

PROJECT REPORT

Action Title: “ADVOCACY FOR SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN IN THE NORTHERN REGION”

GRANT ID: 31-2-098

JANUARY, 2020

Background

Currently, West Mamprugu, East Mamprugu and Bunkpuru districts in the north east region are not addressing the gender policy of the planting for food and jobs (PFJs) to ensure that, productive Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)/women's groups who are ready to go into agribusinesses in the areas are supported. The lack of administrative/political support is impeding & affecting health, and increasing unemployment among PWDs and women's groups. The PFJs policy emphasised the need for disable/women groups to have priority opportunities. It states that “5.4.2. Inclusiveness of gender and youth (15-35 years) and women farmers and households headed by women will be encouraged to participate in the program. To ensure the inclusiveness of gender and youth, the program will engage the following tools: - (a) priority will be given to value chains that are important for women and young people; (b) empowering women and youth in FBOs and providing leadership training; (c) sensitizing district assemblies and regional house of chiefs; (d) establishing regional gender teams; (e) promoting the participation in aggregation, trading, banking, processing, packaging and value addition; (f) engaging short-term gender and youth specialists to conduct value chain diagnostics; (g) using role models in promotion programs; and (h) using age and gender disaggregated indicators to monitor the outreach of the program”

The project which is titled: ADVOCACY FOR SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN IN THE NORTHERN REGION had the following objectives:

Overall objective; Contribute to the private sector and economic development by empowering and creating enabling environment for the vulnerable and women groups in the Agriculture Value Chain.

Specific objectives;

1. To address the gender policy of the planting for food and jobs (PFJs) to ensure those productive Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)/women's groups who are ready to go into agribusinesses in the areas are supported.
2. To secure agreement with DA and MOFA to enforce gender policy of the PFJs.
3. To ensure that an enabling environment is created by DA/MOFA to include PWDs and women's groups in their annual plan for support.

As per the contract signed with the grantee, we were tasked to facilitate the implementation of the following activities:

1. Conduct research and use findings to advocate in ensuring that the gender policy of the planting for food and jobs (PFJs) to ensure those productive Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)/women's groups who are ready to go into agribusinesses in the areas are supported
2. Organize a sensitization workshop and share research findings.
3. Hold stakeholder meeting to validate research findings
4. The media campaigns shall be used to project research findings to facilitate quick response.
- 5 engage all stakeholders in a Dialogue and do the necessary follow ups to ensure they respond to our demands
6. Organize a post-dialogue meeting

Accomplishments

- ✓ Research has been done and reports submitted to BUSAC, proposal document has been developed and presented to DA/MOFA. Some of the research findings include the following:

1. More disabled women respondents (98%) were affected negatively about the planting for food and jobs (PFJs) policy in the 3 districts of Northern Region.

2. Large numbers of respondents (80%) are not aware of the government initiative and enforcement of planting for food and jobs which should target them to alleviate poverty. This seems to deviate from policy intent.

3. Access to information is a barrier to real beneficiaries. There is a high of inadequate information on social and behavioral change communication (SBCC) at the various grassroots about the PFJs policy. This was conformed from the data gathered during the study, respondents who have not benefited from the Planting for food and Jobs Program gave the following as responses; “We are not informed”, “Project is not here”, “lack of access to information”, “Could not reach out to the MOFA staff” as reasons preventing them from becoming beneficiaries..

4. The analyzed data from the research point to the fact that the PFJs policy is not yet grounded and still have not responded to marginalized groups such as conscious women groups and productive disabled groups to benefit from package. Respondents suggested

- ✓ Sensitization programs have been conducted and reports submitted to BUSAC. Members expressed their satisfaction about the activity at the end of the program as they had the opportunity to interact with the MoFA officers during the program and their questions on good agronomic practices were answered. The chief of Kukua who participated in the program took the opportunity to request for an agricultural extension officer to be assigned to his community.

The MoFA officer in charge of extension services in the West Mamprusi Municipal assured members that an extension officer will be assigned to Kukua as soon as possible.

- ✓ Stakeholder validation of research was successfully done and communiqué issued. The Municipal chief executive for west mamprusi municipal gave his assurance to support PWDs through the district assembly common fund to improve their agricultural productivity. The Agric director consented that his office will give 10% allocation each to women, PWDs and youth in agriculture in the planting for food and jobs program next year. He added that this will be enforced in their planning in 2020.

- ✓ Media engagements and campaigns have been done and recordings submitted to BUSAC.

[here:http://www.gbcghanaonline.com/news/farmers-sensitized-to-planting-for-food-and-jobs-extension-services/2019/](http://www.gbcghanaonline.com/news/farmers-sensitized-to-planting-for-food-and-jobs-extension-services/2019/)

<http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/government-eliminates-hassle-of-farmers-on-pfj-inputs-purchase-152564>.

- ✓ Dialogue meeting has been held successfully and reports are available.
- ✓ Post –Dialogue meeting; the post dialogue meeting was meant to engage stakeholders for feedback and reaffirmation of decisions taken at the dialogue meeting. All stakeholders (Agric departments, district assembly, people with disabilities, women and youth groups were successfully engaged. Commitment to implement the recommendations made during dialogue was reaffirmed by duty bearers. They are as follows:
 1. PWDs, women and youth groups will be given 10% allocation each in the planting for food and jobs program in 2020 year.
 2. Department of Agric will actively involve farmer-based groups in their planning meetings.
 3. The department of Agric in all three project district will intensify their sensitization on the Pfj policy for more farmers to benefit.

Lessons Learnt

- Access to information is a barrier to the real beneficiaries hence There is a high level of inadequate information about the PFJs policy.
- The PFJ program does not provide a systemic approach to agriculture, eg there is no market linkage for farmers.

- Women farmers do not have the courage to go to the department of agriculture and seek solutions to their farming problems.
- Farmers complain about their inability to access tractor services timely.
- Farmers want government to support them with loans to farm.
- Limited access to extension services by farmers.
- Farmers also complain of not receiving periodic training on good agricultural practices

Acknowledgement

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District Assemblies.

Conclusion

The association clearly had a case to press home demands from MOFA. Research and advocacy has been found to be effective in influencing policy initiative and enforcement. The “Planting for Food and Jobs” (P4FJ) is a sustainable approach to reaching out large numbers of the rural population to be motivated for agribusiness. The Ghana Federation of People with Disability (GFPWD) could take advantage of the policy to be self-reliance and a contribution to climate change mitigation. MOFA in collaboration with district agriculture and environment committee agreed to increase participation of women, youth and members of people living with disabilities (PWDs) in the 2020 agriculture season.

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