

# Summary of achievements and products

## Central American Cacao Project

**Belize, 2010**



## 2010 PCC results and products in Belize

This report presents the advances and results of the Central American Cacao Project (CPP) in Belize during 2010. This project is part of the Mesoamerican Agroenvironmental Program<sup>1</sup> (MAP) of CATIE (Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center). In Belize CATIE-CCP works in alliance with Toledo Cocoa Growers Association (TCGA) who is the co executor organization.

### Production and environment

**Clonal gardens:** In 2010 a 1-hectare clonal garden divided into four 0.5-acre subplots (about 0.25 ha each) was established with 256 cacao plants from six varieties selected by CATIE (CC-137, ICS-95, PMCT-58, CATIE R-1, CATIE R-4 and CATIE R-6). The plots are in the following villages: Santa Cruz, Santa Elena, Laguna and Silver Creek in the Toledo district. The Institute of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ITVET) has 70 plants that contain some 15 clones (one or two small trees) per clone of a multilocal garden (the same design in six countries) containing new varieties for research.



*Cacao plantation in Silver Creek, Punta Gorda*

The establishment of the multilocal trials has encountered delays, as have the clonal gardens. The principal reason stems from the low catch rate of the buds in the grafting process. The transport of cuttings carrying the buds for the grafts causes their deterioration, which results in low catching percentages for the grafts. Other factors that have influenced the results have been the infrastructure to develop the nurseries and adverse climate conditions. The human factor has also come into play because of the lack of personnel experienced in grafting cacao; it has been necessary to develop this capacity during the process. Achieving a 1-ha clonal garden in the field has taken nearly three years of tremendous effort. Belize now has a clonal garden for observation, evaluation and posterior use by cacao-growing families—productive, quality, Trinitarian-based varieties with important tolerance to monilia, developed by the cacao improvement program at CATIE after a process of more than 15 years of research.



*Plants ready for transplanting to the field. October, 2010.*

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<sup>1</sup> MAP is a CATIE intersectorial platform for knowledge management and innovation that uses a livelihoods focus to multiply ecologically sound, economically competitive and socially equitable uses of natural resources to achieve the management and sustainable use of land, with the goal of improving human well-being in rural areas of Mesoamerica

## Education and training

The farmer field schools (FFS) provide a practical and experiential method of training that takes place on the farms of the producer families, where a group of cacao growers share knowledge and new experiences. These FFS are facilitated by young promoters, leaders in their communities, who provide follow-up for use of the knowledge on the farms. In Belize TCGA has a team of facilitators and develops the program with technical assistance from

CATIE in more than 25 communities of the Toledo and South Stand Creek districts.

In 2010 the first phase of FFS ended, in which 421 families, 944 people (35% women) participated and 863 people from 26 communities was graduated—communities such as Maya Mopan in South Stann Creek and San Antonio, San José and Silver Creek in Toledo, among others.

During this year, the second FFS phase began, with 387 people from 189 families registered. The first session was directed to family awareness, with the topic “The Farm and the Family,” which aimed to make the families aware of the importance of the farm for food production and family income, as well as to highlight the roles played by family members on the farm and the productive processes, the role of the woman and gender equality. This session ended in January 2011. Simultaneously, the evaluation of knowledge is being done, where families are consulted about cacao production in agroforestry systems. This evaluation, continuing from the beginning to the end of the ECA cycle, allows measurement of the level of knowledge in the families at the beginning and at the end of the education course.

As a result of this process, more than 600 families will be motivated and will update their knowledge about cacao growing through the interchange of experiences and the adoption of new practices to increase cacao production on their farms and improve environmental services provided by this production system.



*Farm Field School (FFS) graduation in San Antonio, Punta Gorda*



*Farm Field School (FFS) session in San Antonio, Punta Gorda*

## Strengthening business

CATIE-PCC provides business support to the project's co-executing business organizations. TCGA has had the advice of personnel and consultants to improve its business skills, with funds to contract consultants on specific topics according to its needs. In the 2010 Operating Plan, the organization included some activities to strengthen the organization, and during the year it put a performance management system in place. Agreements with its most important client have also been achieved so that the organization works on increasing production and improving quality.



*Cyrila's cocoa-based products*

The organization Cyrila's Chocolate has received technical assistance from CCP in brand positioning, graphic image and marketing.

## Cooperation and advocacy

TCGA maintains communication with the Belize Cocoa Task Force, which includes the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Regional Unit for Technical Assistance (RUTA), CCP and TCGA, among others. The Cocoa Task Force acts in Belize as the National Coordinating Council; in 2010, though no meetings were held, close communication was maintained among the members.

In October the CATIE-TCGA alliance made a presentation to MAP donors at a national event with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and of other CATIE projects in Belize.



*Producers weighing their cacao in TCGA*

## Participatory management

Some US\$80,000 was assigned to TCGA to carry out the programmed activities. Staff of the organization participated in the project technical meetings in Talamanca, Costa Rica, and in the Evaluation Planning Workshop 2010-2011 at CATIE headquarters. A system of participatory monitoring and evaluation is in place.

## Coordination with CATIE

CATIE, together with partner institutions, executes several initiatives: the Central American Cacao Project in the Toledo district in the southern part of the country, the Mesoterra and the Forests and Forest Management (Finnfor) projects in the Cayo district (northeastern part of the country), bordering with Guatemala.



*Presentation by Armando Choco in donors visit to Belize in 2010*

## Annex

<b>Table 1. Participants in the first cycle of the field school for members of the Toledo Cacao Growers Association (TCGA) organization</b>	
Number of sessions /topics	7
Number of sessions per topic	34
Number of communities	26
Number of families	421
Participation of men	610
Participation of women	334
<b>Total number of participants</b>	<b>944</b>
% of men	65%
% of women	35%
% of heads of household	16
<b>Total number of graduates</b>	<b>863</b>
% of women graduates	38%