

GSSP Newsletter



After a hiatus of six months since November 2016 through April 2017, the News Digest of the Ghana Strategy Support Program (GSSP) comes to you as a monthly GSSP Newsletter. The newsletter will comprise of two segments: the first part offers updates on GSSP activities and outputs; the second, as before, will be the News Digest¹.

Welcome to this first edition of the GSSP Newsletter - enjoy reading!

The GSSP Corner:

Publications

- ❖ Outgrower schemes are perceived to be an important strategy for smallholder development. GSSP has come out with two new studies on outgrower schemes. These studies are based on the survey of farmers in Sissala East, Sissala West and Wa East, which have the highest maize production and the highest concentration of outgrower schemes in the Upper West Region (UWR). The surveys focused on two relatively large maize-based outgrower schemes with fixed input packages (Masara and Akate) and other smaller and more flexible outgrower schemes in UWR, where maize outgrower schemes were concentrating at the time of the survey. Detailed plot-level and household-level data were complemented by key informant interviews and in-depth interviews of aggregators and firms that are operating outgrower schemes in the area.

The results show that despite of improved technology adoption and yield increases for maize farmers under the outgrower schemes, the sustainability of these schemes is a matter of concern. Yields though increased under the outgrower schemes, are not high enough to compensate for higher input requirements and high cost of capital. The cost of producing a ton of maize is higher under a CF scheme than without scheme, due to the relatively higher costs of non-labour purchased inputs like fertilizer, seed, and herbicide under scheme. An average outgrower harvests 1,170-1,210 kg/acre and repays 1,050-1,250 kg/acre for fertilizer, seeds, herbicides, and other inputs obtained through the outgrower scheme. Imputed at the ongoing market prices for similar or comparable inputs in the community, the cost of repayment for inputs provided under the scheme is estimated to be 48% higher than the

¹ In this edition, the News Digest comprises of information collected and compiled from January through April, 2017. From the successive editions, however, the news digest will be a compilation of the monthly news and information for the preceding month, e.g., Newsletter for June 2017 will have news compiled through May 2017.

market prices. This can be interpreted as the nominal rate of interest for borrowing inputs from the scheme, which must be repaid within five to six months. Input diversion is a concern in these outgrower schemes. However, even when input diversion is controlled for, most outgrowers do not have positive profits on their scheme plots.

In a subsequent paper the authors use the same dataset to analyze the impact of development projects on farmers' participation in these outgrower schemes. The paper reveals that the presence of agricultural development projects providing free or subsidized inputs, in communities, are strongly associated with lower rates of entry and higher rates of exit among farmers from maize outgrower schemes. As aforementioned, Ragasa et.al. (2017) shows that participation in outgrower schemes may not be profitable for smallholders, which in turn can explain farmers' reluctance to engage in outgrower schemes when alternative means of accessing agricultural inputs are available.

The findings raise two key issues of policy concern: first, that the presence of welfare projects may pose additional hurdles to the establishment of a vibrant private sector in Northern Ghana; and second, whether outgrower schemes are really viable to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in Ghana.

Limitations of Contract Farming as a Pro-Poor Strategy: The Case of Maize Outgrower Schemes in Upper West Ghana (Ragasa, Lambrecht and Kufoalor 2017),

<http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/131117/filename/131328.pdf>

Do development projects crowd-out private sector activities? Evidence from contract farming participation in Northern Ghana (Lambrecht and Ragasa 2016) -

<http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/130950/filename/131161.pdf>

- ❖ Though targeting poor and smallholder farmers is the key in the program implementation guidelines of fertilizer subsidy programs, GSSP's recent works of fertilizer subsidy targeting in Ghana show that there are considerable challenges in the existing methods of targeting. Currently, larger-scale and wealthier farmers are the main beneficiaries of subsidized fertilizer even though the stated goal is to target smallholder farmers with fertilizer subsidies. The experience of other African countries suggests that the effectiveness of fertilizer subsidies can improve with effective targeting of resource-poor smallholders. However, targeting smallholder farmers entails significant transaction costs and may even be infeasible in some cases. Faced with such challenges, the question of how to improve the targeting of input subsidy programs in the country remains relevant both for policy and academic researches.

Improving the targeting of fertilizer subsidy programs in Africa south of the Sahara:

Perspectives from the Ghanaian experience (Houssou, N., Asante-Addo, Collins, Kwaw S. Andam, 2017),

<http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/131104>

Can better targeting improve the effectiveness of Ghana's Fertilizer Subsidy Program? Lessons from Ghana and other countries in Africa south of the Sahara (Houssou, N.; Andam, K. S.; Collins, A.A., 2017),
<http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/131068>

- ❖ As developing countries undergo agricultural transformation, the interactions between crop and livestock value chains become important as drivers of agrarian development and growth. What is the nature and extent of these interactions, and how can policies foster growth in the value chains?

GSSP's current publication on poultry-maize linkage in Ghana addresses these questions by researching two interlinked value chains: maize, which serves as the main input of the production for the second value chain, poultry, a rapidly growing source of protein for Ghana's growing urban population. Further, this study also explores the potential sources of competitiveness of the domestic poultry sector against frozen meat imports. The findings establish the importance of feed in the poultry value chain and shows how the sector has become more integrated with poultry production, especially on larger-scale poultry farms.

A chicken and Maize Situation: The Poultry Feed Sector in Ghana (Andam et.al., 2017),
<http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15738coll2/id/131055>

- ❖ IFPRI's current study on food policy systems analyses the factors contributing to the effectiveness of a policy system. The process of policy design, adoption, implementation, and refinement requires an effective policy system as well as a capacitated and supportive institutional structure. External actors both through technical and financial assistance often support policy systems in developing countries. Poor coordination and harmonization of such assistance among various actors and players within the country can often result in undermining the very policy systems they try to strengthen. This is typical in the African agricultural development process.

This paper provides a conceptual framework for understanding the policy and institutional architecture of food and agriculture policy system and for improving the coordination and harmonization of the roles of policy actors and players. Applying the framework to Ghana, we map and analyze the organizational contributions of various actors and their functional characteristics. We show how such analysis can aid various policy actors in setting priorities and strategies for increasing their capacity and the effectiveness of their roles. Finally, we draw lessons for strengthening the food policy systems in developing countries through effective coordination among local and external actors.

Strengthening and harmonizing food policy systems to achieve food security: A Case Study and Lessons from Ghana (Babu, S.C. and Blom, S., 2017),
<http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/131071>

- ❖ At a time when donors and governments are increasing efforts to mainstream gender in agriculture, it is critical to revisit long-standing wisdom about gender inequalities in agriculture to be able to more efficiently design and evaluate policy interventions. Many stylized facts about women in agriculture have been repeated for decades. Has nothing changed, really? Is some of this conventional wisdom simply maintained over time, or has it always been inaccurate?

Using longitudinal data from Ghana this GSSP paper attempts to assess some of the facts and evaluate whether gender patterns have changed over time. The paper focuses on five main themes: land, cropping patterns, market participation, agricultural inputs, and employment. This work adds to the extant literature by showing new facts and evidence from more than 20 years. Results are varied and highlight the difficulty of making general statements about gender in agriculture.

Changing gender roles in agriculture? Evidence from 20 years of data in Ghana (Lambrecht, Isabel; Schuster, Monica; Asare, Sarah; and Pelleriaux, Laura, 2017)

<http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/131105>

Announcement

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) is looking for a Research Officer for one-year, fixed-term, renewable appointments in its Ghana Strategy Support Program (GSSP). The incumbents will be on a probation for the initial six months. Subsequent confirmation and renewal of the contract will be subject to the candidates' performance and the Institute's requirements.

The successful candidates will work with senior research staff on administering primary surveys for data collection, statistical analysis of both secondary and primary survey data, and other research support activities such as assisting with literature reviews, drafting reports and research papers, etc., related to the work conducted by GSSP. The successful candidate may also be involved in the program's outreach and communication activities, if needed.

Application deadline: May 20, 2017

<https://www.jobberman.com.gh/job/137403/research-officer-in-greater-accra-region/>

***This position is being re-advertised. Candidates who have applied already are requested not to re-apply.*

GSSP News Digest:

Agricultural Issues

[Farmers Back Agric Minister-Designate to Take Up Job despite Opposition](#)

Civil Society Group Food Sovereignty Ghana (FSG) issued a statement last week indicating it is strongly opposed to the nomination of Dr. Afriyie Akoto as Minister-Designate for Agriculture. The group called on the president, Nana Akufo-Addo to drop his name for the slot, and petitioned Parliament to reject his nomination. The group's demand stems from what it says is the minister-designate's support for plans to introduce Genetically Modified Foods (GM Foods) into the country's food chain, claiming "Dr. Afriyie Akoto has already demonstrated profound ignorance on the subject of GMOs and a shocking indifference to the lives and wellbeing of Ghanaians," citing a media interview he granted in 2014. However, the Ghana National Association of Farmers and Fishermen (GNAFF) is backing Minister-Designate for Food and Agriculture Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto to take up the job despite opposition to his nomination. The association is asking Parliament's Appointment Committee to approve his nomination because they are confident he is the best person to develop the sector.

[Second phase of fishing harbour to be completed in December](#)

The second phase of the 20 million-dollar expansion work at the Albert Bosomtwe-Sam (ABS) Fishing Harbour in Sekondi is expected to be completed by December. The project, being implemented by Japanese Grant Aid Co-operation, has 40 per cent of the work done including the breakwater of 200 meters, landing berth (50m) preparation/resting berth (115m), canoe jetty (76m), driveway (490m) and ice making plant (15tonne/day). The fishing harbour is currently overstretched due to the number of inshore vessels using the facility which makes it appropriate for the second half to be completed. The Japanese Embassy in Ghana and a delegation from the Japanese Government have toured the fishing harbour at Sekondi to have first-hand information on the progress of work. Captain Ebenezer Kojo Afadzi, the Director of the Takoradi Port, explained that the fishing harbour had become an important pillar in the industry, adding, the facility would be put to good use as expected.

[68th New Year School Opens Today](#)

The 68th Annual New Year School formally opens today. Participants are expected to discuss issues on agricultural financing options, opportunities and strategies in the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT). The theme for this year's school, which is being held at the University of Ghana is: "Promoting National Development through Agricultural Modernisation: the Role of ICT." The three-day annual event, geared towards engendering discussions on topical and critical development issues, will this year be

dedicated to the agriculture sector and the use of ICT to advance the sector and improve the lot of farmers.

[Ghana's President says to Focus on ICT for Agricultural Modernization](#)

Speaking at the 68th Annual New Year School at the University of Ghana, Legon, President Akufo-Addo said government places great importance on the modernization of the agricultural sector, adding that the integration of ICT would not only increase the wealth of farmers and fisherfolk but also guarantee the nation's food security. He said given the rapid penetration of ICT in our society today, particularly the use of mobile telephones, there is a realization that ICT should be integrated to be effectively used as facilitating tools in agricultural development to boost its impact on the lives of farmers.

[Adopt Climate-smart Agric to Ensure Food Security](#)

Speaking at the 68th New Year School and Conference," Dr Kwadwo Owusu, a lecturer at the Department of Geography & Resource Development of the University of Ghana, Legon explained that the changing rainfall patterns in the country and the inadequate seasonal climate information to the many smallholder farmers were the major problems to increased crop productivity. He was contributing to the topic, "ICT, Climate Change and Agricultural Production." Dr Owusu noted that Ghanaian farmers faced threats from poor soils, drought, erosion and pests due to the change of weather, and said agricultural improvements would, therefore, stem from information about pest and disease control, especially early warning systems, new varieties, new ways to optimise production and regulations for quality control. He added that farmers need to adopt climate-smart agriculture to ensure food security.

[Agric Workers Laud Government's 'Planting for Good and Job' Campaign](#)

The General Agricultural Worker Union (GAWU) has lauded government's plan to roll out a 'planting for food and jobs' programme, in a bid to promote food security in the country. According to the union, the initiative will help solve some of the challenges bedevilling the agricultural sector such as the importation of unwholesome products. The General Secretary for the GAWU, Edward Kariwe told Citi News, the union was hopeful that government will fully implement the proposal. "It is a fantastic policy framework and we can only hope that it will be implemented. It will first address the production challenges within the agricultural sector, modernize agriculture, and also address the marketing challenges that we have in the sector. It is also meant to guarantee safety for Ghanaians by reducing imports," he said. "We have been hearing of rubber rice coming from various places and we are also aware that sometimes we have rotten poultry produce so for some time now the increase in imported produce has put the Ghanaian health in jeopardy," he added.

[High Food Cost must End - President Akufo-Addo](#)

The President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, says the cost of food is unnecessarily expensive in the country which is blessed with fertile lands. Underlying the fact that production methods in the agricultural sector were not the best, while income levels of farmers and fishermen remained low, the President said the situation had worked to make the agricultural sector unattractive to the youth as a viable means of livelihood and that the situation ought to be arrested.

[Government to Fight Post-harvest Losses with Cocoa Warehouses](#)

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) is to use the idling capacities of the cocoa warehouses nationwide to store excess farm produce for future use. The move will be the outcome of a partnership between the sector ministry and the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), which administers the warehouses, to stock extra foodstuff. It is aimed at fighting post-harvest losses, which are fast becoming a challenge to the agricultural sector. The Senior Minister, Mr. Yaw Osafo-Mafo, explained that the initiative was needed to make the agricultural sector function well. “The warehousing system is going to be put in place. About 45 per cent of the capacity of COCOBOD in storage is idling. Cocoa sheds in all the districts are about half empty, whereas they can accommodate grains,” he said at the fifth edition of the Graphic Business/Stanbic Bank Business Breakfast Meeting series in Accra.

[Reintroduce Agricultural Science in basic school](#)

Speaking at the 20th anniversary celebration of Messiah Preparatory School at Akuse in the Eastern Region, the Managing Director (MD) of Blue Skies Company Limited, Mr. Alistair Djimatey, has urged the government to reintroduce Agricultural Science into the school curricula at the basic level of education, and make it a core subject that will be examinable. Mr. Djimatey said since farming was an important ingredient in the country's development, it was pertinent that agriculture was made a principal subject in school in order to have an effective food production system. He said, “Because a large number of farmers are not educated and so cannot read to follow instructions contained in manuals, it has led to low yields in agricultural production.”

[Food Shortage Worsens in East Africa amid Prolonged Drought](#)

The UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned that drought in the Horn of Africa is expected to intensify in the coming months, with a delayed start to the rainy season and depressed levels of precipitation forecast for March-May in most of the Horn. “Needs are driven by successive episodes of drought, which have led to consecutively failed harvests, combined with conflict and insecurity, and economic shocks affecting the most vulnerable,” OCHA said in its latest Humanitarian Outlook report

released in Nairobi. According to the UN, the impact of the drought is largely comparable to the El Nino-induced East African drought of October-November 2010, which caused a regional food security and nutrition crisis in 2011.

[Ministry Set up Business Development Unit for CSIR](#)

During a working visit to the institute, Prof. Frimpong-Boateng said he was very impressed with the work that went on at the CSIR, especially the Water Research Institute and that the change Ghana wanted would start from the Ministry, because without science and technology agriculture would not improve and there would be no industries. “My joy is that the President of the Republic has set the tone and I am serious with what I am saying, he has said that we cannot continue like this, we cannot continue to rely on an economy that is based on the export of raw materials alone but we need to go into industrial goods and services and be independent from foreign capital and influence. This is what CSIR is about,” he said. The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) is to set up a business development unit to help highlight various technology and innovations of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

[Ministry of Lands Supports Forestry Commission](#)

Mr. John-Peter Amewu, the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, has handed over to the Forestry Commission various forestry tools and vehicles under the Ghana Forest Investment Programme (GFIP) to tackle deforestation and forest degradation. The vehicles includes: six New Holland TD90 Tractors with Trailer, Plough and Harrow, 40 Suzuki DR2005E Motorcycles, a Ford Everest 4WD Fire Information Van (Mobile Education Van), and four Volvo FMX 400 HP Heavy Duty Trucks. Presenting the items at the Achimota Forest Depot of the Forestry Commission in Accra, Mr. Amewu said, Ghana applied to the Climate Investment Fund (CIF) and got approval to implement the GFIP aimed to finance upfront investments to tackle the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation through transformative approaches in the High Forest Zone. He said the Government recognized that the growing cost of natural resources degradation amounted to some 10 per cent of Gross Domestic Product.

[Minister Issues Directive to Sanitise Forestry Sector](#)

Mr. John-Peter Amewu, the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, said there is a ban on export of Rosewood across the country as part of efforts to bring sanity in the forestry sector. He said the ban also gives a directive to the Forestry Commission to stop the issuance of felling permits which were ways to ensure the reverse of the decline of the forest and wildlife resources by addressing vigorously the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. “We will embark on tree nurseries establishment, forest plantation development, development of the bamboo and rattan industry, conservation of

biodiversity, protection of water bodies and promotion of eco-tourism,” he said. Mr. Amewu said this when he toured the agencies under his ministry on Wednesday and assured them of the ministry's commitment to solving their challenges.

[Smallholder Farmers' Empowerment Programme Launched](#)

Ghana Learning Alliance (GH-NLA), a project aimed at promoting smallholder agricultural value chain actors, particularly women and youth has been launched in Accra. “The GH-NLA would facilitate Sustainable Agricultural Intensification (SAI) research evidence used by decision makers for effective policy processes and investments and would enhance the wellbeing of poorer smallholder farmers in the country,” Dr Naaminong Karbo, the Facilitator GH-NLA said. He said the project was under five-year Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning in Africa (SAIRLA) programme and would serve as a platform where learning, discussions and fora would be used to make agriculture better for people. “The participating countries are Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia,” he said.

[National Seed Trade Association Gets Support](#)

Dr Gary Mullen, Chief of Party of the Agricultural Technology Transfer (ATT) Project has assured seed producers of ATTP's continued support of the seed sector to improve agriculture in the country. He said ATTP would also examine the needs of the private sector so that they could offer the needed support for it to grow. Dr Mullen was speaking at a two -day sensitisation workshop for seed value chain actors in Northern Ghana in Tamale organised by the National Seed Trade Association of Ghana (NASTAG) with support from the USAID under its ATT Project. The workshop was also used to introduce an initiative to make more certified seeds available to farmers for planting during the 2017 main cropping season in Northern Ghana.

[We Need Collective Climate Action against Food Insecurity](#)

The Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Food Security Assembly (EBAFOSA) - Ghana, Monday called for an all-inclusive climate action towards food security in Ghana. Dr. John Boateng, the President of EBAFOSA, said climate change had been undermining the future of the Ghanaian economy through agriculture; adding that Ghana was highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Climate change, he said, was destroying the livelihood of many people and contributing towards unemployment because it had made agriculture an unattractive and expensive occupation now. Speaking at a media conference on climate change, in Accra, Dr. Boateng said Ghana's vulnerability to Ghana climate change was held in its economy being mainly dependent on natural resources and rain-fed agriculture, which were very sensitive to climate change. EBAFOSA is the first inclusive pan-African policy framework and implementation platform - a solutions space that brings

together key stakeholders and actors along the entire Ecosystem-Based Adaptation driven agriculture value chain. It was established under the auspices of the United Nations Environmental Programme.

[Ghana to Launch Agric Project for Food Security and Jobs](#)

Ghana will launch a national agricultural program aimed at ensuring food security and creation of jobs, President Nana Akufo-Addo said Tuesday. The “Planting for Food and Jobs” program is aimed at using modern methods to change the lives of many within the shortest possible time. “This campaign will be anchored on the pillars that will transform agriculture, the provision of improved seeds, supply of fertilizers, the provision of dedicated extension services, a marketing strategy and the use of e-agriculture,” the president said in his State of the Nation Address in parliament. The president lamented that the country’s agriculture was not in good shape, with farmers left on their own. “It is not surprising, therefore, that food prices are high and we have to import almost everything we eat, including vegetables from our Sahelian neighbors. And yet, agriculture provides the best opportunity to use modern methods to change the lives of many within the shortest possible time,” he argued.

[Scientists Warn Armyworm Invasion to Endanger East Africa’s Food Security](#)

Small-scale farmers across the East African region are likely to grapple with severe food insecurity due to the recent fall armyworm invasion on key staples, scientists warned on Sunday. Prasanna Boddupalli, director of the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center’s (CIMMYT) Global Maize Program, said the virulent pest has so far damaged an estimated 287,000 hectares of maize in the region since last year. “Surveys conducted last year in farmers’ fields confirmed the pest is spreading fast in Kenya and Uganda. It poses a significant risk to the two countries’ quest to tackle food insecurity against a backdrop of drought,” Boddupalli said during an interview with Xinhua in Nairobi. He disclosed that the armyworm infestation was discovered in three Kenyan counties namely Embu, Kisii and Machakos as well as Namulonge, Kasese and Gulu regions of Uganda.

[Integrate ICT into Agric to Boost Production - Akufo-Addo](#)

President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has called on stakeholders in the agricultural sector to integrate Information Communication Technology (ICT) into the sector to boost production and also better the lot of farmers. Opening the 68th Annual New Year School and Conference at the University of Ghana in Accra on Monday January 16, Mr. Akufo-Addo said government places great premium on the modernisation of the agricultural sector and the integration of ICT will not only increase the wealth of farmers and fisherfolk but guarantee the nation’s food security as well. “It is clear that ICT has brought to the fore

new ways of doing things. Given the rapid penetration of ICT in our society today, particularly the use of mobile telephones, there is a realisation that ICT should be integrated to be effectively used as facilitating tools in agricultural development to boost its impact on the lives of our farmers,” he stated. “ICT provides easier access to markets and information resources and I have no doubt that if this is mainstreamed into our agricultural practices, productivity within the sector will be increased to ensure that not only will farmers’ input increase but also the nation’s food security will be guaranteed.”

[Akufu-Addo Urged to Prioritise Agric Innovation](#)

Civil Society Group, Alliance for Science Ghana is urging President Nana Akufu-Addo to prioritise Agric innovation if the administration will be able to successfully deal with the country’s food security challenges. The Alliance for Science, a group of scientists, civil society persons, academics and farmers, in an open letter to the new president asked him to support the application of advanced technology to food production, particularly the production of food using Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) technology.

[Canadian Government injects \\$120m into Planting for Food and Jobs Program](#)

The Canadian Government is set to Inject a total of \$120m US Dollars (125m Canadian Dollars) into the Planting for Food and Jobs initiative being spearheaded by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The agreement for the release of the funds was signed last week Wednesday, February 01, 2017 at the Finance Ministry. It forms part of the Modernizing Agriculture in Ghana (MAG) Project which forms part of efforts by government to reverse the declining growth of the agriculture sector over the past eight years. The Minister of Finance, Dr. Ken Ofori-Atta, signed on behalf of Ghana whilst the Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana, Ms. Heather Anne Cameron, signed on behalf of her country. It was also witnessed by the Chief of Staff, Mrs. Frema Opare Addo and the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto.

[Cost of Borrowing Killing Poultry Industry](#)

The Chairman of Ghana National Association of Poultry Farmers, Victor Oppong Agyei, has bemoaned the high cost of agricultural borrowing in the country, describing it as a major setback to the sustainability and growth of the poultry industry. He said the cost and structure of financing agriculture in the country are unfriendly to the poultry sector. He consequently called for a downward review of the prevailing interest rates to support financing of the poultry industry. He was addressing a mini summit in Sunyani organised by the USAID to facilitate the financing of agribusiness in the country. The one-day conference, under the theme: “Financing the maize, rice and soy value chains for enhanced feed and poultry production in Ghana”, formed part of the implementation of the five-year USAID-Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (USAID-FinGAP).

[Improved Fertilizer to Boost Farming in Botanga](#)

A newly improved 25-10-10 fertilizer, which comes with a polymer coating, has been introduced to farmers in Botanga, a suburb of Kumbungu District in Tamale. The fertilizer has the ability to sustain the slow release of the nutrients over a period of two to three months, thereby, providing a consistent availability of nutrients throughout the vegetative and reproductive stages of the plant. General Manager of the Agricultural Manufacturing Group, Henry Otoo-Mensah said that, the introduction of the new improved 25-10-10 fertilizer was borne out of concerns expressed by farmers after the previous fertilizers given them negatively impacted on their crop yield. He reiterated the commitment of his outfit to engage with the research institutions to provide quality fertilizer that will boost the production levels of farmers.

[USAID and Partners Discuss Collective Progress on Food Security in Ghana](#)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on March 21 and 22 met with the Government and partners working to advance food security goals under the U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future. In Ghana, Feed the Future works to spur economic growth and trade, boost the income of farmers and reduce hunger, poverty, and undernutrition. Over the course of two days, the Feed the Future partners and the Government of Ghana examined the progress made over the last year and discussed potential plans for improving nutrition and food security, as well as building a more inclusive agriculture sector in Ghana.

[Over 140,000 Farmers Benefit from Agric programme in Northern Region](#)

Under the FTF programme which has been running in Ghana for the last four years, more than \$85 million has been mobilised in capital for the rice, maize and soya bean value chain, resulting in the reduction of stunted growth among children under five and improved household nutrition. As part of their achievements, more than 140,000 farmers in the Northern Region have had their incomes doubled in the last four years following a policy to make high-yielding seed varieties accessible to rural farmers under the Feed the Future (FTF) programme of the US government.

['Planting for Food and Jobs' gets USAID support](#)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has pledged to support the government's proposed 'Planting for Food and Jobs' programme to ensure food security and reduce poverty. Speaking at a two-day Feed the Future Implementing Partner's Meeting held in Accra on the theme: "Sustaining the Momentum to Finish Strongly," Andy Karas, the USAID Ghana Mission Director, said the Feed-the- Future Initiative had made

significant progress in the Northern Region in terms of poverty reduction and improved nutrition since it started in 2013. The US government currently supports agriculture in the Savanna Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) Zones with an annual funding of US\$45 million.

[Ghana Planting for Food and Job Policy to Cost GH¢560m - Afriyie Akoto](#)

The government of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), led by President Nana Akufo-Addo will roll out an agriculture policy for food production and jobs. The Planting for Food and Job policy expected to start this year is expected to cost GH¢560 million and generate GH¢1.3 billion gross revenue for participating farmers in its first year, the Minister for Food and Agriculture, Dr. Afriyie Akoto has announced. Dr. Akoto mentioned that five crops: Soya, rice, maize, sorghum and vegetables will be the main focus of the policy and 200,000 farmers will be targeted in the next two months to begin the project for this year. The policy is also expected to create 750,000 jobs in the first year and when it is successful it will be extended to 2020 to reach at least half of the population of the five million farmers in the country by the end of the four years.

[USAID Intensifies Efforts to Boost Agricultural Opportunities](#)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Feed the Future's Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement (ADVANCE) project hosted a summit to discuss the future of agriculture in Ghana from March 1-2. The event featured panel discussions on generating opportunities within the agriculture sector, as well as lessons learned. Topics discussed included agricultural trade and marketing, information, communications and technology, gender equality in farming, leveraging agricultural finance, and access to agricultural inputs. Participants devised strategies on how to maximize impact and ensure a sustainable agriculture system in Ghana. The aim of the event was to discuss current achievements as well as challenges in meeting the goals of the Ghana Government's Shared Growth and Development Agenda and the U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative - Feed the Future.

[NGO Expresses Concerns over the Use Farmlands](#)

A research conducted by "Mangrove-Ghana" a Non-Governmental Organisation dedicated to Agriculture and food security in Ghana has stressed the need for pragmatic steps to protect farm lands across the country. The research revealed that the excessive usage of most fertile agricultural lands for construction and sand winning purposes was gradually depriving farmers of their livelihood and also posed a greater threat to food security. Dr Daniel Adu Ankrah, Executive Director of Mangrove-Ghana mentioned during an interview with Ghana News Agency that the over exploitation of the arable land, forest, wetlands and rivers to meet the socio-economic needs had adversely affected the fragile

environment adding, “uncontrolled sand winning, bush burning, hunting and excessive felling of trees was fast threatening the biodiversity, thus putting the fertility of the soil as well as wildlife at risk

[Fertilizer Importers Advised to Partner with Researchers](#)

Fertilizer importers have been advised to partner with researchers to come out with quality to enable farmers get the required amount of soil nutrient to boost crop growth. “Lack of access to quality fertilizer result to post harvest loses making it difficult for the farmers to produce the required crop and compelled the government to spend much money to import to feed the nation.”Mr Williams Boakye-Akyeapong, the Northern Regional Director of food and Agriculture gave the advice during a field day in Botanga in the Kumbungu District, which was organised by the Agricultural Manufacturing Group (AMG) and Iddisal Company Limited.

[Bongo District Smallholder Farmers Exploit Indigenous Farming Technologies](#)

Some Smallholder farmers in the Bongo District of the Upper East Region are exploiting indigenous farming technologies to preserve their food stuff for storage and treat their livestock of diseases and pest. This came to light at the launch of a new Food Security Project, dubbed “Promoting Local Innovation for Food and Nutrition Security (Proli-FaNS)” at the Bongo-Soe Community in the District. The three-year Project which is aimed at strengthening the innovations capacity of rural communities particularly rural women farmers to help increase food production and nutrition security, is being jointly implemented by the Association of Church Based Development Projects (ACDEP) and the Navrongo -Bolgatanga Catholic Diocesan Development Office (NABOCADO) with funding support from the German Government through MISEREOR, a Catholic Organisation also in Germany.

[Rising Cashew Demand Fuels Smuggling from Ivory Coast](#)

Rising demand for cashew nuts has fuelled smuggling from Ivory Coast to Ghana and other countries, damaging the quality of exports from the world's top producer, farmers and exporters said on Tuesday. Ivory Coast is on track to produce a record 715,000 tonnes of raw cashews this year thanks to good weather, but exporters estimate that about 100,000 tonnes, including the best-quality nuts, could be smuggled out of the country. Cashews are primarily smuggled to Ghana and in smaller amounts to Burkina Faso and Mali. Smuggling happens every year but has grown more profitable, and thus more common, this season, farmers said.

[Campaign against Food Waste and Overeating Launched In Wa](#)

A project to minimize the misuse and waste of food in Ghana has been launched at the University for Development Studies (UDS) WA-Campus, and later to WA Senior High Technical School, all in the Upper West region of Ghana. At the launch of the project, Executive Director of the Centre for Climate Change and Food Security (CCCFS), Mahmud Mohammed-Nurudeen, enjoined the students to eat less animal products, and help reduce the global growing trend of food insecurity. The project is also part of efforts to reduce the billions of tonnes of food lost to ensure everyone has access to a safe, affordable and nutritious diet. “If we continue to throw away food and litter around, then we are just preparing a dangerous environment for the future generations,” he said.

[GMO Cowpea Hits Local Market Next Year](#)

Ongoing field tests on genetically modified cowpea (Bt cowpea) have produced successful results and will be ready for commercialisation and release onto the local market in 2018. This was revealed by Principal Investigator in charge of the research project Dr Mumuni Abdulai. According to Dr Abdulai, who is also Deputy Director at the Savannah Agricultural Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the ongoing trials as part of regulatory procedures before the variety can be commercialised, is at an advanced stage. He told Joy news’ Joseph Opoku Gakpo in an interview: “we have gone far now,” adding the plan is to jointly release the cowpea onto the market at the same time as the variety will be ready for release in Nigeria and Burkina Faso where trials are ongoing as well.

[Report: Newmont’s Take-over of Farmlands Threaten Food Security](#)

Residents of nine communities (Kenyase No.1, Kenyase No.2, Ntotroso, Tutuka, Kwusu, Yawusukrom, Manu Shed, Amakona and Yaroguruma) in the Asutifi North of the Brong Ahafo Region, especially women, are worried that they no more have enough farmlands to engage in their farming activities as a result of the take-over of their lands by Newmont Ghana Gold Limited. The concerns were sampled as part of a research work carried out by Emmanuel Yamoah Tenkorang of the Institute for Development Studies of the University of Cape Coast and published in a report titled “Assessing the social and economic effects of mining on women affected by Newmont Ghana Gold’s operations.”

[40% Of Arable Lands Is Too Scanty For Food Production in Ghana](#)

Dr. J. O. Fenning, Director of the Soil Research Institute (SRI), has announced that about 40 percent of arable lands in illegal mining areas has become polluted and unsuitable for food production. He said the situation was even more disturbing in the Western Region, where 70 per cent of lands in mining (galamsey) communities cannot support food production. He added that in excess of 18, 600,000 hectares of land in Ghana had been

found to contain iron-pan (petroplinthite), which made it difficult for food and cash crops to produce the required yield.

[Ghana's Food Storage Facility in Danger](#)

There is apparent inactivity at the National Food Buffer Stock Company (NAFCO) as workers continue to go to the office everyday but find little work to do, Business Day can report. Our investigations have also uncovered concerns that some of the workers are beginning to doubt the prospects of the Company, particularly within the sphere of government's recently announced 'Planting for Food and Jobs' programme. Largely, workers have attributed the slowdown in operations to the absence of a substantive chief executive officer (CEO). The agency has been without a CEO for the past couple of months, mainly due to a change in political administration of the country.

[Guinness Ghana to Support Planting For Food & Jobs Programme](#)

Guinness Ghana Limited has pledged its support for government's "Planting for Food and Jobs" programme, stating that it would boost the use of local raw materials by manufacturing companies, and at the same time help to create jobs for thousands of Ghanaians. According to Mr. Francis Agbonlahor, Managing Director of Guinness Ghana, the company made a key decision some 5 years ago to use local raw materials for the production of its beverages. Within a 4 year period, the company had increased its use of local raw materials from 12% to the current level of 48%. It is in this vein that Guinness Ghana is excited by government's "Planting for Food and Jobs" programme, as it seeks to increase the use of local raw materials for its production to 80% by 2020.

[Cocobod to Halt Free Fertiliser to Cocoa Farmers](#)

Thebftonline.com can confirm that barring any last minute decision from the government, cocoa farmers will have to purchase fertilizer for their cocoa farms beginning this 2017/2018 crop season. This new policy direction is contained in a seven-page document seeking reforms of the cocoa sector aimed at increasing productivity and the sector robust through innovation. Known as the "Ghana's new cocoa sector development strategy", the document seeks to modernise Ghana's cocoa sector and produce climate-smart cocoa through increased productivity of farms. According to the document, the government hopes to focus on high-quality cocoa and niche markets by making Ghana's cocoa resilient in the face of fluctuating global prices, climate change and competitive.

[U/W: Planting for food Initiative Launch](#)

The "Planting for food and jobs campaign" has been launched in the Upper West Region with a call on all to take up farming as a full time or part time activity. The launching was

done alongside the inauguration of the regional implementation committee and an earlier orientation for 86 recruited graduates from Agricultural Colleges as Agriculture Extension Agents (AEAs).

[Planting for Food and Jobs Campaign' - the Role of Science and technology](#)

Many a time, the relevance of agriculture is relegated to the background. However, this sector is one of the most important sectors in every economy. Through agriculture, the world is fed while the myriad of industries across the world are also fed with the raw materials they require to produce the many of the products we find around.

[COCOBOD Project to Rehabilitate 10,000 Hectares of Cocoa Farms](#)

The Ghana Cocoa Board (Cocobod) has launched a project to treat and rehabilitate some 10,000 hectares of diseased and overage cocoa farms in the Western North and Eastern regions this year. The project will involve the removal of 11 million trees for replanting. Currently, about 17% of cocoa area, that is about 309,830.73 hectares, surveyed is affected by the Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease (CSSVD) while about 23 per cent (411,086.41 ha) of the country's cocoa tree stock is more than 30 years and economically unproductive.

[Cocoa still Sensitive Economic Commodity - Shippers Authority](#)

The Cocoa sector continues to be a sensitive commodity to Ghana's economy in 2016 and the country therefore has to increase its yields in the coming years to realise its full benefits in the export sector. "As a result of the key impact of the cocoa sector on Ghana's economy, the Ghana Shippers Authority (GSA) in collaboration with the Cocoa Marketing Company succeeded in obtaining a freeze on freight rates for the shipment of the country's cocoa," Dr Kofi Mbiah, GSA Chief Executive Officer told newsmen in Accra. Speaking at the first in a series of media engagements tagged: "The Shipping Quarter and Outlook," Dr Mbiah revealed that the total transit and transshipment for 2016 amounted to 900,763 metric tonnes. The statistics indicate that transit and transshipment trade imports hit 861,299 metric tonnes while exports trade recorded 39,464 metric tonnes.

[800,000 tonne cocoa target to be exceeded -Cocobod chief](#)

Ghana is on track to exceed its revised 800,000-tonne target for cocoa production this season due to good rains this year, the chief executive of regulator Cocobod said on Friday. Cocoa purchases in Ghana, the world's second-largest cocoa grower, totalled 691,149 tonnes as of March 23, from the start of the 2016/17 season on Oct. 1, according to Cocobod data seen by Reuters. That represented a 4 percent rise on last season. "The rains have been good for us this year and the outlook is very good," Cocobod Chief Executive Joseph Boahen Aidoo told Reuters in an interview. "Indications are that we're likely to

cross the 800,000 mark." He said Cocobod aimed to raise a \$1.3 billion syndicated loan from international banks in September for 2017/18 crop purchases. That loan was based on an expected output of 850,000 tonnes, Aidoo said.

[‘Planting for Food and Jobs’ will succeed – Nana Addo](#)

President Nana Akufo-Addo has assured that his government has put in place measures to ensure the success of the ‘Planting for Food and Jobs’ programme, which was launched today [Wednesday]. The programme, which was launched in Goaso in the Brong Ahafo Region, is expected to modernize agriculture, improve production, achieve food security and make Ghana more self-sufficient, whilst creating jobs for the youth, the President said.

[UNESCO Ready to Strengthen Water Security](#)

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has called for the harnessing of the contributions of science and innovation for water security. Mr. Tirso Dos Santos, the Head and Representative of UNESCO to Ghana, said the organisation was ready to support the process and to undertake a major action to strengthen water security for sustainable development. He said water resources were unceasingly under severe pressure, largely due to anthropogenic or human factors and other global drivers. He explained that this altered rainfall patterns, soil moisture and humidity.

[Sunyani Agro-chemical sellers hail ‘planting for food jobs initiative’](#)

Dealers in agro chemicals, farm inputs and foodstuffs in the Sunyani Municipality have hailed the government’s ‘Planting for Food and Jobs’ campaign. They told the Ghana News Agency (GNA) in an interview in Sunyani that the campaign would speed up their businesses, and reduce the importation of food. Mr. Andy Gyan, the Manager of Farmers Link Agro-Chemicals, said the campaign would not only guarantee national food security, but also motivate the youth to engage in farming as a commercial venture. Mr. Gyan noted that because of the high cost of farm inputs and equipment, many farmers were not able to buy them, and he was optimistic that with the campaign, prices of such tools would go down for the benefit of the “peasant farmer”.

[USAID Contributes to Peace-Building in Ghana](#)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Northern Ghana Governance Activity has held a Conflict Management and Peace-building training for 50 participants from Bimbilla in the Nanumba North District of the Northern Region. The two-day training, which ended on Friday, was in response to USAID’s contribution to

creating stability in conflict-affected farming communities in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions.

[FinComEco Aims at Improving Food Security](#)

The integrated Financial and Commodities Ecosystem (FinComEco) on Monday launched an initiative aimed at driving improvements in food security, economic diversity and financial inclusion through a socially responsible commercial delivery partnership. The goal is a sustainable and increasing improvement in the sophistication and living standards of smallholder farmers and their families in developing countries brought about by a venture, which links agriculture to the latest financial technology.

[UK-based Organisation to Support Government's Agric Initiative](#)

Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI), a UK-based inter-governmental not-for-profit organisation, has pledged support for the “Planting for Food and Jobs” initiative being implemented by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA). CABI, through its capacity-building programme, intends to facilitate the training of agricultural extension agents for them to acquire the necessary skills to drive the project. Briefing the minister on CABI’s activities in Ghana, Dr Nicholls recounted the long-standing relations his organisation has had with the ministry, citing the implementation of the Plantwise project as one of the flagship projects of CABI. The Plantwise project seeks to improve food security and rural livelihood by reducing crop losses through practical health advice to Ghanaian farmers.

Reports/Articles

[Alternate Solutions Towards Sustainable Irrigated Agriculture in Ghana: Review of Literature](#)

H Mensah, B Ibrahim - Journal of Agriculture and Sustainability, 2017

Irrigated agriculture management is still not effective in Ghana. The growing recognition of irrigation problems and its impact on the economy and environment have prompted the government of Ghana to implement plans and strategies to encourage new developments and technologies to promote sustainable irrigated agriculture. The study aims at identifying sustainable ways in promoting irrigated agriculture in Ghana. Literature search and thematic analysis of the literature were used and the themes identified provide the basis for the study. The results were that sustainability can be achieved if there is effective WUA management, strong irrigation facility, effective farmers training, improving extension capacity to deliver, sustainable irrigation techniques and effective collaboration. In conclusion, irrigation sectors should take full advantage of abundant water resource in Ghana and ensure that irrigation is

handled in a way that protects the environment for the present generation without compromising the benefits of the future generations.

Consumption Trends of White Cassava and Consumer Perceptions of Yellow Cassava in Ghana

EA Duah, E Parkes, RO Baah, A Acquatey-Mensah... - 2016 Journal of Food and Nutrition Research, 2016, Vol. 4, No. 12, 814-819

Vitamin A deficiency has been one of the major nutritional problems for many countries where cassava is eaten as a major source of energy. In an attempt to help reduce the incidence of vitamin A deficiency, bio-fortified cassava which contains more pro-vitamin A carotenoids than the white cassava, has been introduced to such areas. This study therefore endeavored to find out how often Ghanaians ate cassava and its products, as well as what Ghanaian consumers knew about bio-fortified cassava and their willingness to consume it. A survey was done between the month of January and March using 287 participants in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana which gathered information on their demographics, and their frequencies of the consumption of cassava and its products. Data on the knowledge of the participants on yellow flesh cassava, and their willingness to accept it were also gathered. Logistic regression was used to determine the relationship between some demographic characteristics and knowledge and 'willingness-to-accept' biofortified cassava. The cassava product which was mostly consumed by the participants was gari. Sixty-three percent of the participants had no knowledge of bio-fortified cassava. About half of them were willing to accept the biofortified cassava, and more than half of the participants perceived that yellow cassava could be used for some white cassava products. Providing nutritional information and sensitizing consumers on the benefits of biofortified cassava can enhance its consumption in Ghana.

Achieving Food Security Amongst Ghanaian Smallholder Farmers: The Valuable Role of Inclusive Agribusiness.

Vries, K. de (2017) Faculty of Geosciences Theses (Master thesis)

In this thesis, the role of inclusive agricultural business on the food security of involved suppliers is explored. The thesis involves a case study of HPW Fresh & Dry Ltd., a Swiss small or medium sized enterprise (SME) in southern Ghana. A mixed-method approach was applied to obtain qualitative and quantitative data by means of a preliminary desk study, nine semi-structured interviews, 117 household surveys, five focus group discussions and participatory observation. Respondents were randomly selected from a suppliers-list. The analytical tools that are used include a one-way Anova tests for continues variables and chi-square tests for nominal and ordinal variables, performed with IBM SPSS statistics version 23. Post Hoc Scheffe tests were performed to assess statistically differences between pairs of

means. Bivariate analyses were performed to study the strength of relations between various variables.

[Define “Social Exclusion”, Articulate Realistic Benchmarks and Evaluation Modalities for the Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty Program, Ghana](#)

Ishmael Norman^{1,2,3} - Advances in Applied Sociology, 2017, 7, 16-34

The Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty, a “flagship” program of Ghana, has been praised as a Sub-Saharan Africa’s “miracle cure” for poverty alleviation because it gives US\$4.00 - 6.00 a month to a single beneficiary household. In any other regions of the world, the paltry sum would not be praiseworthy. This paper reviewed the literature on the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty program to identify the reported gains by beneficiaries. Using government’s own publication on LEAP, the author sought to determine evidence of exclusion of the extreme poor, and to find if the alleged gains under LEAP have improved the social inclusion and functionings of the beneficiary households by reducing the alleged social exclusion, chronic poverty and deprivation or by improving social solidarity and equal opportunities for the beneficiaries. Internet search of pertinent literature was conducted, with hand searching of grey literature produced by the Ghana Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and others on the matter.

[The Effects of an NGO Development Project on the Rural Community of Tarkwa Bremen in Western Ghana](#)

Richard Stack Wharton, UPenn - University of Pennsylvania Scholarly Commons

Very little research exists on the effects of NGO development projects on small African communities, as often organisations will not perform the basic research necessary at the beginning of a project to perform statistical tests on their effectiveness. This paper’s purpose is to provide a baseline of economic conditions and cultural practices within the Community of Tarkwa Bremen prior to the completion of a development project so as to allow future research to examine its effectiveness, whilst also providing a comment on the likelihood of the Tarkwa Bremen Community Alliance’s being successfully self-funded. The paper pays attention to examining the effects of gender discrimination, whilst providing readers with an insight into the current conditions within the village. Data Analysis Results indicate that there is no statistically significance difference between the education levels of male and female children within the village, but that many village children suffer from attending school later in life.

[The Influence of Income and Prices on Global Dietary Patterns by Country, Age, and Gender](#)

Andrew Muhammad, Anna D'Souza, Birgit Meade, Renata Micha, and Dariush Mozaffarian

Worldwide changes in eating habits are contributing to a rise in obesity and chronic noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes and heart disease, across all countries, including middle- and low-income countries. Now that many countries share common challenges related to food choice and public health, international organizations such as the World Health Organization have recommended global campaigns to address the rise of NCDs by implementing policies to improve diets. Although these organizations have proposed pricing and income policies, the effectiveness of such policies—based on income level and regional preferences, as well as on age and gender—could differ across countries. To address this issue, this study investigates how income and prices influence dietary habits globally.

[Commodity Systems Assessment Methodology of Postharvest Losses in Vegetable Amaranths: The Case of Tamale, Ghana](#)

M Osei-Kwarteng, JP Gweyi-Onyango, GK Mahunu - International Journal of ..., 2017

A semi structured questionnaire based on the commodity system assessment methodology (CSAM) was used to determine postharvest losses in vegetable amaranths (VA). Fifty producers and retailers were randomly selected from five and four major VA producing areas and markets, respectively, and interviewed. Data obtained were subjected to descriptive statistical analyses. The survey revealed that absence of laws, regulation, incentives, and inadequate technical information affected the production of VA. The utmost preproduction challenge was poor quality seeds with poor seed yield (35%), low viability (19%), and nontrueness (46%). It was noted that some cultural practices including planting pattern and density, irrigation, and fertiliser use had effects on postharvest losses. Some postharvest practices used were cleaning with water, trimming, sorting, and grading. Usually the produce was transported to marketing centers by cars and motor cycle trailers. Generally poor temperature management after harvest was a big challenge for the postharvest handling of VA. The potential of vegetable amaranths as a commodity in the study area can be enhanced by providing the necessary institutional support, incentives, and use of good management practices along the value chain. An interdisciplinary approach and quantification of losses along the chain are recommended for any future study.

[Profit Efficiency of Small Scale Yam Production in Northern Ghana](#)

M Tanko, AF Alidu - International Journal of Development and Economic Sustainability

Contribution made by small scale yam producers in Northern Ghana cannot be over emphasis, however very little attention is given to their profit efficiency and its determinants. This research used the stochastic efficiency frontier model to identify the level of yam farmers profit efficiency. Multistage random sampling method was adopted to obtain 225 small scale yam farmers across northern Ghana. On average, the profit efficiency of yam farmers was 56.75% in the study area with a minimum and maximum efficiency of 20% and 100% respectively. This implies there is an opportunity to increase profit by 43.25%. The inefficiency model showed that sex, household size, educational level, extension access and land ownership have negative coefficients, meaning that as these variables increases the profit efficiency of the farmer increases. The variable sex inverse relation suggests that; male farmers are more efficient than their female counterparts which needs to close.

[Farmers' Willingness to Pay for the Provision of Ecosystem Services to Enhance Agricultural Production in Sene East District, Ghana](#)

BK Bani, L Damnyag - Small-scale Forestry, 2017

This study investigated farmers' willingness to pay (WTP) by trading food crop as payment for the provision of ecosystem services (ES) to enhance agricultural production and factors influencing their WTP through integrating timber trees on their farmlands in Sene East district, Ghana. A total of 177 farmers were selected from six communities using stratified and simple random sampling. One-on-one interviews were conducted using structured questionnaires. The contingent valuation method was used to gather the data on farmers' WTP for the provision of ES. A multiple linear regression was run to test factors influencing farmers' WTP.

[Tackling Vitamin A Deficiency with Biofortified Sweetpotato in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)

JW Low, ROM Mwanga, M Andrade, E Carey, AM Ball - Global Food Security, 2017

Orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) is a rich plant-based source of beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A. In sub-Saharan Africa, sweetpotato is known as a food security crop but most varieties grown are high dry matter white-fleshed types, lacking beta-carotene. In 1995, researchers recognized the potential of OFSP varieties to address widespread vitamin A deficiency in SSA using an integrated agriculture-nutrition approach. With their partners, they confronted conventional wisdom concerning food-based approaches and institutional barriers, to build the evidence base and breed 42 OFSP varieties adapted to farmer needs and consumer preferences. Subsequently, a multi-partner, multi-donor initiative, launched in 2009, has already reached 2.8 million households. This review summarizes that effort describing how the changing policy environment influenced the process.

[Mining Effects on Rural Livelihoods, Adopted Strategies and the Role of Stakeholder and Regulatory Institutions in Ghana. Evidence of the Amansie West District of Ghana](#)

IB Danquah, SC Fialor, R Aidoo - American Journal of Rural Development, 2017

The study determines the effects of mining on rural livelihoods, adopted strategies and the role of stakeholder and regulatory institutions. The study achieves this by investigating the status of key rural livelihood indicators, what influence the choice of livelihood strategies in mining communities and the assessment of institutional performance. The role of institutions even though a key instrument in ensuring sustainable livelihoods is mostly not considered in livelihood studies of developing countries. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. The significant difference in the means of income, yield value and labour cost between non-mining and mining communities is an evidence of the threat posed on communities in the study area by mining and its activities. The multinomial logit result showed that farmers' choice of livelihood in mining communities was influenced by gender, age, family size, leadership status of household head, labour cost, annual household income, number of years of education and extension training.

[The Potential Economic Impact of Guinea-race Sorghum Hybrids in Mali: A Comparison of Research and Development Paradigms](#)

M Smale, A Assima, A Diallo, E Weltzien, F Rattunde - African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics Volume 12 Number 1 pages 17-34

Rural Malians depend on sorghum as a staple food. Despite long-term investment in sorghum improvement, achieving major gains in sorghum yields has posed challenges. We assessed the potential economic impact of the first Guinea-race sorghum hybrids developed and diffused using participatory plant breeding with decentralised, farmer-based seed systems. We compared this approach to formal plant breeding with a centralised, state-managed seed system – the sole approach pursued in Mali prior to 2000. To incorporate risk, we augmented the economic surplus model by applying Monte Carlo sampling to simulate distributions of model parameters. A census of sorghum varieties in 58 villages of the Sudanese Savanna served as the adoption baseline. Our findings indicate that research on sorghum hybrids with the new approach is a sound investment. Public and private actors need to continue investing in innovative ways to expand the sorghum seed system. The sensitivity of results to the price elasticity of supply suggests commercialisation opportunities.

[Effective and Inclusive Regulation of Street Foods in Kumasi: Promoting Food Safety, Protecting Consumers and Enhancing the Wellbeing of Food Vendors](#)

JB Forkuor, KO Akuoko, E Henry - DANIDA (Ghana Street Food Project)

This brief was prepared to begin stakeholder discussions and plans on improving the safety of street-vended foods through effective regulations and inclusive participation and

ownership of regulations by vendors. It puts forward a number of specific recommendations aimed at improving the safety of street-vended foods within the Kumasi metropolis. The recommendations are based on three years of research (2012-2015) into the regulations governing street-vended foods in the Kumasi Metropolis. The aim of this brief is not to dictate solutions to policy makers and regulatory authorities, but to serve as a platform on which stakeholders can deliberate and develop draft regulations that will help to protect both consumers and street food vendors.

[Evaluating the Constraints to Development of Agricultural Insurance for Cashew Crop Farmers in Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana](#)

NO Mensah, SC Fialor, E Yeboah - Open Journal of Business and Management, 2017

Research evidence from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in 2011 gives credence to the notion that cashew development would mitigate the impact of climate change on cocoa in 2012. This makes cashew development imperative, however to do so requires access to credit from financial institutions, which ration credits when it comes to lending to the agricultural sector. Research evidence has shown a correlation between agricultural insurance and loan uptake in Malawi and Ghana. However, an evaluation of the cashew subsector in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana with an aim of developing agricultural insurance schemes for cashew crop farmers has not been without constraints. This study sought to investigate the key constraints that would impede the development of agricultural insurance for cashew crop farmers in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Based on a positivist research philosophy, the study employed quantitative techniques. A multistage sampling technique was employed, which involved purposively selecting stakeholders of Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool (GAIP). A simple random sampling technique was also employed to select 30 pool stakeholders from GAIP.

** The GSSP News Digest just summarizes news that is reported in the press. Any errors of fact or omission are not IFPRI's responsibility **

The articles included in this news digest have been generated from online news sources and the daily graphic newspaper published on a weekly basis, from January through April, 2017. For more information on any of these articles, please contact Gladys Baaba Arhin at G.Arhin@cgiar.org

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