

9th General Assembly

I- OPENING CEREMONY

On Monday morning, April 26, 2021, delegates proceeded to register and set them up in the conference room where the opening ceremony was to take place.

After the opening of the regional meeting on African Robusta Cafés by the Minister of Trade, Industry, Promotion of Local Consumption and the Private Sector, Mr. Kodjo Sévon-Tépe ADEDZE, the Representatives of the World Bank, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (ONUDI) and ITC presented their intervention in the framework of the ACP-EU Programme.

This opening ceremony also saw the participation in person and videoconference of several personalities, representing international organizations and donors. In particular, the World Bank, ONUDI, the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OEACP), the International Coffee Organization (ICO)...

Immediately after the Chairman of the Organizing Committee delivered his welcome speech to all the delegates and distinguished guests, several speeches followed one another.

After all the customary speeches, all participants made a symbolic toast in honor of the Robusta Cafés of Africa.

II- ACTIVITIES

The work of the various workshops began in the afternoon of Monday 26 and continued until Thursday 29 April afternoon.

In the afternoon of Monday, following the opening ceremony, the audience was built on the ACP/EU-ACRAM Programme by the various Representatives of the Programme Implementing Agencies.

a. The International Trade Centre (ITC) partners in Africa are the Robusta Coffee Agency of Africa and Madagascar (ACRAM), the Interprofessional Cocoa and Coffee Council (CICC), the Farmers Union Network of Liberia (FUN) and the Coffee Federation of Ghana. Its objective is to promote the marketing and added value of Robusta Coffee.

b. The World Bank proposes activities related to the adoption and implementation of new investments that would adapt to the environment of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

c. The objective of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (ONUDI) is to promote best practices in investment promotion in order to benefit from the experience gained

through national programmes. ONUDI listed some of the achievements of the programme already in force in Cameroon.

The activities took place on two levels:

Level 1. Meeting of ACRAM technical Committees

- **Youth, Marketing and Promotion Committee**

The said Committee was chaired by His Excellency, Mr. Aly TOURE, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the Commodity Organizations in London. Several presentations were made, namely that of the Executive Secretary of ACRAM, Mr. Ismaël NDJEWE, who spoke on the potential of the ACRAM Coffee field.

Dr Denis SEUDIEU, Chief Economist of the ICO, highlighted in his speech the challenges of the African Coffee Sector and in particular, the Robusta.

Mr. Béma COULIBALY, Director of Economic Affairs of the OPCW, in turn, made a presentation on the activities carried out and not carried out in view of Covid 19.

After all these communications, several recommendations were made to the ACRAM General Assembly.

- **Gender Committee**

The Gender Committee chaired by the Right Honourable Patricia Hermine NDAM NJOYA saw the participation of several women in person and by videoconference. The various focal points made presentations on the state of the sector in their respective countries in the current pandemic context, particularly on the socio-economic impact of the health crisis on women involved in the sector.

The zoom participants, namely, Ms Bénédicte CHATEL, from Commodafrica, Hilary BARRY, from the NGO LADYAGRI and Blanca Maria Castro from the NGO International Women Coffee Alliance, also made presentations on the interventions that their organizations are carrying out in coffee-producing countries, support for the Gender approach and how this can be implemented in the ACRAM space.

Several recommendations were made to the General Assembly (see the report enclosed).

- **Cooperation and Transfer of Technology Committee**

This Committee was held under the chairmanship of Dr Pascal Komlan WEGBE, former Director of Research and Development at the IACO.

The main items on the agenda were the presentation of the Acram Coffee Academy project and the ACRAM-CIRAD collaboration that would build on the Framework Agreement signed between the two organizations.

Indeed, following the communications of CIRAD researchers, followed by that of Dr. LEGNATHE who presented the Regional Program on the Varietal Improvement of African Robusta, strong and sustained recommendations were made to the ACRAM General Assembly.

The Report of work and recommendations are recorded in appendices.

- **Administration and Finances Committee**

This committee was chaired by Mr. Eris Séraphin NDJIBILA, Advisor to the Director General of the Stabilization and Equalization Fund. At the beginning of the work, information was given on the assignment to Libreville (Gabon) of an ITC Technical Advisor in the person of Mr. Mory DIAWARA, for a period of one year.

Speaking in turn, the Executive Secretary briefed the Assembly on the start of the implementation of the ITC/ACRAM Memorandum of Understanding.

Given the unavailability of some of ACRAM's statutory members, the Committee decided to defer to the General Assembly to convene an Extraordinary General Assembly to discuss several outstanding agenda items.

The report of the work and the recommendations will be recorded in the appendix.

Level 2. Focal points and National Experts Training of the ACP/UE Programme.

The various focal points and National Experts of the ACP/EU Programme followed one another to present each other the current situation of their country, namely:

1. Ghana

Represented by the delegation of the Coffee Federation of Ghana (CFG), Executive Secretary Ivy made a presentation on the sector's priority actions under the project. She recalled the alignment of the project with national and governmental priorities, as well as the work undertaken with COCOBOD.

2. Cameroun

The national expert of Cameroon Mr. Régis SIMO presented the situation of the coffee sector in the country and the activities planned for the year 2021. Mr. ESSONO, Director of Operations of CICC Cameroon and ACRAM focal point of the project stressed the need for targeted actions for certain actors. In terms of sharing experiences on the inclusion of young people in the sector, he

mentioned the "New Generation" program. Funded by the CICC, this program is a model of success that could be duplicated and adapted to the realities of the different program countries. The programme has nearly 500 young people willing to integrate it.

As other tools to promote the consumption of coffee and cocoa in Cameroon, the CICC organizes every last Wednesday of the month, tasting sessions for the general public, in the main cities of the country.

3. Liberia

The presentation of the coffee sector in Liberia was made by Mrs Josephine George Francis, President of the Farmers Union Network (FUN). After a historical reminder of the importance of Robusta coffee for the Liberian economy, she stressed that this sector is supported by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Also, in terms of marketing, Liberica, a special variety has experienced significant exports to the United Arab Emirates in the past and the objective of the Network is to strengthen the presence of this country on this market and that of the Maghreb. Madam President gave a brief description of the sector, including governance policies and the importance of agriculture in general and coffee in particular..

4. DR of Congo

Mr Serge LUTAUDILA and Mrs Regine TIKA have built us up on the situation in their country.

They have told us that the recruitment of the national expert is almost complete and activities will begin very soon. In six (6) months, it is planned to:

- (i) Carry out adaptation activities;
- (ii) Identify needs according to the objectives of the program;
- (iii) Raise producers' awareness of the objectives of the project and the grouping of producers into cooperatives (where it does not exist). They will take place from 01 to 30 June 2021 in the various sites selected (Kongo central, Mai-ndombé, Kwilu, Kwango).

The objective is to identify the strengths, weaknesses and priorities of Robusta producers.

5. Togo

Mr. Cyrille MBAGYOM, focal point of the program highlighted, during his presentation, the experience of Togo was highlighted through the existence of an Agricultural Microfinance.

This microcredit institution was created in October 2000 by coffee and cocoa producers in Togo. It grants marketing credits to cooperatives selected after the collection of the products. This allows the producer to dispose of the money before the sale to exporters through their umbrella organization.

Other credits, in particular for the purchase of inputs, are granted to them. The interest rate of the credit is between 18 and 23%.

Repayment is made by payment to the microfinance account of the umbrella organization. The microfinance company deducts the loan amount and interest, and the rest is transferred to the umbrella organization's account.

This tool solves the problem of financing primary commercialization in countries.

Togo is, however, willing to provide additional information on this tool..

6. Côte d'Ivoire

His Excellency Ambassador Aly TOURE, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the Commodity Organizations in London, reiterated the need for the inclusion of participants from Côte d'Ivoire in regional activities within the framework of this project. He was reassured that all ACRAM members will participate in the testing of the Cafés, in particular with the CAFE LAB.

Other training activities and visits to THE COUNTRIES OF THE ACRAM space to share experiences will also be open to members.

Mr. Nanga COULIBALY, Technical Advisor to the Director General of the Cocoa Coffee Council also reiterated the need to appoint a focal point of this project for the coordination of activities.

The main objective is to ensure that the prices of the coffees from the program reach those of the Brazilian Nature by 2024 at the latest.

All targeted actions of the programme will contribute to this overall objective.

The cafés from the programme will serve as an example for possible future actions in the sector and beyond.

The three (3) main pillars of the program are the organization (capacity building) of the actors of the sector, the increase of the productivity of the plants (quantity and quality) and the guarantee of a better remuneration (price) of the coffees.

The global programme for the coffee sector will contribute to:

- Ensure a better organization of beneficiaries;
- Facilitating investment attraction;
- Promote ACRAM Robusta coffees (Quality, Packaging-Trade Fairs).

III- ACRAM GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CLOSING CEREMONY

The morning of Friday, April 30, 2021 was devoted to the beginning of the work of the 9th General Assembly, under the chairmanship of Mr. Enselme GOUTHON, also Secretary General of the Coordinating Committee of the Cocoa and Coffee Sectors (CCFCC) Togo.

The various Chair-Presidents of the committees have alternately made the economy of the work of their committees punctuated by the recommendations to the Sovereign General Assembly.

The various reports of the said committees are annexed to it.

The closing ceremony was held in the afternoon of Friday under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Promotion of Local Consumption and the Private Sector.

After the word of the President of ACRAM, the floor was given to the Executive Secretary to read the Resolutions of the 9th General Assembly. Following the reading of the Resolutions, the various delegates were invited to make their comments and remarks for amendment.

Following this phase, four Heads of foreign delegations took the podium to read the various motions of thanks to the Head of State of the Republic of Togo, the European Union, the OIF, ACP and ITC. Heads of State of the Republics of Cameroon and Gabon and a final motion against the Togolese people.

Immediately afterwards, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Promotion of Local Consumption and the Private Sector representing the Minister delivered the Closing Speech marking the end of this meeting..

The curtains fell in Lome in the evening by a gala dinner hosted by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Togolese government.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Report of Youth, Promotion and Marketing Committee

Appendix 2: Report of Gender Committee

Appendix 3: Report of Cooperation and Transfer of Technology Committee

Appendix 4: Report of Administration and Finances Committee

Appendix 5: Resolutions of the 9th ACRAM G A

- Presentations by the World Bank, UNIDO and ITC can be downloaded from the following link: <https://we.tl/t-7k1T8wFrPN>