

INNOVATION FUND
Scaling AgroCenta platform for adoption and effective market linkages in Ghana (SAPA)
Parent project: Accelerating inclusive green growth through agri-based digital innovation in West Africa (AGriDI)

PROJECT COORDINATOR

AgroCenta Limited, Ghana

PARTNER

Farrelly and Mitchel, Ghana

LOCATION

Ghana: Bono, Bono East and Ahafo regions

PERIOD

March 2022 – March 2024

EU FUNDING

EUR 224,838.17

SECTOR

Agriculture

KEYWORDS

Digital technologies, smallholder farmers, capacity building, technology transfer, MSMEs, farmer cooperatives

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CHALLENGE

Smallholder farmers in Ghana are unable to access profitable markets because they have little information on the prevailing crop prices that can offer them good margins. They also lack the storage and processing infrastructure to benefit from market price fluctuations and add value to raw products. As such, they often make use of the prevailing numerous intermediary actors in the value chains and end up being the losers in the market.

PERSPECTIVES

The project enhances access to market information (inputs and agricultural produce) for more than 20,000 smallholder farmers in the Bono, Bono East and Ahafo regions of Ghana with AgroCenta's digital platform. Women and the youth will have access to agricultural market information, farm inputs information, training on good agricultural practices, and weather forecasts. At the same time, emphasis is put on the creation of decent jobs and stable income for the youth.



Training of farmers on good agricultural practices on a farm in the community of Boasu, Bono Region

JUSTIFICATION

Digital access to tailored agricultural and market information (inputs and agricultural produce) enable smallholder farmers to increase their agricultural productivity and revenue.

METHOD

The AgroCenta platform connects maize smallholder farmers to other value chain actors such as buyers and truck delivery services, allowing them to get real-time market information via SMS and voice services right on their phones. To boost the adoption of this platform by its users, in particular among farmers, the following approach is applied.

- Review and upgrade the AgroCenta platform, i.e., fixing bugs and adding more features to the platform to enhance user experience, to be done every six months to ensure the platform is performing and meeting new challenges and demands of its users. The platform provides access to technological tools and information that will inform agents and farmers on good farming practices, such as weather information, market information and access to agro-inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.
- Identify, screen, and select 200 individuals to become service agents of AgroCenta, putting together an agent network to represent the platform in the proximity of the agents' locations.





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- Develop partnerships with service agents and farmers. The agents will be trained to deliver the important features of the platform (registration of smallholder farmers and MSMEs, functions of the platform, basic client services, and provision of information).
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INNOVATIVENESS

AgroCenta offers a comprehensive platform enabling farmers to establish a digital profile, develop their creditworthiness, and gain entry to an expanded market with equitable pricing. Through this platform, farmers can access advanced technological tools and informative resources that educate them on optimal farming techniques. This includes real-time weather and market data, along with direct access to finance and agricultural inputs like fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, and innovations in post-harvest management practices (the use of hermetic storage bags for prolonged shelf life).



Training of farmers on good agricultural practices in Kyiridiagya, Bono East Region



The Adepa AgroCenta Cooperative in Buoku (Bono region) discussing on enhancing their cooperative framework

EXPECTED RESULTS

Impact

- Increased income for maize smallholder farmer households in the middle belt of Ghana.

Outcomes

- Increased engagement of maize value chain actors on the Agrocenta platform in farming and market activities.
- Increased trading activities among maize value chain actors on the Agrocenta platform.

Outputs

- Upgraded and accessible AgroCenta platform.
- Maize smallholder farmers and other maize value chain actors (aggregators, processors, logistics service providers, etc.) enabled in the utilisation of the upgraded Agrocenta platform.
- Maize smallholder farmers capacitated in improved harvesting and post-harvesting techniques and entrepreneurial / business development skills.



This [SAPA](#) project is one of 9 supported by the ACP Innovation Fund project: [AGriDI](#), a project implemented by the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) in Kenya, in partnership with the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin, Gearbox Pan African Network in Kenya and Agropolis Fondation in France.

Contributing to a conducive environment for agri-based digital innovations, especially for women and youth farmers, and accelerating inclusive green growth in West African countries, [AGriDI](#) has selected 9 (third-party) projects that are implemented by academic and research institutions, ministries and government agencies responsible for ICT or science, technology and innovation, farmer cooperatives, MSMEs, and civil society organisations in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Nigeria.

[AGriDI](#) supports the development and scaling of the use of digital technologies for agricultural development, such as in the areas of soil mapping, agro-inputs, crop management, marketing, and policy making.

