Connecting Cocoa Communities

To register, text ‘R’ to shortcode
2626
(Add prefix or 0266112626
without network)
World Cocoa Foundation Partnership Meeting
*October 2012*

- **Andy McCormick**
  The Hershey Company

- **Tawiah Agyarko-Kwarteng**
  World Education
Estimate: 80% + of Cocoa Farmers Will Use Cell Phones in 2015
A Big Idea

Cell phones are one of the most effective advancements in history to lift people out of poverty.
Why Farmers Want CocoaLink

- Reduces isolation
- Links communities
- Vital information
- Teaches literacy
- Modern business
- Helps their families
- Makes money
- Kids love it
Cell Phones in West Africa
### English

- In pruning your young cocoa trees, cut off low lying branches to maintain the first point of branching at a height of 1.5 m.

- Remember, farm safety is important. Be careful when using harvesting hooks or sharp cutlasses. Do not engage children in use of sharp cutlasses or harvesting hooks.

- Make it a point to spray your cocoa farm in August, September, October and December to control capsids. For effective results, use only CONFIDOR, ACTARA or AKATEMASTER.

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### Twi

- Ṣe woretwitwa wo kookoo mu amman biara a eko kookoo dua nketewa a ne tenten nnuruu basa baako ne efa no (1.5m) yi fri kookoo no mu.

- Hwe wo ho so yiye wo sɔɔsa wo nkrante namnam a wode te kookoo na ampla wo. Mma mmofra anaa Mmfa mmofra nnte kookoo.

- Bɔ mmɔdɛn sɛ wɔbɛpɛte wo kookoofuo no sɔsɔanaa, Ɛbɔ, Ahinime ne ɔpɛnimaa no mu na fa si akate ano. Nnuro pa a ebetumi adi akate yi dɛm ne “Confidor”, “Actara” anaa “Akatemaster”. 

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**150,000 Farmer Messages Delivered**
“CocoaLink has helped me because there was an argument between me and my wife on proper fermentation and drying processes; the text (SMS) cleared the issue, I now know how to dry it (cocoa) well. My purchasing clerk commended me for good dried beans this time. Previously I had no time for drying the beans. Thanks to CocoaLink for all the education and bringing the extension agents close to us - we need more from CocoaLink”
Where we work

PILOT (15 communities in Western region); EXPANSION (over 200 communities in Western, Ashanti, Eastern and Central regions)
Farmer Registration

Two ways for registration
- Via short code (done directly by farmers)
- Via mobile application (by extension agents/field officers)

Online platform

CocoaLink’s back office portal can be accessed securely on the internet; provides various services (farmer database, knowledge library, bulk messaging services, monitoring database, etc)
Two-way messaging (delivery and feedback)

CocoaLink’s platform enables the delivery of messages to all registered farmers. Farmers are also able to send in their enquiries via SMS through the short code for feedback and support.

Farmer education & training

Follow up and additional training is provided through extension agent visits to farmers in their communities.
Some key metrics

- Over 5,150 farmers registered so far; Since September, working with 4 new partners to hit target of 25,000 farmers
- Over 55 messages developed (agronomy, child labor, malaria) and over 150,000 individual SMS sent
- Over 100 extension agents and field officers supporting registration and providing farmer extension training across 4 cocoa-growing regions
Evaluations

Key findings from Baseline survey (Sept-Nov 2011)

- 277 households from 15 communities
- 96% of cocoa households with mobile phones
- Less than 50% could compose, send, read or delete SMS
- About 38% cited mobile phones as a source of production and price information (80% cited radio)
- About 10% of respondents had ever received expert information via phone; about 30% had ever received agricultural information from their fellow farmers
- Average yield of 2.6 bags (166.4Kg) per acre

Midterm evaluation ongoing (Oct-Nov 2012)

External impact evaluation planned: focus will be on assessing farmer behaviors based on CocoaLink engagement
Lessons Learned

- COCOBOD leadership essential
- Sustainability through COCOBOD
- Powerful literacy tool
- 24/7 IT capability; need ongoing technical support
- Catalyst for farmer conversations
- Need to close gap with women farmers
- Platform for young farmers
A Powerful Communications & Messaging Platform

Sustainability  Community  Low-Cost  Measurable  User-Focused
From 2013, CocoaLink will be fully operational in both Ghana and Cote D’Ivoire.

We welcome new partners, public and private.

We would like to hear from you.

Please contact the CocoaLink team:

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