



INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty

Ghana Strategy Support Program
PMB CT 112
Cantonments, Accra, Ghana
Tel: +233-302-780716
Fax: +233-302-784752
Email: ifpri-ghana@cgiar.org
Website: <http://gssp.ifpri.info>

Scholarship Competition

The Ghana Strategy Support Program (GSSP) is a research, communication, and capacity-strengthening program of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The program aims to strengthen the capabilities of researchers, administrators, policy-makers, and members of civil society in Ghana to develop and implement agricultural and rural development strategies. Two important aspects of strengthening research capabilities are improving the statistical system and creating demand for research and evidence-based policy making. GSSP is working with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) and the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) to improve the agricultural statistical system in the country. Currently an improved system for generating agricultural data is being piloted in 20 districts throughout the country. Much of the effort that goes into research in the country is done by post graduate students and is underutilized. To strengthen capacities as well as better utilize research, GSSP proposes to initiate a program for supporting Master's level thesis research.

In addition to offering students resources and collaboration opportunities to build their research capabilities, the scholarship program aims to enhance the relevance of this body of research to improving the effectiveness of agricultural and rural development strategies in Ghana. An important aspect of this is to make researchers more accountable to stakeholders in the sector. The program will initiate mechanisms to inform the students of issues in the agricultural sector that are relevant for policymakers in the country. Stakeholders in the sector will also be given the opportunity to provide input into the selection of theses that will be supported. Building these linkages between researchers and stakeholders will be an important part of the development of a local knowledge system being created as part of Ghana's commitment to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

The support will be restricted to research in social sciences on topics directly related to agricultural and rural development. Students in Economics, Agricultural Economics, Agribusiness, Agricultural Administration, and Development Studies at the University of Ghana, the University of Cape Coast, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and the University for Development Studies would be eligible to apply for this scholarship.

The support will consist of a sustenance grant of \$4,000 dollars (\$1,000 per month) to complete the thesis. It is expected that large household data sets will be available from MoFA's pilot agricultural production survey by then, which may reduce the need for further data collection. If field work is necessary, additional support of up to \$4,000 may be given to support these efforts depending on the proposal. Further support as needed may also be provided after theses have been completed for preparing outputs for publication and dissemination depending on the quality and relevance of research outputs.

Tentatively, the following process will be used to select applicants for the scholarship. During the first round of selection, students will submit concept notes outlining their proposed work.

Applicants will be notified that they have been selected to submit full proposals for the scholarship program. Students will submit proposals that have been approved by their supervisors by August 15, 2012. Select applicants, along with one thesis advisor, will then be invited to a workshop where the students will have an opportunity to present their proposals. A committee consisting of both researchers and stakeholders will then choose the proposals selected for scholarships based on a demonstration of clear goals and objectives, adequate preparation and background information on the topic, appropriate methods to address the research questions, and relevance to current issues affecting the sector. The workshop will also include a day of sessions on cutting edge research methodologies as well as writing and other communication skills. The workshop will be combined with a day of presentations by other researchers and organizations. This will provide an opportunity for students to develop linkages in the field of agriculture as well.

Tentative deadlines are as follows:

Concept Notes Due: June 15, 2012

Proposals Due: August 15, 2012

Conference: September (tentatively set for first week in September)

Scholarships Announced: September 30, 2012

More details will be shared on the GSSP blog (www.gssp.ifpri.info) as they become available. Guidelines for concept note and proposal submission will be posted.

Concept notes should be submitted to Ms. Esther Mensah by email at IFPRI-Ghana@cgiar.org no later than 5pm on June 15th. For questions regarding submissions, Esther can be reached at 0302-780-716.