



Tropentag, September 15-17, 2021, hybrid conference

“Towards shifting paradigms in agriculture
for a healthy and sustainable future”

Gender Inequalities in Cocoa Farming and Farmland Ownership in Ghana

KWABENA BUABENG¹, KATHARINA LÖHR², STEFAN SIEBER³

¹*Leibniz Centre for Agric. Landscape Res. (ZALF), Sustainable Land Use in Developing Countries (SusLAND), Germany*

²*Leibniz Centre for Agric. Landscape Res. (ZALF), Sustainable Land Use in Developing Countries (SusLAND), Germany*

³*Leibniz Centre for Agric. Landscape Res. (ZALF), Sustainable Land Use in Developing Countries (SusLAND), Germany*

Abstract

Women produce more than fifty percent of the food grown worldwide. In Ghana, like in many other cocoa-producing countries, to be recognised as a cocoa farmer is primarily associated with land ownership. As land titles mostly belong to men, the role of women in agricultural production remains unrecognised. Traditional patriarchal roles have favoured men and promoted structural gender inequalities in terms of decision-making, access to and control over land for agricultural activities, and the ability to engage in more productive activities. This study assesses the role of women in the case of cocoa production and their access to cocoa farmlands. Accurate data on gender roles in cocoa production is scarce and thus makes it challenging to assess the effectiveness of gender strategies and policies on women empowerment. Drawing from the Capabilities and Vulnerabilities Analysis framework, the study aims to assess the differences between male and female participation in cocoa farming activities, focusing on the types of farm activities women participate in, why they participate, and how they significantly differ in terms of the challenges they face on the farmlands. Following the Capabilities and Analysis framework theory, a semi-structured questionnaire will be administered to farmers in the deciduous rainforest zones in the Ashanti, Western and Eastern Regions of Ghana and analysed by descriptive statistics and nonparametric statistical tests. The findings to be presented will bridge the research and policy gap of gender-sensitive research designs with appropriate sampling, which accounts for the heterogeneity among women involved in cocoa farming and, most importantly, includes hard-to-reach and especially disempowered women. The approach seeks to generate more reliable data based on the entire network of labour and kinship relations surrounding a cocoa farm and not just the household to gain a deeper understanding of the power relations revolving around cocoa production. This will allow identifying ways to effectively engage with all women involved in cocoa farming while assessing possible women-specific risks and vulnerabilities.

Keywords: *Gender equality, *Land ownership, *Participatory resource management