



## Ghana: Bringing the inputs one step closer to the farmers

Worldwide, the Ukraine conflict is leading to unparalleled price hikes in food, fuel, and fertilizer. Like in most countries in the world, Ghana is being impacted by these shocks. According to [the FAO](#), as of 2020, there was a **5.6% prevalence of severe hunger** and a **36.6% prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity** among the Ghana population.

In Ghana, as smallholder farmers prepare the soil for the season, they cannot produce enough food because there is less fertilizer available for the 2022/23 major cropping the prices are rising. For example, as of February 2022, petrol and diesel increased from 4 to 7 cedis, kenkey (a basic staple) from 1 to 3 cedis, and bread from 5 to 10 cedis.<sup>1</sup> National inflation is nearly 13%.<sup>2</sup> In simple words, **Ghana is already on the path to grow less food this year.** Farmers are not producing enough food crops, which affects their households' livelihoods, and impacts women and children. **Even CARE struggled to buy enough inputs to plant demonstration fields this year because of the market changes.**

There are projects already in place intended to support smallholder's farmers on the eve of this fertilizer crisis. The Grow Ghana Initiative led by Yara Ghana Company Limited will provide free bags of YaraMila Actyva fertilizer to 100,000 smallholders farmers. This will help reduce the average fertilizer cost by about one third, allowing the country to keep the food production and ensure food security, with the possibility of preventing hunger in 60 million people in the African continent.<sup>3</sup> This is one of several initiatives designed to cushion the impact of the crisis. To understand more about the current impact of the global food crisis on smallholder farmers and their coping mechanisms in the local context, CARE engaged with farmers in Ghana, in the area of the Wassai East

Fertilizers prices have increased by

**200%**

Leading farmers to reduce the size of their fields by

**32-50%**

<sup>1</sup> Ghana Web. (2022). Commodities whose prices have skyrocketed in 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/business/Commodities-whose-prices-have-skyrocketed-in-2022-1470460>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Duodu, S. (2022). 10,000 smallholders' farmers to benefit from Grow Ghana Initiative. Retrieved from <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ghana-news-100-000-smallholder-farmers-to-benefit-from-grow-ghana-initiative.html>

district to collect first-hand information on input prices and the impact of these shocks in the wake of the current global crisis.

## Cocoa Life Project

This project started in 2008 with funding from Mondelez International and was extended from September 2020 to December 2022. It has trained more than 3,000 registered cocoa farmers.<sup>4</sup> The project aims to empower cocoa communities, conserve, and restore forests where cocoa grows, and build sustainable cocoa farming business. This with the hope of using farming and production practices that protect future crops. Among the practices is planting shade trees to hold humidity and lessen the impact of droughts.<sup>5</sup>

It is divided into two areas, farmer-based and community-based. The **farmers-based** component supports farmers to increase productivity and income by connecting farmers to inputs, hosting demonstration plots, teaching new farming practices, and helping farmers strengthen their skills and networks. Usually, in cocoa plantations, the yield is low, around 400 kg per hectare, but with new farming practices this could increase productivity to at least 42% higher. The **community-based** component facilitates and supports communities to develop their own action plans, allowing them to build their own ideas and participate in community assemblies.

In addition, 650 farmers (M: 475 and F: 175) in 52 communities are receiving coaching and services on their farms and the coached farmers are providing services as mentors to other farmers in communities.<sup>6</sup> This new farming technology adoption rate among farmers to increase and to ensure high productivity among the farming communities. Also, to provide addition income sources, 239 youth people among the cocoa communities are managing cocoa and plantation nurseries.<sup>7</sup> And, there are around 2,620 VSLA's groups (M: 807 F: 1,813) among the 52 cocoa communities. VSLA's made possible for women to have financial access to support income generating activities.

## Agricultural Input Fair



To help address these challenges, the project organized an agricultural input fair. The input fair planned to engage 26 communities from the Wassa East District. The purpose of this fair is for farmers to access input dealers and agrochemicals, identify cocoa board approved inputs, and gain knowledge on Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs) and on the appropriate use of agrochemicals. It also gets inputs closer to farmers, makes it easier to access inputs without spending a lot of fuel, and allows farmers to work with several retailers to ensure they can buy different inputs, even if one retailer has run out of supply.

With the goal of supporting **4 major input imported firms to build business relationship with over 8,500** farmers during this unprecedented global agricultural context, input dealers worked directly with the farmers. This aimed to reduce the cost and time of farmers traveling long distances to get agrochemicals and farmers were able to discuss with the agro-dealers how and when they needed the products. In addition to this, farmers are building important business relationships and skills with agro-dealers, helping each other out into which chemical product will work better in their own farming context.

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<sup>4</sup> Brief CARE Cocoa Life Ghana

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

The project also supports the agro-dealers, helping them connect to each other to balance supply and demand as needed, as well as connecting them to a new customer base.

Using fertilizers, hybrid maize seeds with GAPs can increase production

4 X

## Fertilizer Panorama

Alex Aidoo popularly known as Okyeame in Anto Community, during one of our engagements mentioned “We did not get fertilizer during this year's major farming season. It affected our farmland size preparation for the maize and other cereals as most of us reduced the acreage for

cultivation or postponed activities to minor cropping season in September.”

To cope with the fertilizer shortage and the high prices rates, the project has selected 50 farmers to get training in composting organic fertilizer. *See picture on the left*, farmers preparing compost manure at Yaw Gyima community. This is done through collaboration with Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) field staff (Agricultural Extension Agents).



### Conclusion

Farmers in the project area are battling the global food crisis. The continued increase in the prices of fuel and fertilizer is threatening the global food supply. As this continues farmers keep coping using different strategies and support of international and national organisms, such as building relationships with agro-dealers to reduce the time and cost of getting agrochemicals, donation of fertilizers to keep the national food production running and are also learning about organic fertilizers to manage the shortage and fertilizer high prices and **be able to feed their households, Ghana, and the world.**

**Authors:** This brief was written by Emmanuel Gyarteng and Miriam Selva in August 2022.