



Tropentag, September 11-13, 2024, hybrid conference

“Exploring opportunities ...  
for managing natural resources and a better life for all”

## Preserving resources, securing livelihoods: Reducing food loss and waste for sustainable development in Ghana

DORCAS TWUMWAA GYAN<sup>1</sup>, FAUSTINA APPIAA GYAN<sup>2</sup>, ESI DADZIE<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Southern University and A&M College, Dept. of Urban Forestry, Environment and Natural Resources, United States*

<sup>2</sup>*University of Cape Coast, Dept. of Business and Social Science Education, Ghana*

### Abstract

Food loss and waste represent significant challenges to sustainable development worldwide, impacting both food security and environmental sustainability. In Ghana, a country with a rich agricultural heritage and diverse food systems, these challenges are particularly pronounced in most rural farming communities. Despite significant progress in agricultural production and food distribution, a substantial portion of the food produced in the country is lost or wasted each year, increasing poverty among rural farmers. This problem not only undermines efforts to improve food security and nutrition but also represents a significant economic loss for farmers and other stakeholders along the supply chain. Moreover, food loss and waste contribute to environmental degradation, including greenhouse gas emissions and resource depletion. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to food loss and waste in Ghana and developing effective strategies and interventions to mitigate it. This study aims to systematically review the scale and impact of food loss and waste on food security, the livelihood of farmers, and environmental sustainability in Ghana. This study will delve into innovative strategies and community-led efforts to minimise food loss and waste throughout the food supply chain. These include initiatives such as improved postharvest handling practices, local food processing innovations, and community-based food recovery programs. These efforts have contributed to improved livelihoods, increased resilience, and enhanced social cohesion within communities by preserving valuable resources, reducing economic losses, and enhancing food security. Through collaborative partnerships, policy support, and grassroots initiatives, Ghana has the opportunity to lead the way towards a more resilient and prosperous future for its communities.

**Keywords:** Food loss, food waste, resources, sustainable livelihood