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Farmers’ and academia’s views”

Factors influencing the adoption of sustainable livelihoods: a case study of smallholder cocoa farmers in the eastern region of Ghana

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Abstract

Cocoa remains one of the leading cash crops in Ghana and most countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Regardless of its numerous benefits, cocoa is sometimes subject to changes in climatic conditions such that limited or excess rainfall and temperature can reduce the quantity produced at the end of a season. This means that cocoa farmers should have an additional livelihood to sustain them amid unpredicted and unexpected weather events. The German Government, Ministry of Food and Agriculture and Ghana Cocoa Board, have collectively trained cocoa farmers in the Asamankese cocoa district on Sustainable Livelihood Programs (SLP) to help them increase their livelihood and generate more income. However, the adoption of SLP is low within the Asamankese cocoa district. The study’s main objective is to explore the factors that influence farmers’ adoption of sustainable livelihoods.

300 cocoa farmers from the project were sampled randomly from the district and interviewed using structured questionnaire. Binary Logistic regression was used to establish a relationship between SLP adoption and factors that influence it. Cronbach alpha (= 0.81) was used to test the reliability of most of the Likert scale questions. Findings revealed a significant relationship between the socio-cultural background, economic, environmental, and personal factors and SLP adoption. It was also revealed that farmers fully engaged in other livelihood programs tend to increase their income, livelihood, crop yield, food security, and others. Such farmers can increase their cocoa production by generating income elsewhere to purchase inputs. They do not solely depend on cocoa for survival as yields decrease between years. The study recommends that the government of Ghana should ensure effective collaboration with most NGOs interested in the Sustainable Livelihood of farmers and work for hand in hand with them to support farmers. Also, inputs should be made available for farmers who want to venture into other sustainable agri-business programs.

Keywords: Adoption, smallholder cocoa farmers, sustainable livelihood programs