

## **2.3 Action Plan for Community Based Extension Agents (CBEA)**

### ***2.3.1 Description of Technology***

The Community Based Extension Agents (CBEA) is a rural agricultural extension model based on the idea of providing specialised and intensive technical training to identified people in living rural communities to promote a variety of technologies and offer technical services with support and review from an extension organization. The CBEA is a demand driven model; in that provide opportunity for farmers or groups or community to contact the service provider for specific information and related services. The community based extension model can contribute to climate change adaptation through the training of service providers in climate data collection; analysis and dissemination within their areas of operation to enable communities select appropriate response strategies.

The community based rural agricultural extension model was introduced in Ghana to complement the efforts of veterinary services in addressing livestock health problems in the absence of adequate qualified staff. The practice has since been expanded to include other technical areas including crop agronomy. It is also being used to promote climate change adaptation in parts of the northern region by CARE International, an NGO. The use of the model however remains on pilot basis with limited coverage.

### ***2.3.2 Target for Transfer and Diffusion***

The action plan targets the enhancement of extension service to 500 communities in selected districts across the country. It is intended that the transfer and diffusion of the technology will be done within a five-year period beginning from 2013 to 2017.

### ***2.3.3 Barriers to Promotion and Diffusion of Community-Based Extension Agents***

Inadequate extension service to farmers resulting in non-application of improved farming practices is the base problem, which the CBEA technology addresses. The direct result of these is low productivity and/or production resulting in household food insecurity, poverty and general

low standards of living in rural communities. There are the usual economic and non-economic barriers.

The economic and financial barrier to the smooth promotion and diffusion of this technology revolves around lack of motivation for available personnel. Closely associated with this is the absence or inadequacy of financial benefits for the job the agents do within their communities and absence of tools and equipment to enable them perform their duties satisfactorily. Closely associated with the above is inadequate training for the agents. The above are as a result of lack of budgetary allocation to support CBEA because it is not identified as an integral part of the national extension structure as a result of the existing national agriculture extension policy.

The main barrier is the absence of trained personnel as a result of lack of qualified persons to be trained, which is a direct result of poor quality of educational within rural communities. Rural-urban migration is also identified as a cause of non-availability of required personnel for training.

Non-appreciation of role of community based extension agents is a major barrier because of poor perception among community members due to low awareness about the importance of CBEA among rural communities which is also due to high dependence on regular extension service from national extension organization.

Institutionally, limited support from the national extension service was also indentified as a barrier. This is as a result of lack of budgetary allocation because CBEA is not an integral part of the national extension service delivery mechanism.

#### ***2.3.4 Measures to Address Barriers***

Measures for improving the promotion and diffusion of were identified through stakeholder consultation and fine-tuned by consultant using own knowledge based on local experience. The measures were initially identified for each category of barriers and regrouped into economic and financial; and non-financial measures.

Central to addressing economic and financial barriers is the need to review current extension system to enable integration of CBEA into the national extension structure to enable budgetary allocation to support its implementation. Additional to this could be a mechanism for engaging with not-for-profit organisations (CSOs/ NGOs, Relief Agencies, Faith Based Organizations, and Farmer-Based Organizations, etc.) to support the role out of the technology specific locations in collaboration with the local/district administration structure. There is the need to provide necessary tools and equipment and establish a clear modality for providing remuneration to trained personnel. Additionally, resources including training facilities should be provided for continuous training of personnel.

There is the need to undertake sustained awareness creation on the benefits of CBEA among rural communities to remove misconceptions and encouragement of non-formal education among the adult population.

There is the need to review current extension structure and delivery mechanisms to include CBEA to enable its recognition and prioritization as major step towards addressing the wide gap between farmers and available extension staff. The national extension service should develop a comprehensive action plan for rolling out and supporting CBE in rural communities complete with training actions.

The envisaged action plan for the transfer and diffusion of the CBEA encapsulates a programme with the government partnering multi and bilateral agencies to promote extension services in the farming communities through the CBEA. This is summarized in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3 Summary of Action Plan for Community Based Extension Agents**

<i>Action/ Measure</i>	<i>Why Action</i>	<i>Responsible Agents/ Responsibilities</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Indicator of Success</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
Enhancing extension service to 500 communities in selected districts ó recruitment of staff, budgetary support for implementation, logistics (e.g. vehicles, motorbikes and bicycles)	The existing extension service is inadequate to support farming in many farming communities	MMDAs in collaboration with MOFA:  <i>MOFA – coordination, oversight of project.</i>  <i>MMDAs – implementation of project in districts</i>	2013 ó 2017	\$5,000,000	Government of Ghana, development partners (multi & bilateral agencies), and private sector	Extension services delivered to at least 450 communities nationwide	Cooperation of the MMDA and MOFA in the project implementation
Capacity building for extension officers and other staff for the 500 communities	The CBEA concept is relatively different from the existing extension system and there is need for training.	MOFA technical directorate in collaboration with CSIR and universities:  <i>All agents work together on capacity building</i>	2013 ó 2017	\$2,000 per each extension officer/ staff  Total - \$1,000,000	Government of Ghana, development partners (multi & bilateral agencies), and private sector	About 100 extension officers trained (5 each for 20 districts)	Commitment of the extension officers and other staff.
Training of average 10 community agents in 500 communities	There is need to train the community agents to ensure effective extension service delivery	MMDAs (extension service) in collaboration with the MOFA directorates and CSOs:  <i>MMDAs –</i>	2013 - 2017	\$1,000 per community agent  Total - \$5,000,000	Government of Ghana, development partners (multi & bilateral agencies) and private sector	450 community agents trained	Availability and commitment of the 500 community agents

		<i>mobilising CBEAs from communities.</i>					
		<i>MOFA – training CBEAs</i>					
Training of farmers by community agents in 500 communities	The trained community agents need to disseminate their knowledge and expertise to farmers in the respective communities	Community agents, MMDAs (extension service) in collaboration with the MOFA directorates and CSOs:  <i>CBEAs – train farmers in communities.</i>  <i>MOFA &amp; MMDAs – provide support to CBEAs</i>	2013 - 2017	\$4,000 per community in 500 communities Total ó 2,000,000	Government of Ghana, development partners (multi & bilateral agencies) and private sector	20 farmers trained in each community by the agents	Willingness of the farmers to learn from the CBEAs
<b>Total</b>				\$13,000,000			