



MEDIA BRIEFING REPORT



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SUMMARY

As part of the project “*Strengthening Innovations and Technology Dissemination for Sustainable Development in Cereals, Cocoa and Coffee Value Chains in Western and Eastern Africa*” (SATTIFS) in Ghana, a media briefing was organized for all media houses in Sunyani. It was also attended by other project stakeholders, namely Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA). The briefing took place at the University of Energy and Natural Resources, Sunyani on 8th April, 2015. The objectives of this meeting were to:

1. Provide the participants with an insight into the project objectives;
2. Expose the participants to activities undertaken so far undertaken;
3. Highlight the achievements of the project to the participants and
4. Present the way forward for the project.

It was facilitated by the Project Coordinator, Prof. Daniel Obeng Ofori, who presented an overview of the project to the audience; with emphasis on the objectives and the project cycle. He emphasized on the project activities and what it hopes to achieve and the benefit to the rural small scale farmers in the areas of operation. The Deputy coordinator, Dr. Phyllis Opare, presented to them activities undertaken so far and the achievements the project has gained. The Scientific Officer, Dr. Michael Lartey and the Project Field Officer, Mr. James Agyei-Ohemeng also provided them with an update on the field activities and invited them to the Farmer Field School (FFS) in Nkoranza the next day. The participants asked questions about the project cycle and its potential to be scaled up for the benefit of larger farming communities. We had a very successful program and everyone was satisfied with the progress so far.

Introduction

The “*Strengthening Innovations and Technology Dissemination for Sustainable Development in Cereals, Cocoa and Coffee Value Chains in Western and Eastern Africa*” is a project aimed at building capacity in science, technology, and innovation in West and East Africa to boost food security, reduce/alleviate poverty and enhance socio-economic development. It is being implemented in several communities in the Brong Ahafo and Ashanti Regions of Ghana. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture, cocoa and maize farmers, artisans, processors and other practitioners in the cocoa and maize value chain have been identified as key stakeholders to participate in the research and as beneficiaries of the training and the research outcomes of this project.

The CITED office/team, since its establishment, has been operating in the Region for the past fifteen months. As part of our visibility effort to the public, a media briefing about the project was organized for the media houses in the Brong Ahafo Region. The objectives of this meeting were to:

1. Provide the participants with an insight into the objectives of SATTIFS,
2. Expose the participants to activities undertaken by CITED office so far,
3. Highlight some of the achievements of SATTIFS to the participants and
4. Present the way forward for SATTIFS.

The ultimate aim is to enable the media disseminate proper information about SATTIFS and CITED to the general public.

Media Briefing

The program started at 09.00 hrs with an opening prayer by Rev. Dr. Phyllis Opare. The participants introduced themselves and the media houses they represented. The Operational Unit Coordinator, Professor Daniel Obeng Ofori started by giving them an insight into the reason for the meeting and went on to give them the project background. He further briefed them about the objectives of SATTIFS, its operational areas in Africa, (Ghana, Uganda and Ethiopia) and the type of crops (rice, maize, coffee and cocoa) SATTIFS is interested in at the moment. The Project will last till December, 2016. In all 19 people from 13 media houses participated.



Figure 1: Project Coordinator (left) and the COCOBOD representative (right) explaining issues at the Press briefing.

The Project Operational Unit Coordinator further told the press that the project was being run in close collaboration with local farmers, Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) and the COCOBOD. CITED office is coordinating the project field activities. He also told the participants that the project is not bringing any new technology but rather trying to encourage farmers to use the existing technologies developed by scientists over the years which are aimed at improving crop yield and food security.

The Deputy Operational Unit Coordinator, Rev. Dr. Phyllis Opare explained the activities so far undertaken by the CITED office since the start of the project in January 2013 to date. She said the project undertook a baseline survey of all technologies available and being used by the farmers in cocoa and maize production. CITED office also established a demonstration farm at Techiman to show farmers the best practices in maize production under the guidance of the MOFA directorate in Techiman.



Figure 2: The Deputy Operational Unit Coordinator (left) and a participant from Ark FM (right) making a point at the Press briefing.

The details of these findings were all communicated to the farmers at stakeholders' workshops and all reports on project activities are available at the CITED office. Participants were asked to visit and see pictorial postings on the project facebook page at 'sattifs'. Participants were asked to like the page, ask questions and add contributions to the activities on the site. They were also asked to visit the project website at www.sattifs.unimol.it where they can get details of the project.

Achievements

Highlighting the achievements so far, the project has been able to organize over 30 maize farmer groups in Techiman, Nkoranza, and Wenchi, 15 cocoa farmer groups in Goaso/Tepa. The farmers have been sensitized on the use of available scientific technologies, how and where to access these technologies for their crop production. The entire project is dealing directly with the MOFA in Techiman, Wenchi, Nkoranza, Atebubu and parts of Sunyani for maize production. There are over 300 individual small scale farmers involved. In this maize planting season, the



Figure 3: Farmers using approved maize for planting during FFS in Nkoranza.

project seeks to supply inputs like planting seeds and fertilizers to our farmer groups in Techiman and Nkoranza through our Farmer Field Schools (FFS). The Farmers are gathered periodically to undergo training in maize production from land preparation to harvest in the FFS. The training is organized by the MOFA team in Techiman and Nkoranza Districts.

The Farmers have been sensitized to get their planting seed materials from only the MOFA-designated dealers Figure 3. The field is lined, using nylon thread and well laid out to make planting easy Figure 4.



Figure 4: Farmers on the land clearing (left), lining (middle) and maize planting (right) during FFS in Nkoranza.

They are also trained to plant in lines (Figure 4) to enable them work easily on their farm.

Under our FFS for cocoa farmers, selected farmers will be provided with seedlings from our nursery for the farmers to plant new fields or replace old, dying and unproductive cocoa trees. The FFS will be organized by the COCOBOD technical team in Goaso and Cocoa Research Institute staff at Tepa. The FFS for cocoa farmers will take place in May/June this year during the rainy season.



Figure 5: The Registrar of UENR interacting with Farmers at a Workshop in the CITED Secretariat.

Way Forward

It is our sincere hope that the timelines set for the project activities will be met and CITED which has become part of the University will focus on the future of the farmers by monitoring them as far as the use of the Technologies are concerned. It is also the desire of the University to further strengthen CITED to undertake the role of further expansion in the project coverage areas at end of the project in 2016.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Name	Media House
1	Anthony Goode	GBC-BAR
2	Bijja Mukusah Ali	GBC-BAR
3	Debrah Kwasi Emmanuel	Moonlite FM
4	Appiah Kubi Richard	Storm FM
5	Kwasi Kumi Boadi	Sky FM
6	Nana Agyen	Dinpa FM
7	Seth Opoku Agyeman	Space FM
8	Afia Aboagyewaa	Ark FM
9	Ramatu Alidu	Ark FM
10	Linda Gyamfuaa	Metro FM
11	Daniel Y. Daycee	Metro TV
12	Gordon Walter Seade	Viasat TV
13	Nana Osei Kyeretwie	Ghana News Agency (GNA)
14	James Baah	Daily Graphic
15	Micheal Boateng	The Chronicle
16	Henry T. Biney	COCOBOD
17	Rebecca Obeng Adjei	COCOBOD
18	Andoh G. Kwarkye	COCOBOD
19	Aboagye Desmond Kwame	COCOBOD

APPENDIX- The media briefing was reported in the links below

<https://l.facebook.com/l/gAQHtGn97/https%3A%2F%2F>

<http://www.modernghana.com/news/610886/1/university-of-energy-establishes-centre-for-sustai.html>

<http://thechronicle.com.gh/uenr-to-agric-productivity-in-ba/>