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Indigenous Knowledge on Soil Conservation for Crop Production in Yua Community, Northern Ghana

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Abstract

In this paper, the author sheds light on indigenous knowledge systems on soil conservation for crop production in Yua, a rural community located in the ‘Atankwidi Basin’ of northeastern Ghana. The Atankwidi basin is part of the larger Volta Basin in West Africa and specifically spans through four administrative districts of the Upper East Region of Ghana. These districts mainly include the Kassena-Nankana West and East districts, and to a lesser extent the Bongo and Bolgatanga districts. This area is largely part of a guinea savannah zone in northern Ghana undergoing environmental degradation due to a combination of factors: agricultural and construction activities, desertification and changing rainfall patterns. This situation has negatively impacted on soil fertility and agricultural production so that food poverty is widespread. In response, actors at the household level have become more committed to indigenous knowledge practices on soil conservation for sustaining crop production.

Drawing on qualitative empirical research and data, the author concludes that there is intensification and adaptation of indigenous soil conservation knowledge systems on for sustaining crop production in the phase of environmental and soil degradation. In the domain of indigenous knowledge systems, the author reports on preparation and application of various forms of traditional farm yard and organic manure locally called ‘naandeene posigo’ and ‘tampogre posigo’. The author also examines emerging new forms of organic manure preparation and application which essentially include ‘Naabene’ and pitch compost applications.

Keywords: Ghana, indigenous knowledge, soil conservation