



GASIP STAKEHOLDER ENCOUNTER

Date: Tuesday 13th April, 2021

Time: 10am – 11:00am

Zoom: http://bit.ly/gasip_encounter

Streaming: <https://www.facebook.com/gasipghana>

Statement by the National Programme Coordinator – Mr. Klutse Kudomor

Chief Director, Representatives of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), National Directors of the Ministry of Food & Agriculture (MoFA), Directors of Regional and District Agriculture Departments, Partnering Value Chain Drivers (VCDs), Smallholder Farmer Organization Leads, the Media, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is an honour to have you join us in our first stakeholder encounter under the theme: “Consolidating the Gains in Strengthening Smallholder Farmer Organizations” . Thank you for coming, and for those of you joining online, thank you for your participation.

Mr. Chairman, as you are aware, the Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Program, GASIP is currently being financed by an IFAD loan of 36 million USD and Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Program (ASAP) grant of 10 million USD. The Programme is being implemented by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

The goal and objective of GASIP is to sustainably reduce poverty in rural Ghana by increasing profitability and resilience to climate change of Agribusinesses & Smallholder Farmers.

GASIP became effective in 2015 and was expected to close by June 2021. However, the Programme is being considered for Extension so as to complete outstanding activities.

Before the current Management took over in April 2019, GASIP implementation status was 12%, a situation which was leading to a premature closure of the programme by IFAD for non-performance. However, due to hard work by Management and staff, IFAD has reclassified the status of the programme from **“a non- performing programme to a performing programme”**.

Mr. Chairman, implementation status had increased to 78% within a spate of less than one year. Management did this by supporting the smallholder farmers. GASIP created shared values and opportunities within the value chains of rice, maize, soya and vegetables. More importantly, GASIP invested in capacity building and training.

Mr. Chairman, the smallholder farmer produces about 90% of the staple food we consume in Ghana. This implies that they are the main actors in maintaining food security in Ghana. Therefore, any investment in the food value chains of the smallholder farmer will cascade greatly in supporting the food systems in Ghana.



However, by the nature of their production systems and geographical locations, they are faced with some enormous challenges.

These include: low productivity and production, inadequate market access, insufficient rural infrastructure, limited and slow inclusion of women and youth in agricultural value chains and limited extension services.

Mr. Chairman, the smallholder farmer can be competitive at any level, provided the necessary measures are put in place.

It is for this reason that GASIP is designed to address the problems of the smallholder farmer.

GASIP is designed to leverage on the private sector in making the smallholder farmer competitive by increasing their efficiency and resilience to climate change through the provision of appropriate technologies, rural infrastructure and equal participation of women and youth.

Mr. Chairman, over the last two years GASIP has achieved some remarkable successes which need to be emphasized. These include:

- partnering with agribusinesses (processors, aggregators, etc), to provide market access to smallholder farmers, subscribing them to receive market price information from the Ghana Commodity Exchange.
- In the last two years GASIP has supported
 - 90,000 smallholder farmers in over 1,000 FBOs, working with 80 Agribusinesses (VCD). They were supported directly with production inputs. They were also trained in good agricultural practices, climate change resilience, food safety and quality, operational excellence, food processing, among others.
- In terms of equipment and machinery, 28 tractors, 600 power tillers and hand-held rice harvesters were distributed to selected smallholder farmer organizations.
- GASIP has also heavily invested in rural infrastructure
 - access roads were provided to link farmers to markets
 - solar powered boreholes were provided to 27 communities for dry season vegetable production to farmers
 - 12 weather stations were installed to provide accurate and timely weather information,
 - we are currently developing 560 ha irrigation fields for rice production.
- Equally important, GASIP has demonstrated various Climate Smart Agricultural (CSA) technologies to smallholder farmers nationwide.



- These were done through the establishment and training of farmers in 66 conservation agriculture demonstration fields, training of district staff, sensitizing the media and agribusinesses in CSA, among others.

Mr. Chairman, it is important to emphasize that, these accomplishments, as I said earlier, have led to achieving the impressive implementation status of 78% at the end of 2020. This remarkable performance is what led to IFAD's reclassification of GASIP from **“a non- performing to a performing programme”**.

Mr. Chairman, let me add that, our achievements are also attributable to the smooth collaboration with key stakeholders. Notable among are the MOFA Directorates, especially the District Agriculture Departments, the Ghana Meteorological Agency, the Ghana Irrigation Development Authority and the Centre for No-Till Agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, I must be quick in saying that the support and guidance by the IFAD Country Office (ICO) and the Ministry of Food & Agriculture at the highest level cannot be over-emphasized.

Mr. Chairman, during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, there was the need to cushion smallholder farmers against its effects to avert any food security issues.

In this regard, a new Project, the **Emergency Support to Rural Livelihoods and Food Systems Exposed to COVID-19 (ESRF)** was developed by IFAD, MOFA and other partners. Under the funding arrangement of ESRF, IFAD is contributing 20 million USD. Contributions from other development partners, the Government of Ghana and beneficiaries will be provided in cash and in kind. Due to GASIP's capabilities and prior achievements, the implementation of the ESRF is nested under GASIP.

Through the ESRF, GASIP has distributed improved seeds and fertilizers to more than 20,000 smallholder farmers across the country.

Mr. Chairman, you may please recall that the cash transfer component of the ESRF was launched by your good self on 16th March, 2021 at the MOFA Resource Centre. Under this component IFAD is supporting the extremely vulnerable farmers including People Living with Disability from 8 poorest districts the country with an amount of 1.5 Million USD. IFAD has also made provision for PPEs and training on preventing COVID-19 spread.

Mr. Chairman, GASIP has demonstrated that when given more resources, the Programme will execute more activities that will cause a catalytic transformation among smallholder farmers.

In this regard, IFAD, MOFA and other partners have developed a Concept Note for a new Programme - **Livelihood and Productivity Enhancement of Smallholder Farmers (PROSPER)**.



This 105 Million USD programme will help consolidate the current gains of GASIP and expand the activities to cover other value chains. IFAD is contributing 60 Million USD.

PROSPER will enable Ghana's smallholder farmers to become competitive, meet market demands and therefore increase rural incomes.

Mr. Chairman, we have started the 2021 with vigour. The activities of 2021 will focus on implementing the ESRF, facilitating the approval processes of PROSPER, and consolidating the gains made under GASIP including:

- Capacity building of FBOs and SHFs to engage and strengthen market linkages
- Increasing support for Women and the Youth
- Support SHFs with processing facilities and farm implements,
- Development of commercial and public Infrastructure
- Mainstreaming Climate Change into all components of the programme

Mr. Chairman, it is worthy to note that GASIP, ESRF and PROSPER are all serving as a flexible vehicle for MoFA's smallholder farmer value chain development, aligning with government's Agenda for Transforming Ghana's Agriculture – 'Investing in Food and Jobs' and its allied initiatives such as Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ), Rearing for Food and Jobs (RFJ), Planting for Export and Rural Development (PERD).

Let me use this opportunity to invite the media to follow us and take keen interest in our activities.

We hope to work together for the benefit of the smallholder farmer and Ghana as a whole.

Thank you for coming.