

Disseminating Innovative Resources and Technologies to Smallholder Farmers in Ghana: Results of the Community Extension Agent Program



Photo: Mohammed Ibrahim

Ghana's Ministry of Food and Agriculture currently operates an agricultural extension agency program to help teach smallholder farmers the most current farming techniques, but there are not enough agents to provide a constant presence in local communities. As part of the Disseminating Innovative Resources and Technologies to Smallholder Farmers (DIRTS) project, researchers collaborated with the ministry to test a new community agricultural extension agent program, which selected and trained local agents to supplement the existing MOFA agents and provide more frequent teaching and support.

Key Findings*

After three years

- Community extension agents successfully increased local farmers' knowledge and improved their practices.
- Delivering specific information about a practice close to the time when the practice should be adopted may be an important component of a successful program.
- However, farmers' improved knowledge and implementation of best practices did not ultimately translate into increased yields or more earnings for the farmers.
- Farmers who received the program invested more in the use of chemicals, but not other inputs.

**These results are preliminary and may change after further data collection and/or analysis.*

Researchers: Mathias Fosua, Damien Karlan, Shashikanta Kolevali, Christopher Udry
Partners: Ghana Agricultural Insurance Programme (GAIP), Ghana Ministry of Food and Agriculture, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Senanir Agricultural Research Institute (SARI)
Timeline: 2014-2018
Study Sample: 3,240 households in 162 farming communities in Northern Region.

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