

GENDER AND THE LEGUME ALLIANCE

Locations	Ghana, Tanzania
Dates	01/06/2016 - 31/12/2019

Summary

Legume crops play a key role in household nutritional security and incomes but production is in decline. To rectify this, the Legume Alliance is trying to secure information about growing common beans into as many smallholder farming households in Ghana and Tanzania as possible. This work will also look at information targeting different gender groups. Allowing them to achieve sustainable intensification that will increase incomes and help attain nutritional security in the region.

The problem

Legume crops (common beans, soybean and groundnut in particular) are a good source or protein and play a key role in household nutritional security and incomes. Traditionally farmers allocate around one to three acres for legume production however, production has been declining recently.

By reducing impacts on the environment, sustainable agricultural intensification can make a positive contribution in addressing food security. Proven ways of growing legumes to scale in a sustainable but intense way already exist. However, the extent to which smallholder farmers can implement new practices to achieve this is limited. Factors include:

- lack of access to actionable information
- inadequate incentives for adoption
- lack of capacity to implement
- lack of necessary inputs
- poor public/private sector policies

- lack of capacity of farmers to communicate household needs for inputs and services

The lack of access to actionable information and the lack of appropriate links to factor markets (markets involving services such as labour, capital and resources are purchased and sold) are two of the major constraints. Moreover, another obstacle is targeting information on sustainable agricultural intensification to different gender groups.

What we are doing

The project seeks to improve poor Ghanaian and Tanzanian smallholder farmers' access and capacity to use information and knowledge, in order to achieve sustainable intensification.

In Tanzania we are building on a previous project and intensifying production of common beans and soybeans. Whilst in Ghana we are gathering together new partners with which to carry out campaigns on soybean.

The scale-up work in Ghana and Tanzania will leave a valuable legacy in addition to the project providing research for governments, investors and decision makers that can inform the delivery of more effective policies and investments. This should lead to better-targeted, communication for farmers on agricultural intensification and more effective value chains. The research will take particular account of women and youth involved in legume value-chains.

Overall, in order to achieve sustainable intensification, the project team wants to understand what strategies work best when trying to improve smallholder farmers' access and capacity to use knowledge and information (market, agronomic etc). The team are especially interested in women and youth.

In doing so, the project will test the hypotheses that:

- different communication channels are more suited to different gender groups
- providing information to input dealers and farmers can broker links and help improve input supply and demand

Our activities will revolve around:

- establishing a network of Ghanaian and Tanzanian partners around campaign activities
- mapping and analysing information flows within households
- consolidating recommendations for the strategy and design of value chain development initiatives
- generating evidence on the effectiveness of our campaigns
- making evidence available to decision makers

Results so far

As a result of the project, the public and private sectors and NGOs will be able to engage with the evidence from differing communication channels. These help strengthen value chains and enable poor smallholders in Tanzania and Ghana, particularly women and youth, to profit from legume technologies that allow intensification without further land degradation.

Donors

Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning in Africa (SAIRLA), UK Department for International Development (DFID)

Partners

Countrywise Ghana, University for Development Studies, Ghana, I-Logix, Sokoine University, Tanzania, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)









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