Market survey of *Garcinia kola* (Bitter kola) in Yaoundé city, Cameroon

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Background on Bitter kola (*Garcinia kola* H.)

- A medium-sized tree (*Clusiaceae* family) located from Sierra Leone to Angola
- Among six indigenous tree species selected by ICRAF for domestication in Cameroon
- Seeds represent the most valuable product - increasing sales ($20M in 2000 → $375M in 2014) [1,2]
- Commonly sold article at local markets: aphrodisiac, stimulant, snack or medicine for stomach problems [3,4]; profit = important source of household income
- No study exists to map existing market/value chains in Cameroon

Methodology

- Street survey in four districts in Yaoundé city with increasing distance from city centre prior to survey of markets (Fig. 1)
- Mfoundi and Mokolo markets were selected for study
- Semi-structured questionnaires (in French and English)
- Data collected during June and July 2016
- 71 respondents interviewed - 36 from streets and 35 from markets
- Data were processed in MS Office Excel version 2010

Results

- Two main group of sellers were identified: market traders and street vendors (Table)
- Street vendors divided to two groups: mobile-street vendors and stall-holders
- Both groups were price takers who followed price which were practiced by other sellers
- Different selling units: cup for 500 CFA (0.76 €) in market traders and 3 seeds per 100 CFA (0.15 €) in street vendors
- Collector was pointed as a main source of supply (for 54.8%) of all respondents
- Demographical profile of sellers and place of origin of seeds were identified (Fig. 2)

Discussion and conclusion

- One of the first survey documenting the role of street-vendors in bitter kola seeds market-chain
- Market traders were predominantly women (86%) [6] and street vendors young boys (95.6%)
- Highest prices observed in non-harvested period [7]
- During harvest, no difference observed among identified vendors
- Study proved perception of medicinal activity of bitter kola seeds among vendors
- Based on high prevalence of bitter kola seeds among taxi drivers, chewing stick could be suggested as most documented mode of use [4]
- Further studies are needed to document the role of collectors and farmers, domestication potentials and socioeconomic barriers, and margins, volumes and flow in the whole value-chain

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References


Fig. 1: Street survey in Yaoundé

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mfoundi market</th>
<th>Mokolo market</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20</td>
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<tr>
<td>20–40</td>
<td>20–40</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>Education level</td>
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<td>Main selling unit</td>
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<td>Main customer</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2: origin of sellers and place where the bitter kola was bought/harvested

Based on [5]