

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

From this field research, it can be concluded that the cassava farmers have a low level of education (41.29% of them have a primary school education only). So, the farmers with no or low education have difficulty in accessing information on the new techniques of production and marketing. They also have no knowledge or interest about the weather factors and the pest mitigation that can affect their crop. Therefore, their ideas on the production of cassava are more often based on myths instead on facts, like thinking that cassava does not need fertilizers or pesticides, and they sometimes use inappropriate techniques in their agro-practice. In addition, continuous cropping of cassava in the same field, without balanced fertilizer application can lead to soil nutrient depletion and a yield decline over time. Those are the reasons that we see substantial variations in this study.

The silos play a vital role in the cassava value chain, and their demand has led to the enhancement of the value of cassava roots, which is transformed to dried chips and provides animal food (CP Company). Some of the dried chips are used locally, and the rest (67.76%) is sold to Thai traders who in return, export it to Chinese markets. On the other hand, addressing the emerging opportunities and challenges in the cassava market requires cross-sectorial participation from the full range of stakeholders in the value chain, notably the government.

Through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, the government can supply credit in the form of soft loans to buy fertilizers or pesticides. In the light of the foregoing results, improving the profits of the farmers is a major challenge that will require interest from the government officials with an appropriate budget. The support from politicians of all levels is essential.

The farmers who sold cassava in the form of dried chips got 17% more benefits than the farmers who sold cassava in the form of fresh roots. The cassava

production provides jobs for the local population who faces a high level of unemployment. Cassava is also a way to diversify the revenue of the farmers, although they have a lower profit than the transporters and the traders. Unfortunately, only 28.77% of the dried chips cassava is processed locally for the animal food and the rest is sold to Thai traders for exporting to the Chinese market. Consequently, this has a negative effect for the added value of the cassava production.

An inappropriate agro-practice, a low industrial processing capacity, a dependence on Thai traders for exporting to Chinese market and the volatility in the demand and supply, those are some of the biggest problems for the cassava farmers in Cambodia.

5.2 Recommendation

Government

- The Provincial department of agriculture, Forestry and Fishery and other donor partners should make massive investment in subsidizing cassava production. The farmers need help to improve the processing of their cassava locally with new technology. Lower interest loans should also be made available to the farmers, by the Ministry. There is a need for the promotion of newly introduced cassava varieties, with an appropriate strategy.
- The Provincial department of agriculture should be conducted training about soil nutrition and the 4R Nutrient Stewardship concept, pest and diseases of the cassava to cassava farmers.
- All of this would contribute to a sustainable cassava-based production system.

Cassava farmers

- The farmers should be encouraged to form themselves into viable Cooperative Groups or Associations. This would allow them to have a stronger voice when they need a bank or government loan, or when they would sell cassava as a group.
- They should accept the 4R Nutrient Stewardship concept of applying the right source of plant nutrients at the right rate, at the right time, and in the right

place. This provides guidelines on fertilizer management that will help the farmers to reap the full benefits of their investment.

- Since there is a higher benefit in the sale of dried chips, the farmers should privilege this channel.
- The farmers should find out about new varieties that are resistant to disease and drought, and that produce high yield.

Further studies

- More research into the added values analysis of all the actors, including the CP (food for Animals Company) and the Thai exporters.
- Research about climate change and the impact on the cassava production.
- Implementation of an agricultural policy (Cassava production) at sub national level in Cambodia.