

# HISTORICAL, ETHNOGRAPHY AND SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW ON WOMEN'S AGRARIAN SYSTEMS IN AFRICA: THE CASE FOR THE NIGERIAN COCOA INDUSTRY

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## INTRODUCTION

This review explores the roles played by women in agriculture with reference to the APRA mandate crop - Cocoa. The potentials of women to agricultural growth are highlighted as well as the factors limiting their contribution to agricultural development.

## FEATURES OF AGRARIAN FARMING SYSTEMS



- Advocacy for agricultural commercialisation is on the increase.
- Three models of commercial agriculture:
  - ❖ Large-scale plantations;
  - ❖ Contract farming; and
  - ❖ Small and medium commercial farms.
- Nigeria's cocoa farmers largely belong here



Plate 1 1: Woman with harvested cocoa pods



plate 2: Small scale cocoa farm

## WOMEN IN NIGERIA'S COCOA INDUSTRY

- Men's involvement in cocoa production appears high,
  - But women indeed contribute more.
- Women achieve 20 to 30 per cent lower agricultural productivity than men, partly due to child dependency.
- The argument for targeting women in agricultural productivity are:
  - ❑ Their productive potential
  - ❑ They represent an important group of beneficiaries of agricultural development efforts.
- BUT:
  - Women farmers have less access to essential inputs
  - lesser control over land
  - financing.
  - Lower wages when hired
  - Non-payment on family farms
  - Less opportunities for training
- They are involved in :
  - Small scale cocoa plantations
  - Post harvest processes especially pod breaking, fermentation and drying
- Processing:
  - Black soap
  - Cocoa product is a niche commodity.



## CONCLUSION

Literature on gender and agriculture have shown that participation and its impacts are not gender blind.

A gender approach to development is necessary in order to give priority to women. This is essentially important owing to the multiple roles played by women in the society.

## REFERENCES

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## Acknowledgement

Funded by UK AIDS  
from the UK  
GOVERNMENT



Funded by UK aid from the UK Government