

1. Kwamtili Estate

1.1. General overview

The estate looks in many ways neglected and badly managed. Most buildings are falling apart, rotten machinery stands around and most workers have no directions.

Workers complain about not having an effective and efficient management.

Theft is a problem, but by far not as serious as stated.

There is no business- or work plan.

1.2. Infrastructure/Assets

Office (Tanga)

The flat in Tanga is in a good location with sea view. Local market, banks and shops are nearby.

There are two good bed rooms, a large living room, a very basic kitchen and an office/storage room. It is rather untidy and has no running water.

Rent per month: 100USD.

There is a telephone and internet access.

Main building

The main building is centrally located on top of a hill. It is only a five minute walk to the water dam or to the cocoa processing and storage facilities.

The building is in a basic but good condition and can be used for living and for storing key materials/machines. However there are no bars in the windows. Also breaking in through the doors is not difficult.

There is no electricity or drinking water. Electricity can be produced with a small generator, which is enough for basic lighting. However there must be a short-circuit somewhere in the wiring. Even with just a few lights on, the generator cannot carry the load. There is no refrigerator. Drinking water has to be brought from outside. Rain water is collected in a 5'000 and a 3'000 liter water tank. There is also a concrete water storage which is leaking even after several repairs (approx. 10'000 liters).

Cooking facilities are basic.

Where the sewage goes is unknown.



Cocoa processing and storage facilities



A large and lockable building is used for fermenting and washing the cocoa beans.

Next to it is the storage building containing two open silos for about 4-5 tons of dry cocoa each. The building is secured with two padlocks.

There are five roofed tables for drying the washed cocoa.

Four have a removable roof for drying the cocoa in the sun and one has a basic wood stove.

On the same compound is a small office, a maize mill (inefficient and dirty), a small 'restaurant'/bakery (makes the porridge for the school kids), a shed and a two shelters

for sheep and chickens.

School

Presently there are 22 kids attending the school from 9am to 11am (aged between 5 and 8 years). The building is large enough for about 50 children and has a new toilet building with water in the fenced-off yard. There is a male teacher of about 70 years. The children are very attentive and eager to learn, but there seems to be no real teaching material or scheme. They don't sing any songs and most of them are not able to count to ten. A good project would be to grow seedlings (beans, cocoa, ...) with the kids.

Water dam

Close to the main building is the large water dam with a wall of 5m. However there is a crack over the full length that has to be repaired before the next rain falls. Presently there is just enough water for the fish to survive. When the Muzi River has water, some could be pumped into the dam (200m away, 3m up).



There is a smaller dam where the tenants are. This dam needs to be renovated. Capacity unknown.

Machines

There is a small tractor with a trailer that looks fairly new. A squad bike, two motorbikes and smaller machinery (small generator, chainsaw,...) are still working. Larger machines (2 bowsers, larger tractors ...) are still on site however in very bad condition.

Cocoa plantation



On the main area of the estate are pockets of different sizes with a total of 20'000 to 25'000 cocoa trees. In general the condition of the plantation is ok and there are about 20 to 30 cocoa pods on an average tree. This will yield approx. 300 grams of dry cocoa (1kg wet). With a steady supply of water there would be more and bigger pods. Also many young trees have died due to the drought. The plantation also needs pesticides and fertilizer for maximum yield.

Cocoa nursery

At the far end of the lake is the cocoa nursery. Here small plants are grown to hand out to the tenants and small holders. Due to the lack of water most seedlings died. The roof (bamboo and palm leaves) has to be rebuilt.

Animals

There are 16 cows and calves and one bull. They are not milk cows so there are about 2-3 liters of milk per day. A family lives next to the cow's basic yard and looks after them during the day. The cows don't have water. Most of them have a tag in their ear.

Four donkeys live with the cows.

About 40 sheep live at the cocoa processing site. They don't have water or tags.

In the same area are about 30 chickens with babies. What happens to the eggs is unknown.

All these animals live there as described but there is no plan what to do with them for either kind.

Tenants

There are numerous tenants on Kwamtili land. The ones not growing cocoa pay rent. The cocoa growing tenants look after approx. 10'000 trees.

Small holders

There are several small holders in the area growing cocoa trees. They receive the seedlings and some advice for free. These plantations look very well looked after and the people seem interested and knowledgeable. In my opinion expanding the small holder activities is the way to go in order to increase the amount of cocoa.

1.3. Personnel/Management

Presently there are 12 full time staff (3 managers, 6 'guards', 1 cow man, 1 driver, 1 house keeper).

People from the area can be hired for work.

Mr. Magogo

Mr Fielder's replacement, but not employed by the company. He runs a few projects and office jobs, but responsibilities are not clear-cut.

He runs a computer business (selling hardware, consultancy, selling own programs). Apparently he

Mr. Sami

The 'old' manager. He has been on the estate for over 20 years. He is responsible for the cocoa plantation and the cocoa processing.

Mr. Mooner

The 'new' manager. He was supposed to be Mr Sami's successor. He is more the office-manager, which he is good at. He files reports, collects the rent from the tenants and labels the trees. In my opinion he is good, but not suitable for Mr Sami's job.

Mr. Razafami

Also a manager. Buys the cocoa from the harvesters/tenants/smallholders and does some of the fermentation work.

1.4. Finances

It is very difficult to establish the real financial situation of the estate. According to the books available, there are assets of approx. 147'000USD and liabilities of approx. 172'000USD. The capital account shows a value of 123'000USD. The accumulated loss is 148'000USD.

Also the income statement is no use. I estimate the yearly costs are somewhere between 30'000 and 50'000USD.

Even audited financial reports from the past show major mistakes (e.g. a cash-balance of -28'000USD).

2. Options

There are basically two options besides abandoning the estate:

- Dennis Fielder runs the estate as long as his health permits and then his wife could take over or the estate could be sold at a later stage.
- Steven Attwell (Fish Eagle Point) is interested in buying the estate. He business partner would live on the estate and continue with the cocoa production. Steven would bring tourists to the estate and grow beef cattle on the area not used for cocoa. A final decision is pending.

3. Conclusion

In order to increase yields and decrease theft the manager has to be on site for most of the time. The manager should also hold the majority of the shares.

Major investments are required to be able to live on the estate and to secure water resources.

In my opinion Dennis Fielder is no longer able to run the estate (physically, mentally *or and* financially). His wife might be able to, however there is no money for the investments. Selling the estate to Steven Attwell seems to be a very good solution for the estate and the people living in the area. He seems to have very solid financial and human resources. Also his plan makes sense.