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Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project
Quarterly Report

Second Quarter – January 1 to March 31, 2015

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

Program Name:	**Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project**
Activity Start and End Date:	**October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2016**
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	**United States Forest Service International Programs**
Agreement Number:	**AEG-T-00-07-00003**
Name of Subcontractors/Subawardees:	**None**
Major Counterpart Organizations:	**Ghana Forestry Commission (Forest Services Division, Wildlife Division), Ghana Department of Food and Agriculture, Ghana Town and Country Planning Departments**
Geographic Coverage (cities and or countries):	**Six coastal districts of the Western Region of Ghana**
Reporting Period:	**January 1st 2015 – March 31st 2015**

Program Description/Introduction

Ghana's Western Region is one of the fastest growing areas of the country and in all of West Africa. Land use pressures are enormous, especially in the high population centers of the region's six coastal districts. Demand for conversion of forests to agriculture, cash crop development, harvesting of mangroves and other forest species for charcoal and timber production, artisanal mining, and urban development all pose significant threats to forests in this region. High unemployment rates compound these pressures, exacerbating unsustainable natural resource management practices and reducing ecosystem services provided by the region's forests.

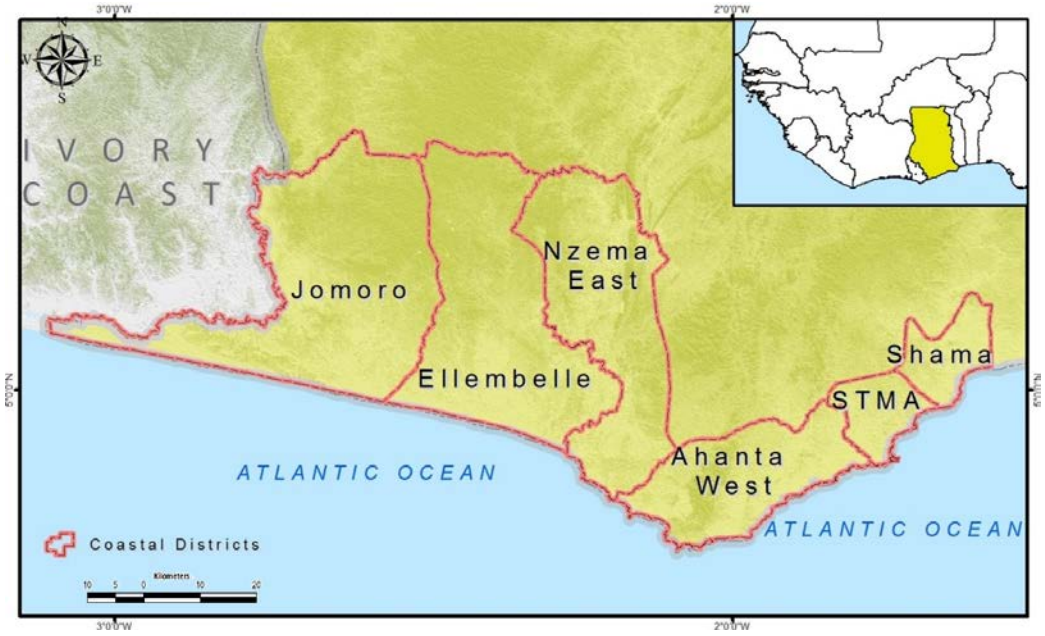
Most land in the Western Region outside forest reserves and other protected areas has been deforested and converted to agriculture. The current situation is one of urgency—to find ways of taking pressure off the remaining reserves and to improve livelihoods and land management outside the reserves. Coupled with the human pressures on the landscape, a warming climate caused by increased atmospheric carbon dioxide poses significant risk to the landscape. In addition to increased temperatures, climate change is associated with jet stream fluctuations causing irregular, more extreme, and unusual weather patterns and events. Changing rainfall patterns and amounts can mean droughts in some areas and floods in others. Changing phenology, distributions of plant species, and rising sea levels are some of the potential adverse impacts on the region from climate change.

To address these growing threats, USAID/Ghana's Economic Growth office has developed natural resource interventions in Ghana's Western Region. USAID's main initiative, the Fisheries and Coastal Management (FCM) Program, has four components: (i) strengthened enabling environment for decentralized fisheries and coastal governance, (ii) increased use of applied science to inform decision-making, law enforcement and the implementation of management plans, (iii) heightened public awareness of trends, challenges and successes in

ecosystem management and stronger public demand for sustainable use and conservation, and (iv) improved management of marine and coastal natural resources for multiple benefits.

The US Forest Service, under a participating agency partnership agreement (PAPA) with USAID, manages one component of the FCM program, the Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project (CSLP). It contributes in some form to all four components but most of its emphasis is on the fourth component. Operating in the six coastal districts of Ghana's resource-rich Western Region (see Figure 1), the CSLP activities target landscape-level engagement with communities, non-governmental organizations, Government of Ghana agencies, the private sector, and international partners. The project's geographic area stretches from the Cote d'Ivoire border eastward through the Greater Amanzule wetlands complex, Cape Three Points, the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Area (STMA) and east to the Central Region border.

Figure 1. The six coastal districts in Ghana's Western Region.



The CSLP responds to the USAID Sustainable Landscapes (SL) Results Framework by focusing on Strategic Objective 1: Accelerate the transition to low emission development through investments in clean energy and sustainable landscapes. The SL interventions are supporting the second development objective of ensuring sustainable and broadly shared economic growth in Ghana under the USAID/Ghana Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). The goal of the strategy is to support the Government of Ghana in realizing its goal of becoming an established middle-income country by 2022.

To confront these growing threats mentioned above, the CSLP intends to improve carbon sequestration, forest management, and livelihoods in the six coastal districts of the Western Region. The overall long-term impact of the project is aimed at promoting low emissions development in Ghana's Western Region by strengthening community-based natural resource management and monitoring. The project focuses on the coastal landscape, including mangroves, other wetlands, and forests and agricultural areas (within and outside protected areas) all of which are managed under a diversity of land tenure regimes.

Ghana has seen numerous interventions related to forest conservation in the past, many with only limited success. CSLP's primary activities are focused on community-level interactions that work to achieve low

emissions development goals. One key component of the CSLP strategy is the application of a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) model—a social entrepreneurial concept that has already enjoyed much success in Ghana. It is employed by the CSLP as a novel vehicle to help encourage and promote activities that maintain and increase forest cover with native and existing tree species. The project's activities are being established within communities where there is an existing and functioning community governance body such as Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs) or similar entities. This history of community collaboration provides an entry point to develop a community's capacity to launch their own VSLA and oversee loans to community members. The CSLP is applying the VSLA concept to provide incentives for farmers and landowners to incorporate more indigenous species of trees on their land while helping provide seed funding for a revolving funding mechanism to work towards improved livelihoods.

With successful implementation, these efforts will contribute to increased employment, improved livelihoods, better land management of existing natural resources, increased soil fertility, and increased carbon stocks. Moreover, improved land management and livelihoods will reduce pressure on intact areas of forest reserve, protecting their biodiversity, allowing for ecotourism opportunities and enhancing the value of other ecosystem services within the value chains of the local communities.

Summary of Results to Date

Standard Indicators	Baseline FY 2014	FY 2015					Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target? Y/N
		Annual Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
4.8-7 Quantity of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, measured in metric tons of CO2e, reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance	**0**	**20,496 CO2e**	6,480	2,085			41.8	Y
4.8.1-26 Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved NRM as a result of USG assistance	0[1]	**1,200 ha**	316	20			28.0	N
4.8.1-29 Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance	0	**9,600 hours**	829	1316			22.3	N
4.8.1-6 Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable NRM and conservation as a result of USG assistance	0	**600 people**	107	79			31.0	--[2]
4.8.2-14 Number of institutions with improved capacity to address climate change issues as a result of USG assistance	0[3]	**50 institutions**	7	30			74.0	Y
4.8.2-29 Number of person hours of training completed in climate change as a result of USG assistance	0	**4,800 hours**	148	2412			53.3	Y

[1]Annual report included the number of hectares of protected areas within the six coastal districts as reported by the Government of Ghana. We have revised this to 0 to reflect the starting point for USG interventions in order to more accurately track our achievements toward this target.

[2] Determination of increased economic benefits resulting from many of the project related activities are often time lagged.

[3]Population of institutions in the six coastal districts:

District Assemblies 6	Traditional Councils 6	Traditional/Town Palaces 15
CREMAs 9	Farmer-based Org 9	Gov't. tech. serv. (EPA, FSD, DoFA, WD, BAC) 5

ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Progress Narrative

The CSLP team focused on training and capacity building activities as well as tree nursery establishment during the quarter for Intermediate Result 1 (IR 1) which is to improve livelihoods through enhanced natural resources management practices. This focus lays the groundwork for tree planting, beehive swarming and improved management practices that will commence with the rainy season that normally begins during the next quarter. The key achievements made under IR 1 for the CSLP included:

- 83 farmers, including 10 women, trained in beekeeping basics including establishment and siting of the hive, care of the hive and maintenance;
- 6 artisans trained in the construction of beehives who will be engaged next quarter to produce up to 50 hives;
- 5 community tree nurseries and one demonstration site tree nursery, with TRACTOR, established;
- Nursery management tools and timber tree seeds distributed to all the community nurseries;
- 405 participants, including 114 women, trained in climate smart agricultural techniques for vegetable production;
- 201 participants, including 139 men, trained in composting methods as part of the climate smart agriculture techniques;
- 150 participants, including 33 women, trained in farmer-managed natural regeneration of tree species;
- 4 new VSLA groups were initiated and began modular trainings bringing the total number of VSLAs to 9 as of the end of March;
- VSLA monitoring software system established and data collection in progress to allow the CSLP to monitor success rate of savings, loan disbursements and repayment, and to compare these numbers to global statistics; and,
- Community awareness raising activities were conducted involving the chiefs and district level authorities providing an overview of the VSLA concept.

Activities under IR 2, aiming to strengthen engagement and coordination on sustainable landscape management, focused on engaging chiefs and elders, community based organizations such as VSLAs, as well as government institutions such as the district assembly and the respective technical offices. The objective of the engagements was to deepen the understanding of stakeholders on climate change impacts and what may be done to adapt to and mitigate such impacts. Key achievements in this quarter included:

- Video shows on climate change impacts in the Shama District held in four communities;
- Climate change training for 18 school teachers from 2 schools in collaboration with the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission;
- Continued engagement with stakeholders such as the CREMAs, VSLAs and district assemblies within the CSLP operational area;
- Establishment of climate change clubs in two schools; and,

- Regional level stakeholders' meeting held involving key governmental counterparts from the Western Region Coordinating Council (WRCC).

Activities under IR 3, which aims to enhance capacity for ecosystem services monitoring, led to the training of community assistants on using GPS units to map farmland and resulted in mapping a large extent of project intervention area. In addition, the technical capacity of key counterparts in carbon stock measurement was achieved as the next step in the greenhouse gas emission estimation and tracking process. These key achievements included:

- GPS mapping training for 26 Community Assistants;
- 653.3 hectares of farmland mapped by the trained community assistants in three districts; and,
- 40 participants trained in the skills for carbon stocks measurement including community assistants, districts assembly staff and Western Region Coordinating Council staff.

Implementation Status

Intermediate Result 1: Improved Livelihoods through Enhanced Natural Resources Management Practices

Sub IR 1.1: Provide capacity building for targeted community groups to effectively manage and conserve natural resources in priority areas

Intermediate Result	Activities to be Implemented	Expected Outputs	Planned Date of Completion
1.1.1 Implement prioritized NRM conservation related livelihoods	• Develop training modules for climate smart vegetable production – Composting • Build capacity of farmers in beekeeping - part 1 • Build Capacity of farmers in beekeeping Part 2 • Hire beekeeping practitioner as demonstrator for beekeeping trainings • Train vegetable farmers on climate smart vegetable production • Train vegetable farmers on climate smart vegetable production – composting • Procure relevant livelihood support equipment/tools – beekeeping • Procure equipment for establishment of community nurseries • Distribute relevant livelihood support equipment/stools • Facilitate setting up of beehives/practical applications • Study tour for selected farmers to successful livelihood activities and agroforestry sites	• Draft training module on composting • Farmers are aware of improved beekeeping skills • Farmers conversant with Improved and environmentally conscious agricultural practices • Farmers practice livelihood options in a safe and professional way. • Farmers are aware and share the lessons and experiences of other farmers.	March 2014
1.1.2 Support implementation of the Greater Amanzule Management Scenario with Hen Mpoano	Undertake quarterly working visit with implementing partner	• Field activity quality Assessment	March 2014

CSLP has adopted the avoided degradation and deforestation (ADD) strategy to enhance forest conservation while improving livelihoods. One of the identified medium to long term livelihood options to abate deforestation is to introduce beekeeping in these sites. Beekeeping training was planned for the first quarter but had to be postponed due to the procurement time required in the selection of a suitable trainer and acquiring the requisite equipment. Part I of the training started in the first quarter and was handled by CSLP staff. During this quarter, the training in Part I continued while Part II also took place. Part II was undertaken by a consultant, supported by CSLP staff. Four staff of the Western Region Directorate of the Department of Food and Agriculture (DOFA) participated in the trainings including the Regional Extension Officer. This will further enable MOFA staff to continue to provide support to beekeeping farmers even beyond the life of CSLP. A total of 83 farmers were trained including 10 women.

CSLP procured safety equipment necessary for the implementation and management of bees including a few beehives. The consultant engaged by the project demonstrated the use and maintenance of the equipment such as the smoker, bee suit, hive tools and the beehive itself. The swarming season, when colonization of the hives is likely to occur, is from the month of July to November. CSLP is supporting farmers to prepare their hives for this important season by ensuring proper siting and placement of the hives. Additionally, farmers expressing interest since the first training will be considered for trainings in the next quarter.

In order to ensure adequate materials are available locally for long term management of beekeeping in the region, and based upon research by CSLP which identified that a lack of capacity in the construction of beehives exists within the six coastal districts of the Western Region, a consultant was engaged to train six carpenters in beehive construction. Four of the carpenters are farmers who are scattered throughout the six coastal districts. The other trainees are professional carpenters from Takoradi and operate at the Takoradi Kokompe Wood section. The training took place at Kokompe where there is access to all the necessary wood molding equipment necessary for the exacting methods necessary for beehive construction—especially in making the top bars. The advice offered for the carpenters in the districts who might not have the equipment to manufacture the top bars to precision, is to buy the top bars from their two colleagues in Kokompe and place in the beehive boxes that can be more easily molded in their own local workshops. These six beehive artisans will be contracted to construct beehives for the CSLP-registered farmers beginning next quarter.

Most farming practices in the operational area of CSLP are not climate friendly. They involve indiscriminate removal of trees from the farm

Profile: CSLP Community Champion

Photo 1. Stephen Sakitey, pictured here on the right with Program Manager Adam Welti, with his first beehive constructed with his own time, money and resources thanks to CSLP-sponsored training.

A key component to sustainability and long-term success of CSLP interventions is the identification of and capacity support for champions in communities of intervention who believe strongly in the shared objectives of the project and have committed their own time and resources to ensuring success. One of those champions is Stephen Sakitey in Fawoman in the Jomoro district. Stephen is a carpenter who was trained on beehive construction by CSLP and has used his own time and money to build his hive to hone his skills in order to build quality hives for others. His income has increased thanks to his work with the project having been trained to carry out mapping of farm intervention areas in his community.

Stephen is an active member of the Fawoman VSLA group where he is actively saving and to which he says he cherishes the "great savings attitude" that he has developed as a result. He has participated in CSLP sponsored trainings related to improved natural resources management and climate change.

Stephen's enthusiasm and willingness to commit his own time and resources to project interventions, is what CSLP hopes to build upon with other champions throughout the six coastal districts. More on Stephen's story can be found in the success story annex of this report.

using slash and burn practices. This often entails clearing of trees including those along the edges of water bodies thereby exposing the soil to greater erosion risk and more rapid water evaporation. Other practices include poor soil and nutrient management and mishandling of chemicals. In order to help curtail some of these unsustainable practices, CSLP developed a climate smart agriculture training module in line with the definition of the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) climate smart agriculture definition. The FAO defines climate smart agriculture as one that:

- Sustainably increases productivity and incomes;
- Adapts and builds resilience to climate change; and,
- Reduces and/or removes greenhouse gas emissions, where possible.

During the quarter, 405 participants, including 114 women, were trained on these concepts from five of the six districts. The trained participants are food crop farmers who are also practicing vegetable production in mixed cropping systems. The objectives of the training were to:

- Improve farmers' skills to adopt good agronomic practices to enhance productivity, and,
- Adopt agroforestry practices to ensure biodiversity conservation, environmental health and to contribute to carbon sequestration.

The trainees were convinced of the need to adopt radical changes to ensure sustainable and healthy farming practices. 174 participants, including 64 women, have committed to setup climate smart agriculture plots with the support of CSLP and DOFA. During the training, participants identified a critical set of negative on-farm activities where some recommendations were suggested as listed in the table below.

Unsustainable Practices and Challenges	**Recommendation**
Clearing all vegetation along water bodies and trees on farm	✓ CSLP to supply various tree species to be integrated into farming activities ✓ Create buffer zones along river bodies (at least 5 meters) and plant trees in the coming years
Limited access to improved or certified seeds	✓ Contact DOFA staff for advice and link to approved agro input dealers' shops in the localities.
Poor fertility of the soil without the use of inorganic fertilizers	✓ Integrate tree species in the farm such as *Albizia* species and *Gliricidia sepium* that fix nitrogen into the soil ✓ Use farm and kitchen waste including animal droppings and compost
Prevalence of pests and diseases	✓ Adopt good farm hygiene ✓ Plant at recommended distance ✓ Plant healthy and certified seeds ✓ Adopt Integrated Pest Management
Other field observations affecting the growth and development of the crops	✓ Report to MOFA staff for follow-ups visits and seek technical advice
Limited market access for selling farm produce and acquiring agribusiness goods	✓ Organize into vegetable grower-groups and link to service providers such as B-BOVID, Pyxera Global and National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) etc. ✓ Consider farm as a business entity

Four DOFA staff participated in the CSA training from the Western Region Directorate, including the Regional Director. As a result of this engagement, DOFA staff have indicated their interest in establishing climate smart demonstration sites across the districts during the coming rainy season.

A training module was drafted on composting for farmers as part of the climate smart vegetable production trainings. The goal of the training was to enable farmers to take advantage of the food and organic waste materials both from the household and on-farm, to improve the soil nutrient quality. Poor soil quality is a major limiting factor to enhanced crop production in the six coastal districts. The content of the composting module included:

- Environmental benefits of composting to improve soil nutrients
    - Improve soil structure
    - Effective water holding capacity
    - Sustainable production
- Composting requirements
    - Shredding materials
    - Conducive environment for effective compost making
- Compostable/non-compostable materials
    - Farm and kitchen wastes
    - Avoidance of plastics and weeds sprayed with chemicals
- Methods of composting
    - Stack method
    - Pit method
- Building the compost pile
    - Recommended pile size for effective composting
    - Mixing fresh and dry stuffs
    - Covering to avoid excessive drying

201 community members were trained on composting principles, including 62 women. The trainees were selected from across sixteen communities of the five coastal districts with the exception of Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA). Ten MOFA staff including two District Directors participated in the trainings over a period of four weeks.

In addition to the composting training, a study tour has been planned for selected community members who have shown interest in tree planting. The tour will take place during the coming rainy season when conditions will be more appropriate to observe tree planting efforts. A few select individuals who will be able to champion tree planting efforts in their communities, will be selected to visit some of the sites identified below.

Item	Name	Location	What To See
1	Paul Nsiah	Tarkwa	More than 20 acres of cocoa agroforestry Mature chew stick trees at harvest stage
2	Sureso-Pebease CREMA	Sureso, Amenfi West District	7-12 year old cocoa agroforestry sites, plantations of *Cedrella odorata* and Teak
3	OCAP	Asankragwa, Amenfi West District	15 year old enrichment planting of secondary forest, cocoa agroforestry, cassava processing, and beekeeping livelihood activities

The sites are all located in the Western Region and will allow farmers to hear and see first-hand the potential for success in tree planting.

The initial grant agreement that was signed with Hen Mpoano for the continuation of the Greater Amanzule Wetland Management processes came to an end in January 2015. As part of monitoring, CSLP participated in a number of events especially involving important decision-making by stakeholders. In view of this, CSLP participated in the meetings with:

- Jomoro District Assembly to announce the revamping of the process and seek the support of the assembly;
- Meeting with the Traditional Authority of the various communities to announce the process and ensure their buy-in;
- Meeting with local Non-Governmental Organizations to announce the process and to seek their support; and
- Greater Amanzule Retreat, involving the district chief executives, chiefs, assembly members and opinion leaders to review the process and outcomes and chart the way forward which occurred in Kikam in the Ellembele District Assembly.

A follow-on grant, to span 12-15 months and establish functioning co-management units that are implementing management activities, is being formulated and is expected to be implemented in the next quarter.

Intermediate Result 1: Improved Livelihoods through Enhanced Natural Resources Management Practices

Sub IR 1.2: Identify, Develop and Demonstrate appropriate and forest landscape restoration methods (Technology and Practices) for native Ecosystems and Improved Livelihoods

Intermediate Result	Activities to be Implemented	Expected Outputs	Planned Date of Completion
1.2.1 Develop and help implement agroforestry and forestry interventions	• Develop training modules for managing/tending AF trees/shrubs • Develop training module on farmer assisted natural regeneration – on farm focus • Train farmers on farmer assisted natural regeneration – on farm focus • Develop training modules on woodlot management and charcoal enterprises • Conduct training on conservation techniques for secondary remnant forest patches/enrichment planting • Conduct training on management of woodlots and charcoal enterprises • Initiate planting to restore mangroves at Yabiw and Akwidaa	• Draft training modules on tending trees, assisted natural regeneration and woodlot management in place • Section of farmers trained in natural regeneration techniques and woodlot management • Mangrove seedlings available and sections of degraded Yabiw mangrove re-planted	March 2014
1.2.2 Establish and manage forest trees nurseries in four communities	• Identify and select seed sources for collection and / or purchasing • Prepare nursery site for germination and transplanting/potting • Prepare nursery site for germination and transplanting/potting • Tending operations on nurseries	• Procurement of 40,000 seedlings from private sources assured • Community nurseries are operational	March 2014

A training module for farmer-managed natural regeneration was drafted during the quarter. The module was designed to include training for managing and tending agroforestry trees and shrubs. The content includes the following:

- What is farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR)?
- Reasons for adopting FMNR
- Considerations for species selection in FMNR
- Practical sessions to be carried out on the farm landscape
    - Identification of trees in their different stages and their uses/benefits
    - Guidance on tree density
    - Key tending operations in FMNR (Singling, thinning, pruning)

Training has begun with the module and has been completed in four communities including Ayawora, and Adubrim in the Ellembele District, Asonti in Nzema East District and Tumentu in Ahanta West District. In these four communities, 150 farmers have been trained, including 33 women. The training is on-going and is intended to cover about 500 farmers. All these trainings have been planned to prepare farmers in advance so that as the rainy season begins, they will be well prepared to implement some of these improved practices.

Drafting of a module on woodlot management and charcoal enterprises is on-going. The challenging component is identifying a means of efficient charcoal burning which is environmentally conscious, which requires further investigation by the project. CSLP recognizes that no matter how effective and efficient that a recommended method may be, the design and support of the alternative by the end users is vital to success. To gain practical information and experience, CSLP will facilitate a discussion around this topic during the upcoming quarter.

The people of Yabiw and Anto-Tre in the Shama District Assembly, led by the chief who also acts as the Acting Omanhene of Shama Traditional Council, have committed to re-plant patches of degraded mangroves on their land. Through outreach with the district assemblies in the previous quarter, this activity was captured in the Shama District Assembly Medium Term Development Plan that is currently being drafted. In Yabiw, a group of community members have requested support to produce 5,000 *Cassia* species seedlings to establish a woodlot for charcoal production.

In order to achieve these goals, two nurseries have been setup at Anto-Tre and Yabiw in collaboration with Friends of The Nation (FoN). FoN has experience in mangrove re-planting in Anlo Beach in the Shama District and they have identified community members from Anlo Beach who will periodically join the people of Yabiw to support them in the establishment of their nursery.

Photo 2. Anto-Tre Mangrove Nursery in Shama District

The CSLP has targeted 70,000 seedlings of various species for planting this year throughout the six districts. The team is facilitating the production of 30,000 of these seedlings from the nurseries established and will procure the remaining 40,000 from private producers. Two private nurseries have been identified and agreements signed with them to produce and supply additional seedlings to CSLP

from May to July 2015. CSLP staff are visiting the project and private nursery sites regularly to conduct monitoring and evaluation and to ensure that issues are addressed in a timely manner in order to ensure that the number of seedlings planned for planting are available for the upcoming planting season.

The three community nurseries that are earmarked to produce 10,000 seedlings each are sited in Adubrim, Tumentu and Tweakor 1.

Photo 3. Adubrim community nursery germination beds

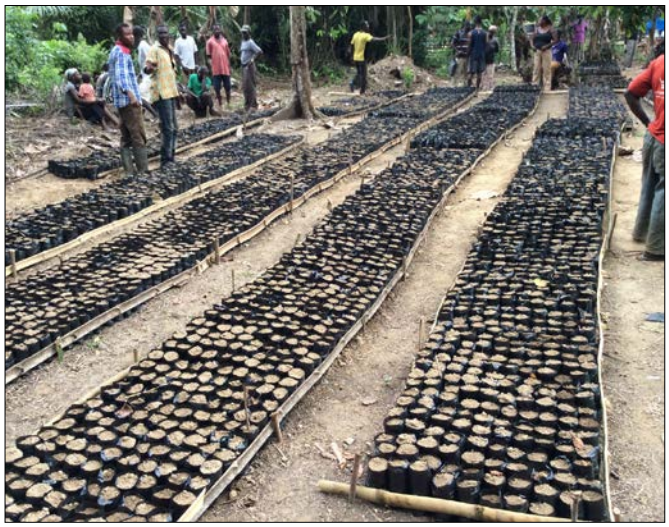


Photo 4. Adubrim Community poly bags ready to receive seedlings from germination beds

For this first growing season, the community nurseries are focused on producing fast growing forest species namely Ofram (*Terminalia superba*), Emire (*Terminalia ivorensis*) and Kusia (*Nauclea diderichi*) while the private producers have been contracted to provide primarily non-timber forest product species such as Chew Stick (*Garcinia afzelii*), Whentia (*Xylopia aethiopica*) and some primary timber species whose seeds are not common such as Mahogany (*Khaya ivorensis*), Makore (*Tieghemella heckelii*) and Niangon.

Seeds of the required species, as well as nursery equipment, have been procured and distributed to the three community nursery site managers. This includes wellington boots, gloves, wheelbarrows, rakes, watering cans and polythene bags for filling. Two private seedling producers have been selected based on their capacity to produce the species required in the desired quantities and during the timeframe specified.

Another nursery has been initiated at the TRACTOR/B-BOVID site in Angu. The objective of this nursery at the demonstration farm site is to produce all the seedlings of timber and non-timber forest species required for integrating onto the site per the agroforestry plan developed in collaboration with CSLP. In addition, it is expected that TRACTOR will be able to provide seedlings for farmers who visit the demonstration site and desire to setup similar practices on their sites. In addition to providing necessary inputs, the nursery is providing hands-on practice for enhancing the skills of TRACTOR staff in forest species nursery establishment.

Intermediate Result 1: Improved Livelihoods through Enhanced Natural Resources Management Practices

Sub IR 1.3: Promote incentives to implement improved natural resources management for improving livelihoods, biodiversity and carbon sequestration

Intermediate Result	Activities to be Implemented	Expected Outputs	Planned Date of Completion
1.3.1 Formation of Village Savings & Loan Associations (VSLAs)	• Community wide sensitizations on VSLA • Enlist interested members for VSLAs • Arrange meetings with newly formed groups • Orientation meetings with district officials / opinion leaders	• New VSLA groups enlisted and under training	March 2015
1.3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation of VSLAs	• Set up MIS data base • Capacity building on MIS software • MIS data collection (Quarterly)	• Monitoring of VSLAs is in place	March 2015
1.3.4 Training of VSLA Agents	• Develop a criteria for selecting the Village Agents (VAs)	• Community VSLA Agents in place	September 2015
1.3.7 Explore Linkage possibilities for Additional funding for NRM based activities	• Identifying interested NRM activities or groups	• VSLAs identify areas of focus based on skill and comparative advantage • Enhanced linkages with relevant stakeholders	March 2015
1.3.9 Develop improvement in woodlot management and charcoal enterprises	• Draft document on best management practices	• Farmers adopt environmentally friendly charcoal production practices.	March 2015
1.3.10 Explore options for registration of on-farm regenerated trees	• Organize stakeholders' meetings on options for registration of on-farm regenerated trees	• Options of registration of planted trees/naturally regenerated trees available to farmers	September 2015

Two orientation meetings were held in the Shama and the Ahanta West District Assemblies to introduce the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) concept in these districts as the CSLP works to scale up the model's use. Participants were primarily chiefs, queens, elders, Business Advisory Center members, Community Development Officers, District Assemblymen and other opinion leaders. The objectives of the meetings were to raise awareness about VSLAs, provide insight as to the methodology for establishment and management of the groups, and to garner support from the assembled leaders for the concept. As a result of the meeting and upon consultation with communities, four additional VSLA groups have been established creating a total of nine spread throughout the six districts. The status of each VSLA's progression through the first year of modules is highlighted below.

Phases of VSLA Establishment

- Preparatory (3 weeks)
- Intensive (14 weeks)
- Development (18 weeks) and
- Maturity

Community	District	VSLA Name	Module M	Module F	1 Group naming & Election of Management	2 Policy Formulation	3 Development of Constitution	4 First Share purchase	5 First Loan Disbursement	6 Loan Repayment	7 Share out	General uses anticipated for loans
Tweakor-Navrongo	Jomoro	Dzigbodi	7	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Support NRM prioritized livelihoods, farming/business
Fawoman		Nyame Nhyira	4	13	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Support NRM prioritized livelihoods, farming, school fees
Tweakor		Yesu Mo	12	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			New, NRM prioritized livelihoods, farming, trading, and school fees
Ayawora	Ellembele	Nyame na Aye	13	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Support NRM prioritized livelihoods, farming, school fees, trading
Adubrim		Odo	11	14	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Support NRM prioritized livelihoods, farming, school fees
		Biakoye	9	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Support NRM prioritized livelihoods, farming, trading, and school fees
Asonti	Nzema East	Nebeyin	6	19	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			New, NRM based livelihoods, trading, school fees, and farming
		Asomdwie	5	20	✓	✓	✓	✓				New, NRM based livelihoods, trading, school fees, and farming
Dwomo	Shama	Emmanuel	5	8	✓	✓						New, NRM based livelihoods, ward school fees, farming
Total			72	128								

Additional VSLAs are likely to be established in Nzema East and Shama districts early in the next quarter.

The CSLP VSLA Specialist undertook capacity building in the use of management and information software for monitoring the VSLAs during the quarter. This software enables comparison of all the CSLP

VSLA groups locally, as well as with other VSLAs worldwide. It is a tool that will help to flag potential issues as well as monitor VSLA success. Every quarter in the year, data is gathered for input into the software for analysis and decision-making. Annex B shows the results of the analysis of savings, loan disbursements, loan repayments, interest earned and expected return on savings for the VSLAs established as of March 2015.

The next phase of development of the VSLA concept throughout the project area is to select and train individuals as VSLA Village Agents. The Village Agents support VSLAs to resolve any issues that may arise concerning their activities so as to build greater sustainability for the system when CSLP staff are not present and to champion continued use of the savings and loan model after the project's completion. In addition, the agents will be able to nurture new VSLA groups and lead them through the seven modules until they reach the fund share-out stage. A set of criteria has been developed for identifying these individuals and the selection will take place when the first groups reach the share out stage at the end of the first full cycle of the VSLA year—likely to occur in October or November. Ideal candidates may be selected from VSLAs that are able to re-organize and start another cycle of savings.

Intermediate Result 1: Improved Livelihoods through Enhanced Natural Resources Management Practices

Sub IR 1.4: Increase capacity on interagency coordination and extension services (related to ecosystem services and landscape restoration) for GOG partners

Intermediate Result	Activities to be Implemented	Expected Outputs	Planned Date of Completion
1.4.1 Support NRM-related workshops/forums/trainings	• Participate in relevant NRM-related policy roundtables and workshops	• Keep project staff abreast with national policy issues and contribute suggestions	September 2016

Tree tenure remains a challenge in ensuring sustainability of CSLP interventions especially as it relates to reducing deforestation and degradation and promoting reforestation. The current procedure for ensuring ownership of planted trees in Ghana is, per Forestry Commission (FC) Policy, to have the tree registered with the FC. The suggested procedure is to:

- Submit a map as proof of access or ownership of the land, and,
- Request the FC to count as many planted trees as may be found and register them.

The challenge with the procedure is that most landowners and farmers do not have the capacity to plot and map their lands. Therefore, they are denied the opportunity to benefit from registration of planted trees. Thus, CSLP has held a series of discussions with farmers who continue to doubt the security of their planted/to be planted trees and question where and how they will be able to register the trees they plant with a process that is not cumbersome. Wherever possible, CSLP is helping to engage Forestry Commission staff directly with the farmers facing these challenges to ensure that local voices are heard at the national level. During a recent field visit by a Forestry Commission counterpart from Accra, answers to the CSLP-supported farmers' questions concerning registration of trees have not been conclusive.

Thus, CSLP has begun an internal exercise to chart out a tree registration procedure that is dovetailed into the traditional system of land leases and access, traditional authority administration and the local

governance system involving the unit committees, area councils, assembly members and the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies and the Forestry Commission. The system would be evidence-based and rely on transparency and witnesses including the landowners, tenants, planters of the trees, local government units, traditional authorities, and local Forestry Commission officials. The results of this activity will be a position paper that will be shared with relevant stakeholders for discussion and decision-making to further the national discussion about reforming tree tenure based upon the experiences of CSLP and farmers/landowners in the six coastal districts.

The CSLP participated in a two-day workshop that was organized by the Achichire-Sureso-Pebaseman CREMA Cooperative with funding from the BUSAC Advocacy Fund. The objective of the workshop was to strengthen the new wildlife bill to address the concerns and needs of CREMA members and also provide the CREMA concept the requisite legal grounds for the leveraging of new innovative mechanisms such as REDD+, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Forest Investment Program (FIP), Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA). The two-day workshop identified areas of weakness in the bill and recommended changes. The recommendations will be presented to wider stakeholders for further examination before being submitted to parliament for the review of the current bill. The CSLP will continue to engage and interact with the Forestry Commission to help push this agenda forward. Where appropriate the project will also interact with other donor-funded projects to ensure that the tree tenure issue that affects its community farmers most directly is resolved as quickly and as transparently as possible.

Intermediate Result 2: Strengthened Stakeholder Engagements and Coordination on Sustainable Landscape Management

Intermediate Result	Activities to be Implemented	Expected Outputs	Planned Date of Completion
Sub IR 2.1: Improve public awareness on the relationship between ecosystem services and livelihoods	• Organize 17 community interactions / training (using videos, drama etc.) on critical coastal issues (1 in each community) • Organize 10 Climate Change trainings/ fora across all districts • Form Climate Change Clubs / support existing Environmental Clubs in basic schools & offer series of basic trainings on NRM/Climate Change	• Communities' members and schools' children are become conversant with environment, livelihoods and climate change issues.	September 2015
Sub IR 2.2. Promote stakeholder engagement and coordination at all levels	• Organize quarterly Regional Stakeholders meetings (4 in total)	• CSLP fits into the regional and local governance development agenda within the Western Region	September 2015
Sub IR 2.3. Promote platforms that will support sustainable landscapes management	• Organize 12 training programs for different local institutions e.g. CREMA, Faith based, AWG, PCC	Local institutions more aware of sustainable NRM and actively promoting it in their communities	September 2015

The CSLP team interacted with four communities including Tweakor 1, Tweakor-Navrongo, Adusuazo and Fawoman, all in the Jomoro District, to raise awareness on climate change. A video presentation followed by discussion focused on flooding which occurred recently in Shama District and the resulting impact it had on people's lives. Additionally, the participants discussed concepts, causes and evidence of climate change and its impact on our lives. Participants at the events included chiefs and elders, assembly members, opinion leaders and children, women and men. The objectives of these activities were to raise awareness on climate change and facilitate behavioral change among community members.

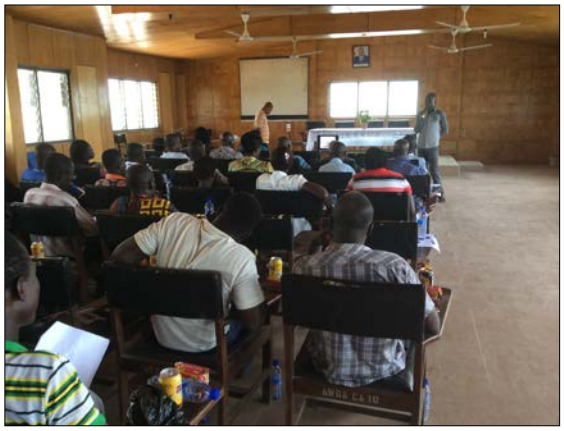


Photo 5. Cape Three Points CREMA Chairman addressing fellow Executives at the training in Agona Nkwanta

All the CREMA executives in the CSLP operational area participated in climate change training during the quarter. A total of 97 participants attended representing Jomoro, Ellembelle and the Ahanta West Districts. The same module was used to train 18 teachers including 5 women from four schools in Asonti in Nzema East District and Adusuazo in Jomoro District. These teachers work at schools that have formed school clubs in collaboration with CSLP and the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission. The Environmental Protection Agency may also form a similar set of clubs.

The teachers requested this training as they do not have adequate understanding of the concept to teach the required material on the topic. The trained teachers pledged to use the knowledge acquired to support the schools clubs and improve their teaching in the classroom.

Following requests from the District Education Directorate of the Nzema East and Jomoro Districts, Asonti Metropolitan Junior High School and Adusuazo District Assembly Junior High School have received permission to cooperate with the CSLP to form and nurture their schools' climate change clubs into maturity. 54 students in Asonti and 18 students in Adusuazo have registered for the clubs, with select teachers serving as liaisons between the schools and CSLP for continuing the engagement. Initial plans are to develop regular lessons and activities on climate change and other relevant environmental topics as well as quizzes, debates, study tours, radio discussions and sporting events.

As part of the process to ensure that community chiefs are aware of ongoing CSLP activities and ensure their continued support, two meetings were held for traditional authorities in Jomoro and Ellembelle districts. There were a total of 33 participants comprising chiefs, queen mothers and elders from 13 communities from the two districts. The authorities were informed of the activities of CSLP that had taken place within their communities over the last three months. The traditional authorities expressed the need for regular information sharing and expressed their support for CSLP activities.

The quarterly Regional Stakeholders meeting this period included a total of nine representatives to include the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Town and Country Planning Department (TCPD), Regional Economic Planning Unit, Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) and Forest Services Division of Forestry Commission (FSD). As usual, the meeting discussed activities of CSLP over the past quarter and CSLP sought advice, recommendations, misgivings or concerns about project activities from the advisory group.

Intermediate Result 3: Enhanced Capacity for Ecosystem Services Monitoring

Intermediate Result	Activities to be Implemented	Expected Outputs	Planned Date of Completion
Sub IR 3.1: Provide capacity building on forest and wetland carbon and other ecosystem services measurement	• Provide practical training for Community Assistants and stakeholders on carbon measurement in the field • Collect baseline C-stocks data in all land-cover types for all CSLP intervention sites • Analyze C-Stocks data and assign coefficient per site/tree species	• CSLP constituents are knowledgeable of ecosystem services measurement and the results influence their decision-making	March 2015
Sub IR 3.2. Collect and utilize biophysical and socioeconomic data to inform land-use planning and decision-making process	• Participatory mapping of areas of intervention within CSLP target communities • Work with Hen Mpoano to produce base maps for GAW and other CSLP intervention districts/areas • Work with TCP in six districts to identify open areas for restoration, enrichment and securing the sites from encroachment	• CSLP intervention sites identified and mapped out	March 2015
Sub IR 3.3. Integrating lessons learned on national level jurisdictional monitoring, reporting and verification systems to integrate into a regional REDD+ system framework	• Work with the national GHG accounting (AFOLU sector) working group	• CSLP is abreast with National standards in GHG activities	March 2015

Forty people from across the six coastal districts were trained during the quarter in carbon stock assessment. They included 23 community assistants, 2 staff of the planning unit of the Western Region Coordinating Council, 3 staff of the Forest Services Division, 2 staff of the Wildlife Division, and 10 staff from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The objectives were to:

- Provide clearer understanding of the concept and need for Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) in carbon accounting;
- Enhance deeper understanding on biomass/carbon estimation in different land-cover types; and,
- Provide practical hands-on training skills on carbon estimation in the field.

Participants were taken through methods for plot laying, tree diameter measurement, tree height measurement and ocular estimation, and litter and soil sampling. The trained participants will now be the core team in the Western Region coastal districts to provide capacity in carbon stocks estimation.

The plan to begin actual estimation of carbon stocks in the landscape of the six coastal districts has been postponed to the next quarter. This is to enable the completion of mapping of the CSLP intervention sites that will be followed by stratification of the maps before sample plots can be identified for data collection. This process depends upon the collaboration of Hen Mpoano due to their advanced data analysis capacity. Hen Mpoano's ability to carry out the digitization of the maps, stratification and analyses of the GIS data will be necessary for successful completion of the estimation activities.

Training for community assistants on GPS mapping was conducted during the quarter for two districts, namely Shama and Ahanta West. In total, 26 people were trained with 16 coming from the Ahanta West District and 10 from Shama District. Mapping of the CSLP intervention sites by the trained community assistants continued during the quarter. A breakdown of mapping carried out is as follows:

DISTRICT	COMMUNITY	AREA (ha)
Ellembelle	Adubrim	64.5
	Ayawora	94.0
Nzema East	Asonti	164.8
Jomoro	Adusuazo	174.0
	Tweakor 1	92.4
Shama	Yabiw	65.6
	Total	**655.3**

CSLP held discussions with the staff of some of the district assemblies including the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA) with the objective of identifying areas within their jurisdiction which may be restored/enhanced or reforested to serve as recreational areas, greeneries, urban parks, etc. The response from the STMA has been very positive. A visit was undertaken with the staff of Parks and Garden and the Town and Country Planning Unit to assess next steps and the role CSLP can play to support their efforts. In collaboration with the Western Region Chapter of the Forestry Commission Ladies Association, a number of sites have been identified that include roundabouts for beautification, potential recreational areas, and wetland sites that require re-planting in Sekondi-Takoradi. The CSLP is liaising with the aforementioned stakeholders to carry out planting during the next quarter in some of these identified sites.

Following the drafting of the biennial report that is due for submission to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change by the Ghana National Green House Gas (AFOLU) Working Group, a meeting was organized for the final review of the document. CSLP participated in this meeting and was represented by the Environmental Services and Spatial Planning Specialist.

Implementation Challenges

One of the main challenges this quarter was identifying tree seed sources. In order to establish many of the nurseries, several tree seed species were needed and their availability in Ghana was quite limited. The CSLP team conducted a wide search and while were able to locate some new sources, the viability of the seeds was questionable and will be evident over the coming weeks as the success rate is determined based upon sprouting success in the nursery.

CSLP is aiming to support the community nurseries through a model to make these small, privately operated enterprises. There a number of factors that need to be in place to make these successful, self-sustaining, and income-generating activities. Obvious elements for a private forest-tree nursery to operate successfully include adequate demand from farmers for the seedlings being produced. In addition, there needs to be a local champion with managerial and business sense and there has to be an established and logical program for procurement of inputs and for the distribution of the seedlings. The CSLP intends to pursue supporting these enterprise development using the experiences and lessons from this initial establishment year.

Another challenge is the development project dependency mentality that many of the farmers with whom the CSLP is engaged have regarding their partnership with the project. Many farmers are unwilling to invest their own resources into project activities believing that the inputs should be provided to them. The CSLP team has heard countless stories of previous development interventions in the region that have failed after the project period ended due to a lack of follow up and true buy in from the farmers. CSLP faces similar challenges and it is our goal to improve the mentality to one of shared support for the project goals. As highlighted earlier in the report, at least one engaged farmer who has a strong entrepreneurial spirit is participating in the project and exemplifying the shared interest the project hopes to create. It is our hope that he will remain fully involved, and others like him are identified, to serve as community champions to help change mentalities as they relate to project-dependency in order to aim for greater sustainability of project initiatives after the completion of the project.

The CSLP Environmental Services and Spatial Planning Specialist resigned late in the quarter in order to move closer to his family and pursue a related career opportunity. Recruitment for his replacement will take place during the next quarter and while we are hopeful of finding a strong replacement, activities under IR 3 will be slowed a bit as a result.

PMP Update

CSLP is recruiting a Monitoring and Evaluation consultant to assist on a short-term basis with the review of our PMP and M&E procedures and to develop tools to make tracking and reporting easier for the team. It is hoped this individual will be able to provide recommendations, templates and support during the upcoming quarter in order to more easily gather information.

INTEGRATION OF CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

All CSLP field activities aim to engage women as much as possible. Particular attention is paid to the number of women involved in trainings and attempts are made to ensure they can participate based upon the time of the trainings, days of the week for interventions in relation to market day, etc. Participants in the village savings and loan associations are primarily women. The project continues to seek means of further engaging these female participants in other project activities associated with improved natural resources management and empowering them through such efforts.

Sustainability Mechanisms

During the quarter, CSLP has more formally engaged with TRACTOR, a local NGO working to improve sustainable farming practices in the Western Region. Two of their agriculture technicians are now fully engaged in CSLP activities in order to learn about agroforestry and climate change related interventions. In addition, CSLP is working with TRACTOR colleagues on sustainable design and management of their farm demonstration site in the Western Region. It is hoped that this engagement can be managed by TRACTOR after the project's completion and therefore, continue to promote some of the sustainable strategies undertaken by CSLP and engaged farmers.

As the partnership with TRACTOR grows, it is hoped that focus will turn to developing markets for these more sustainably produced fruits, vegetables and non-timber forest products. With a large number of farmers engaged in their activities, partnering with TRACTOR will aid CSLP engaged farmers to organize and leverage such market access.

CSLP activities aim to build upon an entrepreneurial idea and support basic business principles. As activities move forward over the coming months, a major goal is to connect farmer/producer associations with the Ghana Supply Chain Development Program training opportunities to better assist the groups with business and marketing skills. Long term success of many of the CSLP interventions depend upon an economic incentive that is grounded upon indigenous knowledge and that can be managed locally.

Environmental Compliance

There have been no significant changes in environmental compliance issues since the last quarterly report (2015, Quarter 1, October to December 2014). Each of the three community nursery sites reported on in that document continue to be monitored for any environmental concerns.

The CSLP initiated assistance with two other nurseries during this most recent quarter and there are no environmental concerns associated with the siting of either. One is located at the B-BOVID/TRACTOR demonstration farm designed to produce agroforestry/nitrogen-fixing seedlings, commercial tree species for enrichment plantings in secondary forest patches and fruit and nut species for local consumption. The other new nursery is community-based and will be used to produce seedlings for fuelwood plantations. Both nurseries are on fairly level ground. As a precaution, the beds are oriented perpendicular to the slight slope to minimize any erosion from rain and watering. There are no

chemicals used at any of the CSLP-supported nursery sites. Weekly monitoring at these sites is conducted by CSLP staff, Community Assistants and TRACTOR employees.

Global Climate Change

Address only if your program does not receive GCC funding but can speak to impact in either adaptation and/or mitigation).

Policy and Governance Support

The CSLP continues to keep the Forestry Commission (both nationally and regionally) abreast of its activities and the issues and problems being voiced by farmers and other partners in the field. This is an important and stated function of the project and it plays this role both through regular briefings in Accra and with supported field trip encounters between government staff (FSD, WD, REDD+ coordinators, etc.). The project also engages regularly with district planners, Department of Food and Agriculture extension agents, and regional stakeholders to share training experiences and spatial plans related to activities related to the natural environment. In addition, CSLP has a quarterly review and discussion with key regional government stakeholders. Each of these quarterly meetings provide opportunities and platforms to engage in discussions on policy issues and the governance of coastal forests and wetland landscapes.

Two opportunities this quarter are highlighted elsewhere in this document. One discusses the issue of tree tenure and its importance as an incentive for community farmers to plant, protect and nurture trees of specific species on the landscapes where they are the stewards. Some of the details can be reviewed again with the discussion under Sub IR 1.4 above.

The second area that can impact policy and governance of natural resources is that associated with the wetlands and mangrove areas of the six coastal districts. The CSLP's involvement with this topic stretches from the previous quarter forward through the whole life of the project. The discussions noted above surrounding the grant to the local NGO, Hen Mpoano, under Sub IR 1.1 and below under the Public Private Partnership, help to illustrate areas where the CSLP will be most actively engaged in the coming quarters.

Local Capacity Development

As mentioned throughout this report, CSLP aims to increase local capacity by partnering with Government of Ghana institutions, NGOs and the private sector wherever possible. Our training programs have engaged national, regional, local and traditional authorities wherever possible and the team continues to receive positive feedback from our partners as they engage in such trainings—often times contributing to the training in addition to being participants. A key partner in this regard has been the Ministry of Food and Agriculture extension agents located throughout the region. Being the key interface between the government and farmers, these agents will be the primary government partners continuing collaboration with farmers after the project's completion. Their continued interest and engagement is a positive sign for the success of CSLP's interventions.

In addition, as discussed earlier, two key staff from TRACTOR are now fully engaged with the CSLP team on a daily basis. Building knowledge for the staff of this NGO will support their longer-term objectives, that of their farmer-client network, and potentially other organizations with whom they may work in the

future. Such opportunities for collaboration and capacity development will be sought out by CSLP throughout the life of the project.

Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Global Development Alliance (GDA) Impacts

As just noted, the CSLP continues to nurture its relationship with B-BOVID/TRACTOR (TRACTOR being the NGO arm of the B-BOVID social enterprise). This quarter, two TRACTOR agriculturalist interns were embedded with the CSLP technical team. The goal of this relationship is to impart practical skills and knowledge, most specifically in the area of agroforestry, to the two agriculturalists. In time, their experiences will improve the NGO's capacity in agroforestry, benefiting not just TRACTOR, but also B-BOVID's client farmers in the six coastal districts. The CSLP is working closely with the TRACTIOR specialists each week at the demonstration farm owned by B-BOVID. Tree nursery skills, agroforestry designs and plantings, fuelwood management, secondary forest area management and spatial planning and mapping are all activities being implemented jointly on the demonstration area with B-BOVID/TRACTOR. The site also has the cooperation and support of the regional offices of the Department of Food and Agriculture (now DoFA, formerly MoFA), the EPA, and the FC's Forest Services Division, all regional partners of the CSLP as well.

The Western Region Project Implementers (USAID and other donor Chiefs of Party) are also meeting monthly and becoming more proactive with one another to leverage experience and expertise in areas that they have in common. One of the more exciting possibilities being explored is in the coastal mangrove resources. These are not only of interest to the CSLP as a significant source of sequestered carbon and in need of conservation/restoration/protection but are also the focal point of a number of other donors, private sector entrepreneurs, and all important youth and women's sources of livelihoods. As hatchery areas for Ghana's extremely threatened pelagic fishery the mangrove resources figure prominently in the new USAID-funded Sustainable Fisheries Management Project and the SNV's REDD+, Energy and Environment Program. Other NGO's, working with fish smokers, local women's groups and coastal communities all have the mangrove nexus in common. Another new project and potential partner is the UK's Department for International Development-funded Coastal Foundation that seeks to improve social investments by the private sector players in the six coastal districts by championing the needs and livelihoods of its coastal populations and communities. Taken together, these initiatives (along with several not specifically mentioned) present an excellent opportunity for the private sector, local communities, donors and local governments to highlight and champion the extraordinary importance of the mangrove resource to the six coastal district's livelihoods and economy and as a pillar of Ghana's pelagic fishery. Each of us has a role to play, and with a little coordination and planning we can affect policy, build awareness, enhance local livelihoods and protect the resource.

Science, Technology, and Innovation Impacts

Recent engagement with teachers through science clubs developed in partnership with government agencies such as the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency is increasing the science capacity of these education professionals. These teachers have provided feedback that while they are expected to teach on the concepts of climate change in their classrooms, their ability to do so is limited due to a lack of knowledge on the topic (along with a few basic supplies that the CSLP can provide). The project has engaged teachers in climate change trainings whereby they have gained the awareness necessary to teach the topic to their students. CSLP hopes this can lead to increased thinking and questions by the students and can promote a life-long interest in science and topics such as climate change and natural resources management.

In addition, and as a part of the teacher training activity, CSLP is engaging with climate change clubs at a few junior high schools in the region. The clubs will be engaged in awareness raising activities at their schools, design and implement tree planting programs, and develop additional associated activities. This engagement will promote greater understanding of some of the concepts being learned in the classroom through practical application.

District level planners and assembly members continue to be engaged with the mapping activities taking place throughout the region. Awareness raising activities with local authorities is substantiating the CSLP's earlier assessments that there is a need for practical, field-based training activities such as on-the-ground mapping, land cover/land use and carbon assessments, and other basic interactions for improved planning within the districts. As many of the assemblies develop and track progress on their medium-term development plans, staff are reporting that the data available as a result of GPS mapping of farms and intervention areas is providing quantitative, timely information that is necessary for effective planning. It is hoped that such activities can build a case for instituting a similar set of exercises as a part of future government planning efforts to ensure multiple use and sustainable management across the landscape to support diverse livelihood opportunities while conserving biodiversity.

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

During this quarter, involvement of stakeholders in CSLP activities has remained strong. Government of Ghana agencies, local authorities, NGOs, teachers and the regional stakeholder advisory group have all remained actively involved in project activities. As highlighted throughout this report, nearly all intervention activities are conducted in collaboration with stakeholders—from MOFA extension agents supporting climate smart agriculture trainings, to support and collaboration with local authorities on climate change awareness activities, to tree nursery establishment with local NGOs. The CSLP believes that long-term success depends upon the active engagement and participation of stakeholders from throughout the Western Region.

This engagement is important to ensure support during the project but also to build longer-term sustainability for project interventions. In addition, through various venues in which the CSLP has brought together numerous stakeholders, we are finding that organizations are communicating more frequently and identifying areas of overlap and areas for potential collaboration amongst themselves that they had previously not realized.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

The nation-wide electricity shortage had a significant toll on project activities during the period. The generator purchased at the start of the project was meant to be used only occasionally and was adequate at that time. As the power situation has worsened, the generator was unable to keep up with

a need for nearly every day use for 6-8 hours per day. At the end of the quarter, CSLP was fortunate to acquire a used, larger capacity generator from another USAID funded project. That has alleviated the pressure on our smaller generator and thus has allowed the team to function at a normal capacity. Budgetary implications of increased generator use and associated fuel costs are yet to be determined, but at current usage rates are likely to have an impact on the ability for the project to spend as much as previously projected on field activities.

The diversity and geographic spread of the CSLP activities has continued to present logistical challenges. Ensuring that each member of the technical team will be in the community where they need to be on any given work day to initiate, monitor, and guide the many activities under each IR is a weekly planning conundrum. Five specialists, each with different activities, often in different locations with only two vehicles/drivers is a significant challenge. The CSLP will acquire a third vehicle from another USAID project and this should lessen the load a bit; and the project will hire a third driver in the next quarter.

As mentioned earlier in this document, the Environmental Services and Spatial Planning Specialist announced his resignation effective at the end of April 2015. That position is being advertised and it is hoped that local, qualified candidates will apply. This is a position that anchors IR 3 and requires significant time in the field (as do all the technical positions with the project).

LESSONS LEARNED

The CSLP is finding that its careful and regular coordination with local traditional authorities is paying benefits as it continues its on-the-ground engagement of local communities and farmers. The traditional authorities appreciate being kept abreast of the project's activities and also knowing what is being planned for the coming months.

This is similar for the CSLP's other partners and regional stakeholders. The project staff is becoming more adept at advance communication to these groups and the dividends appear to be accumulating in terms of figuring into district spatial plans and coordination roles. In the coming months and quarters, the project needs to try tailoring its activities to specific needs and issues within each district, but still staying within the sightlines of its goals and objectives.

Communicating with the CSLP' main partners—the communities and farmers—remains a challenge. Cell phone networks are very weak and unreliable in most of the communities. Having specific contact persons (community assistants) has helped but community events (funerals, etc.) and weather (heavy rains and flooding) will continue to challenge the best-laid plans. This means that there will be time lost and opportunities missed, but maintaining a flexible approach will be a most welcomed support area that the project can provide to its community and district partners.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER INCLUDING UPCOMING EVENTS

During the upcoming quarter, CSLP has planned the following activities:

- Participation by the Assistant Director and Community Benefits Specialist in USFS sponsored International Seminar on Watershed Management
- Climate change extravaganza events with local authorities
- Climate change videos in communities
- Tree outplanting once rains commence
- Initial beehive monitoring visits once bees begin swarming (likely to occur during the rainy season)
- Newly established VSLAs continue through modules and existing VSLAs move into development phase
- Finalization of grant with Hen Mpoano and continuation of Greater Amanzule Wetlands management activities
- Small grant to TRACTOR to augment ongoing activities
- Continued engagement with the Forestry Commission's Ladies Association and the STMA Parks and Gardens to refurbish and protect green areas within the Metropolitan Assembly, notably the Butuah Wetland
- Monitoring, with the MoFA agents, CSA-inspired actions with community farmers
- Construction and placement of beehives in previously identified apiary sites on farms
- Regional stakeholder meeting coinciding with a 2-day field trip with local media to visit farmers participating in the CSLP-supported activities

HOW IMPLEMENTING PARTNER HAS ADDRESSED A/COR COMMENTS FROM THE LAST QUARTERLY OR SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

There were no specific issues raised or comments made.

ANNEX A: PROGRESS SUMMARY

Table 1(a): PMP Indicator progress - USAID Standard Indicators and Project Custom Indicators

Development Objective (DO): To promote low emissions development in Ghana's Western Region by strengthening community-based natural resource management and monitoring											
Indicator	Data Source	Baseline data		FY 2015		Quarterly Status – FY 2015				Annual Performance Achieved to Date (in %)	Comment(s)
		Year	Value	Annual Cumulative Planned Target	Annual Cumulative Actual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Intermediate Result (IR) 1: To Improve Livelihoods Through Enhanced Natural Resource Management Practices											
Sub-IR: 1.3. Promote incentives to implement improved natural resources management for improving livelihoods, biodiversity and carbon sequestration											
4.8.1-26 Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved NRM as a result of USG assistance	GPS/GIS Field Data	2014	0	1,200 Ha	336	316	20			28.0	
4.8.1-6 Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable NRM and conservation as a result of USG assistance	Field Data	2014	0	600 People	186	107	79			31.0	95 men 91 women
Sub-IR: 1.4: Increase capacity on interagency coordination and extension services (related to ecosystem services and landscape restoration) for GOG partners											
4.8.2-14 Number of institutions with improved capacity to address climate change issues as a result of USG assistance	Capacity Building /Event Reports	2014	0	50	37	7	30			74.0	

Intermediate Result (IR) 2: Strengthened Stakeholder Engagements and Coordination on Sustainable Landscape Management											
Sub-IR: 2.1: Improve public awareness on the relationship between ecosystem services and livelihoods											
4.8.1-29 Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance	**Training Reports**	**2014**	**0**	**9,600 hours**	**2,145**	**829**	**1,316**			**22.3**	
Intermediate Result (IR) 3: Enhanced Capacity for Ecosystem Services Monitoring											
Sub-IR: 3.1: Provide capacity building on forest and wetland carbon and other ecosystem services measurement and 3.3 Integrating lessons learned on national level jurisdictional monitoring, reporting and verification systems to integrate into a regional REDD+ system framework											
4.8-7 Quantity of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, measured in metric tons of CO2e, reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance	**Field Data**	**2014**	**0**	**20,496 CO_2 e**	**8,565**	**6,480**	**2,085**			**41.0**	
4.8.2-29 Number of person hours of training completed in climate change as a result of USG assistance	**Training Event Reports**	**2014**	**0**	**4,800 hours**	**2,560**	**148**	**2,412**			**53.3**	

ANNEX B: CSLP'S VSLA GROUPS ANALYSIS

Group comparison

MIS name Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project

Project name Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project

Date of report 10/03/2015

Monitored by	Include/Exclude VA Groups
All	Include

Group name and number	Number of Members	Attendance rate	Value of savings this cycle	Average annualized savings (per Member)	Value of loans outstanding	Avg. outstanding loan size (per Member)	% of Members with loans outstanding	Fund utilization rate	Return on savings	Social fund balance
0001 - Nyame na Aye	25	100%	1,875	263	540	135	16%	28%	2.4%	80
0002 - Dzigbordi	19	84%	1,494	273	800	114	37%	52%	2.5%	281
0003 - Nyame Nhyira	14	57%	1,094	340	200	200	7%	18%	0.0%	121
0004 - Biakoye	25	48%	1,592	302	650	163	16%	41%	0.3%	216
0005 - Odo	25	60%	1,290	0	620	103	24%	47%	1.7%	137
Average	22	70%	1,469	236	562	143	20%	37%	1.4%	167
Total	108		7,345		2,810					835

Benchmark

MIS name	Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project		
Project name	Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project		
Start date	02/06/2014	**End date**	30/09/2016
Date of report	10/03/2015	**Project age (months)**	9

Group status	**Compare to**
Supervised	World

	Project	**World**
Sample age (weeks)	11	35
Member satisfaction		
Attendance rate	70.4%	90.8%
Membership growth rate	22.7%	4.7%
Financial performance		
Savings		
Average annualized savings (per Member)	USD 97	USD 68
Average annualized savings (per Member) as % GNI per capita	7.9%	8.5%
Loans		
Average outstanding loan size	USD 42	USD 44
Average outstanding loan size as % GNI per capita	3.4%	5.8%
% Members with loans outstanding	20.4%	42.4%
Fund utilization rate	37.7%	47.7%
Writeoff rate	0.0%	0.0%
Dividends paid	0	0
Return on savings	1.5%	26.0%
Returns		
Return on assets	1.3%	20.6%
Costs		
Cost per Member	USD 171.51	USD 24.44

ANNEX C: SUCCESS STORIES

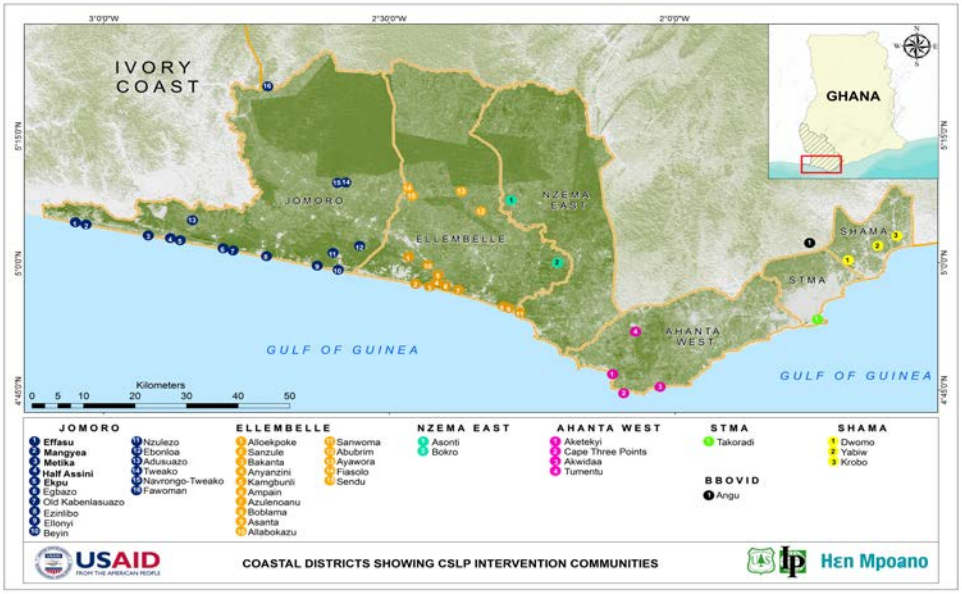
Story from the Field

40 COMMUNITIES BENEFIT FROM USAID's CSLP

The USAID funded and US Forest Service managed Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project (CSLP) is currently focusing its interventions in 17 predominately agrarian communities. Through a grant to Hen Mpoano (a local NGO), an additional 23 communities fringing the Greater Amanzule wetland are engaged with CSLP activities. This brings the total to 40 communities that the CSLP and partner teams will be focusing attention and efforts on for the current project year ending September 2015. This number includes two additional communities, Fiasolo and Sendu, both in the Ellembelle District of Ghana's Western Region, which were welcomed to the project during the first quarter of the current project year. In the 17 communities where the CSLP team is focusing, there are over 400 farmers enlisted for diverse agroforestry and livelihood interventions.

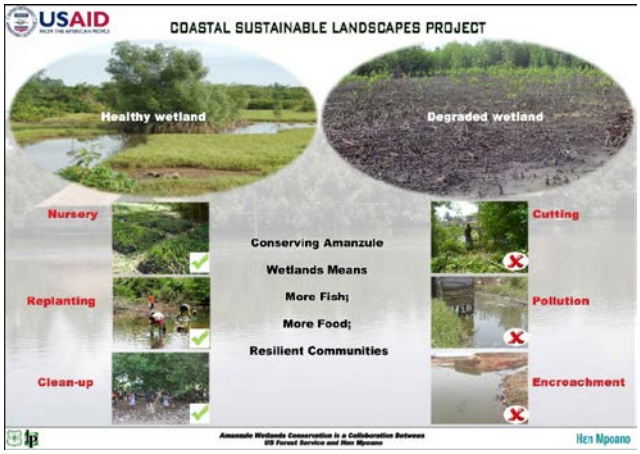
The collaboration with Hen Mpoano and the other 23 communities supports the establishment of a participatory conservation strategy for the Greater Amanzule Wetland area. The Amanzule wetland area, which currently has no conservation protection designation, straddles the coastal districts of Nzema East, Ellembelle and Jomoro. Livelihood activities of the residents of these coastal communities are primarily focused on fishing while a few double as farmers.

The map below shows all 40 intervention communities in the Western Region.



Story from the Field

CSLP and Hen Mpoano Complete First Phase of Wetland Conservation Activities



A poster developed for the community sensitization activities during the grant period

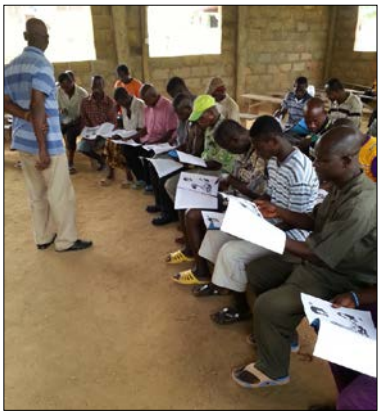
In November 2014, the USAID-funded and US Forest Service-managed Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project (CSLP), offered small grant funding to Hen Mpoano (a local NGO) to move forward the Greater Amanzule Wetland Conservation activities started by the previous USAID 4-year Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance (ICFG) project. The collaborative effort between CSLP and Hen Mpoano aims to establish a formal co-management process and improve management planning for the Amanzule wetlands. The area, rich in biodiversity, currently has no formal conservation designation. The first phase of the collaboration ended in January 2015, during which time the partners successfully carried out a series of activities to enhance conservation awareness in 23 communities surrounding the wetland. At least 300 people, most of whom were fisher folks, farmers, artisans and other resource users, took an active part in the awareness-raising community meetings (durbars). Topics highlighted at the various durbars included linkages between livelihoods and wetland ecosystem services as well as awareness raising events related to Greater Amanzule conservation scenarios initially developed during the ICFG project.

Aside from community-focused events, engagements with local NGOs, traditional leaders and the district assemblies also took place. Paramount chiefs in the Ellembelle and Jomoro districts signed a resolution in support of the conservation effort during the ICFG period. Through the CSLP collaboration with Hen Mpoano, sub-chiefs of the 23 wetland communities affirmed their buy-in endorsing a similar resolution in support of the conservation management scenarios. In addition, some residents volunteered to be members of community-level conservation committees that will be considered in the next phase of the collaboration. Undoubtedly, the conservation awareness raising events have sustained stakeholder support and helped to the obtain buy-in of local chiefs for conservation of the wetlands to move the communities to the next phase of the collaboration and hopeful sustainable management of the area.

A follow on grant funding mechanism is being finalized to continue this important work between CSLP, Hen Mpoano and the 23 communities.

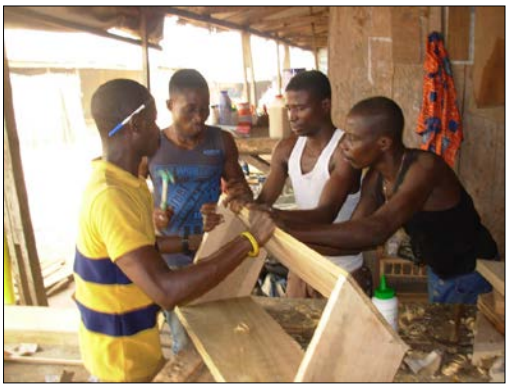
Story from the Field

CSLP PROMOTES BEEKEEPING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



Beekeeping training

The USAID-funded and US Forest Service-managed Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project (CSLP), in collaboration with some of the project's enlisted farmers, prioritized beekeeping management as a livelihood activity of interest compatible with existing practices. It is also one that will provide the added benefit of conserving forest patches and tree cover on farms. The use of these secondary forest patches for beekeeping is an important climate change mitigation activity as farmers see the need for conserving these patches to promote pollination and development of the apiary rather than clearing them and converting them to agricultural land. The apiaries will hopefully provide valuable honey and associated by-products that can be sold locally to meet high demand throughout the country. Thanks to project efforts with farmers, these areas are being conserved and will help maintain important stocks of sequestered carbon.



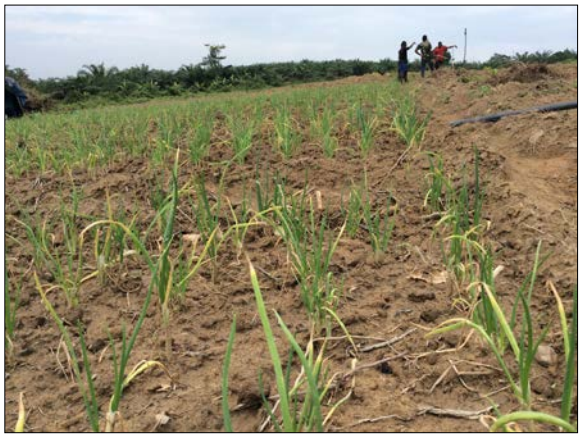
Beehive construction training

Through this intervention, 83 farmers, including 10 women, in the Nzema East, Ellembelle, and Jomoro districts of Ghana's Western Region who are setting aside secondary forest lands for beekeeping, have gone through two trainings on beekeeping concepts. The first component focused on the basics of beekeeping while the second involved practical training on the establishment of apiaries and initial management practices. As part of the trainings, the farmers were taken through the uses of key beekeeping equipment and tools such as the smoker, protective clothing and the hive itself. Trainees learned how to site an apiary within secondary forests through a demonstration in a nearby site. As part of the initial efforts, one beehive has been given to one promising farmer in each of the four communities across the three districts. The enthusiastic farmers will start practicing beekeeping at the next swarming season (which is typically late July to early November).

Additionally, beehive construction training was conducted for six carpenters/artisans; three of whom are CSLP enlisted farmers. At the end of the training, the carpenters constructed six beehives to the exacting standards required for successful hive production. These carpenters have now gained a new skill and will hopefully be engaged by additional farmers to use their skills to build additional hives and thereby gain additional income.

Story from the Field

FARMERS ADOPT CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE PRACTICES



Top photos: CSA trainings. Bottom photo: vegetable farms

Unsustainable farming methods are among some of the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Many of these unsustainable agriculture practices are widely practiced in farming communities throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The situation is not different from the intervention communities of the USAID-funded and US Forest Service-managed Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project (CSLP). Most of the farmers adopt slash and burn as a method of clearing and preparing the land for food production, a practice that greatly threatens remaining forest areas. In addition, the improper use of agrochemicals, indiscriminate cutting of valuable tree species and the removal of most vegetation cover both disrupt natural processes that can help maintain soil quality and also remove or damage potentially valuable sources of income to the famer.

As a means to reversing some of these unsustainable practices and further reduce greenhouse gas emissions, CSLP is promoting the concepts of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA). As part of this effort, from December 2014 to February 2015, the project trained 405 farmers, including 113 women, across five coastal districts on the principles of CSA with an emphasis on vegetable production. The trainings, facilitated by the CSLP and officials from the Department of Food and Agriculture, aim to equip farmers with new concepts of management for sustainable crop production (largely of vegetables), conserving the environment and improving food security. A significant number of the trained farmers are ready to adopt the new CSA best practices such as avoiding bush burning, reducing use of agrochemicals in vegetable production and creating buffer zones along river banks. As farmers embrace these CSA practices, the CSLP is hopeful that they will contribute to improved natural resource management, further enhance farmer livelihoods and sequester carbon.

INTRODUCING STEPHEN SAKITEY, CSLP LOCAL CHAMPION IN FAWOMAN

Born on February 10, 1976 at Puada in the Volta Region of Ghana, Stephen Sakitey, is a CSLP Community Assistant based in Fawoman. Stephen is a carpenter by profession and an active farmer. In 2002, he relocated from Puada to Fawoman, one of CSLP's intervention communities in the Jomoro district. He is married and a father of two girls and two boys and has seven other dependents.

Stephen (right) showing CSLP Program Manager, Adam Welti, (left) the beehive he constructed

As Community Assistant, he mobilizes farmers for all project interventions in the community. Stephen has received training on the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) and assists in mapping of different land cover types of the project enlisted farmers. He is among the six carpenters trained on beehive construction. After the training, Stephen voluntarily paid for the cost of producing the first model for his own use and is ready to pre-finance that of other farmers interested in beekeeping.

Stephen is the Record Keeper or Secretary of the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) formed in Fawoman. As Record Keeper, he ensures that all transactions take place according to the group's rules and makes all passbook entries for shares and loans. Stephen has also benefited from other trainings organized by CSLP including those on climate smart agriculture, farmer managed natural regeneration, climate change and beekeeping.

Stephen Sakitey is pleased with the project interventions and made the following remarks during an interaction with CSLP Staff.

''I'm really grateful to CSLP. Now, I have an additional great source of income. I can produce beehives and sell to interested farmers. I appreciate the new knowledge gained on the values of trees and the new skill acquired: the use of GPS. In fact, I had not seen a GPS device before, but now, I have used it to map farms and can assist other projects that will require the use of GPS in their activities. I'm ready to plant more trees and encourage other farmers to do the same. The VSLA is also really helpful; though I am yet to take a loan from the group, I cherish the great savings attitude I have developed. I'm also hopeful of making money from the honey production/beekeeping and I'm ready to train other local carpenters on beehive construction.''