

CSAS-GSAP PARTNERSHIP PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT AND ANALYSIS (November, 2002)

ACTIVITIES

PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGE (AIC/CSAS MISSION TO GHANA)

- The Ghana Society of Animal Production (GSAP) hosted Mr. Tom Beach (International Program Coordinator, AIC) and Dr. John Baah (Canadian Project Coordinator, CSAS), from November 16 to December 10, 2002. Apart from project monitoring, Dr. Baah's visit also afforded him the opportunity to hold in depth discussions with the GSAP Project Implementation Committee members on the findings from the baseline studies and assist with the preparation of the multi-year proposal. Among the numerous activities undertaken by Mr Beach in Ghana were the invaluable comments, guidance and assistance he provided the CSAS-GSAP proposal writing team. Mr Beach and Dr. Baah, in the company of Dr. K. Oppong-Anane, Ghanaian Project Coordinator held meetings with a cross section of stakeholders in the agricultural industry including the Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture, Directors of Animal Production, Agricultural Extension, and Women in Agricultural Development Directorates of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) as well as representatives of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, National Council for Women and Development (NCWD) and some development partners to introduce the CSAS-GSAP Project, seek their input and explore potential areas of collaboration. The team met GSAP members in Accra, Kumasi and Tamale to discuss the project, introduce the AIC organization, the IADP and review ITPP philosophy and purpose. The team met the Deputy Executive Director of Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana at Tafo to solicit the assistance of the Shea Research Unit at Bole in the Social Development Priority component of the project.

At Tamale in the Northern Region, the team called on the Regional Director of Agriculture and Ag. Director of Savanna Research Institute, Animal Research Institute and the University of Development Studies to promote the project and encourage collaboration. Discussions were held with development partners including local NGOs, Christian Children's Fund of Canada, the Northern Region Livestock Farmer's Association and Regional Representative of NCWD. The leader of the Baseline Study Team, Dr. N. Karbo, accompanied the team on visits to some of the potential sites in the project area, comprising 7 women's (shea nut picking and processing) groups in the West Mamprusi and Bole Districts to discuss the project and their expectations.

- A meeting was held on December 10 by representatives of the Agricultural Professional bodies namely, GSAP, Ghana Soil Science Association, Ghana Institute of Horticulturists and Ghana Institute of Agricultural Engineers on formation of an umbrella association aimed at making the societies more efficient in achieving their respective missions and having a common voice in lobbying government and private sector for improvement in Ghanaian agriculture.

PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION

- One hundred (100) more copies of the brochure on "Invitation to join GSAP" were distributed to students at the University of Development Studies, Tamale, and the Mampong Campus of the University of Winneba.
- The draft Project Proposal was prepared and forwarded to the Canadian Project Coordinator and AIC International Program Coordinator for review.
- The Ghanaian Project Coordinator addressed a meeting of members of the Northern Livestock Farmers' Association on GSAP mission and CSAS-GSAP Partnership Project.
- As indicated under AIC/CSAS Mission report, a cross section of the livestock/shea nut industry operators were briefed on GSAP and CSAS-GSAP Partnership.
- The Ghanaian Project Coordinator had a meeting with Ms Valerie Ginyard, the Executive Director of Phoenix Woman, USA Women's NGO, on the proposed project. She expressed her organization's interest in participating in the social development priority aspects of the project.

APPLIED AND PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

- Analysis of questionnaire data on the baseline study was undertaken.
- Stakeholders' workshop on the baseline study was undertaken.
- Project proposal was drafted by a multi-disciplinary team of scientists.
- Follow-up visits were made to potential beneficiaries in project area.
- Comprehensive project proposal prepared and forwarded to IADC.

Information and Analysis (by Mr. Tom Beach, International Program Coordinator, AIC)

Fathi Paul is involved with a project which has been operating since the early 90s. She has a team of good facilitators and support from The Body Shop which buys the product at a fair price. Discussions with Fathi Paul and her facilitators elicited the following information which was supported by comments from the group discussions in the villages.

- Women identified the need for protection from snakes and scorpions, improved sources of water for processing, transportation of shea nuts to the market or their house for processing, grinding mills at the village level to eliminate the most difficult part of the processing (stone grinding by hand) and ongoing support to help women's groups to function democratically. Through the informal surveys at the villages, it was determined that more than 5% of the women have been bitten by snakes and the incident of snakebite is increasing as more shea nuts are being harvested.
- Serum for snakebite is not available in small clinics. All cases of snakebite that were identified had to travel great distances (40 to 70 km) to receive serum.
- The women involved in shea nut gathering and shea butter processing are primarily those who are 30 to 60 years old. Many have an interest in raising livestock, especially sheep and goats.
- Women traditionally form groups to work together picking shea nuts and, often, processing them into shea butter.
- Individually, women frequently sell shea nuts or shea butter when the price is low so they can buy food or pay school fees. In marketing groups, there is more discipline and less temptation to sell at a lower price.
- There are exporters who buy and sell the shea nuts but the women recognize that they increase their revenue by processing the nuts into butter and selling the butter.
- Individuals and groups have a general idea of the amount of nuts picked and processed or sold from year to year but the lack of any record keeping makes analysis of the potential and real profits and growth difficult.
- Processing machines are not as efficient as traditional methods in extracting shea butter.
- Shea nut harvesting and butter processing happens during a busy time when crops are being planted and weeded but the income is welcome because it is also the hungry season when stored food is low and the next harvest is months away.
- Sheanut trees are wild and, other than the very recently developed plantations, the trees do not belong to any person or family. However, people do own the land that sheanut trees are on and, because of the land ownership, they can restrict people from access to the nuts.
- Several groups indicated an interest in livestock production but identified the influencing role men play, especially in marketing.

Political and Organizational Structures

There is an increased effort to focus activities on the most disadvantaged, women and children.

- The current Government has created a Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs which includes the long standing National Council for Women's Development (NCWD).
- The Ministry of Food and Agriculture has created a Directorate for Women in Agriculture.

Northern Farmers Livestock Association

- The association currently has about 800 members is growing as more people, primarily younger men and some women, see livestock production as a viable business.
- Key problems are water availability, availability of quality pharmaceuticals and superior breeding stock.

- Members identified two areas for assistance from GSAP - marketing and timing of finished animals for major market opportunities (Ramadan, Easter, Christmas).
- Association members are promoting record keeping, including the use of ear tags, breeding programs to improve herd quality and rangeland development.
- Members acknowledged that bushfires decreased the value of land for grazing and burned crop residue that was potential feed.
- Members showed an interest in “production templates” – brief descriptions on what is needed to start a small production unit and how to raise livestock or poultry.

Ghana Society of Agricultural Engineering (GSAE)

- GSAE has shown great interest and ability to network and build connections. They have worked with other Agricultural Engineering Societies in West Africa to hold joint conferences and hosted the September 2000 joint conference with funding from FAO, MOFA, and the Council for Science and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- GSAE is interested in participating in a joint, multidisciplinary conference in 2003 or 2004.

Technoserv

- An American NGO working in rural development in northern Ghana. Technoserv began assisting with technical information and training and has seen the need for marketing support and moved to support producers, especially shea butter and shea nut, to market their products internationally.

Potential Project Sites

The project sites varied in their needs, expectations and capacity to organize and make productive use of project support. The sites are all different but there are several aspects that seem to group them.

- Project sites on the main roads have had longer contact with NGOs, projects and assistance so they are clear in their message, well organized and even demanding at times. Several times they requested financial assistance so they could do more purchasing and reselling of produce. It isn't clear that additional support will significantly increase development of the community and there is a fear that support to these well organized groups could be to the detriment of the less organized groups and individuals in further away villages (if they acted as middle buyers and sellers of the produce, it would decrease the income of the original producer/gatherer).
- Project sites farther from the main road had traditional groups that functioned well but were often dependent on or under the control of a few strong personalities. Participants were 30 to 60 year old, married women with children who were settled in the community. Identification of needs were varied but protection from snake bite and marketing were common in all groups.

• *While access is more difficult, the potential for immediate and short term, measurable results was greater in the more remote villages which had less contact with and support from NGOs or government.*

Australian connection

- The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) published an article about researchers Roger Beckmann and Bob Clemens who have been promoting legume forages (*Trifolium subterraneum* and *Stylosanthes humilis*) in East Africa. There are several GSAP members who studied and/or worked in Australia.

GSAP members should use their connections in Australia to make contact with Beckmann and Clemens to compare research results and recommendations.

Overall Comments

- *As the project begins, it should focus on areas with the greatest potential success – those with resources, good organization and strong leadership.*
- *GSAP is to be commended in that their planning includes measurable moves toward sustainability of society activities (scientific journal production, conferences and membership support).*
- *GSAP has strong connections with decision makers and leaders in MOFA and legislative bodies which it recognizes as a strategic resource.*