

Appendix 1: Focus groups and life stories

1.1 Communication for informed consent

Focus groups guide – Project Sowing Development - Impact of Covid-19 on family farming and food security in Latin America - 2021

Good morning/good afternoon. We are running a study about the impact of COVID-19 on family agriculture (or small/medium producers), and we would like to know more closely about your own experience and that of your community during this time of pandemic, getting also to identify the barriers and opportunities for local development and for the strengthening of agrifood systems. Before starting, we would like to clarify the following:

- We are not government employees, but we are part of a project that is coordinated by a research center with headquarters in Chile: Rimisp—Latin American Center for Rural Development.
- Your participation is voluntary and can be anonymous if you prefer. That means it is not mandatory, and you don't have to provide your name or personal information if you choose not to.
- This information will be used exclusively for research purposes.

We would like to record this meeting. Would that be ok for everyone?

1.2 Participants in the focus groups and life stories

FOCUS GROUPS				Gender		Type of Farmer
Round	Date	Territory	Town	Women	Men	
1	April 2021	Los Ríos	Ventanas	7		Hard corn producers
1	April 2021	Los Ríos	Pueblo Viejo	6	4	Hard corn producers
1	April 2021	Los Ríos	Mocache	2	4	Fairtrade certified professional producers
1	June 2021	Guayas	Daule	3	4	Rice producers
1	July 2021	Guayas	Santa Lucía	11		Rice producer
2	October 2021	Los Ríos	Ventanas	9		Hard corn producers
2	November 2021	Los Ríos	Mocache	3	8	Certified organic cocoa producers
2	November 2021	Guayas	Palestina	2	5	Rice producers

2	November 2021	Guayas	Santa Lucía	11		Rice producers
4	October 2022	Guayas	Santa Lucía	5	8	Rice producers
4	November 2022	Guayas	Balzar	3	9	Corn and Cocoa producers from Guayas and Los Ríos
4	December 2022	Guayas	Milagro	2	7	Cocoa producers in Guayas, Los Ríos and Manabí

LIFE STORIES						
Round	Name*	Date	Territory	Locality	Age	Occupation
1	Mrs. Linda	June 2021	Los Ríos	Ventanas	71	Hard corn and cocoa producer
1	Mrs. Marcia	June 2021	Los Ríos	Pueblo Viejo	50	Corn and cocoa producer
1	Mrs. Marcela	June 2021	Los Ríos	Mocache	43	Organic cocoa and green plantain producer
1	Mrs. Paola	June 2021	Los Ríos	Mocache	37	Cocoa, corn, plantain producer
1	Mrs. Vicenta	June 2021	Guayas	Daule	61	Rice producer
1	Mrs. Carolina	June 2021	Guayas	Daule	62	Rice producer
1	Mrs. Lourdes	July 2021	Guayas	Santa Lucía	45	Rice producer
1	Mrs. Juana	August 2021	Guayas	Palestina	37	Rice producer
2	Mrs. Roxana	November 2021	Los Ríos	Ventanas	67	Corn, pigeon pea, and cocoa producer
2	Mrs. Marcela	November 2021	Los Ríos	Mocache	43	Organic cocoa and green plantain
2	Mrs. Paola	November 2021	Los Ríos	Mocache	37	Corn, pigeon pea, and cocoa producer
2	Mrs. Carolina	November 2021	Guayas	Daule	62	Rice producer
2	Mrs. Lourdes	November 2021	Guayas	Santa Lucía	45	Rice producer
2	Mrs. Juana	November 2021	Guayas	Palestina	37	Rice producer
2	Mrs. Linda	December 2021	Los Ríos	Ventanas	71	Hard corn and cocoa producer
2	Mrs. Vicenta	December 2021	Guayas	Daule	61	Rice producer
3	Mrs. Marcela	April 2022	Los Ríos	Mocache	44	Organic cocoa and green plantain producer
3	Mrs. Paola	April 2022	Los Ríos	Mocache	38	Cocoa, corn, plantain producer
3	Mrs. Roxana	April 2022	Los Ríos	Ventanas	68	Corn, pigeon pea, and cocoa producer
3	Mrs. Vicenta	May 2022	Guayas	Daule	62	Rice producer
3	Mrs. Carolina	May 2022	Guayas	Daule	63	Rice producer
3	Mrs. Lourdes	May 2022	Guayas	Santa Lucía	46	Rice producer
3	Mrs. Juana	May 2022	Guayas	Palestina	38	She no longer produced rice but rather rented her land
4	Mrs. Vicenta	November 2022	Guayas	Daule	62	Rice producer
4	Mrs. Carolina	November 2022	Guayas	Daule	63	Rice producer
4	Mrs. Lourdes	November 2022	Guayas	Santa Lucía	46	Rice producer
4	Mrs. Juana	December 2022	Guayas	Palestina	38	She no longer produced rice but rather rented her land
4	Mrs. Marcela	December 2022	Los Ríos	Mocache	44	Organic cocoa and green plantain producer
4	Mrs. Paola	December 2022	Los Ríos	Mocache	38	Cocoa, corn, plantain producer
4	Mrs. Roxana	January 2023	Los Ríos	Ventanas	68	Corn, pigeon pea, and cocoa producer

* Names have been changed to protect the identities of the interviewees

Appendix 2: Risks, uncertainty, and problems in the production and marketing of corn and cocoa

Table A2.1: Risks and uncertainty in the production of corn - additional citations

Risks and uncertainty in the production of corn	Citations
Price risk	<i>'[The] urea that is used for corn cultivation is indispensable, without urea conventional corn does not produce, and the muriates and all the other products...[in] 2020 the bag of urea was \$18, now it has almost tripled and the price of corn is still not set so that you know how much you are going to invest and how much you are going to receive for your harvest...people plant and it is uncertain how they are going to sell it, and it is a product that cannot be stored...the producer is forced to sell it and the merchant takes advantage of that situation, they pay whatever they want because there is no control...the farmer is practically abandoned.'</i> (mixed group, Mocache, Los Ríos, 2nd round)
Biological risk	<i>'This was really bad... the corn looked great, but when harvest time arrived it was rotten. I don't know what happened. It was first-class corn, first-class seed and it got the plague. Not just us, everyone complains about it, rotten corn. My husband harvests every year in those 2-3 small blocks up to 3000 USD, but this year it was only around 2000 USD'</i> (Mrs. Linda, Ventanas, Los Ríos, 1st round).
The latent uncertainty	<i>'Last year I did 6 blocks, this year I have leased-in 8, but I can't ask for credit because of a guarantee that I gave...I regret to have leased-in, but I have already paid the rent, I have already invested more than \$2000.... I don't know what I'm going to do, and nobody wants to rent-in, because [I thought] I'll keep about 4-5 blocks and rent-out about 3... I'm worried that if last year I invested \$7000, this year with those high prices I have to have about \$12000-14000...where am I going to get all that money from?'</i> (women's focus group, Ventanas, Los Ríos, 2nd round)

Table A2.2: Difficulties in cocoa marketing among non-associated conventional producers

Difficulties	Citations
No differentiation in price by quality	<i>'For us, national cocoa and its price is not competitive compared to CCN-51 for all the effort that must be made in cultivation and its maintenance...The current price of cocoa only serves to barely cover the investment or what is spent during planting and growth...Cocoa prices have not managed to completely cover production costs, in that sense it is not possible to perceive the importance of the real value of cocoa even though there are reference prices for its sale.'</i> (mixed focus group, Milagro, Guayas, 4th round).
Tare	<i>'We sell [our cocoa] to the best buyer, it depends on how he/she behaves...on who is at the weighing scales, who calculates the</i>

	<i>tare well and gives the exact weight...if the tare gets too high, we take it somewhere else...in general [the tare] is 20 to 28%, it depends on how you dry it in the sun too.'</i> (Mrs. Paola, conventional cocoa producer, Mocache, Los Ríos, 2nd round)
Price variability	<i>'...cocoa price goes up and down, but right now it is stable, it is about \$93 per quintal, with that it has helped us to survive in our diet, in household expenses, which is what is necessary, it is just enough, nothing to save.'</i> (Mrs. Paola, conventional cocoa producer, Mocache, Los Ríos, 2nd round)

Appendix 3: Common problems in the chains

Table A3.1: Problems related to public credit - additional citations

Problems with public credit	Citations
High level of requirements and untimely loans	<i>'I used to make loans to the private bank because it was very difficult to make credits to the [public bank], a lot of paperwork, ... I would go to the [private bank], see I need a credit, the next day they would deposit 5000-7000 dollars... the [public bank] could take 3 months to give you the money.'</i> (Mixed group of cocoa farmers, Mocache, Los Ríos, 1st round)
Untimely loans and its impact on productivity	<i>'...because of the untimeliness of the loans [in public banks], many times the harvest is not very good, because it is expected that the credit will be ready in December; but they give it in January, when it has already rained.'</i> (women's focus group of corn farmers, Ventanas, 2nd round)
High level of requirements and low loan amounts	<i>'It is more common that we work with a person who provides the money at interest, because... to get a loan from a bank they put a lot of requirements...and for example, they give you an extremely low loan...only enough to plow, mix the soil and sow, and the rest?...not enough to get to the harvest...'</i> (women's focus group of rice farmers, Santa Lucía, Guayas, 2nd round).

Table A3.2: Limitations of the state and producer demands - additional citations

State limitations	Citations
State's limited action	<p><i>'The Ministry offers to help us sell corn at a better price, that's a lie. At harvest time they don't even show up here.'</i> (mixed group of corn farmers, Pueblo Viejo, Los Ríos, 1st round)</p> <p><i>'The role of the public sector is quite deficient... the government always promises, but doesn't deliver.'</i> (mixed focus group of corn farmers, Balzar, Guayas, 4th round)</p> <p><i>'I even talked to a minister of agriculture, he said that there was no money for the programs...there are programs that are like drops of help, they are not enough.'</i> (mixed focus group of rice farmers, Santa Lucía, Guayas, 4th round).</p>
Producers' demands to the state	<p><i>'The MAG (Ministry of Agriculture) does not work...a few years ago we had the UNA (National Storage Unit) silos, that was a regulating entity for rice and corn prices...now they are smashing us farmers on the price...'</i> (mixed focus group, Santa Lucía, Guayas, 4th round).</p> <p><i>'The state should get more involved in the organic topic...in carbon sequestration, [give] a compensation, some say "at least the state should reward me, say about \$50 a year, \$100 a year, because I have my plot with good tree plantations" ...as a state policy, with an incentive...'</i> (mixed focus group of organic cocoa producers, Mocache, Los Ríos, 2nd round)</p>