



PROCEEDINGS OF THE INCEPTION MEETING FOR THE PROJECT “STRONGER SMALLHOLDER INSTITUTION FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DECISION AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN GHANA”

Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, 8-9 August, 2018



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Introduction to proceedings

- i. The Inception Meeting for the project “Stronger smallholder institution for active participation in policy decision and sustainable agriculture in Ghana” was held at the Conference Hall of the Noguchi Memorial institute for Medical Research.
- ii. The meeting was held from 8th to 9th August, 2018.
- iii. Forty-five (45) participants attended the meeting.
- iv. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Charles Nyaaba.
- v. The agenda and list of participants for the meeting are attached as appendices 2 and 4 respectively.

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY 8TH AUGUST 2018

1. Morning session

a. Introductions

The meeting started with an opening prayer by Mr. Charles Hombey and was facilitated by Mrs. Martha Acquah-Crentsil. The facilitator welcomed all participants and thanked Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana (PFAG) for organising such a meeting to bring together stakeholders to discuss issues confronting them and to build their capacity to monitor government flagship programmes. She called for a self-introduction of participants and encouraged participants to state the regions they were representing in order to tie challenges raised to their respective areas.



Mrs. Acquah-Crentsil facilitating discussions for the morning session

b. Welcome address

The welcome address was delivered by Mr. Abdul-Rahman Mohammed, the National President, PFAG. In his address, he thanked the Open Society Initiative in West Africa (OSIWA) for consistently supporting the activities of smallholder farmers in Ghana and called on all other funding organisations to follow the footsteps of OSIWA who are changing policies through their support to PFAG in the agricultural sector in Ghana.

He mentioned that the meeting will discuss two key issues. These included:

- a. The importance of agroecology practices and why they should be adopted by peasant farmers, particularly, the safe application of pesticides.
- b. To build capacity to monitor government flagship programmes which is supposed to better the lives of Ghanaians especially farmers.

He emphasized that PFAG is strongly against the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and the reason is to safeguard the country's indigenous seeds. He added that the fight against GMOs is not necessarily because of the health related issues but rather a matter of food sovereignty. He also urged all participants to fully participate in the meeting in order to benefit fully. Also, he emphasized that the best way to increase production in the country is not to introduce GMOs. He supported this with the issue of BT cotton by stating that the introduction of BT cotton in Burkina Faso was not successful as the production declined just about three years after introduction. This was to say that GMO will not necessarily increase food production.



Mr. Abdul-Rahman Mohammed delivering the welcome address

c. Purpose of meeting

Madam Victoria Adongo was invited to state the purpose of the meeting. Before she stated the purpose she talked about how worried she was about some developments such as representatives of Alliance for Science going from region to region persuading people to accept GMOs. She strongly felt that the truth about GMOs was not communicated and that people were being misled into accepting GMOs.

Finally, she stated that the purpose of the meeting was to talk about agroecology and explained that, usually, people engage in agroecology without even knowing about it. So, at the end of the meeting, every participant must be enlightened on what agroecology is and be able to decide whether it is beneficial or not. She added that agroecology is against the use of some pesticides such as “condemn”. This pesticide kills every living thing in the soil and this has implications for plants, living organisms in the soil and consequently humans. Therefore, she urged all participants to listen carefully to the presentation in order to make informed decisions.

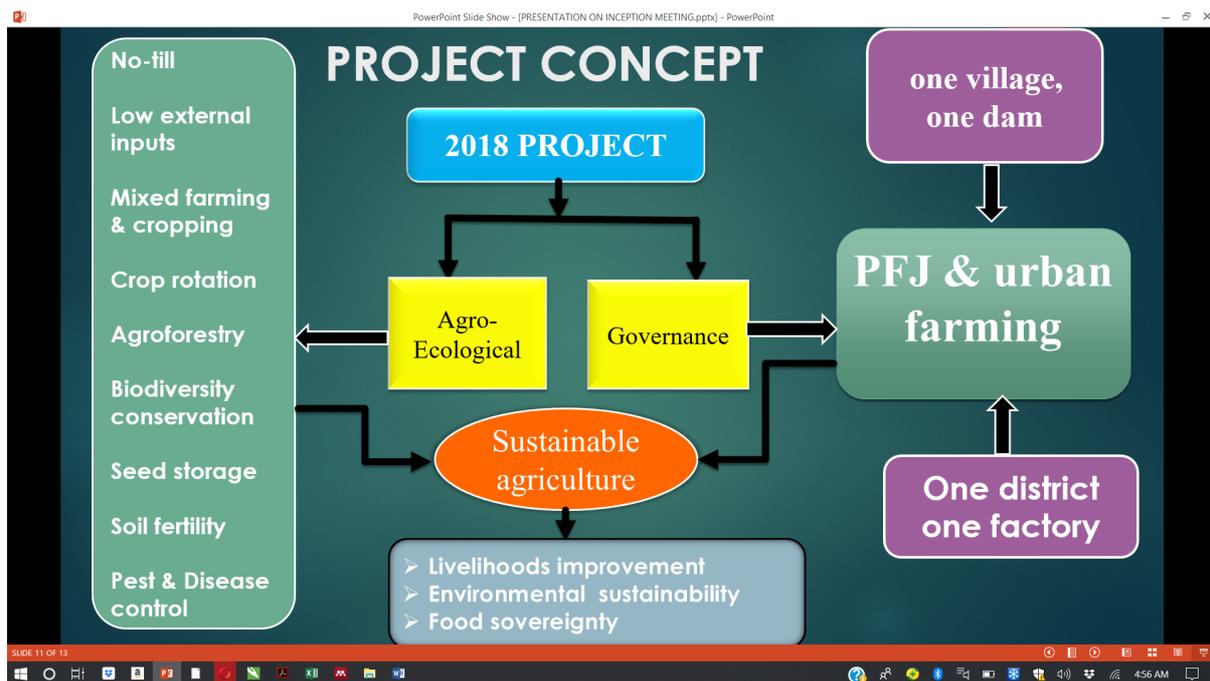


Madam Victoria Adongo stating the purpose of the meeting

d. Project Concept

The project concept was presented by Mr Charles Nyaaba, Programmes director of PFAG. He thanked all participants for coming for the meeting, especially, those who travelled all the way from the Northern regions to Accra. He stated that his presentation will include a

background of the project campaign and purpose of the inception meeting. Also, his presentation highlighted on agroecology and sustainable agriculture practices. Mr. Charles Nyaaba mentioned that his presentation will be supported by Mr. Bern Guri, Executive Director, Center for Indigenous Knowledge and Organisational Development (CIKOD). In his substantive presentation, he underscored that the essence of the meeting was to build capacity of participants on agroecology and sustainable agricultural practices and also mount a campaign to monitor government flagship programmes by participating in governance and advocacy of policies.



A snapshot of the project concept

The major flagship programme is Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ). This initiative by government is great, however, its implementation is not effective. For example, smallholder farmers do not have access to the tractors that were provided for tilling the soil. Also, farmers have issues with fertilizer applications as many of them are not educated on the required quantities of fertilizers to apply to their farms under the fertilizer subsidy programme.

The results of the aforementioned issues are land grabbing, climate change, soil infertility, loss of biodiversity, deforestation etc. However, in the current project PFAG is suggesting alternative approaches, mainly off season activities such as bee keeping, poultry rearing and mushroom production. This initiative was started with a demonstration farm in 2015. The land was said to be infertile and left uncultivated. With the knowledge of agroecology, the soil was revived and currently, the farm produces more food crops than any of the farms in the area.

Mr. Nyaaba also lamented on concerns raised by some farmers during his field visits. One of the farmers said...

One day the poor will have nothing else to eat but only the rich

He mentioned that the current project is a second phase of the recently completed project and the main objective of the project is to create an enabling policy involvement for sustainable farming, food security, poverty reduction among smallholder farmers in Ghana. The sub-objectives are:

- To empower grassroot farmers with the capacity to hold government accountable on its agricultural policies
- To promote sustainable farming through agroecological farming practices

The activities under the project include:

- Inception meeting
- Train farmers, media, CSOs and extension officers on climate change and agroecological processes
- Build capacity of farmer, media to participate in the budget process, policy making and governance
- Monitor government agricultural flagship programme. Thus, one village, one dam; One district, one factory and planting for food and jobs
- Sensitisation on eating quality food against anything from the soil

Finally, he mentioned that agroecology approach to be adopted will include the following:

- Little disturbance to soil/No till agriculture
- Little external input
- Mixed farming/mixed grouping
- Organic manure
- Maintain soil fertility
- Pest control using natural enemies

Mr. Bern Guri was invited to give a short talk on indigenous knowledge systems. In his speech he said the concept of agroecology is based on indigenous knowledge and for Ghana to move forward, then it needs to build on its indigenous knowledge. He added that the concept of agroecology was practiced by farmers until modern methods were introduced. He reiterated that agroecology is concerned about protecting the environment and social relations.

Key questions that were asked after Mr. Nyaaba's presentation included:

- a. What is the capacity of the agroecology approach (in terms of land size and labour intensiveness) to produce good yields?
- b. Is there any evidence to support that GMOs introduce pests and diseases?
- c. Are there any specific diseases that are caused by GMOs?



Mr. Charles Nyaaba giving a presentation on the project concept

e. Introduction to the research design

The afternoon session started with a presentation by Mr. Samuel Dakey, a researcher from the Center for Development Research and Agro-Innovation (CEDRAI) of University of Ghana. He mentioned the afternoon session was focussed on training stakeholders on how to monitor the government's planting for food and jobs programme. Monitoring is necessary in order to identify lapses in a project. During monitoring changes could be made to the project when the need arises. He mentioned that the both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected. The qualitative interviews will be key informant interviews and focus group discussion, these will be recorded with voice recorders and transcribed. The quantitative interviews will be conducted using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview). The instrument for the qualitative survey will be a semi-structured interview while that of quantitative will be a close ended instrument. Five key areas were considered under the current project. These are seeds, extension services, marketing, fertilizers and e-agriculture. He reiterated that participants will be grouped and each group will be asked to discuss issues facing any one of the key areas under the project.

did not germinate at all when sown. Some farmers did not even receive the seeds at all while others had in abundance basically due to their lobbying prowess and political affiliation.

Fertilizer distribution

Due to the improper registration of farmers, most smallholder farmers do not have access to fertilizers. The fertilizers are smuggled to neighbouring countries where they are sold. In addition, fertilizers are attached to seeds and these are given to farmers without examining the fertility level of the soils on their farms.

Produce marketing

There are lack storage facilities to preserve produce before selling. Due to the perishable nature of produce they are sold out soon after harvesting, often at a low cost. Also, farms are far away from homes making it difficult to send produce to market.

E-agriculture

Farmers who do not own farms are not registered properly. Thus, the phone numbers of a family member with a phone is collected and that person is not contacted and even when contacted does not draw the attention of the farmer. This makes it difficult for farmers to assess the fertilizer package.

Extension services

Generally, extension officers are lacking. There are only a few available and they concentrate on their own farms rather than visiting the farms of farmers. These extension officers sit in their offices instead of visiting farms to address issues and to give guidelines.



Participants of group one during the group discussion



Participants of group two during the group discussions



Participants of group three during the group discussions



Participants of group four during the group discussions

DAY 2: Thursday

a. Recap of day 1

The second day of the inception meeting started with a recap of the previous day's discussions. This was facilitated by Ms. Louisa Sawyerr, Africa Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Initiative of University of Ghana (ACCAI-UG) and Mr Oracca-Tetteh, PFAG-Ashanti Region. The responses from the participants during the recap showed that they were full engaged in the discussions and understood the details of the project.

A major issue that came up on day one of the inception meeting but was left unanswered because Mr. Edward Kareweh was not available was raised. This was the issue of how to track extension officers to know if really they were doing their work. In a response, Mr. Kareweh gave a scenario which is practices in other countries. He mentioned that in other countries, each extension officer is given a GPS tracking device to monitor their movement.

b. Brief explanation on government's Agriculture flagship programmes

Following the recap, Mr. Kareweh was given the opportunity to present on the government flagship programmes. In his presentation, he mentioned that the government wishes to transform the economy of Ghana through agriculture. He added that the Planting for Food and Jobs programme did not have a comprehensive document at the time of its inception but now it does. The government's plan was to drive the PFJ with extension services and so 2700 agents were employed and given an all-inclusive salary. This meant that the agents were not classified as an integral part of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The agents also need certain logistics to enable them work which and these were not provided.

He also mentioned that, it can be deduced from the government flagship programme that a tripartite system was been established. Thus, the one village one dam programme will provide water for irrigation and the one district one factory programme will also provide factories that

will process the food produced. He added that one village one dam programme has several issues surrounding it. In the first place, the type of dam was not specified. Even if it is for irrigation, then the size of the dam need to be very big in order to provide irrigation services to villages in the Northern regions of Ghana that experience eight months of dry season. The one district one factory programme also suffers a lot of mishaps. Thus, the resources are not adequate to build factories in all the districts. Under the PFJ, he made reference to an ariticle in the Ghanaian times dated January 18, 2018. Following Mr. Kareweh's presentation, there were question from participants and these were addressed by Mr. Kareweh. Based on the discussions five issues were raised to draft a communique for a press statement (Appendix 4).

Action Point

Mr George Asekere, GBC to draft a communique for a press statement

c. Training on the questionnaire

The discussions and issues raised on the first day were used to develop a questionnaire that were presented to participants for their inputs. Mr. Ralph Sam of CEDRAI explain the details of the questionnaire to participants and trained them on how to administer them although from the outset he mentioned that not all of the participants will be allowed to participant in the survey due to their time availability.

All inputs from participants were noted and will be incorporated in the questionnaire to improve it.



A participant contributing to the discussion

d. Health talk

There was a brief talk on health by Dr. Kwaku Ohene-Asare from the University of Ghana Business School. He advised participants on the harmful effects of some medications and asked that participants should be use drugs that have been prescribed by doctors.

e. Closing remarks

Madam Victoria Adongo gave the closing remarks. She thanked all participants for staying active during the two days and for their contributions to the discussion. She urged everyone to fully participate in the project in order to yield positive results.

Appendix 1: Flyer



**INCEPTION MEETING AND CAPACITY BUILDING ON
LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

**“STRONGER SMALLHOLDER INSTITUTION FOR
ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DECISION AND
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN GHANA”**

Venue: Noguchi Memorial Institute, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra

Date:
**Wed 8th &
Thu 9th August, 2018.**

Time:
8:00 A.M. Each day



Appendix 2: Inception meeting agenda
PEASANT FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF GHANA (PFAG)

PROGRAMME FOR INCEPTION MEETING

VENUE: NOGUCHI MEMORIAL INSTITUTE, LEGON

DATE: 8th August 2018

TIME: 08:30am daily

TIME	MAIN ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
08:30-9:00	Arrival and registration	All
09:00-09:05	Opening Prayer	Volunteer
09:05-09:10	Self-introduction	All
09:10-09:15	Welcome Address	Abdul-Rahman Mohammed- National President , PFAG
09:15-09:20	Purpose of the meeting	Victoria Adongo – Executive Director (PFAG)
09:20-10:20	The project concept Agro-ecology Monitoring of gov't agric. flagship projects	Charles Kwowe Nyaaba- Programme Director (PFAG)
10:20-10:40	Questions and answers	All
10:40-11:10	Snack Break	All
11:10-11:40	Brief explanation on gov't agric flagship programmes: -PFJ, -one village one dam, -one district one factory	Edward Kareweh – General secretary (GAWU)
11:40-12:00	Questions and answers	All
12:00-12:20	Introduction to the research design	Ralph Sam- CEDRAI
12:20-12:40	Questions and answers	All
12:40-01:00	Grouping and group work	Ralph Sam- CEDRAI
01:00-01:45	Lunch	All
01:45-02:45	Plenary	Ralph Sam
02:45-03:45	Presentation and review of plenary work	Group leaders
3:45-04:45	Drafting of research questions	Group work
4:45- 05:00	Closing remarks	Charles

DAY II

TIME	MAIN ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
08:30-9:00	Arrival and registration	All
09:00-09:20	Recap of day I	
09:20-10:00	Presentation of draft questionnaire	All
10:00-10:40	Training on the questionnaire	
10:40-11:00	Questions and answers	
11:00-12:30	Training on the questionnaire Introduction to CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal interview) Sampling procedure	Ralph Sam
12:30- 01:00	Health talk	
01:00- 01:15	Closing remarks	Victoria Adongo
01:00-01-45	Lunch	All

Appendix 3: Issues raised by the groups

Group 1: Seeds and Produce Marketing

Seeds

- Timeliness of seed delivery (Delays)
- Quality (Germination of seeds)
- Purity of seed varieties
- Farmers planted own seeds
- Accepted PFJ seed (in order to have fertilizer)
- Coupon irregularities (e-registration fails to capture farm sizes)
- Seed imports (Uncertainties surrounding crop varieties, qualities and quantities)
- Produce marketing
- Produce sold on open market or through middle women
- No guaranteed price (even prices by buffer stock company lower than the open market prices)

Group 2: Fertilizer distribution and marketing

Fertilizer distribution

- There are not enough coupons
- Conditions tied to the distribution is not feasible (buy seeds before getting fertilizers)
- Fertilizer smuggling to other countries
- Not enough distribution outlets/outlets are not close enough for the farmers
- Most distribution outlets opted out from business because of delays in payments
- The use of the coupon system was not helping as compared to the form A system
- Timely supply of the fertilizer in different areas should be checked to reduce pressure on its acquisition
- The actual usage of the fertilizer in different areas should be checked to reduce pressure on its acquisition
- The government should know the appropriate fertilizer for the different geographical areas
- Farmers have a perception of fake or low quality fertilizer in the market

Marketing

- Farmers do not have access to the buffer companies which the government promised
- Low prices from the buffer stock affect the farmer
- Buffer stock unavailable
- Transportation of farm crops to the market is a challenge because of bad roads
- A good involvement of international private sector in the food chain operations
- There is no formal agreement between farmers and aggregates

Group 3: E-Agriculture and Extension services

E-agriculture

- Mode of registration is bad, thus, they create their own names and details
- The ICT system on PFJ is poor. Private sector provider may have several bags of fertilizers but they will say they are not coupon fertilizers.
- The cost of accessing fertilizer is high and the distribution procedures are cumbersome
- In general, communication is poor and private implementers are in the urban centers while farmers are in the remote areas. Extension officers are not available to be communicated with.

Extension services

- Lack of extension officers to train farmers, the few available concentrate on their own farms and seem to be doing more farming than the actual farmers
- Inadequate training on farming practices. The few extension officers that exist do not train farmers on farming practice therefore farmers have not knowledge on farming methodologies
- Untimely delivery of fertilizers and other inputs. Some inputs are delivered after the farming seasons
- Lack of knowledge. Some extension officers do not have requisite knowledge on farming methods and pests and disease control.
- Some extension officers are good but they do not have resources to take them to farms
- Only a few of the farmers (about 20%) use certified seeds because they have not been educated by extension officers on what certified seeds are

Group 4:

Seeds

- Farmers rejected the seeds because they did not know it
- The varieties were not marketable
- Poor germination of PFI seeds supplied to farmers
- Some areas did not receive seeds while other had in abundance
- Poor storage facilities for seed and lack in some areas
- Untimely supply of seeds
- Soil type should be considered before the supply of a particular variety is given
- Packaging and weight should be taken into consideration to avoid confusion
- It failed to meet the national food target
- Delay in paying seed growers
- Seeds should be made accessible to communities far away from MoFa offices
- Government should make sure that seed inspectors monitor and certify before supply to farmers

Marketing

- Lack of storage facilities
- Poor road network
- Poor prices
- Low farm gate price
- High cost at the end market

Appendix 4: Draft communique for press release

COMMUNIQUE ADOPTED AT THE END OF A TWO-DAYS INCEPTION MEETING HELD AT THE NOGUCHI MEMORIAL INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA FROM 8TH TO 9TH AUGUST, 2018 TO TRAIN PEASANT FARMERS ON HOW TO EFFECTIVELY MONITOR THE GOVERNMENT FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES.

We small holder farmers across the country, under the auspices of the Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana, PFAG, and other Stakeholders in the agricultural sector, have at the end of a two day training Programme on how to effectively monitor the government's flagship Programmes, Planting for Food and Jobs, One District One Factory and One Village One Dam, hereby adopt the following:

1. We are vehemently opposed to any attempt(s) to introduce Genetically Modified Organisms, GMOs into the country. It is our considered view that GMOs will disempower the local seed grower and weaken the indigenous seeds thereby making Ghana perpetually dependent on foreign companies for seed. Apart from the unresolved issue of health implications on the consumption of GMOs, we believe that adoption of GMOs will further enslave Ghanaian farmers. If we have sold our **gold, cocoa, oil** etc. and are left with **seeds**, why should we be eager to sell the seeds too?
2. We are calling on government to empower the local seed industry by providing the enabling environment and logistical support to ensure that Ghana is Seed Reliant and not Seed Dependent. It is disheartening that government of Ghana had to import seeds from Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire in 2018 to the tune of 8 million US dollars when the National Association of Seed Traders, NASTAG, has repeatedly indicated its capacity, willingness and readiness to produce enough seeds to meet the seed needs of the country. How can this be in line with H. E. President Akufo Addo's quest to have 'a Ghana beyond Aid? Instead of importing and creating jobs for other countries, empowering their agricultural sectors, weakening our own agricultural sector and even making it difficult for our local currency stability, we want our government to consider the interest of the Ghanaian economy first.
3. Going forward, we want government to make budgetary allocation to local seed growers in the annual budget. We Ghanaian farmers are also calling on government to expedite action on the proposed Agricultural Development Fund to ensure sustained funding for the sector.
4. We commend government on measures taken so far to address the farmer to Extension Service Officer Ratio by employing extension service officers and also engaging Extension Service Assistants. However, it is our opinion that their effectiveness will be undermined if the current package is not improved. We therefore expect government to fully empower Extension Service Officers to enable them to work and produce satisfactory outcomes.
5. Agriculture remains a major backbone of the local economy, hence all efforts aimed at improving the sector should be inclusive. In this direction, we humbly appeal to government to increase stakeholder consultation and when necessary listen and factor the views of the farmers since they are the front line actors in the whole value chain. Our interest is how to make the agricultural sector better for all of us. Any issues raised

about certain aspects of government programmes that are directly related to our day to day activities for which we believe we have some knowledge on, it should not be interpreted to mean we are opponents of the said government.

6. We have always maintained that production is not as serious as marketing and storage. The PFJ Programme has in no doubt increased production which is very laudable and we remain grateful to government. We are however, asking for measures to be put in place to ensure that the farmers get market to sell their produce. It is a fact that if post-harvest losses continue, the morale of the farmers will be dented.
7. We are also urging government not to forget about the component of the PFJ which deals with backyard garden. This component is crucial because it will help in ensuring food security and even in a way arouse the interest of agriculture in children from the very beginning.
8. Farmers are equally unhappy about the smuggling of subsidized fertilizers meant for farmers across the country. As farmers on the ground, we know for a fact that smuggling of fertilizers is ongoing in many regions including the Brong Ahafo, Upper West and Upper East Regions. We believe the Programme is for Ghanaians, hence every effort should be made to ensure that the targeted beneficiaries receive them. We will appreciate it if those engaged in smuggling of fertilizers are investigated and dealt with in accordance with the laws of the land.

Appendix 4: Participants list

Name	Institution	Gender	Contact	Email
Yakubu Iddrisu	NASTAG	Male	0245706021	iddiyak@yahoo.co.uk
Juliana Dokurugu	NASTAG	Female	0249817569	jmdokurugu@gmail.com
Charles T. Hombey	PFAG	Male	0243678509	pizereth@gmail.com
Pabia Isaac	OSARD	Male	0201778731	pabiaisaac@yahoo.com
Benjamin Sarfo	PFAG	Male	0245947882	sarfobenjamin79@yahoo.com
Esposito Edusei (Pollo)	DE BEAT FIM	Male	0244545124	polloesposito@gmail.com
Richard Deku	PFAG	Male	0246589627	rdeku73@gmail.com
Hon. Braimah Abdulai	RUWACDA	Male	0208253068	ruwacda@yahoo.com
Emelia Ghansah	GAWU of GHTUC	Female	0205909676	emeliaghansah@yahoo.com
Millicent Agyemang Badu	PFAG	Female	0246468112	millicentagyemangbadu44@gmail.com
Julius K. Satsi	Ghana News Agency	Male	0543090396	satsimacjulius@gmail.com
Louisa Sawyerr	ACCAI – UG	Female	0543394454	louisasawyerr@gmail.com
Ralph Sam	CEDRAI	Male	0242880135	ralphsam10@gmail.com
Samuel Dakey	CEDRAI	Male	0244663416	samueldakey@gmail.com
Dinko Hanhan	CEDRAI	Male	0546895238	hanaandinico@yahoo.com
George Asekere	GBC	Male	0244693941	peacedoc66@yahoo.com
Bern Guri	CIKOD	Male	0244327798	guribern@gmail.com
Victoria Adongo	PFAG	Female	0244657451	vicadongo@yahoo.com
Ibraihim H. Fuseini	PFAG Volta	Male	0200347643	
Pascal Kudiabor	PFAG	Male	0244704058	paskudiabor@gmail.com
Baloroo B. David	PFAG	Male	0207625110	davidbaloroo@yahoo.com
Yeboaa Arhin	PFAG	Female	0543020416	arhinyeboaa@gmail.com
Naba James Adawina	PFAG	Male	0249489083	jamesadawina@yahoo.com
Clifford Amoah Adagera	ORGUS-GHSBFA		0245373758	clifford.adagera@gmail.com
John Eduaful	PFAG	Male	0276427334	
Wepia Addo Awal A.	PFAG	Male	0242265313	wapiaawal@yahoo.com
Saleh Wenchie	PFAG	Male	0242144064	

Badu Thomas	PFAG	Male	0240501283	
Favour Obon-Klu	PFAG	Female	0243471332	
Duncan Amoah	PFAG	Male	0244080382	vcppg@yahoo.com
Samuel Oracca-Tetteh	PFAG-ASH	Male	0209341855/0243336131	nethealfound@gmail.com
Issaka Tahiru	PFAG Walewale	Male	0203263408	
Safifu Amadu	PFAG U.W.R	Male	0207741799	unitywomen@yahoo.com
Ali Abass Baatah	PFAG U.W.R	Male	0207881415/0555843097	
Abdul Mateen Alhassan	PFAG N/R	Male	0208078197	mateen_alhassan@yahoo.com
Mohammed Rashid	PFAG N/R	Male	0247900528	
Kulma Nlasan David	PFAG N/R	Male	0544159328	
Daniel Kombat	PFAG A/S	Male	0553737976	
Choirseberelle Foster	PFAG B/A	Male	0203126091	
Awilumbono George	PFAG U.E.R	Male	0209707418	atabengeorge@gmail.com
Edward Kareweh	GAWU	Male	0244529484	ekareweh@gmail.com
Toby Moorson	Lancaster Uni. Ghana	Male	0244335080	tobymoorson@gmail.com
Naomi Weimer	Ministry Of Food And Agriculture	Female	0245823732	naomiweimer@yahoo.com
Martha Crentsil Acquah	Multimedia	Female	0243349733	martha.crentsilacquah@myjoyonline.com