



WAFFI

Multi-stakeholder Workshop

Negotiating consensus on forests and trees

February 7-8, 2019

Bolgatanga-Upper East Region, Ghana

Workshop Summary

Overview

On February 7-8, 2019 in Bolgatanga, the West African Forest Farm Interface Project (WAFFI) hosted its final WAFFI Multi-stakeholder Workshop in Ghana. The goals of the workshop were to discuss key findings and emerging issues, understand stakeholders' diverse perspectives and decide on strategies and paths forward.

WAFFI is a collaborative effort by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Tree Aid, the Organization for Indigenous Initiatives and Sustainability (ORGIIS GHANA) and the *Union Départementale des Producteurs de Nobéré* (UDPN). It is being implemented in six villages in the Kassena Nankana West District of Ghana and six villages in the commune of Nobéré in Burkina Faso. The WAFFI project uses farmer-centered capacity-building methods such as participatory action research (PAR) and other multidisciplinary approaches to analyze local management of the forest-farm interface and examines how policy frameworks address the smallholder agriculture and forestry context. The goal is that policy makers, practitioners, scientists and farmer experts actively engage in multi-stakeholder dialogues and use the

evidence generated by WAFFI to define strategies, approaches and actions to effectively support the livelihoods of smallholders managing the forest-farm interface for improved income, food security and equitable benefits.

Fifty people attended the workshop. They included community representatives from the participating villages in Ghana, and traditional paramount chiefs (from the communities of Katiu, Nakong, Kayoro). There were also district assembly members, and representatives from key government entities such as the Forestry Commission's Wildlife and Forest Service Division, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency, Water Resource Commission, Ghana Fire Service and research institutions as well as WAFFI team members.

The workshop focused on issues that emerged from the research regarding two crucial resources: shea and fuelwood. The format of the workshop was oriented towards group discussion, perspective-sharing and problem solving. Community representatives presented findings from their PAR projects, and researchers from CIFOR and ICRAF presented results from their research. Small groups discussed the findings, identified problems and issues, and defined strategies and paths forward.



Photo by Axel Fassio/CIFOR

Key issues

1. Shea trees are facing growing degradation pressures from several flanks. Shea trees are being cut for charcoal production. The WAFFI team estimated that 20-25% of charcoal for sale in local markets is shea. Bushfires during the flowering season are affecting shea nut production. And shea trees are aging, with natural regeneration processes being curtailed by unsustainable practices.
2. Fuelwood is growing scarcer because of increasing extraction by commercial charcoal and firewood sellers in local markets. Women in some communities must now walk distances of 8-14 km to gather fuelwood for household use.
3. The growing cash value of shea nut is affecting men and women in different ways. Men are now exerting more control over the shea income from the farms, where the most productive trees are found, and in some cases are collecting the shea themselves to use the income for farm inputs. Women have to negotiate in new ways to access shea from farms. If not, they go to the forest to collect shea, where more intense bushfires have frequently damaged trees and lowered productivity.

Proposed strategies

The participants proposed several integrated visions and strategies to combine community, policy and research approaches.

- **Strengthen women's influence and opportunities** – Advocate to improve women's access to shea at the household level. Organize local co-operatives to procure shea processing machinery, provide access to loans for women to buy shea and create more livelihood opportunities. Actively engage and include women in decision making at all levels by encouraging more women to stand for both political and community leadership positions.
- **Develop the shea sector** – Form a national-level advocacy group, such as a 'shea board', similar to the 'Ghana Cocoa board', to influence policy, promote shea, define strategies and address challenges. Establish a shea research institute to investigate topics related to shea production, protection and regeneration.
- **Reduce the pressure on shea trees** – Promote new technologies such as improved cook stoves or alternative fuels to lower demand for fuelwood and charcoal. Develop livelihood alternatives for charcoal producers. Explore alternatives such as family woodlots with fast-growing species suitable as fuelwood. Develop policies and plans to protect shea trees and promote shea regeneration.
- **Approach bushfire management holistically** – Approach bushfire management at both the policy level and the community level. Develop bylaws "bottom up" starting at the community to address bushfires. Identify appropriate actions to control fire or mitigate damage. Empower chiefs to enforce the bylaws. Develop cross-boundary strategies and capacity to address issues of fire prevention, education and enforcement.

The workshop closed with enthusiastic interest on the part of the participants to continue the momentum of the discussion with additional multi-stakeholder convenings.

Cover: Shea butter production process near Chiana, Kassena Nankana District - Ghana. Photo by Axel Fassio/CIFOR



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