

CHALLENGES SMALLHOLDER FARMERS FACE IN ACCESSING INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT IN RURAL GHANA

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“Our lives begin to end the day we become
silent about the things that matter”

- Martin Luther King Jnr

Smallholder farmers matter, institutions
matter lets talk about them....



Background

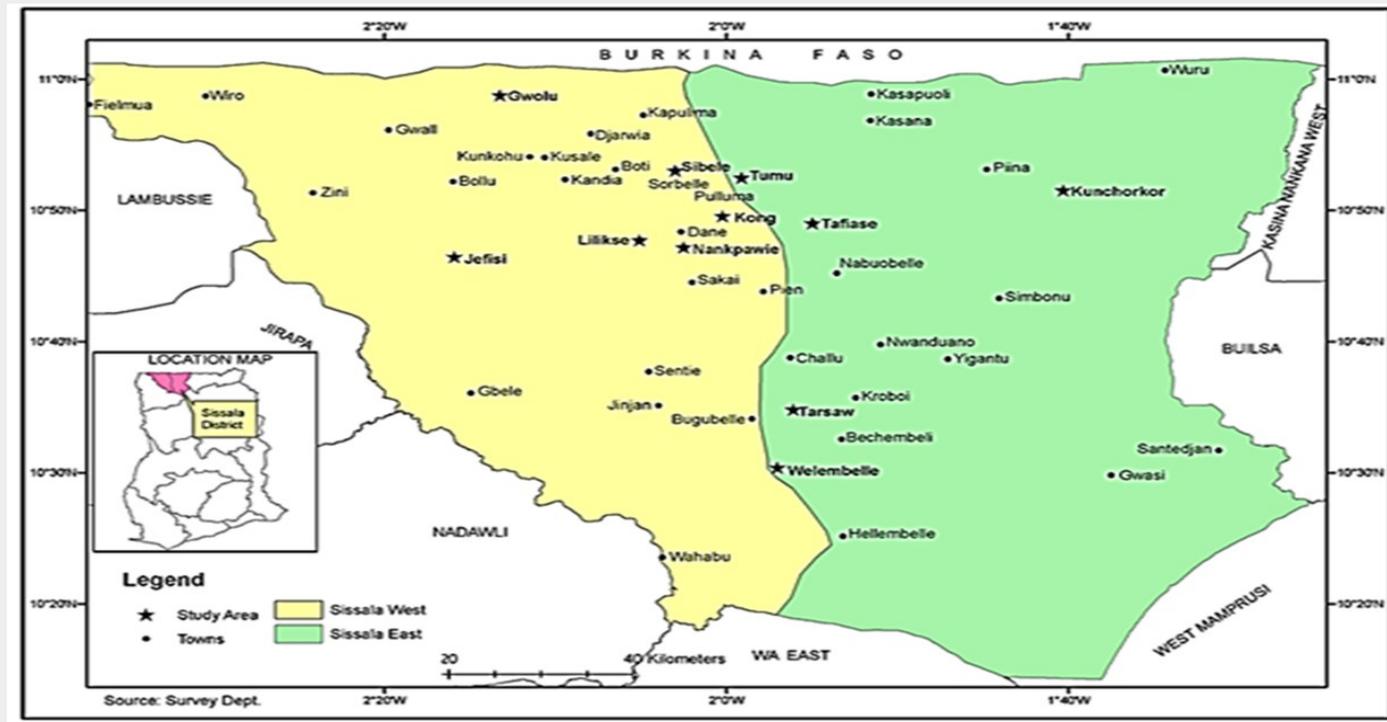
- Smallholder farmers play important social, cultural and economic roles in developing countries. It employs about 48% of the worlds' labour force (ILO, 2014) and 80% of food needs in developing countries (FAO, 2012),
- However, smallholder farmers belong to one of the most vulnerable economic groups to the impacts of climate change (UNFCCC, 2007; Altieri and Koohafkan, 2008; IPCC, 2013).
- Studies show that, the adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers to climate change depends largely on specific institutional arrangements within their societies (Agrawal, 2010).



Background Cont.

- The importance of institutions is that they promote collective action and implement management options which reduce the negative impacts of climate change (O’Riordan and Jordan, 1999; Agrawal, 2010; Moser and Ekstrom, 2010).
- However certain barriers can affect the achievement of this goal (Moser and Ekstrom, 2010) .
- This study sought to find out the problems smallholder farmers face in accessing institutional support to address climate change in rural Ghana.

The Study Area



The Sissala East and West Districts of Ghana

Methodology

Table 1: Methodology

Methodology	Unit	Rationale
Research Design	Mixed Methods	To corroborate the responses of smallholder farmers to that of the institutions.
Unit of Analysis	Farming households Institutions involved in agricultural development and climate change adaptation	- Their adaptation is the main focus of the study - Due to their involvement in agricultural development and climate change
Research technique	Farmer Survey In-depth interview with institutions	- Yields high survey response rates (Creswel, 2002) - Derives easy access and clarity to information about opinions , issues and events
Sampling Approach	Purposive and random sampling Purposive and snowball sampling	- An easy approach and less time consuming - Cost efficient and saves time
Sample Size	160 smallholder farmers from the study districts 12 representatives of institutions	
Data Derived	Quantitative Qualitative data	-enabled the use of statistical methods - allowed for a detailed study of institutions involved in agricultural development and climate change adaptation

Results/ Discussion

- Findings of the study indicated that knowledge and perception about the causes and impacts of climate change by farmers (81%) and institutions in the study area is high.
- The results showed that, both smallholder farmers and institutions in the district had observed that, climate change had both agricultural and non agricultural impacts on smallholder farmers as was presented by Morton (2007).
- Therefore, institutions involved in climate change adaptation support offered both on-farm and off-farm support to farmers as is shown in Table 2.



Results Cont.

Table 2 – Kinds of support institutions give to smallholder farmers

Institution	Adaptation Support Offered	
Sissala East District Assembly (SEDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply of tree crops (for farms and community forests) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of ruminants to women • Flood relief
Sissala West District Assembly (SWDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood relief • Dam repair/Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing of trees around dam sites
DADU/MOFA (SED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and demonstration programs • Provision with ruminants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply of trees to farmers freely
DADU/MOFA (SWD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and demonstration programs • Provision with ruminants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply of trees to farmers at a cost
Masara N'Arziki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input supply of seeds and fertilizer • Linkage to market 	
SILDEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • micro-finance (Village Savings and Loans Association), • livelihood diversification through networking women engaged in handicrafts, shea-butter, and soap and dawadawa production to markets 	
ASUDEV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided with donkeys for animal traction • supply of trees to grow on their farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • received flood relief

Results/ Discussion Cont.

- Study findings disclosed that, institutions involved in adaptation interacted horizontally and vertically with other institutions involved in climate change activities within and without the districts as posited by IPCC (2013).
- A chi-squared analysis conducted to test the relationship between access to institutional support and sex showed no significant relationship between these variables.

$$X^2 = 3.009, df=1, p\text{-value} = 0.083.$$

∴ Since $0.083 > 0.01$, the study can therefore conclude that, there is no significant relationship between sex and access to institutional support in the two districts.

However, the study observed that, interventions of institutions sometimes targeted one sex group over the other due to traditional norms and gender roles and expectations observed in the communities.



Results/Discussion Cont.

- Results indicated that, 75% of respondents stated that they faced or had ever faced challenges in accessing institutional support. The forms of challenges are presented below.

Table 3: Challenges smallholder farmers face in accessing institutional support

Challenges	Responses	Percentage
Lack of information	97	27
Distance	90	25
Language barrier	78	22
Low education	49	14
Poverty	22	6
Trust	12	3
Age	5	1
Total	353	100

source: Field Survey, 2014



Results/Discussion Cont.

Table 4: Respondents views on how institutional access can be improved.

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Extend offices to sub-districts	38	27
Provision of information on institutions	32	23
Improvement of road networks	27	19
Employment of indigenes into institutions	43	30
Increasing the numbers of extension agents	1	1
Total	141	100

source: Field Survey, 2014

- Findings further indicated that, internal barriers within the institutions and external barriers or demand-side barriers also restricted institutional support to smallholder farmers.



Results/Discussion Cont.

Internal barriers to institutional support may arise from:

- ✓ Interactions between institutions at the local level and their parent/partner institutions on the higher level.

"We lack internally generated funds. The government support is also not forthcoming. We also lack extension officers which makes it difficult for us to reach many farmers in the district." (Source: Representative of a public institution)

"The major constraint we face in our effort of giving support to farmers lies with the late arrival of our inputs which happens only a few times for example in 2011 and 2013 due to delays in the shipment of our consignments by our foreign partners resulting in its late arrival here." (Source: Representative of a private-membership organization)

- ✓ Finance and personnel related challenges also hinders institutions from offering much support to smallholder farmers.

"We have limited resources especially funding and human personnel. However funding is the major constraint as funds are needed to pay our personnel and also run the projects. With more funding we can hire more people to work on our projects thus reaching a wider range of people." (Source: Head of an NGO)



Results/Discussion Cont.

- Demand-side barriers that hinder institutional support include ***character traits, lack of financial commitment to pay for adaptation support*** and farmers showing little or no commitment to adaptation projects, ***political affiliations***, lack of trust in NGO's and ***traditional norms***.

"What prevents some of the people from coming forward is their past experiences with other NGO's. Some of the farmers feel discriminated against by development workers and MOFA which most farmers ascribed to political differences. They therefore do not trust the NGO's until they begin to see the effect of their activities." (Source: Head of an NGO)

"Some of the farmers are not ready to contribute their quota to ensure the success of the projects. Let us take the tree planting exercise as an example. Some of the communities did not care for the trees by weeding and creating fire belts around them. This caused the trees to get burnt during the hot dry season." (Source: Representative of a public institution)



Conclusion

- The study was organized to find out the challenges smallholder farmers faced in accessing adaptation support from institutions.
- A sample of 160 smallholder farmers and 12 institutional representatives of institutions involved in agricultural development and adaptation were involved in the study.
- Data was analysed using qualitative and quantitative methods
- Results indicated that, there was no significant relationship between institutional support and adaptation sex as what determined whether one gender group would benefit from an adaptation support or not was due to cultural norms and gender roles and expectations.
- Respondents faced challenges in accessing institutional support
- Additionally, the study found out that institutions also faced some difficulties which affected their efforts to offering adaptation support to smallholder farmers.



Recommendations

- Institutions involved in adaptation should develop innovative ways of meeting with smallholder farmers in remote parts of the districts such as through outreach services on market days as people from the remote parts of the districts come to the market centers to trade.
- Employ more local people so as to enhance effective communication between the institutions and the smallholder farmers
- Institutions and opinion leaders work together to educate the people on the importance of contributing financially and showing sincere commitment to adaptation projects and interventions.
- The study further recommends that institutions offering adaptation support to smallholder farmers must ensure the sustainability of interventions they introduce to farmers through thorough education and post-project monitoring and evaluation



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