part of the household and who she is taking care of. The main income of the household is cocoa production. She has a huge amount of land, as she is descendant of the royal lineage. She and her brothers inherited a lot of land in five couples of two siblings. All her siblings unfortunately passed away, she was the only successor of the stool in this community. She is still taking care of all the lands of her and her late brothers. This gives her a relatively huge amount of income, which according to her is mainly used to pay for school fees for all her children and grandchildren. Not surprisingly the family that relies on her is very extensive. Although she makes a lot of money of her farms, the trees which we could observe, and she explained in small talk are old, even up to 50 years. The best strategy would be to grow new hybrid trees, but because of her age she doesn't want to take the risk anymore to lose any income and not able to pay for medicines or other bills for her health.

The household In Asanteman was also headed by an older lady of 66 years old (no education). Many of her children moved to Kumasi. Only one daughter was living in the same house and was the other representative who we interviewed. Another daughter lived in the community and was also one of the representatives we interviewed. All other children were living in Kumasi. The household consists of 8 children: 3 sons and 5 daughters who all had a partner, except for one son who is single, the head hh has 11 grandchildren. Slightly different compared to the other household she does not have the resources to pay for labourers, and she is still in a bit better health condition to do all the work on the farm herself. She does need the help of her daughter and therefore they work together on the farms.

What both household had in common is that their husbands died and they felt lonely because of that. For the household in Biemso2 a lot of her children were still living in the house and gave her company. In the Asanteman household if it wasn't for her daughter she would feel very alone, and that is what kept her going. She is basically maintaining the farms for her late husband, which bought and started the farm work many years ago. Both families have diversified their income, they have income from food crops, like cassava, plantain, maize. In general, for own consumption and sell whenever they are in abundance. Other household members also help on the farms and help with selling food items. Or even they used to have their own business in the form of hairdressing for example to complement the household income. The interesting fact remains, that the older lady, although she knew this would be the best approach, didn't invest in replanting the old trees.



## Male/female headed household (marital status)

The following dimension plays a role in the choices made for income strategies and daily activities. To start with the differences between a male and female headed household. The female headed households were not easy to find for the selection in the research. Mainly because they are widowers or divorced, and otherwise the male is the head of the household. The youngest female head of the household, had the luck that she inherited land of her family. She wasn't aware of this, until her uncle pointed this out to her. She is surviving mainly because of the earnings of the cocoa farm. It seems that also the other older female head of the households were left with the farm of their husbands and therefore continued this work as a cocoa farmer. They used to help on their husband's farm and are now fully responsible.

Not all couples have been married according to official ways. They consider themselves to be husband or wife, because they live together or have children together. Marriage is important to elaborate on because it is related to the inheritance system of farm land. In this case it is about farm land in general, cocoa farms and non-cocoa farming. As a wife, you not sure to inherit anything from the husband either if you are traditionally or not officially married. When the land belongs to the extended family, after death of the husband, the land goes back to this family, leaving the wife with nothing. Because the relationships are very traditional in these communities, there is also a sharp delineation in task division and the way to address choices concerning income in the household. The divorced couples or widowers have now more responsibilities but as well more control of their own on any kind of decision concerning income strategies or daily activities. The quote below shows that she can make the decision to give the farm out to a caretaker or cultivate it herself for school fees for her son.

*"I was at a town called Asempanay3 (village she used to live), and was involved in some farming activities. I was cultivating cassava and cocoa but now I have left it for someone to take care of them for me... At Asempanay3 the farm belonged to my husband but I got my own share after we divorced and when I moved here, my mother had a farm she inherited. So, since the trade wasn't going on well I decided to farm. I didn't have any money on me so and because of my son's school fees I had no option than to do farming." (HH2A SSI interview, Asanteman, 21-02-2017)*

## Ownership of land

After understanding the composition of the different household better, and how the marital status influences the accessibility to land. It is important to explain the complicated concept of ownership of land. Especially for younger households the accessibility to land seems more difficult than for their elders. The reason that youngsters have more difficulties to obtain land. Especially the arrangements make it more problematic for these younger households, which are explained in the examples below.

There are certain differences in the two regions according to land ownership. In Biemso No2., in the Ashanti Region, land is re-assigned every 99 years, compared to every 50 years in Asanteman, in the Western Region. There are certain arrangements of Abunu, dividing land into two and Abusa dividing land into three. There is another slight nuance in this which is best explained by this example;



*“Yes, the land is now mine. I must go to the chief of Asanteman for documentation so my children can inherit it. However, if the cocoa is no more or dead then the owner will come back for his land. Because of that I have always been planting young cocoa seedlings so the land remains mine forever.” (SSI HH3 Asanteman, 22-02-2017).*

Abusa (dividing into three) is mainly used for food crops and labour arrangements. For cocoa Abunu is normally the arrangement that is used. Before that these arrangements come into play there is always case of a certain ‘Tiri Nsa’, which could be seen basically as a precondition of payment and respect before both parties can go into the actual land tenure arrangement of Abunu. This ‘tiri nsa’ is a huge reason for youth not to be involved in cocoa production in the first place. Both Abunu and Abusa bring different barriers for farmers. Abunu brings the barrier of the pre-payment, which many young individuals struggling and not able to come with the amount and resources to pay for it. Abusa gives the barrier of not becoming a landowner, you get basically just a third for all the hard work, which makes it not attractive. Therefore, they diversify their income strategies and looking for alternatives that bring them either quick money, or money that maybe can invest in land in the future, which is only the situation in a few of the cases included in this research. In some cases, particularly involving the older generations the option is to collectively come up with the payment of this ‘tiri nsa’.

### Lived here or moved recently (migration)

There is variety between household income strategies of people that lived in the community permanently or migrated from another region. The latter group seem to take more hazardous decisions on investment in cocoa production. By means of moving to a new place the risk exist of not being able to sustain themselves because they are not going to have access to land directly. The main assurance is the support of friends and family, by introducing their family members to land owners that are willing to sell. This will be once again explained more elaborately in sub question 4.

### Life events

The first influential life-event having an impact on members’ daily activities and income (diversification) strategies are sickness or death in the family. For male head of hh 17-25, losing his mother made a huge impact on how he and his household strategized his income choices.

*“If my mum was to be alive, she would have taken good care of my wife when she gave birth. My mum would have taken care of the wife and the child so I can be a little bit free.” (Interview SSI age17-25, Biemso No2, 02-02-2017).*

Clearly certain influential changes in once life have the effect of having to adapt or change the strategy of the household. Another clear example is from the father of one of the household heads in Biemso No2.

*“About 4 years before I had an eye problem. Also about 2 years ago, I was being operated twice of hernia. I nearly lost my life through this sickness. I have had two children within that 10 years. Also 3 of my children got married. I also lost my*





*younger child. Because of this sickness (hernia) I became weak and couldn't work on the farm. Even since then I don't have the strength to work as I used to. That is even the reason why I want to give part of the land to others. I was also not able to perform well in bed as well." (Interview SSI age26-35 father of head hh, Biemso No2, 31-01-2017).*

This shows the impact a certain illness can have not only for the individual choices he made, but also for the joint strategies for outsourcing the land to others. We see that the awareness of diversification becomes relevant in number of occasions. First, that when you have a farm and another income source, like a small shop, this would give more assurance whenever any downfall is going to happen like we have seen above in these two examples.

Marriage or a divorce of a couple is another life-event shaping choices in the household. Especially for a young household any divorce has huge implications. This young couple explained it in their interview.

*"The husband of Deborah used to send clothes and money to me and the grand mum at the end of the year but because of the divorce I don't receive those things anymore more. Again, because the husband doesn't send my sister money this days, it has increased my burden because I have to also support my sister to take care of the two kids she has with the divorced husband." (Interview SSI age17-25 male head hh, Biemso No2, 02-02-2017).*

Apart from this example, the household where the husband had two wives, gave some other complications. Especially these hurdles explain in detail how this household in specific is choosing their household strategy they have been following. It also shows more specifically the dynamics within this household. The role of the grandmother especially who has crucial influence on the household decisions.

*"Because he had two wives in the same room at his grandmothers, because they were both pregnant as well. The grandmother forced him to decide with which lady he wanted to be with. He chose for the second wife. This room he also got from his grandmother. Before the stayed in the Zongo, the situation took 3 weeks, before the grandmother gave him the ultimatum, which all happened around 3 years ago." (HHCT HH4 Biemso2, 29-01-2017).*

Although marriage can lead to some certainties in life, it not always gives the assurance of being taken care of in the future. According to the wife of the head of the hh, even if you are married you are not going to get anything from the farm if the husband dies. The land belongs to the family. Therefore she made the decision to save some for herself to have back up plan.

*"The reason they will share is that anything can happen, when the husband dies for example, she needs to have a safety net. That was the idea that she should take*



*part of the yield. The siblings or other family members can also come for it, when the husband dies they will share it [land] among the family. When this will happen she has something for herself.” (SSI HH2 Wife of the head hh Biemso2, 31-01-2017).*

Getting pregnant and having children also asks for an adjustment in strategies within the household. Especially with teenage pregnancies it can be troublesome. A young mother of only 19 years old explained to us what effect this had on her life.

*“I wanted to be a police officer (military) but because I couldn’t further my education, I can’t achieve that dream. My mum even told me she will adopt my child so I can achieve that dream but I am no more interested.” (Interview SSI age17-25 wife, Biemso No2, 02-02-2017).*

Another radical effect is that of the father who started a new family with a new wife after divorcing his first wife. Sending his children to Togo with their grandfather, to strategize the best future for them. This also gave him the room to address the current strategies and income choices.

*“10 years ago, there were not that many children as of now. Today there is too much pressure. He was staying at that time in his house with the former wife, but at that time he had only two children. 5 years ago the two children left to Togo... The household is growing at the moment, however the finances did not grow. When he was divorced he had four children, then he was staying alone. After he was married again gave him some new and more burdens, to take care of another new born child especially...That the 2 children left to Togo. He was ok with it for them to leave to his father. So he would also be a little bit relieved. Here in Ghana they worry him a lot. He is visiting them every year, and he is travelling by car to visit them.” (HHCT HH4 Asanteman, 09-03-2017)*

Lastly migration is also a huge life-event that has impact on the strategies of the household. Some of the household and families have moved from another place for example from Brong-Ahafo, but the effect on the daily activities or income diversification strategies was best explained by the following example.

*“As explained earlier in the SSI, the family moved here to Asanteman, 25 years ago from the Brong-Ahafo Region. At first, they lived in a small village, some houses that were close to the farm. This place in the community is better than the village. For getting loans or any item, they want to buy, they will get more easy access than compared to the remote village.” (HHCT HH3 Asanteman, 08-03-2017).*



## Intra household strategies

*What is the role of social relations (intra household dynamics), and the norms & values underlying these relations, in shaping daily activities, life-events and income (diversification) strategies/choices? (both at individual level (individual strategies), as well as for the hh (working together)*

### *Social relationships. The role of social relationships and intra hh dynamics*

In the previous sub question we saw how life events could give direction to daily activities and income (diversification) strategies. Now we are looking at what the role is of social relations in shaping such life events and income (diversification) strategies.

First, the role of social relationships, in shaping daily activities, is existing in doing things collectively on a regular basis. For example, eating together is one of the answers in the 24h calendars that was addressed as daily activity considered to be done together. Doing this together gives more a social element to eating, which fades the low quantity of food as well.

*“The reason they eat together is that because the small quantity of food they will get. First of all, to eat together they will appreciate the moment more, and eating all from the same bowl all small bits make it look like it is more”. (24h calendar HH5 daughter head hh, Asanteman, 09-03-2017).*

Social relations of family and other people joining in the same activity are essential for this reason in shaping the daily activities.

Social relations can also shape life events, for example if friends give you a tip to move somewhere differently to find land for example.

*“The reason for going to Libya was a friend, who told him that there were a lot of job opportunities there. He made good money for the investment in land. The main idea was to buy the land for future purposes, to invest in a more secure future... It was his friend that called him for purchasing the land. And most of the things to farm the land and grow cocoa he also learned from this friend.” (SSI HH5 male head hh, 30-01-2017).*

Social relations are also shaping Income (diversification) strategies/choices. First social relations give status and can lead to more influence in the income decisions of the household.

*“Because she is more independent she is more respected in the community. She notices it because of her business, she is informed when there is a problem or financial problem. Then she can contribute to the discussions and they consult her, and she is more part of these decisions. Also, when there are funerals, she contributes financially.” (SSI HH5 wife of male head hh, 31-01-2017).*



Social relations are also a good answer for low cost strategies. The male head household (age 45-56) from Asanteman gets help from friends to help on the farm and is not choosing to get paid labourers. He does all the work basically himself with the help of his social network. This is first of all cost-effective.

*“Yes. When there is harvest we help each other. We arrange and go to each person’s farm one by one until we harvest all our crops. My wife also helps in the carrying of the crops... No. I do not use any labour. I do everything myself. Also, I get help from friends so I do not pay for it.” (SSI HH4 male head household Asanteman, 23-02-2017).*

Norms and values underlying these social relations.

The way norms and values or certain structures shape daily activities are best explained by some examples of why household doing certain daily activities together. Religious values are to go to church, which in Ghana is a very important institution that shapes a lot of the activities.

*“Going to church they will all get dressed up nicely and get to church.” (24h calendar HH2 head hh Biemso2, 27-01-2017).*

Another more social affair is that of eating together, which is mostly a normal thing to do but is also shaped by some underlying values.

*“Fetching the water is for both male and female in this household because of the age of the boys. Another thing that happens always together is eating. Her elder brother he never ate alone, because he said that he doesn’t get satisfied when eating alone”.*

The traditional way of thinking is nicely illustrated when we look at preparing and pounding fufu<sup>5</sup>, which is done by the men because they have the strength. But this is an activity done together with the woman which replaces the fufu in the bowl. The rhythm in carrying this out is very important.

*“Also, the preparation of the fufu they do together, he pounds the fufu and she will also work the fufu.” (24h calendar HH5 head hh Biemso2, 30-01-2017).*

Some things are done together because of the common norm of distribution of work pressure.

*“Fetching the water, cooking, sweeping and eating are done together. The reason*

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<sup>5</sup> Fufu is a common dish in Ghana existing of combination of cassava and yam.



*for this is that this quickens the activity. There are actually a lot of people part of the household, so they share the workload.” (24h calendar HH3 granddaughter, 28-01-2017).*

It seems that certain activities are been valued and seen as normal, although one of the more striking findings was that of search for harmony within the household. In these households with more harmony is leading to more unity and therefore a more balanced decision making. Not only the social activities are influenced also the income decisions have more stable consultation with husband and wife.

*“In terms of farming activities, both the husband and wife do it together. For cooking, the things she is cooking they share, she normally cooks for the husband to eat. Now they are married, they see themselves as one people. So, they can take care of the children together.” (24h calendar HH2b wife of head hh Asanteman, 15-03-2017).*

The role of values and norms in shaping life events is an important one. It is especially important for funerals for example. The norm is to join the funeral of somebody that passed away in the community. This involves time and money, but something you must do, otherwise when somebody in your own family passed away, people do not attend and don't bring money to you.

The main role of norms and values shaping income (diversification) strategies/choices, is the traditional way of tasks division. As a married couple, they divide tasks. They often describe tasks involved a lot of strength to be done by men, like the weeding of the fallow or pounding fufu. Men tend to have upper hand in the farming activities, although many tasks subtle tasks are carried out by the women, like planting the seeds. It this traditional way of thinking the men has more saying in the farming activities and how the income is used. The women on the other hand are much more involved in cultivating the food crops and selling these on markets or in their own little shops.

### Individual and joint strategies

Starting with the discrepancy of male and female tasks, which provides an answer for the division of tasks in the more traditional households. Why are there specific male and female tasks and what are these and how these shape the choices within the household? The heterogeneity within the households for income distribution, in words of earnings and household preferences, show that these hh members have a clear division of tasks, and both hh members fulfil the strategy of the head of the household. The women cooks, take care of the children and do domestic chores. The men are working on the land and taking care of income.

*“The reason for this division of labour, it is our culture. The lady takes care of the home, sweeping and things like that. He is the head of the household. Getting to water for example, the children need to get to school. However, it is also considered as a task for the children, if they don't need to go to school yet. The children are expected the fetch the water for the elders, because this is a sign of respect.” (24h*



*calendar HH1 father, 26-01-2017).*

The households that make joint decisions and discuss within the household about how to carry out their income strategy, show the harmonious approach. This shows an interesting difference with the households that carry out more traditional ideas of task division of the previous example. Dialogues between household members illustrate Intra-household bargaining to reach decisions concerning the household unit, for example spend or save money, study or work. Bargaining is traditionally defined economically as the exchanging circumstances of a purchase or contract and is sometimes used instead of direct financial exchange. The process of bargaining within a family is one of the important aspects of family economics. It also plays a role in the households' effectiveness and decision making of households. This efficiency was noticeable in some households.

*"In first instance, he makes the decisions about the recent farming activities. When they decided to buy the land, he discussed it with his wife first. She also agreed on helping him on the land." (SSI HH5 Biemso2, 30-01-2017).*

Another example of how the productivity of the household increased through shared decision making.

*"For the farming, it's my wife and I that take the decisions. We reason together on best ways to go about our farming activities. For the other activities, the whole household decided on that. We got to know that we cannot survive only with the cocoa and that we needed to add other activities to it. So, we decided to do the small shop as an alternative source of income. For the vegetables, even if we do not sell them, we will get some to feed on. We wouldn't go out to buy them so we can save that money for other stuffs. Two heads are better than one. Maybe my decision might be wrong. So, on consultation with my wife we can be able to make decisions that will be profitable to us" (SSI head household HH3 Asanteman, 22-02-2017).*

Eventually power relations in the household have impact on the decision making. Unequal access to any savings or reserves could lead to the atmosphere in which different individuals within the household have more or less bargaining power, and therefore have more or less influence over household decision-making. However, in the previous example this idea is strengthened to show if there is more equal access to saving there is a balanced decision-making process within the household.

## Conclusions

A clear and unambiguous description of how different households and their members in cocoa growing communities shape their income (diversification) strategies cannot be narrowed down to just one or two factors. Above all, there are numerous specific circumstances that should be considered for the mobility of (young) individuals. In line with the complexity of the cocoa value chain, the





situation in cocoa growing communities is also excessively complex. This field report has tried to offer some new perspectives that help to unravel this and demystify the cocoa sector in Ghana.

The first research question was: *Why do (young) individuals and households move in and out of cocoa production and cocoa growing communities? How is this linked with availability and affordability of key resources: land, labour and financial services?* After investigating and observing the mobility of (young) individuals, it was found that both communities have similar motivations for moving in and out of cocoa growing communities. It is important to consider the push factors for moving in or staying involved in the cocoa industry and then pull factors that keeps them in the cocoa production. The main push factors for staying in the cocoa sector are:

1. Limited access to education in rural areas, especially for the parents of young people.
2. Recently, higher level educational institutions are situated in the city.
3. Agriculture and specifically cocoa is for many the best choice for income and there are no alternatives.
4. Inheritance of the cocoa farms, lead to a natural succession.

These were some push factors that have been observed for staying in cocoa. Both communities are distinct from each other in geographic situation, although it appeared that the pull factors for moving into or that draws individuals in to the cocoa sector were comparable. The main pull factors for staying in the cocoa sector:

1. Participating in cocoa leads to a future investment.
2. The lands are more fertile compared to other regions, which pulls people from the northern part of Ghana.
3. Access to land gives collateral for getting a loan, to invest in the children and gave a back-up for sickness.
4. The incentives given by the government and companies.
5. The costs of living in the cocoa communities are low compared to the costs in bigger cities.

On the other side there were certain push and pull factors that moved people out of the cocoa sector towards the city. We observed some differences between the two communities as Biemso No.2 has easier access to the city, and Asanteman was situated much more remotely. The main push factors for moving out of cocoa are:

1. The poor economic activities in the rural areas compared to the financial motion in the city.
2. The difficult access to land, which also excludes these individuals from training programs.
3. The attractiveness of the work, as it is seen as work for the 'un-educated'.
4. The environmental issues and dying crops are push factors for being pushed out of the cocoa growing communities.

Apart from the push factors the main pull factors for moving out of cocoa are:

1. Quick money and especially the nature of direct payment, which is not characteristic to cocoa.
2. Access to education in the city.
3. The pressure of relatives to join them in the cities.



#### 4. The difference of infrastructure from the village with the city.

To finalise, both push and pull factors can be interlinked. A rural community might have no tertiary education or limited economic activities which is a push factor to move away. An urbanised area on the other hand might have many tertiary schools and a vibrant economy that would then be something that attracts someone to a urban area, which is a pull factor. The fact that someone leaves the rural area directly to fulfil their needs in an urban area can be linked together, like in this example, but can also be individual, such as the need to escape poverty in a rural area.

Access to land, one of the key resources, is challenging and put barriers for (young) people to become (or remain) involved in cocoa production. Also the affordability of land is problematic as land tenure arrangements like abunu demand a payment which is for many people unaffordable. With regards to labour, another key resource, we see that the availability of labour can be challenging, particularly in the main cocoa season farmers work on their own land, which welcomed migrants from the North. One other key resource is capital, There is a lack of access to financial services, and only with land as collateral the farmers get loans from banks. Also the affordability of loans is problematic. Money lenders charge high interests. It is not uncommon that youth 'inherits' a debt, which gives youth a burden to start with.

The second research question was: *What are specific aspirations with regard to cocoa growing for youth (17-25 or 26-35; m/f). And what are challenges in relation to cocoa and what role does education play in young people's ambition to move in and/or out of cocoa?* As we have seen education is a main driver for not being involved in cocoa. The aspiration by a lot of youth is to educate themselves. Another aspiration was to make quick money and get fast returns, which is not something that is possible in cocoa farming according to them. However, some young individuals saw farming as a stepping stone to start and invest in their own business, and education would support this cause. There are different challenges for youth to get involved in cocoa production. The first challenge is the limited opportunities of becoming involved in training programs. Secondly the lack of start-up capital. A third challenge is access to land, as most land is already cultivated. Another challenge that came up was the framing of farm work by educational institutions, these institutions compared this kind of work with punishment.

Education plays a fundamental role in the ambition of youth and in the choices these young individuals make. As we have seen education is a main driver for not being involved in cocoa. The aspiration by a lot of youth is to educate themselves. If you do want to get involved in cocoa farming, education is always good to have as a backup plan. Some young individuals aspire even to return as investors to the cocoa farm, after having been educated. We are aware there has been quite some concern about the future generation of cocoa farmers, and whether or not youth is interested. This research partly confirms this lack of interest but also highlights the constraints that make youth less interested. Secondly, we can argue that less youth will not automatically mean fewer farmers, as other people, particularly migrants and current generation sharecroppers show a serious interest in cocoa farming.

The third research question was: *How does the composition of the household and major life-events (looking back 10 years from now) shape members' daily activities and income (diversification) strategies? How do age, marital status, ownership of land and migration play a role?* Different households have different interests and priorities, there are also differences between households in



how the different household members work together and have a shared vision. First the heterogeneity among households shows that different households adhere different income choices. This supports one of the aims of the larger study by KIT to look into clustering of households and develop a meaningful typology. Such a typology can be important to guide future interventions. For example, our research suggests that female headed households are more vulnerable than male headed households in terms of income and access to land. However, for food security and nutrition I would say it tends that in general female heads and female members of the household are more concerned with these food and nutrition issues. Depending on the purpose of your intervention you may want to reach out mainly to female headed households (or not).

The age is a determinant of the level of assurance and access to certain key resources. However, a detailed distinction between all age categories is difficult to make. What has become clear is that young individuals think differently than their elders and older individuals and households. It has also emerged that the household life-cycle does influence crop and investment choices. Youngest youth (17-25) in general doesn't concern themselves with long term assets, it is more about quick money and fast returns. Farmers with old cocoa farms (like the 85 year old female cocoa farmer who owned a large plot of land) not necessarily move sooner out of cocoa, but are less interested in rehabilitation of the farms because of the high risks this brings. For younger age category households the accessibility to land seems more difficult than for their elders. People migrated from another region seem to have taken more hazardous decisions on investment in cocoa production. Also life-events like sickness, marriage, divorce, pregnancy and getting children in the family shown an impact in daily and income strategies. All these events made it more difficult to provide in the households livelihood.

The last and fourth research question was: *What is the role of social relations (intra household dynamics), and the norms & values underlying these relations, in shaping daily activities, life-events and income (diversification) strategies/choices (both at individual level: 'individual strategies', as well as for the hh 'working together'?* For the intra-household dynamics we can say the following:

1. In the more traditional households you see this traditional task division in the hh, which constrain women.
2. You see that in some hh there was more cooperation between the hh members and they jointly take their decisions. There seems to be a relation between joint decision making and more resilient hh.
3. The importance of social networks and a good social network support households in their income diversification strategies.

The findings and further analysis of the data will be part of larger study on income diversification strategies (KIT, forthcoming). An overall conclusion of this research is; people (particularly youth) in cocoa growing communities tend to move out cocoa production, either by taking up other activities in the communities or by physically moving.