SENCAB
Sustainable Enterprise and Capacity Building Initiative

AFRIKA-PROJEKT

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPROACH

INCREASING INDIGENOUS VALUE CHAIN CAPACITIES



Anamase Community – BIRIM SOUTH DISTRICT
Eastern Region – Ghana

by
Sophia Akushie Wittmann (Dr.)
and
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A Community Level Support Project between The Sustainable Enterprise and Capacity Building Initiative (SENCAB) Ghana
and
The Agricultural Resource Management Programme of the Afrika Projekt e.v
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NOTE

The role of traditional leaders within communities, in recent times, has experienced an interface. International organisations as well as civil society groups seek the opportunity to collaborate with local communities in supporting poverty reduction initiatives.

Core problems to meet these opportunities include the relatively little documented information which should act as a guide for development actors to enable them create inroads together with traditional authority and local indigenous organization as partners in development.

Despite challenges arising, our traditional role and duty in creating the required atmosphere for communal development remains unchanged. With the challenge of sustaining local industry, the onus lies on communal leaders in mobilizing local organization to fulfil this task. It is the hope that the increase in the range of stakeholders at the community level should pave the way and create the needed support to increase sustainability in local industry.

Osabarima Nana Tabi Anom II

TRADITIONAL LEADER - AKIM ANAMASE
ANAMASE COMMUNITY - BIRIM SOUTH DISTRICT
EASTERN REGION - GHANA

NOTE

Local industry in the Birim South District faces a range of challenges. Within most communities in the district, a large number of inhabitants, with an often over 50% count of women, largely depend on natural resources and cultivation as a major source of livelihood. The majority of local actors, directly engaged in, and whose livelihood is dependent on these resources, are often unable to have the ability to advocate and voice out their opinion, due to weak civic engagement channels. Overtime, this has led to an unsustainable local industry and a continued cycle of poverty, creating a stalemate in income generation and improved living standards.

The introduction of technical support for the Anamase community in cassava production, a staple and main stay of livelihood for the farming community creates an opening for local industrial development. This will support increased participation of local enterprise groups coordinated by local traditional authority and local government towards an improved processing of produce for bettered quality, and pave the way for an increased value in the marketing of the product.

The presence of support for the local group within the community will create a multiplicator effect in compelling communal support towards the improvement of local industry within the district. The growth of stakeholder relations in the management of assistance will compel local stakeholders fulfill their social responsibility with the local community.

In this vein, stakeholder assistance is expected to support the development of indigenous sustainable practices in cultivation and processing of the staple, as well as fully participate in the introduction of methods adding value to processing activities in the bid to create sustainable livelihoods and reduce poor management of local resource through negative practices.

District Assembly Remarks

BIRIM SOUTH DISTRICT
EASTERN REGION – GHANA

District Stakeholder Gathering – Birim South District

FOREWORD

In recent times, the need to support an active local civil society and to cooperate with traditional authority and indigenous organization as against external influence with top bottom approaches has become more widely practiced.

Organsations engaged in capacity building have in the recent past concentrated more on working with local groups and local authority in capacity building processes to develop and sustain local industry. The aim of these engagements have been to create an avenue to efficiently build rapport with rural civil society, to ensure direct impact in the execution of programmes. Based on the paucity of information on local organization in rural industry in development for still a wide range of marginalized communities, the gap remains in the creation of sufficient information to act as guide to external development bodies, to ensure adequate and participatory development approaches in their inclusion of local actors in sustainable economic development.

The Afrika Projekt e.V, has overtime been implementing agricultural and resource management projects with the aim towards supporting marginalised communities within Africa. The core aim of the organization is to forge partnerships with local NGO's involved in supporting local organization and strengthening civil society in rural communities, and in the planning and execution of support programmes.

With the aim of supporting similar developmental processes in rural Ghana, Afrika Projekt collaborated with SENCAB Ghana, in identifying and sourcing technical assistance to local women's groups within the Anamase community in the Birim South District of the eastern region. The project took the form of a research to identify existing local industry potential, as well as engage with local economic actors towards supporting processing activities, with the aim of improving produce quality, thereby improving local value chain processes towards improved and sustained income generation.

In the execution of this task, I wish to acknowledge Mr Ralph Meier and Mrs. Karin Eilers of the Afrika Projekt eV, who supported and collaborated with SENCAB Ghana in the execution of the assignment, without whom the research and technical support would not have been accomplished.

Profound gratitude goes to Mr Bernard Guri, Executive Director of the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organisational Development (CIKOD) and the organization as a whole for the intense partner role played particularly in the research process.

I particularly wish to acknowledge the efforts of the chief and people of Anamase, for their readiness to cooperate and share knowledge with the research team, without whom the entire project would not have been realized.

Sophia Akushie Wittmann (Dr.)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - SENCAB

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CIRM	Community Institutional Research Mapping
CD	Community Development
ID	Indigenous Knowledge
RED	Rural Enterprise Development
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
LG	Local Government
DCE	District Chief Executive
TA	Traditional Authority

LIST OF FIGURES AND DIAGRAMS AND BOXES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Findings

The collaborative support programme in the Akim Anamase traditional area revealed a number of findings, suggesting in general, that there is an active community indigenous system around which local actors organize their livelihood and sustenance.

Specifically, the project identified a range of issues within the Akim Anamase traditional area:

- A traditional local governance system with a clear structure of authority (Chief, Queen mother, elders, and opinion leaders) based on which communal organization is structured
- An established social support system based on trust and reciprocity (the family/clan system as well as for projecting women's interest (Queen mother representation)
- Crop cultivation - Cassava and palm cultivation as comprising the main stay forms of livelihood with cultivation dominated by males and with women supporting on farms
- Staple and palm fruit transportation is an activity mainly carried out by women, with men supporting where there are challenges in transportation (heavy/large quantities)
- Cassava processing - Women are engaged - doing the actual work for local and commercial purposes, however majority of the businesses are owned by men
- The traditional practice of cassava processing (cutting, milling, drying and roasting) is undertaken through indigenous practices, without the opportunity of modern equipment for processing
- Engagement in other cultivation forms as a means of livelihood sustenance to supplement low income from cassava staple and palm fruit
- An absence of tailor - made training opportunities for quality produce processing, and marketing

Development Implications

The support project was established at the community level, with the presence of predominantly indigenous local industry activity, and parallel attempts at meeting challenges experienced in indigenous industry engagements through seeking support for modern industry processes and sustained produce value.

The predominant existence of indigenous processing systems and the insufficient acquisition of support for modern industry assistance has implications for the development of value chain systems in rural industry and community resource management for improved income levels and sustained poverty reduction at a range of levels:

- Strategies aimed at supporting rural industry will impact more positively on the marginalized groups if support institutions and organisations ensure a holistic inclusion of traditional authority and indigenous enterprise groupings in decision making processes
- In programme planning, execution and monitoring, a clear ownership process should be developed where external support teams create the basis for a solid partnership tailor made to fit into indigenous organizational processes, rather than the development of external project planning tools which exclude the full commitment of indigenous groups
- The mobilization of resources to support the sustainability of enterprise assistance should indicate a clear involvement and support from local groups
- To enable adequate mobilization and a thorough utilization of local resources, there is the need to ensure local groups clearly identify the support project with their culture and indigenous systems
- Unclear identification of assistance with indigenous identity, as well as unclear benefit sharing processes create stalemates in project assistance progress

Recommendations

For development in rural industry as the case is for Anamase, it is recommended that development assistance create pilot projects as a testing ground jointly experimented and in partnership with traditional authority, local government and indigenous organization as key stakeholders in the process.

In the execution of a such pilot project, external support bodies and stakeholders should partner with representatives of indigenous organization and traditional authority in the planning, implementation and monitoring system developed. The criteria set by stakeholders should then be measured, based on the development of impact indicators set, which provide the basis to create a multiplicator effect in extending the process developed to other target communities.

The support project identified other areas needing further investigation. These include:

- Promoting gender equity in ownership and income generation in cultivation, processing and marketing
- Land ownership and access rights in the cultivation of the produce in supporting sustainability and increased income levels
- The current role of middlemen and women (marketing and credit)
- Increasing market linkage capacities through group credit sourcing, produce accreditation and advocacy skills

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Akim Anamase Community- Eastern Region – Birim South District

Figure 1 – Map of Ghana showing the Eastern Region

The Akim Anamase community is based in the Birim South District within the Eastern Region, bordering Akim Oda, with Akim Swedru as district capital. The ethnic groups within the community comprise the Akyem, Kwahu, Krobo and Guans, with a minority of other Akan ethnic groups. The traditional area is under the administrative authority of the Eastern region, implying the political demarcation with Akim Oda being the capital of the Birim Central Municipal District. In Anamase, the chief holds traditional authority, supported by an advisory council of elders for decision making in traditional matters and representing the chief in his absence. The District Chief Executive represents local government authority within the district.

Infrastructure

Access to the community is poor. Buildings within the community are partly made from cement and roofed with corrugated sheets or thatch. The vicinity has no professionally constructed forms of drainage creating waterlog around dwelling places particularly in rainy seasons. The community

portrays scattered clusters of mud built houses. Most households use handmade bricks for housing. The community has minimal social amenity facilities. Although electrification has been partly developed, a large section of the community remains unconnected.

A minimal number use liquid petroleum gas. Kerosine fuelled lamps are mostly used within the community, as well as wood and charcoal for domestic purposes.

Health and Sanitation

The community is undersourced in terms of health and sanitary facilities with lack of regular attendance of medical personnel. The poor road network and distance of bad road to be covered, as well as the non-availability of power poses a problem for health personnel. With poor sanitary facilities, the common use in the community remains the use of conservancy systems. In terms of potable water, the community depends on a few sources of pipe borne water supposed to serve the entire community with other sources being untreated water from shallow hand dug wells.

Education

The community could use improved educational facilities, with the need for facility support especially above the primary level. In terms of formal educational training centres. There are hardly any facilities aside a couple of primary, and a junior secondary school. There is a lack of permanent trained teachers in comparison to the school going population. Teaching material and infrastructure are insufficient.

Climate and Vegetation

Anamase lies within the wet semi-equatorial climatic zone which experiences substantial amount of precipitation. This is characterized by a bi-annual rainy season between May – June and September – October. Vegetation is mainly characterized by thick and evergreen undergrowth dense with cash crop trees. The community falls within the semi-deciduous rainforest region implying high rainfall patterns for crop cultivation. Aside palm cultivation, the climate proves ideal for cultivation of the cassava staple, with soil type - partly clay - like) accompanying regular rainfall patterns

Farm land and Agricultural Practice

Within the community, commercial farming is practiced on a scanty scale, aimed at income for household costs. Subsistence farming takes up the majority of agricultural activity on large scale basis. Land for farming is acquired through leasing (from traditional authority) as well as through inherited family land, self - owned land and share cropping.

Aside the cultivation of oilpalm, one of the major crops within the region, other main cashcrops cultivated include cassava, maize, cocoa, cocoyam, avocado pear, citrus fruits, coconuts, vegetables and plantain.

Individual farming has been practiced overtime with the capacity of farmland for local entrepreneurs ranging from between 1-5 acres, the majority farming on one (1) acre. Few cases within the community register ownership of up to 10 acres per individual, however with the accompanying challenge of acres being scattered and not located within one vicinity. Rare instances indicated ownership of up to 40 acres.

General cultivation practices included weeding and burning for the clearing of farm lands, with high practice of weedicide and pesticide use. Manual composting methods are rare due to the capacity of workforce in relation to farm size, making the option of spraying easier.

Palm and Cassava cultivation has particularly seen the heavy use of fertilizers and pesticides. Being heavily cultivated within the region as one of the major staples, recent developments within the community has witnessed higher cultivation volumes in attempts to move from subsistence farming towards cultivation for more commercial purposes. This has been witnessed through attempts by traditional land holding cultivators to increase farm land (acres) and expand from the typical size of 1 acre to 2-5 acres for small scale growers. Remarkably more land rights are being acquired by women indigenous entrepreneurs, which serves as a positive development in the coordination of land acquisition, based on earlier traditional rights giving land ownership to heads of families, a position usually held by males. Similarly, an increase in processing of the crop has been realized, though still through indigenous methods such as hand grating, filling cassava mulch in sacks to ooze and dry, and hand roasting with naked fire. The tendency is thus through increasing cultivation quantity in acre size, to improve processing quality thereby potential for market access towards increasing sustainable livelihoods.

Likewise, palm cultivation realized intense fertilizer usage. Particularly for small acre farm holders, the practice over time in using fertilizers for larger nut size created a short-term advantage for marketing of the larger palm nut due to its attractiveness. Storage and quality of the fertilized nut overtime proved less advantageous due to the side effects of fertilizer damaging quality and fibre value of the nut.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The Afrika Project technical support was based on the considerations of supporting an increase in produce capacity towards improved income generation.

Cassava and palm production being one the main staples and being heavily engaged in within the community industry following palm production, an information gathering process was initiated by

SENCAB before the onset of project support, revealing challenges in cultivation and staple processing amongst which were:

- **Cultivation and Storage**

  Increasing land access, particularly for women small farm holders (in traditional land inheritance practices *Usuf rights*) where land titles are usually directly handed over to males, thus less opportunity overtime to enable the full capacity development of female entrepreneurs. The developments regarding more open access to land on long lease particularly for female entrepreneurs provides the opening to support capacity building.

  Harmful traditional cultivation methods such as bush burning and felling for the clearing of farm space for crop cultivation on large scale within the farming vicinity, as well as the use of harmful chemicals and pesticides in crop cultivation. Inadequate storage facilities as well proved a challenge, where harvested crop as well as partly processed produce was exposed in the open to weather hazards, reducing quality of crop in marketing.

- **Processing**

  The technical support provided for the project was in the form of a cassava and corn processing machine (double usage) primarily for the milling of cassava towards reducing time waste in manual grating practices, increase hygiene processes and reduce physical dangers in naked hand grating, as well as increase production quantity and quality. These challenges in community industry led to project considerations with the Afrika Projekt in supporting production capacities to provide and increase income generated.

  The project support was thus concretely intended to:

  - Create the opportunity, especially for the selected women's enterprise group, to increase their production capacities.
  - Generate an increased income through the subsidised use of the machine in increased production to enhance market potential.
  - Reduce incidence of spoilage and waste of the crop as well as unhygienic processing standards to increase crop market value.
  - Provide the opportunity for the women's group to exhibit the multiplicator effect for other communal small enterprise groups through an increased value chain process in the improved processing quality.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

Figure 2 – Section Interviews – Community Representatives and Traditional Leader

Approach to the research involved the use of a range of techniques, including qualitative and quantitative analysis. Initial focus group discussions were held with traditional leadership (chief and elders). Elected individual members within the community heavily engaged occupationally in the cultivation and processing of cassava, as well as general local entrepreneurs within the community were interviewed to ascertain views and perceptions from various angles regarding enterprise development generally and with specific reference to the cassava crop. Local government members and representatives, members of the unit committee (represented in the district assembly) were as well interviewed.

Quantitative interviews comprised structured Information gathered from local entrepreneurs, whose cassava and palm fruit cultivation and processing activities comprised at least 50% of their economic engagements. Similarly, qualitative interviews were conducted with stakeholders

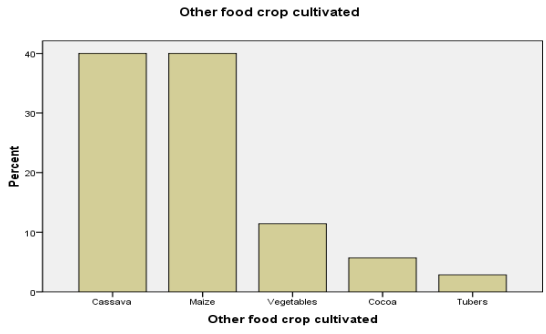
comprising traditional leaders and members of the district assembly body who contributed to the compilation of information on the state of enterprise and developmental challenges within the community.

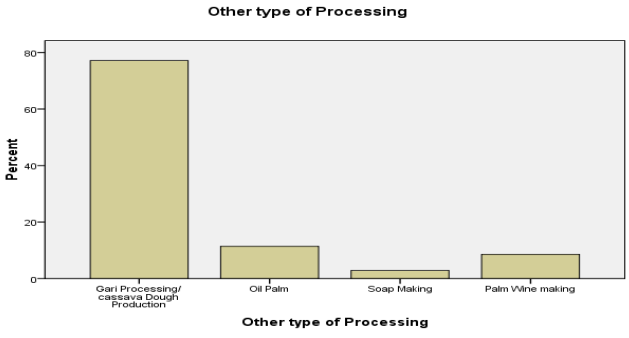
For purposes of the support project, a community focused case study approach was designed to allow for an in-depth view of issues surrounding enterprise functions. Despite similarities in entrepreneurial practice across rural communities in production processes, each community, based on cultural backgrounds, prove unique in various ways with regard to local organisation and inter- relations among traditional institutions.

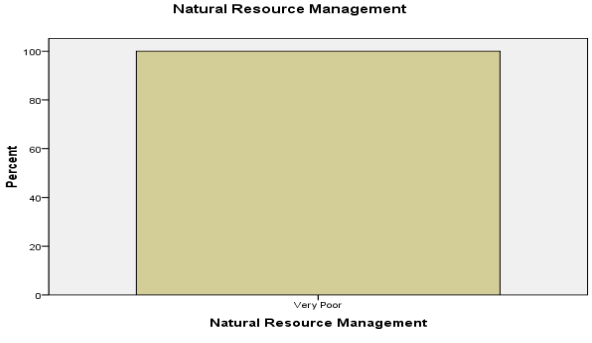
Findings drawn from the process were discussed with community representatives for validation to allow for clarification of unclear areas, which was used as a base to engage in the support project. Information further processed comprised a synthesis and collation of community reports from community opinion leaders, compiled in a set of core outcomes:

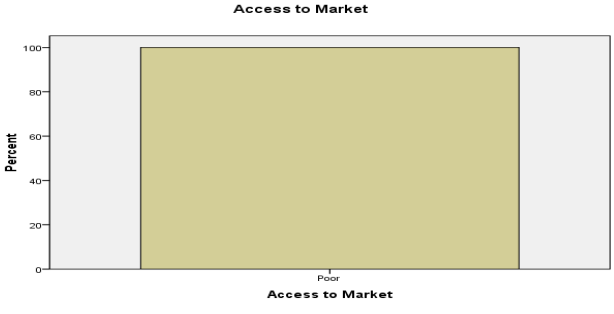
- For processing practices, production and access to market, a mixed group of both cassava and palm fruit growers were interviewed using a focused group discussion techniques. A total number of 10 people participated in the survey on Palm processing. Majority of the people interviewed were men. Their ages range between 34 to 64 years. Apart from 3 people who had dual occupations as in driver and trader, the rest were all farmers who cultivated a variety of crops. According to people interviewed, both subsistence and commercial farming was practiced. Commercial farming was however not on large scale but was done to make a living.
- Land for farming is acquired through lease holding, self-owned land, family lands, share cropping, nothing was said of stool lands being used for farming. Individual farming has been the practice for a long time with people farming on land between 1 to 5 acres. It was recorded from the people interviewed that some owned land of more than 10 acres but are not all in one place. It was also mentioned that other people may have more acres of farm land which can add up to about 40 acres.
- Besides the oil palm, farmers cultivate major cash crops such as cocoa, citrus and the major food crops include maize, cassava, cocoyam, avocado pear, coconuts, vegetables, and plantain. The major practice used on the farm is weeding and burning the weeds on the farm, some also sprayed with weedicide, with this practice taking precedence. The practice of composting was rare due to the large size of farms, the easier alternative being to spray with chemicals.

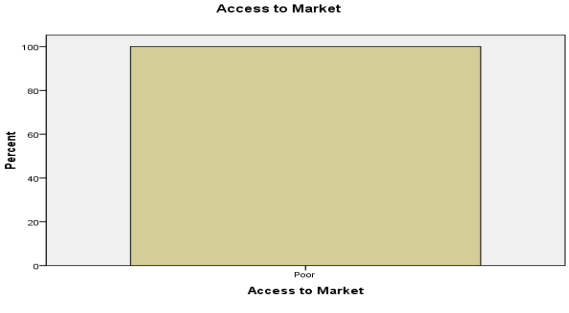
Box 1 – Survey Results - Respondent Distribution

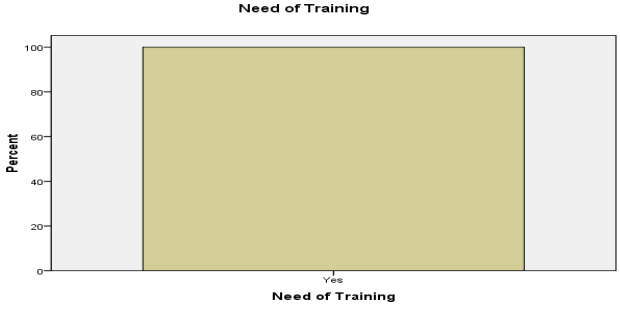


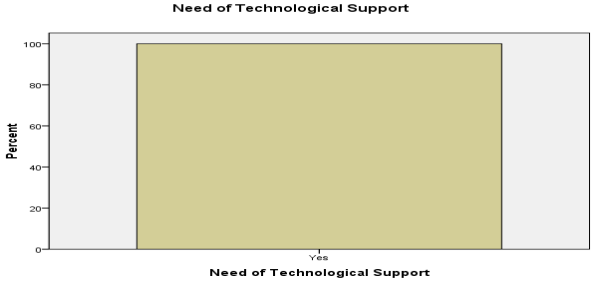












Box 2 – Interviewees – Comments

Comments – Respondent Local (Indigenous) Palm Processor

"Currently there are no organizations supporting the palm processing in the community. However, such support will be welcomed to create jobs in the community. There have also not been linkages with the local government with regards to enterprise support from the DCE in the community."

Box 3 – Interviewees - Comments

Comments – Respondent - Local Palm fruit Producer-

"We need to have a stronger system regulating our produce. The profits depend on the various palm fruit varieties. Markets and cultivators, need to be educated on the bad quality of the large and juicy palm fruits, which have been heavily chemically fertilized, so that our organic products have the chance to penetrate the market. We can then support the quality value chain better.

Box 4 – Interviewees - Comments

Comments Cassava Processor

"I think our main challenge here is the technology to help us dry and process the milled cassava easily, what we are now doing takes several days, and in the rainy season, even more. We are able to process too little at a time. Also, the various varieties of cassava sold to us creates a challenge in the quality of our product. If the producers are encouraged to grow the raw produce organically, we will have a more uniform set of produce delivered to us, with a standard quality. We can then be sure of an improved quality, and marketing of our processed cassava – Gari."

2 COMMUNAL INSTITUTIONS AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

In the past decades, community organisation in rural enterprise has been focused on as an avenue towards supporting the improvement of local small scale agriculture into sustained commercial forms. The essence of improving rural enterprise lies in the bulk of the country's agricultural produce being from rural enterprise. The country's dependence on agriculture for sustenance of the economy is depicted in the country's exports dominated by primary agricultural produce.

Recent developments have recognized traditional agricultural practices and indigenous knowledge as a source of innovation in enhancing rural enterprise capacities. Formal agricultural research shows the challenge of low human capacity of small scale farmers to innovate methods towards enhancing agricultural produce and processing capacities. Additionally, local organization largely lack the capacity to create platforms in raising awareness particularly on women's knowledge base in indigenous cultivation and processing practices. Rural family farmers still lack the capacity to be recognized towards steering processes for agricultural growth to improve productivity, where most small farmers still rely on traditional practices as against the potential to integrate new innovative methods.

In view of the opportunity community organization offers, the ability to draw on useful indigenous methods, as well as supporting development agents in proposing areas for capacity building to release the potential within these communities, examining functions of institutions in the project community will be useful.

2.1 Issues from Literature and Consultations

In delving into communal enterprise, primary focus is laid on indigenous institutions and local functional organizations and their potential as change agents in enterprise, implying need for description and functions relating to these structures.

Indigenous communal organisation and institutions shall refer to the societal structures in which norms, values, and beliefs that guide human interaction in any particular communities are present. Indigenous institutions additionally refer to the leadership structures within the community (chiefs, queen mothers, among others) and their functional roles which ensure that the norms and values of the community are respected. These largely reflect the indigenous knowledge system or culture of the people. Local Organizations within communities additionally refer to units around which community organisation is structured. These are typically presented in the form of Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) and Cooperative Unions among others. In increasing producer link structures communally, these representative organisations have been recognized as playing a vital role towards increasing supporting growth in value chain development within the sub region. Webber & Labaste (2010)

Uphoff (1988) as well as Olson (1965) reiterate further in describing such structures as 'organizations which act on behalf of and are accountable to their membership and which are involved in development activities'. Adjei (2001) particularly recognizes the value of dense socio - cultural network in small holder engagements, which is parallelly reflected in Altenburg (2006) recognizing small holder engagements with the potential to ignite sustainable produce value chain linkages

2.2 Anamase - Local Organisation – Context, Structure and Function

Anamase – Institutions – Structure and Function

Functional Institutions

The structure and function of local organisation within the Anamase community is represented by a range of Functional Indigenous Organisations (FIOs) on which focus is laid in support of enterprise development. These refer to indigenous local structures and organisation such as *Nnoboa* (community self-help) groups, which are a form of community labour pooling groups for farming in support of each other's farming activity. The activities of these traditional groups are seasonal in nature, functional during the peak farming season of May- October.

The range of community institutions are identifiable in terms of being organized based on local structure systems. These are exhibited by a number of community based institutions, including clan groupings, that are stable and prominent.

Religious based associations vary in nature with Faith Based Associations being more prominently projected. Occupational engagements are identified in the form of associational groupings within the community, with producer structures based on traditional belief practices and systems. These include groupings such as Citrus Farmers Association, Cocoa Farmers Association, and Palm Producers Association amongst others.

Local organization is additionally identified in the existence of *Susu* (community savings and loans) groups, being structures through which rural families organize their socio-economic activities for livelihood. These are indigenous self-help groups established by local people based on their own criteria in response to the need for mutual financial support to tackle individual/community challenges. Based on a rotating self-help scheme, members pay regular sums into the scheme, with the ability of members to draw from the scheme in a rotating manner.

These functional structures represent self - initiated, self-help groups, are usually not dependent on external support and prove their sustainability in the absence of external support, in view of their being based on traditional norms of trust and reciprocity.

2.3 Organisational Challenges

Local enterprise in Anamase has experienced a range of setbacks largely based on the challenges afore mentioned. Aside economic setbacks, institutions and structures upon which enterprise activities are built, and the inability to actively advocate, largely contribute to these challenges.

Cultivation of crop and processing within the community has been overtime regarded as a domain for the local women demonstrating local systems used, methods to an extent based on cultural and traditional influence. Whereby cultivation of the staple sees male influence in terms of land ownership and farming, the majority of harvesting, storage and processing fall within the domain of women.

Traditionally, an introduction into local enterprise within the community shows local methods in post cultivation activities beginning with storage, of the staple, processing and bagging for marketing.

In unearthing the communal structures supporting industry within the community, local organisation practised within the community was not identified in an unstructured form (or a form not structured in the manner representing a set or organs whose functions depended on the other), rather, its function was identified as being based partly on traditional kinship structures as well as a system reliant on reciprocity and trust among working groups. Particularly functional were two groups, representing borrowing and lending capacities largely amongst the women as well as supporting in group labour in harvesting activities.

In likening the borrowing and ledging activities to the ***susu*** group function above mentioned, activities within the cultivation and processing of the staple did not particularly take the form of associations formed on the basis of lending and borrowing, rather, a loose arrangement between groups engaged in the activity, with borrowing and payment forms determined amongst parties, largely based on trust and reciprocity.

The capacity to engage in large scale harvesting and cultivation on farms, was seen as partly being done on group trust and reciprocity, largely identified as the ***Nnoboa*** system. However, a growing incidence of a range of farmers engaging external support where the capacity made it possible was as well identified.

2.3.1 Indigenous Enterprise - Setbacks

- **Cultivation Capacities**

  In Anamase, a SENCAB community study unearthed a set of issues in the processes mentioned:

  - Cultivation of cassava staple within the community is a major income earner aside the cultivation of palm and maize

  - Recent developments within the community show a continued and steady engagement in the cultivation of the cassava staple and palm fruit both for large scale household consumption and commercial distribution in its processed state.

  - Difficulties ranging between the point of cultivation to marketing reduce the potential in income earning for both cultivators and processors

  - Respondent views revealed both subsistence and commercial farming being practiced. Commercial farming is however, not on a large scale but done primarily to make a living for immediate household. Land for farming was primarily acquired through lease holding, self-owned land, family lands, and share cropping, with absence of clear usage of stool lands being for farming.

  - Individual farming has been the long-term practice with locals farming on land between 1 to 5 acres. Session interviews revealed that there were land ownerships of more than 10 acres however located in differing farm areas. It was also noted up to 40 acres in rare cases could be registered in single ownerships, however scattered across communities. Besides the oil palm, the farmers cultivate major cash crops such as cocoa, citrus and major food crops include maize, cassava, cocoyam, avocado pear, coconuts, vegetables, and plantain.

  - The major practice used on the farm was identified as weeding and burning weeds on the farm, with the practice of spraying with weedicide taking precedence. The practice of composting was seen as rare due to the large size of people's farms, making them find it easier to spray with chemicals.

  - Cultivation is occupationally engaged in by both male and female farmers, and on small scale, with most farmers engaging in not more than one acre. Is This is often done on shared cropping basis, with crops and vegetables such as okro and pepper being planted alongside. Although cultivation of the staple is engaged in by both male and female farmers, processing of the staple is mainly the domain of community women farmers.

- Practices in the past undertaken have proved a challenge to the value of the staple. Bush burning for clearing of farms, as well as the use of pesticides and fertilizers are amongst the challenges still to be addressed in increasing the value of produce.

- Harvesting of the staple is further an occupation engaged in by both male and female entrepreneurs, with transportation to collection points and sheds being mainly undertaken by women with assistance from male counterparts where amount to be transported is bulky. Storage of the staple implies heaping on bare ground nearby farm areas, or in instances where cultivators possess the capacity, for self - made shed storage facilities.

- The staple is partly well marketed in its directly harvested state, both locally and commercially. Marketing of the produce in its freshly harvested state is mainly done by women at the local markets as well as with the assistance of middlemen to neighbouring districts.

2.3.2 Local Industry - Challenges in Processing

- **Processing Capacities**

It was established that there are 3 major oil palm processing factories in the communities. Individuals are however also engaged in oil extraction on a micro/domestic level. Palm fruits harvested are mostly sold to middle men who purchase the fruits to make oil palm in the small scale community factories. Palm oil and palm kennel oil are derived from processing, with other variants including the preparation of local soap (*Azuma Blows*), Other alternatives include brewing alcohol from the palm wine extracted. Due to the tedious nature of the oil extraction, palm growers sell their produce to the small scale local mill industry and only retain very small amount for home use. Small scale palm processing could take 2 days for oil extraction, depending on quantity and the effectiveness of local machines being used. The quantity of oil palm produced per processing could hardly be determined, based on irregularity and inappropriate infrastructure.

All the people interviewed were engaged in one or more of processes such as gari processing, cassava dough production, vegetable growing, maize production, making of plantain chips at house hold and commercial levels. These they found also lucrative as an additional source of income.

Palm fruits are usually acquired from farmers who sell them by measuring with a local measuring can, with average sales measuring between 1 to 3 sacks of fruits to the local processors. The palm fruit variety called *"Agric"* (fertilizer manipulated variety) is widely grown, as well as the local variety on a smaller scale. The fertilizer manipulated fresh fruits which look larger, usually obtained, have low storage periods due to heavy fertilization of fruit. Bad nuts are usually then used for soap or low grade oil production. In view of the

inability of fresh fruit storage for the fertilized variety, quick processing is usually undertaken in preparation for oil extraction. Once the oil is extracted, the oil can be stored for a long time in rubber gallons with lids. Local practice included storage in metal tanks with loose lids, which are then transferred into gallons with tight lids when being transported to the markets.

Three major factories were identified as belonging to individuals and not community property, with a low count of locals, male and female, employed in managing machinery. Factory observation showed oil extraction machines (metal press), a pounding mill, a nut cracker and separator. Firewood, car tyres, saw dust cake or fiber represent the fuel sources for boiling the nuts. Majority of the work that do not require heavy duty machine are done manually by the women. These include sorting out the fruits, carrying the fruits to the metal containers, fetching the boiled fruits for pounding, and mixing the before extraction.

Within the Anamase community, activities engaged in for the processing of cassava - Gari, is mainly undertaken through indigenous methods by community women. The harvested staple, after bark removal, cut up and milling, is filled into sacks and left to ooze out all fluid. For the drying out process, special sheds locally constructed are used to provide shelter for the milled produce during the period within which it is spread out to dry, after which it is roasted and bagged ready for sale.

In managing local machinery for cut up, squeezing and milling, a range of challenges were observed. In identifying processing quality, local groups mentioned the tendency of not being able to gather the preferred high quality species of cultivated cassava needed in the quantities to process leading to low grade produce being processed (particularly for Gari). Setbacks in terms of local machine usage were experienced whereby frequent breakdown of machinery due to local manufacture and poor local mechanised techniques further implied the only alternative of resorting to manual methods in the event of breakdowns which halted processing or resulted in longer processing periods.

In cases where processors are themselves not cultivators, they experience difficulties in acquiring large quantities of the required quality cassava from farmers based on the lack of an adequate and reliable transport system to convey produce to processing facilities leading to processors resorting to buying produce in small quantities from different sources. Differences in quality of cassava from different sources often results in low quality processed produce.

Further identified is the bottleneck calculated in terms of processing time The resort to locally improvised and mechanised processors or the eventual use of manual methods increase the time frame within processing and marketing, leading to processors often eventually getting processed produce ready for the market when prices have dropped, based on their inability to engage in timely marketing - at a time and season when the

produce sells highest at markets, creating losses for producers. This setback can be retraced to the lack of development in technology access and skills for processors inhibiting progress in engagements.

As reflected below, challenges in processing the cassava staple remain at a very fundamental level, where storage is principally left open, on the ground, with the use of sacks for drying reflecting the need to build facilities for appropriate drying. In initial support for roasting cups, the community is expected to develop their self- help initiative towards the acquisition of complete roaster stoves.

Support for construction of service point- warehouse for bagging, storage and point of sale is identified as to be developed through stakeholder initiative towards providing quality for the produce chain process.

Figure 3 - Drying of milled cassava prior to roasting

Particularly in the roasting process, the challenges faced, environmentally and to the women engaged in the activity, prove extreme. Ecologically, the emanation of smoke from firewood used proves a constant hazard. Roasting done under naked fire for long hours further aggravates health hazard for women engaged.

Figure 4 – Firewood use in processing

Figure 5 - Traditional Gari roasting process

Figure 6 - Boiled Palm Processing

2.4 Market Linkages

Marketing of the staple was identified both in its raw form and processed state, both forms experiencing core challenges such as transportation, as well as issues of poor storage and direct linkages to market sources.

2.4.1 Produce Pricing

- **Cassava - Staple**

  For the raw staple, poor storage as well as heavy use of fertilizer has very frequently led to early rot before negotiations on market sources, leading to heavy losses for producers.

For most producers, the inability to reach out and engage in the direct sourcing of markets beyond the community has led to reliance on middlemen moving between communities and district areas. In most cases, producers are obliged to accept price offers negotiated by middlemen, in view of the fact that the only available option would be to wait long periods for unreliable transport commuting the village, as well as initiating their own market linkages for which time the raw produce cannot last. This process was seen as reiterated on the onset of cultivating seasons, where producers had little avenue to generate capital for farm inputs, relying on middle men to provide them with small loans for the purpose, in return of which prices for produce during harvest were fixed, to the disadvantage of producers.

- **Processed staple - Gari**

Sourcing market linkages for Gari experience similar challenges, more concentrated on the search for larger markets as well as a standard quality.

For markets and sale of Gari, pricing was done solely by processors, either arranging for transport for delivery to a set of consumers, or relying on middle men to pick up bagged Gari, paying them a price agreed upon. A core challenge emerging was the inability of processors to determine current market prices, leading to dependence on middlemen, to their disadvantage. The absence of structured group sale implied the inability of individual processors to organise bulk transportation and sale of Gari to larger markets.

Similar challenges were experienced in exchanges with middlemen by processors as with cultivators. Based on the fact that a constant practice by most processors, where capital was lacking depended on initial credit from middlemen with whom they had business relations, the prices per bagged Gari, weighed in local weighing volumes (*American tin*) was determined during allocation of credit, to which producers then agreed based on the urgent need to initiate processing. Upon initiation of marketing the processed staple, processers were then bound to sell to the middlemen as well as were bound to hold on to prices negotiated and agreed on initially, for which most of the time, were way below current market prices, which had changed over the period. Additionally, processors often experienced situations where even after bagged produce was given to middlemen based on prices they dictated, payment was not promptly offered, with the excuse from middlemen they had to supply to customers before receiving payments and handing over money to processors. Most processors accepted this having little choice, leading to delays in payments and loss of value of money. In view of the fact that pricing and marketing was done solely, and individually (between processors and sales contacts), exact figures could not be provided as to the volumes sold in a quarter or annually, which proved a challenge in supporting assessment of profit margins. Estimates made from individual processors were that they often bagged the Gari in sacks, for approximate price which the retailers upon buying from them, re-bagged in the (*American tin size*) smaller quantities, for further sale. Information gathered unearthed challenges regarding the fluctuations in market prices affecting their product pricing as well as time and resources injected into processing. Aside

the setback of middlemen and retailers collecting bagged produce on credit with the risk of non-payment or delayed payments, the issue of the inability to determine high and low staple yield seasons due to seasonability, climatic conditions as well as cultivation challenges invariably affected produce quality and market value.

Further elaborating on the issue of pricing, most producers mentioned that the differences in cassava quality further implied differences in Gari quality resulting in processors not having a one grade all over, thus prices being determined by buyers, resulting in them often losing, - reflecting on processing (resource and labour input).

2.4.2 Produce Transportation

The main marketing sources identified, aside local distribution, included urban areas such as Oda town, Swedru and Accra. Transportation arrangements, based on observation, has been a longstanding challenge.

In marketing the cassava produce, community traders deal directly with farmers in buying directly from them for sale to middle men or to transport for further sale to nearby communities. Traders normally make individual attempts to get small trucks to convey to deposit areas arranged with middle men or to nearby community centres. Transportation possibilities to and from the community is a major challenge in the conveyance of produce for sale to external markets. Where attempts were made to arrange group transport, irregular group arrangements were resulted in, based on the fact that transportation arrangements sometimes did not suit individual group needs, - Inability to plan volumes to be transported, as well as seasonal heavy rains, and bad roads deepened the challenge. Transportation setbacks as well invariably led to the problem of inability to constantly enter outside markets and maintain relations, leading to lack of knowledge of regional market prices and fluctuation.

2.4.3 Markets and Sale

For extracted palm oil, likewise, pricing was done solely by the processors, thus a direct figure could not be given as to how much was sold in a quarter or year. It was only estimated by a farmer that he sold the large barrel of oil produced for him at GHC 500 after it has been retailed in small quantities sometime in the past.

Challenges were noted on how market pricing affecting products after time and resources had been put into processing. Again cheating was experienced by creditors from outside the community collecting the oil and not returning to pay back. Additionally, there were low season periods registering low fruit yield, thus affecting market production and oil quality. It was also reported that oil palm was not classified in one grade all over, thus prices sometimes being determined by buyers with producers ending up losing.

3 CAPACITY BUILDING IN INDIGENOUS APPROACHES

3.1 Potential for Capacity - Initiatives for Indigenous Enterprise

Findings here revealed the need identified by women to improve processing in potential for capacity. for better marketing and increased income generation.

The traditional practice of processing cassava known by all is the one where the women prepare a naked fire- firewood and roast the dried, milled substance for hours, depending on the quantity and quality in large metal frying bowls. After the process, the substance, in grains is left to cool, is rubbed out again to ensure its granulated form before being bagged. Despite the introduction of a couple of machines and stoves for the purpose in some communities, the Anamase community hardly has this facility. Likewise, for the palmfruit, improvised local machinery for boiling and extraction created processing hazards as well as low hygiene and quality for consumption.

3.1.1 Technology and Enterprise

The traditional practice of processing oil known by all is the one where the women boil the fruits for an hour depending on quantity and pound it in a wooden mortar, after which they mix and remove the nuts and fiber, then boil the substance and collect the oil from surface.

However, discussions revealed motivation to integrate innovative methods into traditional practices, relieving labour challenges and improving end product quality.

For the purpose, identified issues included appropriate tailor-made training in managing engagements as well as creating a balance between yield quantity and processing, to sustain produce links.

3.1.2 Occupational Health and Safety

Standards in occupational health and safety were identified as ranging from low standards to intermittent practices which met locally set hygiene standards. Generally local practices revealed care takers taking charge in ensuring the work sites were clean. Usually the women employed cleaned up the sites. Results from respondents indicated 2 places out of the three being clean according to community standards.

Few workers possessed working gears, (an overall and boots) (locally called *krokro*) which kept them from falling on the slippery ground. However some of the women used ordinary clothes and slippers. Some floors of the factory had been cemented however, large portions of clay floors soaked in oil made the ground sometimes slippery.

Security wise, respondent information indicated factory safety with the care taker ensuring nobody went near the belt that supported machines to avoid harm, as well as ensuring hands were not inserted into the mill to pull the grinded product. An improvised long stick was used to aid in pushing out the milled substance.

Individually they each clean their compound and dispose refuse at the community dump site which is later burnt. Two of the mills in the community were located closer to houses and the third further away from the main town however close to some homes isolated from the community, but directly situated close to the road side.

3.2 Support Scheme – Scope, Structure and Characteristics

For value chain development in cassava processing, the Afrika Project Support scheme provided the infrastructure for local cassava milling as well as palm fruit oil extraction. A number of 25 women in their groups each for cassava and palm were beneficiaries of the infrastructural support.

This was as well expected to address the gender equity dimension of the development efforts towards supporting women in stable income generation and supporting enterprise and advocacy.

Figure 7 - Innovative Approaches – Increasing Indigenous Processing Capacities

Figure 8 – Innovative approaches towards palm fruit processing

3.3 Resource Management Systems in Anamase

In view of the innovative developments, community stakeholders expect value added reflecting an improved produce chain for both products, where the women's grouping formed for both produce varieties is expected to take the form and structure in an accountability flow process, with the use of the machinery in a subsidized manner for group profit and maintenance.

Aside initial challenges experienced in local installation processes, it is expected, based on the women's indigenous organizational structure and grouping, the realisation of an improved produce chain quality towards extending external linkage capacities.

This is expected to be based on the sustenance of natural resources and agro ecological practices for a complete cycle effect in value chain processes, in this regard, the following issues, which were identified as still prevalent, are expected to be addressed through regular monitoring:

- Poor agro ecological practices in managing high production targets revealed farmers resorting to using chemicals to treat the farmlands. The use of fertilizer was also mentioned as being used to achieve high yield.

- Periodic weeding on the farm was mentioned as a form for controlling weeds Timely weeding when the weed seeds had yet not budded and about to break. This ensured that it was weeded off at the early stages before it took over the farm.

- Use of some specific plants as cover plants to keep the soil moist.

- Ability to engage farmers to increase their capacity to negotiate for better management of land resources where often control of the forest lies in jurisdiction of government, as well as extension services to them being scarce.

3.3.1 Concerns in Local Capacity - Building Structural Growth

- **Gender Dimensions of Business and Resource Management**

  Regarding gender related power making decisions for local business, women were noted as having less decision- making power within the community, with males making most decisions on their behalf, such as how and for which purpose products were expected to be used. Women were seen to have less control over monies collected from sale of food crops, with male family representatives deciding on disposal of funds.

  However when it came to access to credit facilities the women were given high priority over men since they are more trusted to manage and also pay back on time.

  Interaction made clear that both men and women have the ability to engage in business that benefit them aside identifying those without the ability to be engaged or directly involved being those physically challenged.

  Low existence of organizations supporting the palm processing in the community was observed. Additionally, there were hardly linkages with the local government with regard to enterprise support from the district assembly structure. However, structures were seen as engaging in initial advocacy for support in local industry enhancing job creation within the community.

  In this regard, further respondent communication generally revealed the following:

  - That processors required a range of training techniques in managing such businesses and learning to use more advanced machines that can help them produce better quality oil and also produce to meet demand in the market.

  - That women were more involved in most of the production of goods in the community, observations being from key highlight on local enterprise participation.

  - Palm cultivation- mainly dominated by males in terms of profits and women supported in maintaining farms.

- Palm fruit carrying was mostly done by women mostly with men supporting in cases of large quantities. For palm processing - Women did the actual work (both locally or commercially) with men owning businesses.
- Soap making – from palm oil- was engaged in only by women.
- Palm wine tapping/ alcohol brewing – was engaged in only by men.

3.3.2 Issues in Addressing Resource Management

Clarity of Ownership - Land Management

- Particularly in land resource, family, kinship rights and long lease practices were prevalent.
- More precise allocations, also gender balanced will provide a channel for more sustained small holder resource use and efficiency.
- It is significant to note that no female is involved in land management processes and do not have information on the sizes allocated and legal status of concessions in their own localities.
- The list of stakeholders who must be consulted in land allocation was limited mainly to owners (traditional authorities, and the District Assembly structure), which could be expanded to include other actors within the community.

4 LOCAL STRUCTURES IN ENTERPRISE - REVIEWING APPROACHES TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 Adding Value to Indigenous Structures - Interface with Modern Industry

Value Chain – Palm Produce

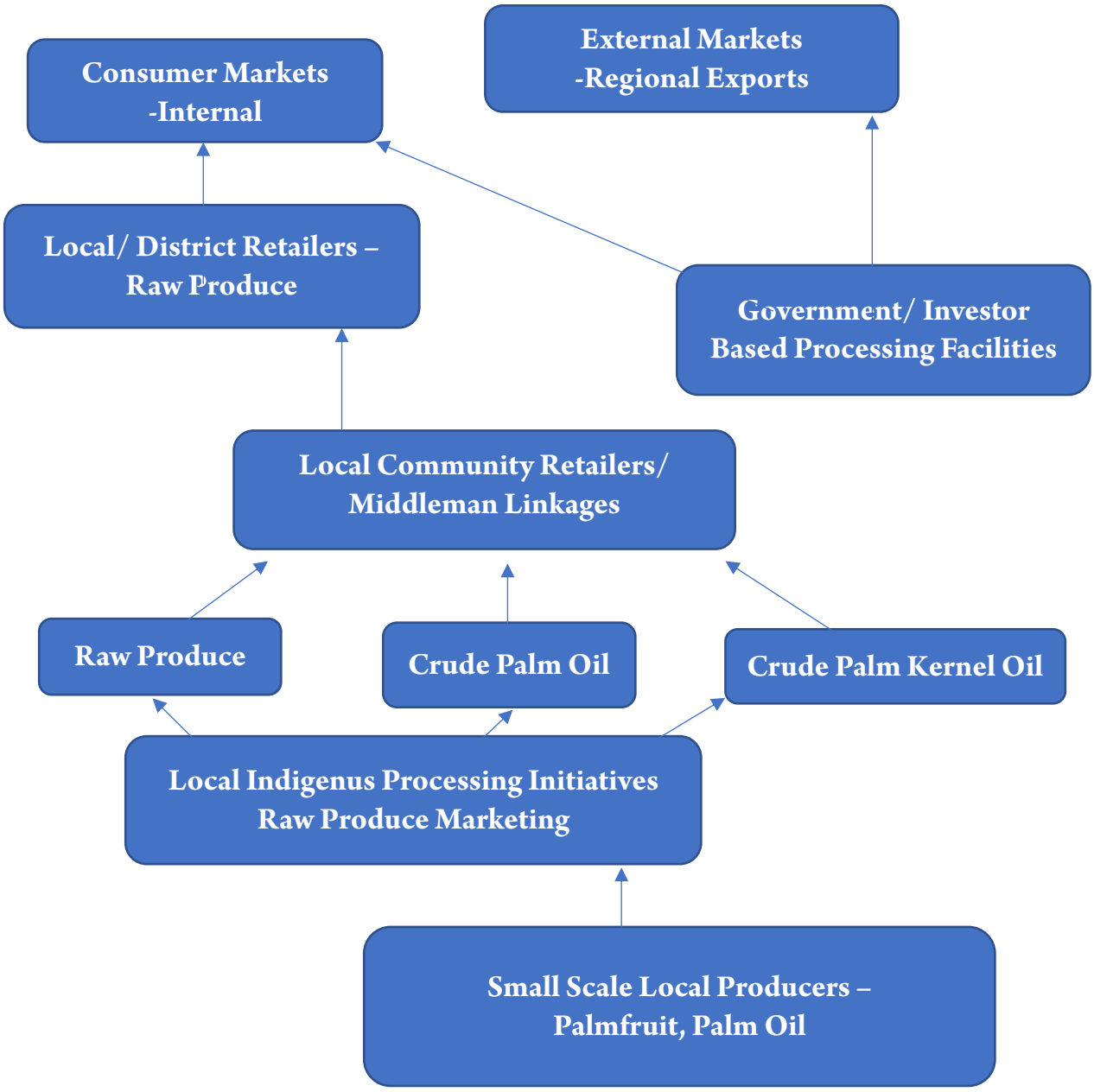


Diagram I - Indigenous Value Chain - Markets

4.2 Potentials and Gaps – Action Research

4.2.1 Field Indications

Leadership Development

Local indigenous engagements reveal the dire need for local stakeholder support. Leadership structures amongst indigenous systems generally reveal a set of critical issues regarding capacity building. Though the issue of low formal education for community based leaders, well as issues of clear succession have created a setback in gearing institutional community development, field observations reveal an improvement in both issues, as in the case of Anamase. However, for the majority of indigenous structures, the challenge continues to pose a threat to institutionalizing stakeholder structuring.

Implementing a Functioning Accountability System

Based on the increased function and role of traditional authorities in community institutional development, the task of managing resources have parallelly expanded. This calls for an additional boost to communal accountability systems and structures, to be managed by, and transparent within the traditional political structures, enabling the creation of reliance by community groups in the management of resources.

In this vein, project activities revealed a range of challenges including:

1. The absence of stakeholder support in an identical community, Kwamoso which led to challenges, therefore the shift to Anamase community.

2. The identified stakeholder support system identified in Anamase, which allowed for project initiation.

3. The need to support local organisation in maintaining local structures and group capacity to support interests in capacity building for value chain processes.

These core challenges were further reflected in gaps identified within the community amongst which reflected the following:

- That the potential of a sizeable production of palm fruit and oil coupled with the challenges in marketing provided a good opportunity to have farmer based cooperatives which could jointly support in value chain production of crude palm oil to avoid shortage, low quality oil, and loss in sales.

- The long existing challenge of low capacity for processors without improved or applied methods for processing as well as the absence of scientific testing of oil or fruits before production, with knowledge in processing being traditionally handed over with little technological support.
- Additionally, the observation of only 3 palm processing factories in the community belonging to individuals without an integrated structure of communal participation reveals lack of stakeholder and agricultural extension services support in Agri- business, particularly for oil palm processing within the community, thus, the need to reduce individual low capacity farming In addressing these factors. It is expected that appropriate technical training coupled with improved production costs would be achievable.
- The concern of production and management of the oil palm business within the community bearing consideration in building the capacity of women within management of the produce business link process is considered vital.

4.2.2 Solution Finding

In concluding, research, as well as project support results led to a set of capacity building options in supporting the value chain development of produce for Anamase:

- The need for storage facilities storing the produce to meet the market value at opportune times would reduce harvest losses
- Increasing market linkage support with permanent buyers at direct source to be assured of continuous and constant demand for produce
- Training needs for the producers in the areas of safety and health, technological training and skills in marketing, book keeping and credit sourcing
- A gender balanced agro occupation with women actively managing small-scale business and taking direct interest in farming as well as primary processing
- The creation of a platform to encourage support for financial security for women as well as participation in decision making
- Stakeholders (Local Government, Traditional leaders, NGOs) to demonstrate responsibility in supporting community increase recognition and value on resources towards increased livelihood

5 Policy Implications, Recommendations & Conclusions

- Indications suggest, local enterprise initiative within Anamase as currently practised cannot deliver the desired value chain productivity, production and income generation security to smallholder farmers. This further suggests, the need for a major shift in approaches gearing activities towards intensifying sustainable agricultural methods.
- District government use of industry development funds should give priority to initiatives supporting small holder capacity building, with additional attention to sustainable land management

Development within these areas will provide an integrated initiative towards:

- Promoting and encouraging various approaches to sustainable land and resource management
- Encouraging integration with research and development institutions to move towards tailor made delivery of packages, specifically suitable to farmer needs based on indigenous management systems and approaches
- Drawing attention towards priorities in focusing on agricultural development needs such as skills training and knowledge transfer activities, particularly within the field of agricultural infrastructure. This will in the long term support the shift from scarce district funds and investor support to self-managed initiatives at local levels

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APPENDICES

Questionnaire Respondents - Interviewees

Name	Age	Occupation	Educational background	Sex	No of dependents
Kwaku Sarkodie	60	Farmer	Middle school	M	6
Daniel Adu Gyamfi	63	Driver/Farmer	Form 4	M	4
Margaret Acheampomaa	42	Farmer	Middle school	F	3
Kwabena Addo Agyarko	53	Farmer	Form 4	M	2
Kofi Ntiamoah	56	Farmer /Driver	Form 4	M	4
Kwabena Siaw	34	Farmer	JSS	M	
Afia Quansah	28	Trader /farmer	JSS	F	
Afia Amatsewaa	42	Farmer	Form 4	F	4
Comfort Amponsah	44	Farmer	Form 4	F	6
Kwame Ampem	48	Farmer	Form 4	M	4

Frequency Tables

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	10	28.6	28.6	28.6
	Female	25	71.4	71.4	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Type of Farming System

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Subsistence Farming	32	91.4	91.4	91.4
	Commercial Farming	3	8.6	8.6	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Size of Farm

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5 acres	30	85.7	85.7	85.7
	5-10 acres	4	11.4	11.4	97.1
	10-20 acres	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-30	3	8.6	8.6	8.6
	31-43	13	37.1	37.1	45.7
	44-56	13	37.1	37.1	82.9
	Above 57	4	11.4	11.4	94.3
	5	2	5.7	5.7	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Type of Farming Practice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Weeding/Slashing	6	17.1	17.1	17.1
	Burning	18	51.4	51.4	68.6
	Use of weedicide	11	31.4	31.4	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Educational Background

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Middle School	26	74.3	74.3	74.3
	Junior High School	8	22.9	22.9	97.1
	Tertiary	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Processing Times

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Once in two weeks	30	85.7	85.7	85.7
	1 week - 2 weeks	3	8.6	8.6	94.3
	2 weeks- 3 weeks	2	5.7	5.7	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Other food crop cultivated

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Cassava	14	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Maize	14	40.0	40.0	80.0
	Vegetables	4	11.4	11.4	91.4
	Cocoa	2	5.7	5.7	97.1
	Tubers	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Other type of Processing

		Fre-quency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Gari Processing/ cassava Dough Production	27	77.1	77.1	77.1
	Oil Palm	4	11.4	11.4	88.6
	Soap Making	1	2.9	2.9	91.4
	Palm Wine making	3	8.6	8.6	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Natural Resource Management

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Poor	35	100.0	100.0	100.0

Access to Market

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	35	100.0	100.0	100.0

Need of Training

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	100.0	100.0	100.0

Need of Technological Support

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	100.0	100.0	100.0

Do women generate their own incom

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	35	100.0	100.0	100.0

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