

### **Family teams ASEM/2014/095**

- Barbara is making a strong recovery from surgery from a fractured tibia and will be off work until the Fri 10/3 in a graduated manner.
- Katja Mikhailovich will be travelling to Mt Hagen on the Thurs 2/3 to meet with John Kaewa (BU) and William Kerua (UNITECH) to discuss further highlands initiatives that link with Phil Brown's sweet potato project.
- Katja will attend the Jiwaka, Voice for Change (VfC) Graduation for Village Community Educators (VCEs) and leaders on the Fri 3/3 and Sat 4/3 again, looking at opportunities for VfC to follow with the TADEP Sweetpotato project.
- Katja will be in POM on the Sun 5/3 to meet with Lalen Simeon (PAU) to discuss financial literacy program and follow-up evaluation studies in the Highlands hub communities
- Work has continued on trying to complete the baseline survey app for pilot during field visits in March. This has progressed a little slower than anticipated.
- Katja, Pauline Gwatarisa and Jeromy Kavi (NARI) will travel to Buka in Bougainville from Mon 6/3 to Sat 11/3 to conduct baseline work with Bougainville Women's Federation with Barbara Tanne (Director) and her team.
- Katja, Pauline and Jeromy continue on to New Ireland to do similar baseline activities with New Ireland Provincial Administration, Department of Agriculture & Livestock (DAL). The local project leader will be Barbara Makapa assisted by Bolomes Arawes.
- We have had great collaboration and assistance from Phil Keane and his team from the TADEP PNG Cocoa project in establishing communications with partner agencies and personnel in New Ireland and for this we have been very appreciative.

### **Canarium FST/2014/099**

- Helen and Theo are attending the steering committee this week with NARI senior management to summarise and discuss project progress to date.
- A revised roadmap has now been drafted. The information and recommendations were first compiled from the initial inception workshop held in September 2014. The updated version considers information gathered through stakeholders and potential stakeholders at workshops and from targeted interviews.
- The drier at the NARI factory is operational as a result of Kim Jones' recent trip to ENB. This gives the factory a capacity to dry 4 tonnes NIS every 7 days or about 20t/month. The factory is now approaching a major milestone moving from a research facility to a commercial operation.

### **Bougainville cocoa HORT/2014/094**

#### **Activities**

- A team of 13 from the project travelled to Sulawesi on training visit to the Mars Cocoa Academy (MCA) from Wed 1/2 to Sat 11/2. Even though they drove for 12 hours from Makassar to get to the academy in Tarengge, they were formally welcomed with a full ceremony at 4:00am! Amongst the skills and experiences learnt included the engagement of schools, women and youth in the cocoa industry, the successful integration of other activities (goats) into cocoa farming systems, side and top-grafting techniques, nursery management, business training, Cocoa Doctors and Cocoa Village Centres and the general quality of housing, electricity and living. The resilience of cocoa communities, and people within those communities was noted. Some of the trainees learnt about brickmaking and at least two returned with brick moulds. The significance of youth engagement highlighted the observation that it is more difficult to retrain old people than to introduce new habits through educating young people. They also noted, with some regret, that Bougainville cocoa Didimen are not getting out to meet the farmers enough. The trainees will give full reports back to their villages and the Bougainville media upon their return.
- Three Gold award winners from the 2016 Bougainville Chocolate Festival continued to Singapore and Malaysia with Grant Vinning and Andrew Sale to meet cocoa buyers and processors. A total of 120 tonnes were sold on a trial basis. By "trial" is meant that the first few shipments must meet

very strict requirements. As the growers gradually prove themselves to be worthy customers, the strict conditions are gradually lessened.

- The Health and Livelihood surveys continue in South Bougainville, under the fantastic leadership of Ignatius (Iggy) Nakuri. These surveys will be completed by Fri 24/3, weather and river crossings permitting. Training for the Central and Northern surveys will start in Arawa the following week, under the guidance of Merrilyn Walton, Kirsten Black, Grant Hill-Cawthorne and David Guest.
- The ABG-DPI has arranged a coordination meeting for donor-funded projects with the cocoa industry in Port Moresby on Tues 28/2. John Konam and David Guest will attend on behalf of the project.

### Lessons

- Never delay planning. We began organising the Sulawesi study tour by requesting that all travellers get their passports and visas ready last November. We postponed their planned departure from Mon 23/1 to Mon 30/1 as most of the travellers hadn't received their visas until Fri 27/1, and then only with the extraordinary help of Rebecca Bogosia from ACIAR in Port Moresby.
- Always reconfirm airline bookings. When our travellers turned up at Buka airport to check in, Air Niugini offloaded them to accommodate other passengers. Subsequently they missed their flights from Port Moresby to Denpasar and Makassar. Other unforeseen issues were the cancelling of the tickets of ten of the mission's tickets from Singapore to Makassar, and three "suspensions" from Makassar back to Singapore. These delays and cancellations resulted in the loss of valuable time at MCA lost, and the unplanned expenditure of a considerable amount of money. Whilst local Air Niugini staff attempted to expedite the delayed travel and enforced stopovers, the Sydney office continued to "suspend" confirmed bookings at the last moment, adding further stress. We now have to commence proceedings to recoup the additional costs imposed by Air Niugini's unexplained actions.
- Extensive marketing skills training prior to marketing mission is imperative. We found that price was only a small component of the total final package. Having an experienced consolidator is critical.
- If you are not sure what to do next, ask yourself "What would Hussin do?" Hussin bin Purung is the inspirational leader who established MCA.
- The hard work associated with any such mission starts now as the growers put into action the things they learned on the mission.

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2. Don't trust confirmed airline bookings. When our travellers turned up at Buka airport to check in, Air Niugini offloaded them to accommodate a group of Panguna landowners. Surely this does not betray where Air Niugini thinks the future of Bougainville lies? Subsequently they missed their flights from Port Moresby to Denpasar and Makassar. Other unexplainable issues were the cancelling of the tickets of ten of the mission's tickets from Singapore to Makassar, and three "suspensions" from Makassar back to Singapore. The inexcusable delays and cancellations resulted in the loss of valuable time at MCA lost, and the unplanned expenditure of a considerable amount of money. Whilst local Air Niugini staff attempted to expedite the delayed travel and enforced stopovers, the Sydney office continued to "suspend" confirmed bookings at the last moment, adding further stress. We now have to commence proceedings to recoup the additional costs imposed by Air Niugini's unexplained actions.
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### **PNG cocoa HORT/2014/096**

- On Tues 31/1, Trevor and Jimmy Risimeri, our project coordinator in East Sepik, had a very productive meeting in Wewak with Elizabeth Kaprangi, the Provincial Administrator of East Sepik. She is very supportive of the project and asked Jimmy to prepare a submission for obtaining Provincial Government funds to extend the work to more villages.
- On Thurs 9/2, Phil had a long phone conversation with Kanika Singh, the Post-Doctoral Fellow on the ACIAR Soil Fertility project led by Damien Field at the University of Sydney and the PNG Cocoa Coconut Institute staff. Collaboration with the Cocoa in PNG project was clarified. This will mainly involve setting up two field trials, one on the Sepik grasslands and the other in New Ireland, for which the Soil Fertility Project will undertake all the detailed soil and leaf sampling and analyses. Arrangements were made for our attendance at the Inception Meeting for the project at CCI on Wed 22/3 to Thurs 23/3, followed by a joint visit to East Sepik to begin establishing the first field trial.
- A Baseline and CommCare training was conducted by Trevor and Aitul Weoh in Madang on Thurs 9/2 and Fri 10/3. Fifteen DAL district staff received training in the use of the CommCare Survey App on smartphones with hard copy as a backup. Participants interviewed each other using both types of survey. This was followed with test surveys of the farmer group from Mabonob, Madang District (CMFT Anton). 19 out of the 25 farmers in the group turned up, many of them with their wives. Six groups of interviewers were formed, with 2 or 3 farmers per group from each district in the Province. Reasons for the survey and use of CommCare were given to farmers before interviews began. Interviews took an average of about 1 hour, regardless of the types of survey (smart phone

App or hard copy), while the block inspections associated with each interview took an average of about 45 minutes. Problems encountered during the training and test run were difficulties in setting up the App on different phones, batteries going flat, variation between phones, lack of internet access for downloading the App and data, and lack of training. Farmers thanked the participants and said they learnt a lot from having to think about and answer the survey questions and take part in the block inspections.

- Kula Daslogo had a meeting with the new Director of DPI in New Ireland, Gideon Bogosia, to put him in touch with Katja Mikhailovich and Barbara Pamphilon of the TADEP Family Teams project so that they can further develop their collaboration with DPI in New Ireland. Kula is leading the collaboration between our projects in New Ireland, where the Family Teams project will be working with two villages with Cocoa Model Farmer-Trainers, Mangai and Luapul, as established in November with Kula's guidance. Bolomes Arawes and Barbara Makapa will be the DPI staff directly involved.
- The Tokiala Solar Dryer is now ready for testing and Trevor and Kenny Francis have prepared a form for assessing the effectiveness of the driers. Trevor delivered the moisture meters to Kenny and got them working.
- Phil had a meeting with Jess Hall at the University of Melbourne on Thurs 16/2 when she sorted out problems he was having downloading the CommCare App. The roll-out of the survey App in Madang and East Sepik was discussed. Jess offered a further face-to-face training session for our project staff. Following his visits to East Sepik and Madang in January, Trevor has arranged for the conduct of Baseline Surveys by DPI and CCI staff there during late February. Later, it was agreed that Jess would offer a debriefing of the use of the App after the conclusion of the surveys in Madang and East Sepik.
- John Konam worked on the project in Karimui from Wed 22/2 to Fri 24/2, flying in on the Missionary Aviation Service Twin Otter. He travelled with DPI staff who had to sort out a compensation claim that has been interfering with project activities. He checked on the growth of the 100 best clones selected from the initial test planting, progress in training local staff and farmers in budding cocoa, progress in construction of a solar drier and temporary quarantine facility for introducing clones from CCI Tavilo. Motor bikes and chainsaws for use in the project have been air-lifted to Karimui. The CCI clones are undergoing quarantine at Tavilo ready for transfer to Karimui.

### **Sweetpotato HORT/2014/097**

#### **Plans for March**

- Phil will be travelling to PNG from Tues 28/2 to Tues 7/3 to attend the Sweetpotato Pest Management project inception meeting and for project planning meetings with NARI and FPDA.
- Craig Henderson and Phil will be in PNG for a project review meeting with NARI and FPDA in late March. They will also be travelling to all TEAM regions to view 'clean seed' trials and finalise sites for on-farm 'clean seed' multiplication facilities.
- Discussions have been initiated with the TADEP Family Teams project leaders to establish 'clean seed' facilities at a proposed demonstration farm that would allow the Village Community Educators (VCEs) at the Baiyer Valley site to extend their training role to the Sweetpotato project.
- CommCare value chain mapping survey will be completed in March, with chains selected from the mapping exercise for further research focus.
- QDAF, ANUE and CQU team members will meet in Canberra in mid-March to review Australian activities and planning for 2017.