



# A REVIEW OF **GHANA'S** PLANTING FOR FOOD AND JOBS



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# **A REVIEW OF GHANA'S PLANTING FOR FOOD AND JOBS PROGRAMME**

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# INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a review of the implementation strategy of Ghana's Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) programme. It focuses on the alignment of the programme with the goals and objectives of the CAADP/ Malabo Declarations. The report also identifies implementation gaps and shortcomings in the implementation through the lens of the CAADP/ Malabo framework. It also makes suggestions on best practices of a holistic agricultural program strategy aimed at achieving accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods.

The Planting for Food and Jobs campaign is a four year programme launched in 2017, with an overall goal to contribute to modernization of the agriculture sector that will lead to structural transformation of the national economy through food security, employment opportunities and reduced poverty. According to MoFA (2017) the three main objectives of the PFJ program are to:

- i. ensure immediate and adequate availability of the selected crops in Ghana through improved productivity and intensification of food crops, and extended support to private sector service providers
- ii. provide job opportunities for the teeming unemployed youth in the agriculture and allied sectors, and
- iii. create general awareness for all formal workers to either have farms and grow some cereals or vegetables or establish backyard gardens, when enough land is not available and accessible

The implementation strategy of the PFJ Campaign seeks to motivate farmers to adopt certified seeds and fertilizers through a private sector led marketing framework, by raising the incentives

and providing complimentary services on the usage of inputs, good agronomic practices, and marketing of outputs over an E-Agriculture platform. The PFJ seeks to improve upon the existing fertilizer and seed subsidy programme through a more comprehensive approach in galvanizing the outreach and impact of subsidies to both productive poor and resource poor farmers; all in farmers in both categories who are willing to participate. Under PFJ the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) will facilitate the availability and accessibility of certified improved seeds and fertilizers through a private sector led market network at subsidized prices. In order to make access to these inputs more inclusive the program beneficiaries shall pay half of the payable cost as down payment, and the remaining half at the end of the harvest. However, this payment arrangement has been revised or not adhered to in the 2018 planting season as farmers are required to pay the full cost of the subsidized input upfront. Total quantity of subsidized fertilizer per farmer under the program will be limited to the maximum required for 2Ha of land.

It is envisaged that the programme will empower the beneficiaries with knowledge and skills needed to maximize the benefits associated with usage of the subsidized inputs through provision and strengthening of proximity extension services. Under PFJ the human and technical capacities of the national extension system will be strengthened by recruiting and training Agriculture Extension Agents (AEAs). The implementation will entail embedding these AEAs in the targeted areas under the program to transfer relevant technologies and information to farmers through regular and recurrent technical visits, and other established extension methods (MoFA, 2017).

The PFJ program will improve the marketability of the increased production of food crops by establishing strong linkages between the producers, private aggregators, public food programs, and private food- and feed enterprises. It will engage the private aggregators, on a commission basis, in debt collection from the

farmers, nucleus farms and FBOs on the subsidized inputs, as cash or kind. Other aspects of the programme include refurbishment of existing warehouses and/or construction of medium-sized warehouses in all the districts, and leasing the operations to private aggregators or entrepreneurs, who shall provide improved services to the farmers on postharvest handling, storage, processing, packaging and marketing of the outputs. It is envisaged that graduation of farmers from subsidy dependence under the programme will be ushered in through a widespread presence of private network for both the inputs and outputs, robust extension services, gradual reduction in subsidies and the spill-over effects of accruing farm revenues.

Under the E-Agriculture component, the program will deploy information and communication technologies (ICT) for efficient targeting of the beneficiaries, and effective management and governance of its scales and impact. All aspects of the programme including registration of participants, beneficiary selection, private service provision, marketing of outputs, communication, coordination of the extension services, emergency responses, and monitoring and evaluation of the outreach and impacts will be managed through the E-Agriculture platform.

The implementation strategy has created a 3-tier governance structure, for the implementation of the PFJ program activities; technical committees at national, regional and district levels. The program is estimated to cost a total of 3,300,721,266 GH¢ (717,548,101 USD) over the period 2017 – 2020 (MoFA, 2017). It is anticipated that through multiplier effects, the increased availability and accessibility of inputs and service provision, the higher agricultural output and productivity will open new range of employment opportunities in agriculture and allied sectors through forward and backward linkages. It is further anticipated that the increased outputs and productivity shall modernize farming and also trigger a structural transformation by increasing the real farm incomes of producers who could then increase the demand for the goods and services produced by the non-farming rural and urban poor.



## 2. REVIEW CONTEXT



The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) is Africa's policy framework for agricultural transformation, wealth creation, food security and nutrition, economic growth and prosperity for all. CAADP is a growth-oriented agricultural development agenda, aimed at increasing agriculture growth rates to a minimum of six percent per year to create the wealth needed for rural communities and households in Africa to prosper through its interventions in four key pillars.

This commitment was re-enforced by African Heads of State in June 2014 in Malabo as a result of progress made and lessons learnt in the implementation of earlier declarations. The Malabo Declaration seeks to achieve accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods by 2025. Specifically, it was to accelerate agricultural growth by at least doubling their current agricultural productivity levels through social protection initiatives via targeted national budget lines, by the year 2025. African states are therefore expected to domesticate these continental policy frameworks (CAADP/Malabo Declarations) into their national plans for the growth of the agriculture sector.

Ghana was one of the first African countries to sign the CAADP Compact in 2009 under the African Union's (AU) New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In that regard, various efforts have been made by governments in domesticating and realizing the goals and objectives of the CAADP/Malabo Declarations. From the development and implementation of the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP I and II) through their investment plans – Medium Term Agricultural Sector Investment Plan (METASIP I and II), governments have initiated various programs and strategies on increasing investments for addressing constraints on productivity, market access and



sustainable production. The METASIP provides a roadmap for the implementation of CAADP; Ghana recently developed a roadmap for METASIP-III (2018-2021) under which the PFJ will be a flagship program (MoFA, 2017). Ghana Agriculture Sector Investment Programme (GASIP) provides a long-term investment framework that will contribute to the realization of METASIP. Through a 3-year cycle, the GASIP also provides for supplementary financing for scaling up investments in private sector-led agricultural value chain development.

The Planting for Food and Jobs Programme, introduced in 2017 is the latest program initiative by government with the overall goal of contributing to modernization of agriculture sector expected to lead to structural transformation of the national economy through food security, employment opportunities and reduced poverty. The PFJ is armed around five key pillars, and is expected to lead to increase in crop productivity, improved marketability of farm outputs and increased food availability in the country.

The purpose of the review is to contribute to enhancing the quality and effectiveness of programme implementation. It is to help ensure that every possible action is being taken to achieve the objectives and targets set out in Ghana's agriculture sector investment plans, within the framework of the CAADP agenda and Malabo Declaration. Issues and gaps identified will be taken up through advocacy to strengthen the programme.

### 3. THE COMPONENTS, METHODOLOGY, CRITERIA, AND TOOLS OF THE REVIEW



The approach of the review consists of assessing (qualitatively) proposed actions and outcomes in the PFJ implementation strategy against the goals and objectives of the CAADP/ Malabo Declaration. The criteria used are measures of the consistency or otherwise of the planned actions outlined in the implementation plan with the earlier stated commitments. These include:

- i. re-committing to the Principles and Values of the CAADP Process;
- ii. enhancing investment finance in agriculture;
- iii. ending hunger in Africa by 2025;
- iv. reducing poverty by half, by 2025, through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation;
- v. boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services;
- v. enhancing resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other related risks; and
- vi. strengthening mutual accountability to actions and results.

The assessment attempted to use the scorecard tool similar to what reported in African Union Commission (2018), wherever possible, for the review and presentation of our assessment of the PFJ as Ghana's instrument for achieving the Malabo commitments. The results are presented by component below.

### 3.1 COMMITMENT 1: Re-committing on CAADP Process

On the first Malabo Commitment which is about recommitting to the CAADP agenda, Ghana was adjudged to be on track by the Inaugural Biennial report of the AU Commission, having reported improvement and demonstrated continuing commitment to internalization of CAADP/Malabo policies, institutions, targets and principles. While the country scored 6.87 out of 10 on this (see African Union Commission, 2018) it seeks to consolidate any gains by expanding the reach-out and effectiveness of agricultural inputs support programs through the PFJ as the flagship programme under METASIP III. In pursuance of increased production and productivity, the PFJ program proposes an integrated and comprehensive approach based on five pillars – seed, fertilizer, extension services, marketing, and an E-agriculture platform. This is expected to substantially increase the availability of inputs (seeds and fertilizers) and the accessibility to input and output markets.

The program will focus on the following key mechanisms: -

- i. facilitation of adoption of inputs, good agronomic practices and output marketing through an integrated e-agriculture platform, and
- ii. provision of support to private actors who are engaged in delivery of goods and services along the value chains in an efficient manner

While not completely new, the renewed emphasis, especially, on provision of reliable and routine technical assistance, mechanisms for abating price volatility and ensuring repayment and linkages, as well as the drive to manage the system on the E-agriculture platform are note worthy. Also, PFJ is to be a flagship programme under METASIP III which is Ghana's agriculture sector investment plan and thus the main vehicle for pursuing the goals and

objectives of the CAADP/ Malabo Declaration. PFJ is further evidence of Ghana re-committing to the CAADP process.

The PFJ strategic implementation plan indicates that MOFA, in consultation with private and public stakeholders, recently designed and validated an improved farm input subsidy model to be used under PFJ. It also indicates that the Program will be spearheaded and implemented by MOFA in partnerships with public and private stakeholders, with the National Technical Committee (NTC) coordinating with development partners and other national stakeholders on the implementation of the program. The plan also proposes to include representatives of the private sector from all levels of the value chains in any discussions related to the design and implementation of the PFJ program. However, it is not clear how and which stakeholders were consulted or involved in the development of the implementation strategy itself.

## 3.2 COMMITMENT 2:

### Enhancing Investment Finance in Agriculture



Regarding the CAADP Commitment of allocating at least 10 percent of annual public expenditures to agriculture, Ghana needs to redouble efforts on this front. Previous public expenditure reviews point to inconsistent measurement and reporting that make it difficult to provide a fair and widely accepted estimate of public expenditure in agriculture in Ghana. The 2017 country scorecard for implementing the Malabo Declaration for Ghana on enhancing investment finance in agriculture was 4.3 out of 10, indicating that the country is not on track.

The PFJ implementation strategy proposes to enter into public-private partnerships for the refurbishment or construction of medium sized warehouses which will be operated by such private entities under lease arrangements; engage commissioned private aggregators in the debt collection; and create needed linkages among the different participants (e.g. banks, traders, processors, and exporters) in the programme which is expected to increase

access to credit by the different actors. The performance measurement framework also provides an indicator for monitoring progress on the flow of private sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by PFJ implementation.

The good thing is that the implementation guide provides projections of all the levels and costs for activities and components of the PFJ for the entire 4-year period. However, programme costs estimates are not compared with past or current share of public expenditure on agriculture to explicitly show anticipated growth in public expenditure required to realize the stated costs. For example, the estimated costs for implementing the PFJ for 2018 is GHS 691,422,313 compared to a total planned public expenditure of GHS 501,501,708 for the entire agriculture sector (including cocoa) in 2016 (MoFEP 2017). The estimated cost of the PFJ for 2019 is 74% above its level for 2018 and rises by 82% in 2020; this may be rather ambitious. However, the nature of the cost estimates presented does not allow comparison with annual public expenditures over the period.

### 3.3 COMMITMENT 3: Ending Hunger by 2025



Ghana was on track on the target for bringing down undernourishment to 5% or less, by the year 2025 in 2017. The review noted that sustainably and inclusively increasing agricultural productivity is cardinal to improving performance of the agricultural sector and central to the Malabo Declaration vision to have agricultural-led transformation and development. Ghana again reported growth rates (17%) of yields of national commodities in excess of the minimum 10% required to be on-track in 2017. On the required minimum agricultural research spending of at least 1% of the agricultural GDP yearly, Ghana reported 11.9% (African Union Commission, 2018).

Under PFJ projected yields are more than double current actual yields for maize and sorghum whilst that of rice will be about double current actual yield. Given the performance of crop yields over the period of the fertilizer and seed subsidy programme as well as the history of agricultural technology adoption by farmers in Ghana, the yield projections for the four year PFJ may be too high or unrealistic.

The PFJ also proposes to support both productive poor and resource poor farmers; it however appears to treat the two groups the same way or similarly in terms of repayment of debt on subsidized inputs.



### 3.4 COMMITMENT 4:

#### Halving Poverty through Agriculture by 2025



The African Heads of State also committed to creating new job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains by 2025. Engaging youth in agricultural sector development could contribute to reducing their level of unemployment and poverty. Ghana does not have reliable data on the proportion of new jobs created for the youth and women in agriculture, thus it was difficult in 2017 and still is today, to adequately report on this commitment.

Under PFJ considerable efforts are to be made to give more opportunity for youth and women in agriculture, and to track data on youth engagement in agriculture and agribusiness. Given Ghana's agriculture sector growth rates in recent years the country needs recommitment to achieving the minimum of 6% annual growth of the agricultural GDP; this sense is reflected in the PFJ plans.

In addition, the PFJ implementation strategy proposes to promote inclusiveness of gender and youth by encouraging youth (15-24

years) and women farmers and households headed by women to participate in the program. Specific actions and tools to ensure the inclusiveness of gender and youth include the following: -

- 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

### 3.5 COMMITMENT 5:

## Boosting Intra-African Trade in Agriculture Commodities

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Heads of State committed to tripling Intra-regional Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services by 2025. Unfortunately only 3 member countries were on track in 2017, having reached the minimum of 20% increase in growth rate; Ghana is not one of them. Regarding the creation of an enabling environment for such trade, Ghana was one of several Member States reported to be on track for reaching more than the minimum of 10 in 2017 for the Trade Facilitation Index (TFI) (African Union Commission, 2018). This shows that Ghana's work on even creating the required enabling environment for Intra-regional Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services by 2025 has just only begun. PFJ implementation strategy has plans to work with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) and the Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC) to facilitate exploration and development of new and niche markets both internal and external) for agricultural produce and products. However, no details on any targets are provided in the strategy; thus the country remains not on target to tripling its intra-regional trade in agricultural commodities and services by 2025. The proposals on trade amount to moves that are marginal and a score of 1.15 out 10, a marginal improvement over Ghana's score at the biennial review is recommended.

### 3.6 COMMITMENT 6:

#### Enhancing Resilience to climate variability

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In respect interventions on resilience building, the PFJ implementation strategy proposes promoting financial risk management tools such as innovative insurance products, forward and futures contracts between producers and buyers. It also plans to promote adoption of varieties that are high yielding, climate resilient and resistant to the prevalent biotic and abiotic stresses will be actively promoted through the program. Ghana was not on track in 2017; not much seems to have changed. Any revision of the country's score may be premature.

It is good that the PFJ indicates that value chain support services will emphasize capacity building on fertilizer use efficiency, appropriate soil fertility replenishment and sustainable soil management practices. It also singles out promoting establishment of local organic fertilizer production enterprises. Sustainable land management is one area in which the country fared poorly, with 0.04% of agricultural land being under sustainable land management practices (African Union Commission, 2018). The estimated cost of subsidized fertilizer gives a breakdown by type, making allocations for bio-fertilizers for 2018 – 2020.

### 3.7 COMMITMENT 7:

#### Enhancing Mutual Accountability for Actions and Results



African Heads of State also committed to enhancing mutual accountability for actions and results. African Member States are hence expected to foster alignment, harmonization and coordination among multi-sectorial efforts and multi-institutional platforms for peer review, mutual learning and mutual accountability. The goal is to reach 100% for the existence of inclusive institutionalized mechanisms and platforms for mutual accountability and peer review by 2018. Ghana is on-track in establishing inclusive institutionalized mechanisms and platforms for mutual accountability and peer review, at least in terms of creation of the necessary institutional structures. The PFJ makes provision for the outputs of the PFJ to be readily integrated with the Joint Sector Review process of country's CAADP implementation plan and reported to Agriculture Sector Working Group annually. Its coordination is to be done by three technical committees at the national, regional and district levels.

But there's still room for improvement and strengthening of mutual accountability. In the case of the PFJ, for instance, there's no representation for input dealers and service providers at any of the three levels of its coordination mechanism; neither is there representation for farmers at the NTC. The implementation strategy indicates that all stakeholders at all levels of the value chains will be included in any discussions on the design and implementation of PFJ. However, it is not immediately clear which stakeholders were involved prior, and leading to the development of the program; and also its implementation strategy. It is very important and necessary to adhere to the implementation strategy, and to involve civil society organizations in the planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

Also, as the African Union Commission (2018) points out the country needs to increase its capacity for evidence based planning (including effective involvement and participation of stakeholders), implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The implementation strategy for the PFJ is a really good instrument and contribution or response to this call. For example, the implementation strategy provides for annual review of the program based on monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the distributed inputs and needs of the beneficiaries. It also has detailed indicators that are based on reliable data and verifiable evidence on inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is important that public discussions on performance of the PFJ are based on verifiable data and sources.



## 4. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION/ EXPLORATION



As we assess the implementation strategy for the PFJ and discuss issues arising, it is important to recognize it for what is - a flagship program under the METASIP-III. As MoFA (2017) notes Ghana Agriculture Sector Investment Programme (GASIP) provides a long-term investment framework that will contribute to the realization of METASIP. PFJ is not intended as Ghana's comprehensive national agriculture investment plan.

- The PFJ does not cover livestock, poultry and fish culture; these are however very important sub-sectors of agriculture without which the CAADP/ Malabo Declaration goals and objectives cannot be achieved. However, in 2018 there has been some indications of a corresponding program to cater for livestock and poultry subsector, 'Rearing for Food and Jobs'.
- Implementation – only major shift is in the official incorporation of the E-agriculture platform to serve as a tool for the registration of potential participants, selection of beneficiaries, inputs and service delivery and payments



and settlements, monitoring and evaluation, among others. The E-agriculture platform had been in the works for some time and plans to deploy it during the 2016 FSP season did not materialize. Whilst officially adopting E-agriculture platform as one of the pillars is commendable, one is unable to comment on its role out and performance.

- Though the implementation strategy indicates that a participatory approach will be used to identify needs of beneficiary farmers it has no details of who was involved and how it was carried out in 2017. Indeed, as of August 2017 when the PFJ was already being implemented the implementation strategy was in draft form.
- Funding – sources, adequacy, prioritization; how realistic is the estimated budget given previous levels of government or public expenditure on agriculture? Other related issues are the private sector share/ contribution (investment); contribution of DPs; equity in distribution of funds across components (prioritized?). Also, it is important to consider the estimated funding requirements compared to or as a proportion of current budget allocation to the agriculture sector.
- Increasing exports to sub-region, rest of Africa and globally – how do we plan to tackle this; are there specific targets for particular crops/ products by destination; how about policies and regulations in place or required to operationalize these?
- While the PFJ emphasizes private sector led implementation it also indicates that the government will still be involved in distribution of inputs (fertilizer and seed)
- Its coverage across all sectors of agriculture is necessary to engender the required broad based growth and poverty

reduction. However, the implementation strategy is not explicit on some important issues e.g. timelines for introducing/ requiring soil tests; basis for limiting quantity of subsidized fertilizer to that required for 2ha. The number of direct clients (farmers) targeted annually in relation to population of potential direct beneficiaries.

- Default due to natural disasters such as floods, pests and disease outbreaks (e.g. fall army worm) – how would these be handled?
- Stakeholder consultations - consultation needs to be better developed and operationalized. The plan should include a section that describes if the consultation during its formulation included all stakeholders and how. The plan could also indicate how the implementation will involve all actors either in monitoring, sector reviews and reshaping policies, among others.
- There's no indication of viability and feasibility checks of envisaged private sector investments; how would candidate investments for PPPs be identified and promoted?
- The planned mode of payment has been revised for this planting season and farmers are required to pay full cost of the subsidized inputs upfront; this runs counter to the proposal to support both productive poor and resource poor farmers.
- No specific provision (e.g. input allocation) is made for women and other vulnerable groups in the PFJ.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



The PFJ implementation strategy is well laid out, extensive and ambitious; well followed through the programme could deliver the much touted modernization and transformation of Ghana's agriculture. However, this is only a plan and every effort must be made to follow through it, and in particular adhere to its monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure its implementation according to plan.

In line with the above it is recommended that:

- Ghana should increase the share of agriculture land under sustainable land management practices from the current low level of 0.04 percent
- Similarly, the country should increase public agriculture expenditure as share of total public expenditure to the Malabo Declaration target of 10 percent
- The country should put in place policies that would facilitate and promote intraregional African trade in agricultural commodities and services.

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