



Ghana Federation
of Forest and Farm
Producers
(GhaFFaP)

GhaFFaP Innovative Climate Action

Smallholder producers turning
climate change challenges to adaptation
and production opportunities within the
dry savanna landscape of Ghana



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GhaFFaP Message



1. There is 3-4 months of seasonal rainfall and its associated flooding coupled with the 9 months of long dry season that has rendered rural families food and nutrition insecure, high poverty and contribute largely to the out-migration to Ghana's city centers.
2. To the extent that water availability and accessibility remains the main problem to rural production and livelihood diversification, if provided and accessibility guaranteed, farmers will adapt easily to climate change impacts through multiple production actions for adaptation.
3. GhaFFaP calls for partnership and support to implement a model green solar farms powered small and medium irrigation systems that support year -round production and integrated green landscapes as a game changer to climate adaptation and inclusive financial transformation through transformation of VSLAs and climate financing from carbon assets.



About GhaFFaP and its Members Strength in Savanna Drylands

The Ghana Federation of Forest and Farm Producers (GhaFFaP) is a national federation of forest and farm producer organizations, drawn from three ecological zones of Ghana – the Savannah, Transition and Forest ecological zones. It has 1,042,880 members, representing twelve producer organizations, of whom 46 per cent are women and 20 per cent are youth. In total, 523,933 GhaFFaP members are within the savanna dryland, of whom 70 per cent are women. The Peasant Farmers Association (PFA), Tuna Women Development Programme (TUWODEP), Community Action in Development and Research (CADER), Katitetaah Maali Lanbuure (KAMALA), Kassena Nankana Baobab Cooperative Union (KANBAOCU), Tele-bere Village Savings and Loans (Tele-bere) and Zuuri Organic Vegetable Farmers Association (ZOVFA) are the seven main GhaFFaP member organizations that have large numbers of members within the savanna drylands.

Given the large number of GhaFFaP members within the savanna dryland, GhaFFaP and its member organizations are key actors to address the climate impacts on their members and are clearly key stakeholders for any discussion or initiative related to climate adaptation within the savanna landscape.



The Climate Change Context

Climate change variability has affected various agriculture and forest-based production systems and value chains and contributing to ever-widening poverty, food and nutrition insecurity, forest and land degradation and deforestation. The combined effects of the heavy floods that occur during the raining season, mainly destroying various production farmlands, and the long dry season, makes it extremely difficult for local communities to meaningfully adapt to the effects of climate change. Water remains a critical resource for agricultural production in this part of Northern Ghana. This is further underscored by the fact that the area has only one rainy season of just three to four months every year, with up to a nine-month period of dry season. This situation is a major factor contributing to rural - urban migration by most of the youth especially women (Kaya-yei), from northern Ghana to the south in search of menial jobs. Various interventions that have been done in terms of water provision for agriculture production through the construction of dams, have made no major impact, largely because these dams serve limited catchment areas with no wider accessibility to the water by communities in a landscape approach. If this situation is not addressed with multiple innovations to complement ongoing interventions, the northern savanna belt will face the biggest threat represented by a devastating breakdown of agriculture and forest-based livelihood production systems.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added an extra dimension of urgency to efforts aimed at tackling challenges such as poverty eradication, climate change, biodiversity loss and inequity. This calls for a focus of responses that promotes green recovery in building back better and aims to achieve greater sustainability of production processes, consumption patterns to improve human health, promote a greener and fairer economy, invest in production and/or food systems that adopt a circular-economy approach and turning climate change challenges into adaptation opportunities. If smallholders have availability and access to water year-round and availability of access to financing for improving their business, they will be able to invest in green production of multiple value chains that secures carbon assets, capture high market share and improve income which will reduce their extraction of other land resources as a way of adapting to climate change challenges and food and nutrition insecurity.

GhaFFaP Innovative Approach for Climate Adaptation

The long-term goal is to turn the dry, degraded and deforested landscapes in the northern savanna belt of Ghana to green, integrated and climate resilient production landscapes for smallholders to provide: (1) food & nutrition security for their households, (2) secure and commercial carbon assets for accessing climate financing and, (3) sustainable, commercially viable, bankable and profitable forest and farm businesses for multiple value chains (basket of products); with year-round available and accessible water. The strategy will promote deforestation-free year-round production, landscape restoration, agroforestry, building of carbon assets and multiple value chain products that enables smallholders to well adapt to the effects of climate change and build back better. The focus of the strategy is to turn the long, nine months dry season period into a major production season and assure year-round production through the provision of solar-powered medium irrigation systems in selected landscapes covering multiple communities within the northern savanna belt.

Kaya-yei is a combination of Hausa and Ga languages meaning female head porters. Kayaye are predominantly girls and young women aged between 8 and 45 years, mostly from the three northern regions of Ghana and neighboring Burkina Faso. They have limited or no education and originate from poor socio-economic background. Indeed the three northern regions of Ghana have the highest poverty incidence in the country. While majority of kayaye are school dropouts who migrate to southern Ghana in search of greener pastures

This innovation will apply the lessons of the existing community-managed small town and rural water systems in Ghana that has been successfully applied to provide domestic water needs of various rural communities. It will use a combination of solar powered water pumping systems connected to underground water reservoirs, and water storage facilities strategically located within the production lands in multiple communities within the landscape, making it easier for multiple households to access the water on their farmlands.

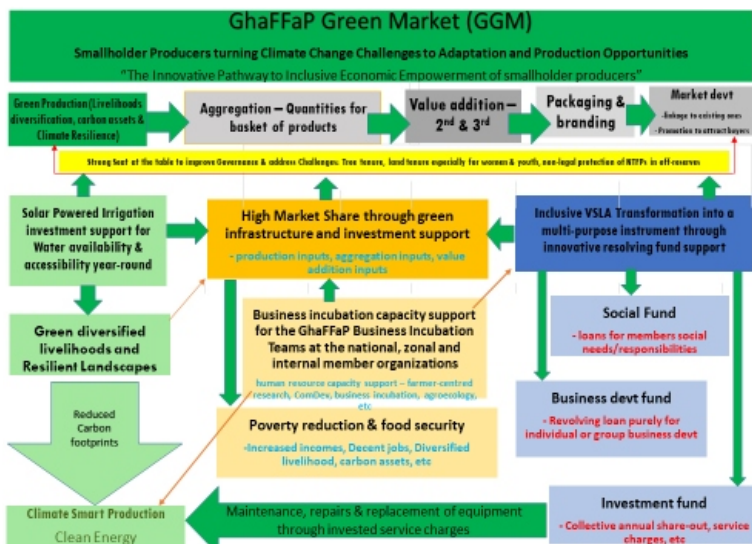
This approach has been the pillar to addressing domestic water supply challenges mainly in various locations in the savanna zone since the era of the arrival of the missionaries and are still currently functional. GhaFFaP, with support from the Forest and Farm Facility, is piloting this strategy with the Tele-bere Village Savings and Loans Association (a women's majority group) which is upscaling a similar pilot in the Garu area of the Upper East Region of Ghana.

The innovation adopts a sustainability strategy under the auspices of the Water Management Committees (WMCs), which will be a unique relationship between the smallholder producer organizations, communities and VSLAs, to determine a monthly service charge to be collectively fixed by the various WMCs and levied on each user of the system and facilitated through functional Village Savings Schemes that are already being operated by GhaFFaP members. These service charges will be collected at the end of each month and lodged in a designated interest earning Savings Account to be managed by the specific WMCs. The service charge will be levied on sales made, based on an amount to be decided by members. The service charge is aligned to the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) due to the lessons of the resilience and successes of the VSLAs over decades. This is to ensure that in the medium to long term the systems can be maintained and/or replaced to ensure that they are operational and sustained.

GhaFFaP intends to engage private sector players in relation to access to finance and markets in order to promote profitable businesses that can catalyze private financing within GhaFFaP VSLAs, financial institutions, buyers and government up to 50% of the total annual VSLA contributions. GhaFFaP member organizations VSLAs collectively mobilize over USD 4 million that is shared out annually. The increased production that will be realized year-round will increase incomes and profits and catalyze increased financial mobilization around the VSLA.

The income to be generated from the increased market share from value addition to primary products will also generate additional private financing up to a minimum of 50%. This will in turn increase the VSLA contribution amounts by members and enable collective investment of the total annual VSLA contributions rather than the usual annual total share outs.

The strategy will adopt a landscape and ecosystem-based adaptation approach that puts smallholders at the forefront of delivering adaptation interventions, ensuring also that mitigation approaches are adopted to provide opportunities for adaptation. It will deliver a combination of innovations, including (1) solar powered irrigation, (2) green production and value addition, and (3) inclusive financial transformation under the VSLAs and carbon assets creation, within the local context as adaption interventions and backed by farmer-centered research. The strategy is aligned and provides effective synergies with Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions and the new Ghana Food and Agriculture Sector Policy. Also the strategy interventions are aligned with the United Nations Ghana's Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan (SERRP) in the context of COVID-19. The strategy has linkages with ongoing government programmes such as the Planting for Food and Jobs, Planting for Export and Rural Development, the Youth in Agroforestry Programme, the Greening Ghana Programme, the Ghana REDD+ Programme and the Ghana Shea Landscape Emission Reduction Strategy.



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