

## **YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN GHANA**

### **A CASE STUDY OF GHANA'S YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME**

**By**

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#### **1.0.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Youth in Agriculture Programme (YIAP) concept was first conceived by the late President of Ghana, Professor Evans John Atta Mills in 1999, when he was the Chairman of the Economic Management team from 1996 to 2000. This was one of the interventions the National Democratic Congress Government introduced as its solution to the precarious youth unemployment in the country.

**The Youth in Agriculture Programme (YIAP) in Ghana is a Government of Ghana (GOG) agricultural sector initiative with an objective of motivating the youth to accept and appreciate farming as a commercial venture, thereby taking up farming as a life time vocation.**

The Youth in Agriculture Programme (YIAP) has been in existence since 1999, received more emphasis and attention since 2009. From a 47,000 youth who gained employment in 2009 under the programme, by 2011 the figure rose to 81,000. In 2012 the number of youth employed reduced to 45,000 because some of them were weaned off and others dropped because they have consistently failed to repay back credit given to them.

## **2.1.0 An Overview of the Youth in Agriculture Programme (YIAP)**

### **2.1.0 Core Functions of the Youth in Agriculture Programme**

The core functions of the Youth in Agriculture Programme amongst others include:

- The provision of employment for the youth through the provision of subsidized agricultural inputs and services;
- Making the youth accept farming as a commercial business venture;
- Ensuring a regular income for the youth;
- Improvement in the standard of living through improved incomes;
- Production of enough food crops, meat and fish using modern methods to meet food security target.
- Introducing the youth to market opportunities that exist in Ghana and the sub-region.

### **2.2.0 Components and Services Provided Under the YIAP**

**2.2.1 Block farm/Crops module** - under this component, YIAP provides tractor services, seed, fertilizer, agrochemicals, harvester services and marketing inputs to farmers on credit and interest free. Recoveries are in kind and in some case (perishables) in cash.

**2.2.2. Livestock and poultry module-** beneficiary youth are assisted with day old chicks, piglets, breeding sows and boars, feed, vaccines, veterinary drugs and other inputs, on the same terms as in the block farm. A number of animals are recovered from farmers and passed to new young farmers.

**2.2.3 Fisheries/Aquaculture-** beneficiary youth are provided with cages, ponds, fingerlings, feed and training. Beneficiaries have two years to pay in full all credits in cash and weaned off the programme.

**2.2.4 Agribusiness** – beneficiary youth are given training and basic equipment to go into food processing and sales. Graduates of tertiary institutions will be given basic training in research, environmental management, financial management, engineering, proposal

writing and other technical areas. These skill will enable them provide consultancies to young and practicing farmers.

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture as the implementing agent of the programme, provides the needed inputs to the young farmers, such as land preparation, high quality seed, fertilizer, herbicides, combine harvesters and threshers, etc. The ministry has deployed its entire technical staff to provide young farmers with the necessary technical assistance needed in agricultural production.

### **2.3.0 Who is eligible to join the YIAP?**

In Ghana, a youth is any person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. Any youth interested in farming; food processing and sales; groups of young men and women in any community who offer to farm in block; youth under national service; religious youth groups are all eligible to join the programme.

Maybe just very briefly how a youth interested can join the programme might be also useful (e.g.: who does the youth get into contact with, and then what is the process that follows? Etc).

### **2.4.0 Main Actors of the Youth in Agriculture Programme**

The whole concept of the youth in agriculture programme is based on “Public –Private-Partnership”.

The government of Ghana mobilizes the youth; provides funds for inputs; facilitate whole process of production; and support young farmers in marketing of their produce. The private sector provides tractor services for land preparation; quality seed; fertilizer and agrochemicals; transport and storage space. The young farmers are the core actors of the programme and are the direct users of inputs towards the production of food.

### 3.0.0 Impact of YIAP on Yield, Income of Youth

#### 3.1.0 Land Cultivated and Number of Young Farmers

YEAR	AREA (HA)/YR	NO. OF YOUTH	MALE	FEMALE	% OF FEMALE	YIELD (MT)/YR	MT/YOUTH/YR
2009	11,000	47,000	39,950	7,050	15	23,100	0.49
2010	47,000	80,000	60,000	20,000	25	120,000	1.50
2011	52,750	81,150	64,092	17,059	27	132,000	1.63
2012	45,000	45,600	31,920	13,680	30	-	-

#### 3.2.0 Government of Ghana Funding and Recoveries

YEAR	GOG FUNDING IN GHANA CEDIS GHC	GOG FUNDING IN US\$	% RECOVERIES
2009	8,000,000.0	5,517,241	45.0
2010	15,000,000.0	10,714,285	60.9
2011	10,400,000.0	6,117,647	56.0

#### 3.3.0 Effect of Modern Technology on Productivity

CROP	STD ACHIEVABLE (Mt/Ha)	BEFORE YIAP (Mt/Ha)	2009 (Mt/Ha)	2010 (Mt/Ha)	2011 (Mt/Ha)
MAIZE	6.0	1.7	2.9	3.0	3.0
RICE	6.5	2.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
SOYA	2.3	1.4	1.8	2.0	2.1
SORGHUM	2.0	1.3	2.0	2.2	2.0

- Other than input provision what is the role of the private sector?
- What's the linkages of the programme with other development programmes and donor programmes?

- What are the profiles of the young farmers engaging in YIAP (age, education background, what kind of crops do they usually go into? This information will be extremely valuable).

#### **4.0.0 THE SUCCESS STORY OF MADAM EMELIA YOObI TETTEH**

Madam Emelia Yoobi Tetteh is a 34 year old outstanding young female farmer of the Youth in Agriculture Programme. She started farming at the age of 15 years and a mother 5. She joined the programme in 2010 and has since expanded her farm. At the end of the 2010 and 2011 farming seasons, Madam Tetteh paid off all her debts owed YIAP, in two installments in each year

#### **4.1.0 MADAM EMELIA YOObI TETTEH’S FARM FROM 2010 TO 2012**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
<b>TOMATO (HA)</b>	1.0	2.0	4.0	Paid off debts in cash in 2010 and 2011
<b>PEPPER (HA)</b>	0.5	1.5	2.5	- do-
<b>OKRO (HA)</b>	0.5	0,5	1	-do-
<b>CASSAVA (HA)</b>	1.0	1.0	1.5	-do-
<b>EXOTIC PIGS</b>	0	2	8	In kind
<b>GOATS</b>	4	12		-do-

#### **5.0.0Challenges of Youth in Agriculture Programme**

- Apart from seed, almost all inputs for block farm production are imported from abroad. This brings about late delivery of inputs to farms in some cases.
- Late release of funds from the Ministry of Finance
- Difficulties in recoveries
- Appropriate storage space and facilities are limited.
- Unreliable weather and erratic rains

- Most farmers are unable to do production twice in a year due to insufficient irrigation facilities across the country.
- Most farmers are yet to appreciate importance of consultancy services.
- Financial banks are reluctant to provide services to farmers, compelling the GoH to carry the burden of funding young farmers.

### **7.0.0 Exit strategy**

An organization or individual in business without an exit strategy may be in a quagmire. At worst, an exit strategy will save face; at best an exit strategy will peg a withdrawal to the achievement of an objective worth more than the cost of continued involvement.

Following this principle YIAP has introduced an exit strategy whereby beneficiaries of the programme are weaned.

### **8.0.0 Conclusion**

The programme has made farming attractive and seen as business; incomes of young farmers have improved; extension agricultural officers derive job satisfaction; appreciation of their worth in agricultural production.