

Taking the time to design a scalable solution for Ghana.



A newly revamped FBA program focuses on impact and enhanced information gathering

There is no winter in Ghana. From an agricultural perspective, that's both good and bad. While farmers can grow year-round, milder temperatures throughout the year also means that bacteria doesn't die naturally and can be a persistent problem that reduces yields. But bacteria can be managed with the right technology. This is the type of problem that Farm Business Advisors (FBAs) address in Ghana.

iDE recently re-booted the FBA program in Ghana to build a stronger model that can be systematically applied across the country. The previous model attempted to do too much, everywhere at once. Rather than having a small impact on many, the Ghana FBAs will have a larger impact on fewer farmers. Thus, the program is in its infancy: in the new pilot phase, starting FBAs are focusing on small (1.5 hectare) farms who have year-round access to water, land that is above the floodplain, and fencing to keep large animals out of the field.

Spending time to learn about the specific challenges (like bacteria) and developing the support structure (e.g., a nursery where seedlings are grown), iDE is

taking what it learned from the past and applying new thinking based on iDE's global FBA programs to meet the Ghanaian context. The newly designed management information system will grow with this new model, enabling better monitoring of FBA performance, client outcomes, and market dynamics in the future.

By changing from a reactive to a proactive approach with farmer clients, FBAs in Ghana have the potential to create long-term, sustainable change in farm production and income generation.

Photo Caption

Tuuteng Simon Sankomah is a community leader and a Farm Business Advisor (FBA). He leads a farm group, and organizes regular meetings for farmers to gather and learn together in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Here he is with a farmer weighing his vegetable harvest for the market linkages that iDE supports.

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The Ghana Context

In 1957, Ghana was the first Sub-Saharan African country to gain independence, boasting of great statesmen from Kwame Nkrumah to Kofi Annan. It is a multilingual country with 70 ethnic groups, each with its own distinct language. Of an estimated population of 25 million, 72 percent are considered to be subsistence farmers, with an average income of \$1.25 per day. In northern Ghana, residents are confronted with the harsh, dry conditions found along the Sahel region across West Africa.

Ghana FBAs By the Numbers

40 clients per 1 FBA

74,439 clients served to date

Average annual income: \$5,400

Each FBA travels an average of 10km per day

Because there is no winter and bacteria doesn't die, FBAs design new ways to manage life with crop protection products.

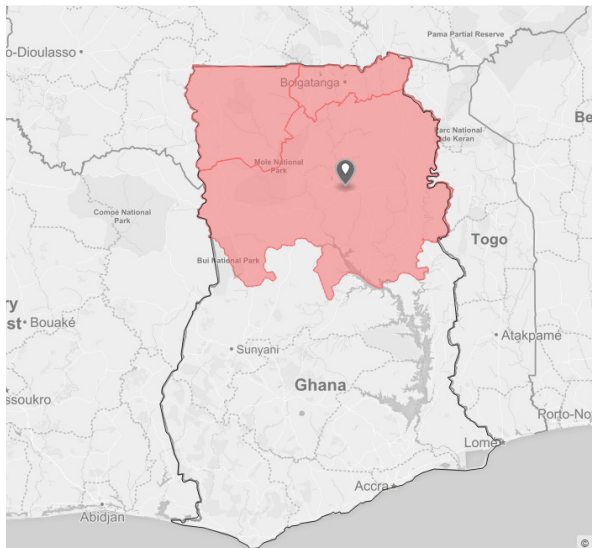


Photo: 2015 iDE

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iDE creates income and livelihood opportunities for poor rural households across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. iDE builds markets in a range of sectors, including agriculture, water, sanitation, hygiene, and access to finance.

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