



## SUCCESS STORY

### Access to credit helps Haitian cooperatives triple fair trade cacao exports

**“Bravo to HIFIVE! We are so happy to be able to have cocoa to meet the international demand.”**

*Dorisca Dieudonne, Cooperative St. Jean Baptiste board secretary*



Photo credit — HIFIVE

*Inspecting the first stage of cocoa fermentation at Cooperative St. Jean Baptiste are (left to right): Samson Louis, FECCANO vice president; Dorastin Jude, Cooperative St. Jean Baptiste general manager; Marcelus Noel, Cooperative St. Jean Baptiste vice president, and Dorisca Dieudonne, board secretary.*



Photo credit — HIFIVE

*Co-op member Josnie Souffrant happily receives her receipt from Cooperative St. Jean Baptiste’s treasurer, Napoloen Andre, for the delivery and weighing of her cacao. “With the money from my loan, I’ve been able to expand cacao production as well as my other business, turning cacao beans into a sweetened cocoa product that is popular here.”*

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Access to credit is often a key element in helping agricultural producers expand and improve their production. In Haiti, USAID is working with the government and farmers to help revitalize traditional crops like cacao, one of the most promising agricultural sectors in Haiti.

Haitian cocoa is a high quality, highly sought-after product due to the special fermentation it undergoes in the northern region, which produces 45% of Haiti’s cocoa. In Europe, the cocoa sells for much higher prices as a “fair trade” product, and the increased revenue has brought many more financial benefits to cacao producers throughout the northern region of Haiti.<sup>1</sup> However without access to credit, FECCANO, a federation of seven cocoa grower cooperatives, has been unable to purchase enough fermented cacao to meet its European contract. Its members have consequently not had the opportunity to improve their earnings in the European market.<sup>2</sup>

USAID’s HIFIVE project worked with FECCANO and its member cooperatives in the north to improve its access to finance.<sup>3</sup> A grant from HIFIVE to a microfinance institution in the same region, KOFIP, supported the development of cacao-related loan products for FECCANO to help improve and expand exports. The program has brought immediate benefits to the 1,800 members of FECCANO’s cooperatives that have been able to produce, buy and ferment larger quantities of cacao beans to fulfill their export contracts. KOFIP’s loan program also supports improved income opportunities for 800 women members with loans for processing and marketing cocoa products and other cash crops such as vegetables and peas.

Dorastin Jude, general manager of Cooperative St. Jean Baptiste, a FECCANO member, in Grand Rivière is enthusiastic about the results. **“In addition to the direct beneficiaries of these credits, there are an additional 13,000 indirect beneficiaries,”** Jude said. **“With the access to credit that HIFIVE has created, FECCANO has tripled the export capacity of its members, increasing from one 40-foot container in previous years to over three 40-foot containers in 2011.”**<sup>4</sup>

Working together, USAID/HIFIVE, FECCANO and KOFIP have brought real change to the lives of cacao producers, improving their livelihoods by increasing and diversifying their income. Encouraged by increasing cacao returns, farmers plan to expand their planting and further reduce deforestation. Access to finance was a critical element to reversing declines in the country’s cacao sector and has given hope to the people whose livelihoods depend on it.

<sup>1</sup> “Fair trade” is an organized market-based approach that aims to help producers realize better trading conditions and ensure sustainability. It focuses primarily on exports from developing countries to developed countries and includes such products as coffee, cacao, handicrafts, fruit, honey and others.

<sup>2</sup> Fédération des Coopératives Cacaoyères du Nord

<sup>3</sup> HIFIVE is the Haiti Integrated Finance for Value Chains and Enterprises cooperative agreement which is funded by USAID and implemented by World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) and FHI 360.

<sup>4</sup> Expanded production has enabled FECCANO to open an additional export market to Canada.