



## Green Story



## Mama Theresia Abidondifu : A first bank loan catalysed by VCO production

Theresia Abidondifu is a 52 year old housewife from Kornasoren village, East Numfor Sub-District, Biak Numfor Regency. She became familiar with Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) production in a training facilitated by the GEG program in 2019.

Since then she has been regularly producing VCO both for personal use and for sale. Usually the VCO that she produces is sold around Numfor, Manokwari and Jayapura. The price of VCO she sells is IDR 50,000 / 100 ml.

Her husband, Mr Mandowen, is very supportive of her business. He helped her in promoting and developing her VCO business by designing VCO promotional banners to hang in front of their house, creating an attractive VCO packaging and stickers as well as brochures containing the benefits of VCO to be distributed to the customers.

In 2020, Bank Papua in Numfor offered her a loan to support her VCO business. At first, she was hesitant because she had never taken a loan out before. However, she pushed herself to take her first loan of IDR. 5,000,000 which she needs to pay back in two years.

**"This loan has not become a burden to me as much as I had anticipated because I can get at least IDR.600.000 from the VCO alone that I use to pay the loan back every month."**

Mama Theresia  
VCO Producer from Numfor

According to Theresia, she used the credit from the bank to support the VCO business and start another business selling ice cubes. She has been paying off her debt now for a year. Every month she has to deposit Rp. 221.000 to the bank.

The example of Mama Theresia, who has managed to get a loan from the bank and can pay it back regularly to the bank, is an interesting role model for other VCO producers on the island of Numfor who want to expand their business but are hesitant and not confident enough in their ability to pay back the loan to banks.

Mama Theresia's success in gaining the trust of the bank and becoming a regular paying creditor shows that a clear business model and consistent sales are sufficient to open up the access for VCO producers to the financial assistance they need.



## Coconut Derivative Products Training in Numfor Island, Biak Numfor Regency

In May, the GEG program conducted a training on coconut derivative products for VCO groups in three villages in Numfor, namely Kansai, Koryakam and Syoribo.

In total this training was attended by 21 groups of VCO producers from 9 villages spread across 4 sub-districts on Numfor Island, Biak Numfor Regency, namely West Numfor sub-district, East Numfor sub-district, Orkeri sub-district and Poiru sub-district.

The training was held for two days

where during the first day of the training, participants were invited to analyze the opportunities, challenges, strengths and weaknesses they have in running their businesses and learn to make simple financial records.

Meanwhile, on the second day the participants learned to make three new coconut-based products, namely “serundeng” or seasoned shredded coconut, coconut jam

and coconut chips. On the second day, the practice of making

derivative products was followed by the practice of calculating investment costs and production costs of the three products made.

It is hoped that through this training, participants will not only know the potential for other coconut derivative products besides VCO but also know how to manage their business finance properly so that production costs and business investment costs can be consistently set aside to ensure the continuity of their businesses.





## Nutmeg Soap – A new Derivative Product from Fakfak

On the 27th May a soap-making training, supported by GEG, was opened by the Bupati of Fakfak. 105 women participated in the training from 18 villages and 6 community groups.

The women learned how to make nutmeg soap with a 10% nutmeg butter composition which is being produced locally. Other ingredients include coconut oil, palm oil and sodium hydroxide which are available locally through the local cooperative.

The group also learned how to package the soap using natural and locally available materials. This training was in collaboration with Moii Papua a local enterprise which markets hand-made products from Papua sourced from local women (<https://www.instagram.com/mooipapua/>). Local government officers were also trained in making soap a few weeks earlier in a separate training.



*Pandoki leaves, a potential alternative for natural packaging for Fakfak's Nutmeg Soap*



## Challenges Facing Local Cacao Collectors in Jayapura District

In 2020, GEG program worked with five farmer groups as local collectors in Jayapura district to encourage the enthusiasm of farmers around them to return and care for their garden by rejuvenating and expanding their cacao farms.

Since August 2020, these groups have started to actively buy dried cacao beans from farmers around their area. However, at the beginning of 2021, these collectors faced challenges in achieving their target. This condition was caused by three main reasons below.

The strong personal relationship between local cacao farmers and their regular collectors. On average, cacao farmers have had a long dependency relationship with collectors. Generally, small collectors in the village are kiosk



owners so that farmers used to depend on them to provide for their daily needs with a guarantee of dried cacao beans. This resulted in them not being able to sell all of their cacao beans to the new local collectors established by the program. It is common for the farmers to divide and sell their cacao beans stock to two or three different buyers.

The local collectors cannot compete with large collectors due to their limited capital. When groups of local farmers and collectors are trying to get cacao farmers to improve the quality of the cacao beans they sell; the large trader arrives offering high prices regardless of the quality of the beans. If local collectors can only buy the dried beans at a price of IDR. 18,000 / kg, large collectors

can offer prices of up to Rp. 23,000/kg even though the beans have not been dried properly.

The decline of cocoa production in Jayapura district. The decline in cocoa production was mainly the result of two things. First, because of the replanting program throughout the area in which GEG is intervening. Second due to the changing length of seasons. April is usually the peak season for cocoa harvest. However, due to the long rainy season, local cocoa trees failed to produce any fruits while clonal cocoa trees produced fewer fruits.

The Nawa Mulya group from Yapsi District, for example, only collected 1.2 tonnes of cocoa beans, far from their target of 2,5 tonnes for January-April. The same condition was also faced by the Katema group from Sebum village, Kaureh District, who had a target early in the year to collect 500 kg of dried cacao beans but only managed to collect 180 kg of it to be sold to UD Ujung Timur.

In response to this situation, the local collectors have adopted several strategies to survive. First, mobilizing all members of the group to actively build personal relationships with cocoa farmers in their area. Second, expanding their purchasing area. Last but not least, limiting the production of fermented cocoa production and focusing on the production of non-fermented cocoa.



# The Cooperation Between Aitumieri Group, Seaweed Based Snacks Producer, and Anggi Mart

Anggi Mart Manokwari is a shop initiated by Simon Tabuni, the coordinator of Inspirational Youth Papua (PMI), Manokwari. This store was opened in 2020 and aimed at becoming a platform to promote and sell products from Papuan farmers and producers in West Papua.

In April, the Aitumieri group who had just obtained a product permit from the Food and Drug Administration Manokwari, started supplying their products to Anggi Mart. Initially the Aitumieri group supplied 20 packets of their products, 10 banana chips and 10 seaweed crackers. The price of each product is IDR. 15.000, which is then sold at Anggi Mart for a price of IDR 18.000.

Currently the Aitumieri group is preparing products to restock in Anggi Mart as the first supply has been sold out. Beside Anggi Mart, the products has also been sold in six other stores and a café in Manokwari.

Emmy Sawaki, one of the members of Aitumieri group said that after getting their product permit, it is easy for them to find stores and cafes willing to sell their products. However, all of them act only as a transit market where the group can only receive the money after the products have sold out. She hopes that as more people know the quality of their products, they can get more orders from buyers and distributors that are willing to pay for their products upfront.





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