A qualitative analysis of women’s farmer-based organizations and gender mainstreaming in national, regional and local level policies in the Upper East Region of northern Ghana.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Upper East Region (UER) in Northern Ghana is the smallest and least developed region in the country. It is geographically important because it is located in the White Volta watershed – a watershed that is shared between Northern Ghana and the neighboring country of Burkina Faso. The White Volta River is responsible for providing water to the region primarily for agriculture. International development research organizations such as the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) are currently working to better understand how natural resources such as the White Volta are being used, and how those usages are inextricably embedded in broader social webs informed by cultural identities such as gender. Unfortunately, little is known about gender issues and relations in the Upper East, therefore, the overarching purpose of this research is to identify those gaps in knowledge in order to better understand how current district, regional and national level policies can more accurately address and integrate local women into their policy strategies and objectives.

This study was originally conducted to gather baseline data on the activities, issues, and concerns of women in the Upper East Region in Ghana, both in general and in relation to water. The initial data collection led to the discovery that women in the Upper East function primarily in groups, therefore the study continued as a pathway to understanding the processes, opportunities, and constraints of how and why women organize themselves as such. An analysis of how, if at all, national, regional, and district level policies address women and groups in Ghana concludes the paper.

In June and July 2012, the Emory graduate student research team, under the guidance of the International Water Management Institute and the French Center on International Research in Agriculture and Development (CIRAD), conducted a series of in-depth interviews with government officials from regional and district offices in the Upper East. In addition, the team conducted focus-group discussions and in-depth interviews with primarily female community members in seven communities in the districts of Bawku West and Bawku Municipal. The research team then analyzed how women’s activities, issues, concerns, and groups are addressed in Ghana’s agricultural, gender, and water policies.
The results of this study revealed that women of the UER are involved in an expansive range of activities, mostly related to farming. These farming-related activities are conducted for two reasons: 1) subsistence as a means to supplement the family’s food supply and 2) income-generation as a means to supplement the family’s income (e.g. school fees, clinic fees, etc.) The study also revealed that women of communities in Bawku Municipal and Bawku West have issues and concerns primarily related to financial assistance, machinery, and water (although not farming-related usages). With regard to financial assistance, women expressed their inability to obtain loans that would enable them to expand their farming and processing endeavors. While most can access small loans through local banks, many are not eligible to receive larger loans because they lack collateral or are assumed unable to pay back the higher interest rates. As a result, women form women’s groups as a primary means to complete work more quickly and efficiently and to obtain loans and other inputs and services. These women’s groups, as revealed during the study, are formed within the community in relation to their farming or processing activities, or as a means to collect and pool money to assist each other in a time of need. Therefore, these groups are integral to how women in the UER function socially and economically. However there is still a disconnect between policies that address women, and the various limitations faced by the women’s groups. Women still rely heavily on traditional community governance structures, such as chieftaincies, and their networks remain isolated within the community itself. Furthermore, their interactions with district and regional level officials remains limited, making it difficult for policy-makers to understand and/or reflect women’s groups more accurately in policies relating to agriculture, women and water. Therefore, women’s groups do not benefit from policies, nor do government policies explicitly detail steps for improving the economic and social livelihoods of women in agriculture.

While it is not exhaustive of the region, the study provides better insight into the women of the region, with regard to their activities, issues, and concerns, as well as the implications of women’s social organization. Through this study, it can be concluded that women remain marginalized by government policies, cultural practices, and their own processes of organizing. While the women of the Upper East Region do not reflect the women of Ghana as a whole, there is a larger implication for the country. This study hopes to provide insight to organizations like IWMI and CIRAD on how to appropriately integrate
women of the region into future research and programming efforts. In addition, the study’s analysis of policies and how they fail to fully address gender in agriculture and water will hopefully engage government officials and involved non-governmental organizations to improve current policies and practices so that women in agriculture are no longer marginalized.
ACRONYMS and ABBREVIATIONS:

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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>CIRAD</td>
<td>Center for International Research on Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>CPWF V4</td>
<td>Challenge Programme on Water and Food, Volta 4</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>CWS</td>
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<td>DA</td>
<td>District Assembly</td>
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<td>Department of Women</td>
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<td>Farmer Based Organization</td>
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<td>FGM</td>
<td>Female Genital Mutilation</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<td>GDO</td>
<td>Gender Desk Officer</td>
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<td>GPRS II</td>
<td>Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II</td>
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<td>GWP</td>
<td>Global Water Partnership</td>
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<td>IWMI</td>
<td>International Water Management Institute</td>
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<td>IWRM</td>
<td>Integrated Water Resources Management</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MLGRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development</td>
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<td>MOFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Food and Agriculture</td>
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<td>MOWAC</td>
<td>Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs</td>
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<td>MSP</td>
<td>Multi-Stakeholder Platform</td>
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<td>MWRWH</td>
<td>Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing</td>
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<td>NDPC</td>
<td>National Development Planning Commission</td>
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<td>NWP</td>
<td>National Water Policy</td>
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<td>RCC</td>
<td>Regional Coordinating Council</td>
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<td>UER</td>
<td>Upper East Region</td>
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<td>UNDESA</td>
<td>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>WRC</td>
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INTRODUCTION:
INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, GENDER AND FBOs IN THE UPPER EAST REGION

Ghana gained its independence from the British in 1957, becoming the first nation in sub-Saharan Africa to do so. However much of the country, particularly the Upper East Region (UER) of Northern Ghana, still struggles to achieve the stated goals of poverty reduction and economic and social development outlined by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Ghana’s second Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRS II). The region is characterized by a large working female population that unfortunately lacks access to many basic services including agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, as well as capital in the form of loans. The International Water Management Institute (IWMI), through the Challenge Program on Water and Food V4 Project (CPWF V4), has been working in the UER to support local and regional level government’s attempts to achieve participatory Integrated Water Resources Management approaches at the sub-basin/watershed level. Based on recent findings from a multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) held by IWMI and the French Center on International Research in Agriculture and Development (CIRAD) in the region, a significant gap in knowledge exists concerning many women farmer’s activities, issues, concerns, as well as the processes, opportunities, and constraints associated with how women form social groups such as farmer based organizations (FBOs). Gaps also exist in relation to how and if these activities, issues, concerns and FBOs are addressed in agricultural, gender and water policies. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to identify those gaps in knowledge in order to better understand how current district and regional level policies in the Upper East can more accurately address and integrate local women into their policy strategies and objectives.

Background and Literature Review:

The interdependent nature of water, from actors to areas to sectors, necessitates an interdependent and integrated approach in management. Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is a development paradigm and methodological tool that incorporates multiple actors, from the basin to the transnational level, as well as multiple segments of society which affect, and are affected by, river systems like that of the Volta River Basin in Ghana. IWRM emphasizes the inclusion of all social, economic and political interests, and promotes solutions that are sustainable and equitable (A Handbook for IWRM in Basins,
2009:4). The Global Water Partnership defines integrated water resource management as a paradigm that “promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems and the environment” (GWP, 2012). As a “policy package”, it includes: “(1) a national water policy so that there is a cohesive normative framework, (2) a water law and regulatory framework for coordinated action, (3) the recognition of the river basin as a unit for planning and management, (4) treating water as an economic good to reflect its scarcity value, (5) the creation of water rights, and (6) participatory water resource management and inclusion of women” (Prakash, 2007:293). Because of IWRM’s emphasis on policy and the inclusion of women, this research is focused on understanding how women farmers are accounted for in agricultural, gender and water policies in the White Volta River Basin in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

The Volta River Basin system as a whole constitutes approximately 70% of Ghana’s available water, and therefore plays a vital role in supplying water for agriculture, industry and household use for a large majority of Ghana’s population (Sarpong, 4). Traditionally, customary law in Ghana granted ownership of water resources to communities and families connected through social networks and lineage systems overseen by local big men or chiefs. Beginning in the early part of the twentieth century, the British colonial government introduced legislation that attempted to formalize water ownership under the national government. Despite this attempt, customary laws governing water rights and access were still officially recognized and “continued to reign de facto over water use and management practices throughout the country” (Laube, 2007:423).

Beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, highly seasonal variations in water patterns, increased reliance on the Volta in providing electricity, and oppressive droughts prompted the Ghanaian government and international actors alike to recognize the need to engage in water reforms. Initially, the World Bank (WB) used the conditions of structural adjustment loans to put pressure on the government to introduce a new approach in the water supply sector which not only “drastically changed water supply policies, but also led to overall water reforms” (Laube, 2007:422). This new approach placed a lot of emphasis on privatizing water supplies, which began a dialogue on the need for the institutional and legal
transformation of water governance. Specifically, international consultants identified the need to create a single, supervisory government body for the water sector in order to attract international investors. Thus, in 1996, the Water Resources Commission (WRC) was born (Laube, 2007:422).

While the WRC was initially created to improve the security of international investments, its function facilitated the integration of IWRM soon thereafter (Laube, 2007:423). The WRC currently pledges itself to the paradigm of IWRM and the principle that water resources management should be “sustainable, equitable, participative, gender sensitive, and last but not least, economically efficient” (Laube, 2007:423).

Despite the institutionalization of IWRM at the national level, implementation at the local level remains somewhat elusive. According to author and anthropologist Wolfram Laube, at the local level, governance structures in northern Ghana are characterized by “multiple foci of power, e.g. district administrations, (neo-)traditional authorities, (and) local ‘big men’”. This local political climate of legal pluralism and pervasive traditional power arrangements, in combination with weak governing bodies prevalent in Ghana and the limited funding allocated to the WRC at the national level, makes implementation at the sub-basin level extremely difficult (Laube, 2007:423).

The International Water Management Institute recognizes that “experience to date shows that effective implementation of IWRM initiatives in the developing world remains a challenge” (CGIAR, 2011) due primarily to “a lack of political will and socio-political externalities” (CGIAR, 2011). Furthermore, IWMI addresses the reflexive concept that unless contemporary reforms “question the policy models themselves … they face the same shortcomings they were meant to address” (CGIAR, 2011). Besides deconstructing policy models, the appropriate implementation of IWRM initiatives at the sub-basin level must also include integrated perspectives on gender in order to balance and connect national interests in water resources with local interests and uses. Therefore, the Emory University graduate student research team conducted qualitative focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with representatives from district and regional level administrations, as well as with women and women’s farming groups in the Upper East, to determine whether or not policies such as those created by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA), the Ministry
of Women’s and Children’s Affairs (MOWAC) and the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH) are attempting to address gender, to what ends, and for what purposes.

Women and women’s farming groups are the primary focus of this research for three overarching reasons: (1) because identifying and understanding gender perspectives is an integral aspect of the IWRM policy package, (2) because agriculture is the primary user of water in the region, and women are the primary agricultural actors, and (3) because the history and role that women’s collective action plays in development in general, and in northern Ghana in particular, has long been recognized but yet still goes unnoticed. According to researcher Adam Salifu, collective action has gained a significant amount of attention from international donor organizations and local governments alike as a reaction to exacerbated “market competition and integration, the marginalization of cultural minorities, and the overexploitation of natural resources” (Salifu et al., 2012:8) which makes individual decision-making and action difficult for many farmers. In Ghana, collective action has taken the form primarily of farmer-based organizations (FBOs) and agri-cooperatives (agri-coops), and is seen as “a preferential means to achieve more equitable, inclusive and community-driven development” in rural areas (Salifu et al., 2012:5). The formation of groups is described as a “social elevator”, or a “mechanism to ensure social mobility and leverage economic inequalities” (Salifu et al., 2012:8). Since 2000, the government of Ghana has received over $9 million in World Bank funding to promote the formation and growth of FBOs and agri-coops in the country, and NGOs have likewise focused on supporting the development of FBOs (Salifu et al., 2012:7-8). Thus, agricultural group formation has become a major mechanism by which governments distribute, and marginalized populations (especially women farmers) gain access to, resources such as agricultural inputs and credit, deemed essential for rural development (Salifu et al., 2012:10).

Based on this background and current understanding of governance, water, gender and collective action in the White Volta Basin in the Upper East Region of Ghana, this research necessarily focuses on bridging the gaps in knowledge that exist in relation to the processes, opportunities and constraints of how and why women’s farming groups form, the specific issues that women’s farming groups face, how/if those issues are related to water, and whether or not women’s farming groups are embedded in broader policy frameworks.
**Project Site and Study Population:**

The Upper East Region is located in northeast Ghana and is one of ten regions in the country. It is bordered by Burkina Faso to the North and Togo to the East. The region is divided into ten administrative districts, including Bawku West and Bawku Municipal, where this research was conducted. The White Volta River separates these two districts. The village level research was conducted in seven villages and two district capitals located in these two districts. In Bawku West, we interviewed women in three villages: Widnaba, Binaba and Zongoyiri; and interviewed district-level government officials in the district capital of Zebila. In Bawku Municipal, we interviewed women in four villages: Bansi, Binduri, Kaadi and Nafkuliga; and interviewed district-level government officials in the district capital of Bawku. The regional level research was conducted in the regional capital of Bolgatanga where we interviewed representatives of regional government departments.

As a side note, and important to how IWMI-CIRAD will continue its work in the area in the future, halfway through our time in the Upper East, the two districts in which we worked were divided into four districts, and Binduri (one of the villages) became its own district. How that will affect the Upper East remains unclear, but Binduri District, not Bawku Municipal, now borders the White Volta to the east.
Each district is administered by a District Assembly (DA) comprised of 2/3 elected officials and 1/3 appointed officials. The districts receive most of their funding from the national government and function relatively autonomously in conjunction with the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) (Modern Ghana, 2012). DAs are responsible for their own fiscal and programmatic planning and implementation. Traditional chieftaincies also exist in parallel to the District Assembly government structures, and traditional chiefs maintain authority over certain issues such as ancestral and natural resources, as well as “play a lead role in fighting for the social welfare of their people, and maintain(ing) law and order including presiding over and settling disputes” (Salifu, et al., 2012:23). At the regional level, the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) is the main administrative structure and is comprised of representatives from each of the eight District Assemblies, regional ministries (such as MOFA and DOW) and the Regional House of Chiefs (Modern Ghana, 2012).

The Upper East is one of the smallest regions in Ghana and constitutes approximately 2.7% of the total land area of the country (Modern Ghana, 2012). According to the 2006 census, there are currently 920,089 people residing in the Upper East, which is equivalent to less than 5% of the national population (Modern Ghana, 2012). The population of the UER resides primarily in the rural areas (84%), making it the least urbanized region in the country (Modern Ghana, 2012). The primary economic activities of those located in the Upper East include agriculture and industry; over 80% of the population is engaged in agricultural activities as their primary means of subsistence (Modern Ghana, 2012). Major agricultural outputs include maize, sorghum/millet and rice during the rainy season, and garden vegetables such as okra, pepper, tomatoes and onions during the dry season. The rainy season lasts from approximately May/June to September/October, and the dry season from November to mid-February.

The Upper East Region is the least developed region of Ghana and maintains the average lowest literacy, life expectancy and average per capita income statistics of all ten regions (Modern Ghana, 2012). Literacy rates hover at approximately 12%, much lower than the national average of 50.5% (Modern Ghana, 2012). Life expectancy in the Upper East likewise falls behind national averages, and the rate of population growth remains at a stagnant 1.1%, the lowest regional average growth rate in the nation (Modern Ghana, 2012). According to Ghana’s second Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRS II) the
region ranks in the 88th percentile of poverty incidence; Bawku West ranks in the 92nd percentile, and Bawku East/Municipal ranks in the 99th (GPRS II, 2006:77).

Finally, the age/sex structure of the region reveals that there are currently more women of childbearing age residing in the Upper East than men, which could potentially affect the age dependency burden of the region. Women aged 15-49 outnumber men by 13% (Modern Ghana, 2012). This is most likely due to the long-term out-migration of males of the same age to other regions to find work, but has also been attributed, although to a much lesser extent, to the higher male mortality rates due to ethnic conflict in certain parts of the region. The implications of the significant higher proportion of women aged 15-49 are far-reaching. The age dependency burden, defined as the ratio of dependent young (0-14 years) and old (65+ years) to the population of working age (15-64 years), is an indication of the “potential effects of changes in population age structures for social and economic development” (UNDESA, 2007:3). What this means, then, is that a much greater burden of labor and responsibility falls disproportionately on the shoulders of women as the “need to provide for the economically dependent persons puts pressure” (UNDESA, 2007:3) on already limited and strained individual and household resources. The economically dependent in the Upper East include primarily children, who require large economic and temporal investments on the part of women. While women have customarily been responsible for time and care invested in childrearing, traditional social structures dictate that males are primarily responsible for supporting their children economically (for example, with school fees). Due to social factors such as outmigration, however, most mothers are now the primary economic caretakers of their children as well, adding to their workload (Joycelyn Adii, personal communication).

Significance:

Given the Upper East’s status as significantly underdeveloped, primarily rural and agriculturally oriented, and characterized by a large working female population, the research conducted and outlined in this report necessarily focuses on four overarching domains: (1) the activities of rural women in the Upper East, (2) the issues and concerns of rural women in the Upper East, (3) how rural women in the Upper East organize themselves in relation to their activities, issues, and concerns, and (4) whether or not those activities, issues,
concerns, and social groupings are reflected or addressed in district and regional level water, agriculture and gender policies.

This particular research falls within a broader action-research project currently managed by the International Water Management Institute: the Challenge Program on Water and Food V4 in Bawku West and Bawku Municipal in the UER. The project aims to support IWRM policies and initiatives in the shared White Volta River Basin in Burkina Faso and Ghana through a participatory approach implemented at the sub-basin/watershed level.

Currently the CPWF V4 action-research project is working to build strong partnerships between the multiple actors involved at all levels of the decision-making process in order to make “evidence-based relevant recommendations” (CPWF V4 Update, 2012:1) on future policy reforms. A number of multi-stakeholder platforms have been conducted to gather data through the use of a participatory tool known as companion modeling (CPWF V4 Update, 2012:2). Companion modeling allows all stakeholders to identify and illustrate how water users are impacted by each other’s decisions, including by policies aimed at natural resource management. Water users include everyone from local farmers to regional-level administrators, and, most importantly for the focus of this research, women.

The second MSP held in Bawku Municipal in June 2012 was focused on identifying and understanding local farming practices and district-level policies. During this MSP, the IWMI-CIRAD research team became aware of a lack of female farmer participation. Through discussions with certain female representatives such as Queen Mothers* and their Magazies†, the IWMI-CIRAD research team also learned that while women were involved in farming, they were also involved in many other activities, and identified a number of issues and concerns specific to women that they felt were not being adequately addressed. Presented with this gap in knowledge about women in Bawku West and Bawku Municipal,

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* Queen Mothers are part of the matrilineal line of the chiefdom or royal family. They are typically related to the chief (mother, aunt, niece, etc.). Queen Mothers are held in high regard by the village, and are responsible for social conditions and decisions relating to women. They liaise between the chief and the village women.

† Magazies are also high-level women who assist the Queen Mother as well as liaise between traditional leaders and the local government system.
the Emory University graduate student researchers, guided by the IWMI-CIRAD research team, developed a research protocol that aimed to better identify and understand women and policy in the Upper East.

Objective:

The overarching objective of this research project, therefore, is to gather comprehensive data pertaining to women’s activities, issues and concerns, and processes of formal and informal organization, in order to better assess whether or not women’s activities, issues, concerns and social groupings are accurately represented and addressed in district and regional level policies.

Primary Aims:

There are 4 primary aims that this research proposes to address:
1. To identify women’s activities
2. To identify women’s issues and concerns
3. To identify if/how women are organized around those activities, issues and concerns
4. To identify if/how those activities, issues, concerns, and/or social organizations are represented in policy

Primary Hypotheses:

Our research rests on three primary hypotheses:
1. Hypothesis 1: Formal and informal women’s networks/social groupings exist
2. Hypothesis 2: Natural resource management (including water management) is not central to women’s networks
3. Hypothesis 3: There is a disconnect between women’s issues, concerns, and modes of social organization, and district and regional level policies

In order to achieve the outlined objective and aims, the research was conducted in four phases, described in detail in the following section. The report then outlines: (1) a description of our summative findings on gender and FBO formation in the UER, (2) a general review of how specific policies by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs, and the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing address gender, and (3) an analysis of those gender knowledge gaps in policies identified in our research, as well as recommendations on how policies can more accurately reflect women’s issues, concerns and FBOs.
METHODS

Our research was conducted over an eight-week period in June and July of 2012, and consisted of four phases. During Phase I we identified key individuals through the second multi-stakeholder platform facilitated by the International Water Management Institute and the Water Resources Commission of Ghana as part of the Challenge Program for Water and Food. Through our initial sampling strategy, we contacted chiefs, district assemblymen, other government officials, and Queen Mothers (or their Magazies) who attended the workshop. During the interviews, we used a snowball sampling strategy, asking the initial “key informants” to identify other “information-rich” individuals to participate in the study. The research was originally focused on understanding how women in the two districts were connected through social networks, however as the research progressed our primary research question shifted to a focus on women’s FBOs. The objectives of each phase are noted below:

Phase I

We identified key female informants in both Bawku Municipal and Bawku West during the MSP II workshop held in Bawku Municipal in early June 2012. In addition to identifying key women, we also identified key officials, including district officials of national ministries such as the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs (MOWAC), and the Community Development Office (CDO). While conducting interviews and focus groups in the seven villages, a workshop participant served as our translator, translating both our interview questions and the subjects’ responses. In some communities, in-depth interviews with queen mothers often manifested into focus group discussions. During these situations, we adapted and modified questions as the conversation developed.

When interviewing village women, we followed interview guides that were designed to obtain preliminary and basic information regarding women’s activities, issues, and concerns, as well as who they interacted with when seeking assistance or information. When interviewing district and regional officials, we used in-depth interview guides that sought general information about the individual and department’s role and level of
interaction both across communities, and within and between other ministries and departments.

*Phase II*

During Phase II we conducted a preliminary data analysis in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and presented the findings to our two supervisors from IWMI and CIRAD. Based on this initial presentation of findings, we determined gaps in our research. These gaps caused us to shift our research questions and proposed hypotheses from a focus on women's social networks to a focus on women's FBOs. As a result we developed new in-depth interview guides and scheduled new and follow-up interviews with women and officials in the UER.

*Phase III*

During the third phase of our research, we returned to the same communities to conduct follow-up interviews and focus group discussions with Queen Mothers and women’s group leaders to determine the processes and constraints of group formation in the UER. Due to time restrictions and limited availability of subjects due to the rainy season and increased farming activities, our follow-up interviews and focus group discussions took place only in the communities of Widnaba and Binaba (Bawku West), and Binduri and Bansi (Bawku Municipal). We also conducted follow-up interviews with MOFA and Community Development Office representatives.

*Phase IV*

During Phase IV we conducted the summative data analysis in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. We also conducted extensive web-based inquiries in order to analyze policies of Ministries such as MOFA, MOWAC and the MWRHW to determine if current policies truly reflect the realities of women and FBOs in the communities, as well as the capacities of district and regional officials.
OVERVIEW OF WOMEN’S ACTIVITIES, ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Women’s Activities

Based on our summative findings, women from the seven communities located in Bawku West and Bawku Municipal Districts engage in an extensive range of activities, from agriculture/farming to income generation (see Appendix A). When asked about their “typical day”, the responses from women in all seven communities were nearly identical:

“She wakes up, washes her face, collects her broom and sweeps the yard, prepares food for her husband and children, then leaves to farm. She farms until approximately 4 or 5PM, then comes home, fetches water, prepares dinner for her husband and children, and then goes to bed.” (Bansi Queen Mother via translator)

Interestingly the narrative of the farmer was always the first narrative to be presented to researchers, leading to the initial assumption that all the women in each community were exclusively farmers. It wasn’t until further probing that the women explained that there were a number of other activities they engaged in, some in addition to, and some independent of, their agricultural responsibilities. Additional farming-related activities include rearing small ruminants and/or guinea fowl, sorghum malt processing for pito ‡, pito brewing, rice processing, dawa-dawa § processing, and shea nut gathering and processing. Other additional activities not related to agriculture but still done in conjunction with farming include retailing fish, selling petty items such as spices and soap, and retailing fertilizers and cement. Finally, there were a few women who did not engage in farming but instead had “professionalized” occupations such as hairdressing and tailoring.

There seems to be a distinct division of roles and responsibilities by gender in many of the communities in the Upper East Region. When asked which activities the women engaged in by themselves, and which they did with men, the women expressed that most of their activities, with the exception of rainy season farming and some dry season farming (namely onion farming), they did independently of men. They explained:

“They (men and women) don’t come together because their issues are different – what the women want to discuss, the men don’t want to listen to, and what the men

‡ Pito is a local alcoholic beverage made from processed sorghum malt.
§ Dawa-dawa is a flavoring added to food and is made from processed soy.
Household chores such as sweeping and cooking are obvious examples of activities that are done exclusively by women, but other women’s activities include some dry season farming (tomatoes, okra and peppers), rice processing, dawa-dawa processing, pito processing and brewing, petty trading, cement retailing, fish retailing and guinea fowl rearing. Fish retailing and guinea fowl rearing are especially interesting examples of the gendered division of labor that seems to permeate the Upper East. In both Bansi and Zongoyiri, the women we spoke with explained that, while fishing was done exclusively by men, the women are the ones involved in market transactions. They go to the men, purchase the fish, and then resell the product at the market.

Guinea fowl rearing was likewise a gendered activity; in Widnaba guinea fowl were identified as exclusively “women’s property,” and those women involved in guinea fowl rearing explained that they were allowed to do whatever they wanted with their fowl (sell, cook, etc.) without having to ask permission from their husbands. The concept of “women’s property” is especially important in the context of the Upper East where there are contentious gendered issues surrounding property rights. While land distribution and land access were not identified by the women as primary issues or concerns, land was discussed in detail by district level representatives in both Bawku West and Bawku Municipal, as well as outlined and addressed in MOFA’s second Food and Agricultural Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II). This is a point that will be discussed in further detail in the policy analysis section.

**Women’s Issues and Concerns**

When discussing the types of activities the women were involved in, women-specific issues and concerns also began to emerge. These issues were strongly linked to the various daily and seasonal activities in which the women engaged. For all seven communities involved in the study, the women identified a lack of financial assistance as the primary concern. A lack of financial assistance includes difficulties in accessing loans due to limited collateral and/or low initial capital to invest. Seven of the seven communities mentioned either a lack of, or poor access to, machinery (milling/processing machines) to increase their productivity. Three out of seven communities mentioned the following items...” (Zongoyiri Focus Group)
as concerns: water (potable and for irrigation), education for their children, and a lack of fertilizer/inputs.

The following concerns were mentioned by two of the seven communities: limited boreholes, poverty, lack of and/or distance to health/clinics, livestock, and poor irrigation. Remaining concerns mentioned by only one out of seven communities included a lack of child/daycare making it more difficult for women to engage in their farming responsibilities, bushfires, difficulties with land preparation, flooding, difficulties generating income, a lack of, or poor quality of, dams, and limited transportation. In some cases, such as with concerns related to water, irrigation was a primary problem when related to farming, while potable water was a concern when related to the general health and well being of children. More specificity pertaining to water arose during conversation and was strongly linked to the various activities.

Based on this data we can infer that women’s primary concerns fall into two overarching domains: (1) maintaining and/or increasing their productive capacity through access to financial assistance, machinery, water for irrigation, and fertilizers/inputs, for both household consumption as well as to sell at the market, (2) and having access to quality services for themselves and their children (education, health/clinics and potable water, daycare services, etc.). The additional issues and concerns are fairly village-specific; for example the only community that mentioned issues with flooding was Nafkuliga, where riverbank cultivation is a primary means of agricultural production due to poor irrigation/dam infrastructure.

While the women identified these concerns at the community level, officials at the district and regional levels primarily indicated that women’s issues focused on gender-based violence (GBV), including physical, emotional, and financial (non-maintenance) abuse. District and regional officials also noted female genital mutilation (FGM) and inequitable land distribution as main concerns faced by women. It is evident that the issues and concerns mentioned by women in the communities and the issues and concerns that the various ministry officials say they try to address on behalf of women do not necessarily align. These differences will be discussed in more detail in the policy analysis section of this report.
OVERVIEW OF FARMER BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The agricultural and income generating activities, as well as certain issue-areas identified by the women, form the basis of women’s groups (sorghum malt processing group, women’s support and solidarity groups, etc.). An important point to highlight about women’s groups relates to the value chains in which they are embedded. A value chain refers to the chain of activities through which a product travels to get from the place of production to the point of distribution/consumption. From what we were able to gather, it seems that many agricultural crops in the Upper East are a part of simple value chains; that is, the same farmer that produces the crop will then take it to market to sell it. Based on the data from this study we also found that some of the women’s FBOs are involved in more complex value chains; many times FBOs involved in one part of a value chain relating to the production of a particular product (for example pito) would only do that one activity. In other words, FBOs who participate in sorghum malt processing for pito do not also brew the pito. Instead they sell their malt product at the market to pito brewers. Furthermore, the actual marketing of these goods was not an activity that was mentioned by the women’s groups. They discussed no real efforts of how they “market” their products to other members in the value chain, nor did they discuss marketing as a separate activity as part of the value chain process. Finally, even though the different groups are involved in the process of production, many times the final product is still sold individually. So the different groups are the primary units of production, but individuals are the ones who facilitate the exchange of products along the value chain. This begs the question as to why women form groups in the first place, and brings us to our discussion of group composition and formation.

Group Composition:

Women’s, men’s and mixed-gender groups are not a new occurrence in the Upper East; FBOs are common and their formations are encouraged by a number of NGOs and government agencies, including the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. MOFA has compiled a database of registered groups in all regions in Ghana, and this information is publicly available on the website www.fboghana.org. According to MOFA, there are currently 316

**While there is other literature available that cites that the marketing of agricultural products, primarily tomatoes, is a separate a highly gendered activity conducted by “Market Queens” in the Upper East, we were unable to identify complex value chains that consisted of such a marketing component.**
FBOs registered in the Upper East Region of Ghana: 27 registered groups in Bawku West, including 2 in Binaba and 1 in Widnaba, and 49 registered groups in Bawku Municipal, including 1 in Binduri (FBO Database).

However, based on the summative findings of this research, the reality of farmer-based organizations in Bawku West and Bawku Municipal is much more complex and diverse than what is listed on the MOFA website. For one, all the groups listed in the MOFA database for the communities in which we conducted our research were mixed-gender groups; there were no women’s-only groups. According to our data, there are a number of women’s groups registered and active in all seven of the communities, and according to a representative from the Community Development Office in Bawku Municipal, there are more registered women’s groups than men’s groups OR mixed-gender groups in Bawku Municipal. Almost all of the women we spoke with, with the glaring exception of the women of Widnaba, were involved in a women’s group not listed on the MOFA website (see Appendix B). Secondly, none of the groups listed on the MOFA website for three of the seven communities in which we worked (Binaba, Widnaba and Binduri) were mentioned or represented in the focus groups we conducted, and vice versa. Finally, most of the registered groups on the MOFA website are quite large, containing anywhere from 50 to 150 members. Most of the women we spoke with recited that their groups are relatively smaller, containing anywhere between 10 and 15 members.

The information listed in the MOFA database and the information we were able to gather seems disjointed; either our sample sizes were too small or not representative of the entire community, the information listed in the MOFA database is incomplete or incongruent with the realities of FBOs in the UER, or what we were able to document is an accurate representation of what takes place informally at the local level but remains unnoticed and has failed to reach a certain level of official recognition.

What the database also fails to indicate is where each FBO is registered, and as will be explained below, there are a variety of places and organizations with which a group can register, including with MOFA. If the statistics represented in the database were compiled based on data from MOFA offices, then it is safe to assume that the registered groups listed on the database are groups that have registered with MOFA. However, while MOFA in
Bawku West was actively involved in the process of group registration, MOFA in Bawku Municipal was not. The MOFA database, however, lists 49 registered groups in Bawku Municipal. This begs the question as to the validity of the data on the database, as well as further emphasizes the complexity of the relationship between the representation of data and reality at all levels (community to regional), especially in relation to how that data then dictates the formation of policy.

**Group Formation:**

Based on the data of women’s activities, issues and concerns, as well as the discussion of group composition, we believe that there are two primary reasons why women (and men) form groups: (1) to pool certain resources such as capital, labor, and knowledge, and (2) to more easily gain access to available support and services such as agricultural inputs and financial credit.

Both of these identified reasons for group formation resonate with the findings of Adam Salifu and colleagues in their research on FBOs in Ghana. According to Salifu et al., there are four categorizations of FBOs in Ghana: production FBOs, processing FBOs, marketing FBOs and multipurpose FBOs (Salifu et al., 2012:12-13). Production FBOs are formed mainly “to facilitate members’ access to credit and agricultural inputs. They are not necessarily created to do collective or group farming” but rather “the members produce at the individual level on their own farms and come together to cut the costs and share the risks associated with training, credit and inputs procurement” (Salifu et al., 2012:12-13). This type of FBO resonates with the many of the FBOs we identified throughout the course of this research.

The second categorization of FBOs are processing FBOs, which are “formed to support the processing of an agricultural output” (Salifu, et al., 2012:13) and would include the sorghum, rice, shea and dawa-dawa processing groups that were identified in the Upper East.

Marketing FBOs are formed to “facilitate agrifood commercialization” (Salifu, et al., 2012:13) by purchasing local agricultural goods and selling them to larger regional traders or urban markets. We did not come across any marketing FBOs in the participating villages, however that does not mean they do not exist in the UER. According to Ngaleza and
Robinson, “market queens” do exist in the Upper East, especially in relation to the distribution of tomatoes, and represent “the direct link between rural farm producers and urban consumption” (Ngaleza, 2011:2). Their roles and relationships to the FBOs with which we spoke are still unclear.

Finally, multipurpose FBOs can be involved in any of the aforementioned activities as well as engage in “livelihood protection activities” such as “mutual support in case of illness, funerals, (and) weddings” (Salifu, et al., 2012:13). According to Salifu, some multipurpose FBOs also engage in “environmental management” such as regulating “the use of common natural resources such as forests, groundwater basins, irrigation schemes, and so on” (Salifu, et al., 2012:13). Through the course of this research, we were able to identify a number of multipurpose FBOs who engaged in livelihood protection activities (usually referred to as Asungtaba groups), but no FBOs engaged in environmental management. The FBOs identified in this research fall into three of the four categorizations of FBOs: production FBOs, processing FBOs and multipurpose FBOs.

When asked why they decided to form groups, participants expressed that they realized that collective action would yield more results than individual action:

They realized that they all had individual problems that they couldn’t solve, so they decided that if they came together as a group, they could share their problems and ideas about how to solve those problems. They heard that similar group formations had occurred in other communities, so they decided to do it in their community. (Zongoyiri Focus Group)

As an aside, but still an important point evident in our findings, is the importance of word of mouth as the primary means of communication among these communities in the Upper East. Almost all groups identified that they had heard of similar groups forming in other communities and decided to do the same, but none could identify exactly which groups they had heard about or from where. Oral communication is also the primary means of planning, organizing and formalizing any social gathering, from group meetings to our own focus groups, and can, in some instances, make information dissemination and implementation difficult. However in a culture that relies heavily on word of mouth for the dissemination of information, it is important not to forget the vital role it plays in shaping how and to whom information flows.
In the previous excerpt from the Zongoyiri Focus Group, the collective pooling of knowledge and providing mutual support was identified as a primary motivator for group formation. In the following excerpt, capital and labor are also identified as resources that are better utilized under the structure of the collective:

*They meet as a group so they can share ideas among themselves about how to process malt. (2) Also because they have such small capital individually, when they come together they can pool their capital to see how they can support each other and raise their incomes. (3) They also hope that as the group grows, they can start to find a better market for their product. (4) Being in a group allows them to support one another in times of bereavement. (5) They all have children who go to school and who can easily fall sick. Therefore they can help each other by sending the child to school or to the clinic if for some reason the mother cannot do it herself. (Binaba Focus Group)*

The second reason for group formation - gaining access to credit and agricultural inputs - was highlighted by not only village research participants, but by government representatives as well. According to Margaret Achema, an agricultural extension agent at MOFA in Bawku West, providing support and services such as seeds and fertilizers to organized groups was a primary and preferred strategy used by MOFA. Achema also explained that in order for groups to gain access to agricultural inputs they must be organized, motivated and registered. The following section describes the process of group registration, as well as the potential values and limits of doing so.

**Group Registration:**

**Process:**

In the description of group composition a lot of emphasis was given to registered groups. According to our data, almost all groups we identified and spoke with are registered with some sort of an assistance provider. Assistance providers include the public sector, NGOs, and private institutions. In Bawku West and Bawku Municipal, groups were registered with assistance providers such as banks, the district government via the Community Development Office (CDO) and/or MOFA, and/or NGOs such as the Association of Church-based Development NGOs (ACDEP) and the Bawku East Women's Development Agency (BEWDA).
For most organizations, being registered at the bank (usually the agricultural development bank) is a prerequisite for groups to receive assistance. The process of registering at the bank and opening a group bank account is as follows: each group, once formed, is required to elect a leadership comprised of a president, a secretary and a treasurer. Each group is also required to have a constitution that outlines the procedures and bylaws of the group (ex: procedures regarding group meetings, frequency and costs of group fees, etc.). Some groups create their own constitutions, and others receive a pre-drafted constitution from an assistance provider such as the CDO in Bawku Municipal. A copy of the constitution is presented to the bank, and all three leaders become co-signers on the group account. Once an account has been opened and a predetermined amount (usually taken from group fees) deposited, groups are then able to register with other assistance providers. The Asungtaba Group in Zongoyiri was the only group we spoke with that was not registered at a bank (and therefore not registered with any other organization), and claimed it was because they realized that putting their pooled capital in a bank account would make it more difficult to access in case of an emergency, due to their distance from Zebila and Bawku, where banks are located. The only assistance provider that did not require a group to be first registered with a bank was the Department of Women at the regional level in Bolgatanga.

After registering with the bank, the assistance provider(s) with which groups then registered varied by district. Based on our interviews with district representatives at MOFA in Bawku West, and MOFA and the Community Development Office in Bawku Municipal, it seems that MOFA agricultural extension agents in Bawku West are more directly involved in assisting community members in the process of group formation and registration than in Bawku Municipal. The agricultural extension agent that we spoke with in Bawku West also indicated that ACDEP played a prominent role in facilitating group registration. Unfortunately, due to time restraints, we were unable to speak with a representative from ACDEP about their work with FBOs.

In Bawku Municipal, the MOFA representative explained that due to limited financial resources, limited manpower (there are only 10 agricultural extension agents for 306 communities) and transportation limitations (due to a municipal law that forbids men, including agricultural extension agents, from riding motorbikes in the district), it/when they
were able to go out into the communities they focused primarily on education campaigns about gender equality in relation to land rights, and did little with education about group formation and registration.

BEWDA was also identified by the focus groups in Binduri and Bansi as an assistance provider that helped with group formation and registration in Bawku Municipal. Again, unfortunately, we were unable to schedule an interview with a BEWDA representative. According to focus group participants, BEWDA provides them with trainings in financial literacy and group dynamics. The women in the community of Binduri indicated that they frequently meet with their BEWDA representative (Andrew); during non-planting season, they meet with their representative up to two times a month, however during planting season, the women’s groups meet with BEWDA less frequently due to their obligations in their fields. The women leaders of the five groups in Bansi revealed that they only met with their BEWDA representative (Peter) three times in the initial stages of the registration process.

Furthermore, the CDO in Bawku Municipal claimed to at least historically be relatively active in educating community members about the processes and benefits of group formation, and maintained a list of over 400 men’s, women’s and mixed-gender groups registered with the CDO in the district (compared to the 49 listed by MOFA on www.fboghana.org). Unfortunately due to recent budget cuts their ability to assist FBOs has decline significantly.

The representative from the Community Development Office in Bawku West was in Accra for the entire duration of our fieldwork, so we were unable to ascertain the comparative role of the CDO in Bawku West in reference to group formation and registration.

**Benefits and Limitations:**

There are a number of narratives that permeate the discourse of FBOs in the Upper East Region, especially about why community members should form/join FBOs in the first place. Based on an analysis of our own data coupled with an extensive web-based inquiry into the processes of group registration, we can draw the following conclusions about the benefits and limitations of registering a group.
The official, national narrative maintains that FBOs and other agri-coops are considered a positive asset in national development strategies in that “they (groups) are perceived to be effective channels for the delivery of government development services” (FBO Database), especially in rural areas where poor infrastructure inhibits more effective delivery of services to individuals. Since the era of structural adjustment, agri-groups and FBOs in Ghana have also been conceptualized as ways to increase competitive agribusiness in the country (Salifu, et al., 2012:4), however this research was unable to identify the more social enterprise-oriented FBOs that other research has documented.

At the regional level, FBOs and other women’s groups are encouraged to register with departments like the Department of Women because by knowing which groups exist, the DOW can more easily disseminate information regarding upcoming meetings and/or campaigns directed at women’s issues and concerns. Furthermore, when groups register with the Department of Women, it can identify their primary activity/issue (ex: hairdresser group, mother’s group, etc.), therefore, if the Department of Women is unable to offer support, it can more easily refer certain groups to other departments for services such as the Department of Social Welfare or the Department of Education. The one obvious limitation to the registration process at the regional level however, is that most groups that register with the DOW are from Bolgatanga and nearby surrounding communities. None of the groups we spoke with in Bawku West or Bawku Municipal were registered with the DOW. Therefore the services that the Department provides are only targeting a specific population of women in the regional capital.

At the district level, similar to the national level, group formation and registration is encouraged because groups are deemed easier to work with, therefore government ministries such as MOFA prefer to disseminate funds, inputs and services to groups rather than individuals. However based on the observations and data of this research, despite this belief, it is still extremely difficult to administer funds and support to groups due to logistical limitations such as budgetary and staff restrictions, as well as the apparent lack of accurate information about the existence of groups. While organizations were aware that groups existed, there were obvious gaps in knowledge about how to distribute services. When questioned as to these gaps, most assistance providers explained that the expectation remained that groups in need of assistance should be “proactive” and “come to them” to
register and receive benefits. The groups, however, explained that they were under the impression that their extension agents and assemblymen should be coming to them to offer support – an obvious catch-22 began to emerge. Regardless of who is to “blame” the fact remains that the structures in place to deliver the services are not there; at the district level the lack of financial support and staff make it difficult to provide assistance to the communities, and at the community level the lack of funds, transportation, and other familial obligations prevent community members from being able to go to the district to receive help.

Figure 1: Benefits and Limitations of Group Registration by Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Official” Narrative</td>
<td>(1) Effective channels for the delivery of gov’t funds and services</td>
<td>(1) Despite being organized in groups it is still difficult to administer funds and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Easier for groups to obtain credit and input packages than individuals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Narrative</td>
<td>(1) Facilitates the sharing of information between the DOW and women’s groups</td>
<td>(1) Most registered groups are only in Bolgatanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) DOW can more easily refer registered groups to other depts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Narrative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawku Municipal</td>
<td>(1) CDO could provide trainings/demonstrations (not anymore due to lack of funding)</td>
<td>(1) Lack of funding inhibits the CDO’s ability to support groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) CDO now provides education to those groups that come to them</td>
<td>(2) Lack of staff and motorcycle laws inhibit MOFA’s ability to support groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) CDO uses groups to disseminate information to wider communities about changes in government policies and district laws</td>
<td>(3) MOFA’s focus is more on equitable land distribution that FBOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4) BEWDA provides trainings</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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on group dynamics and financial literacy
(5) MOFA provides education about agricultural practices and equitable land distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Support Provided</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bawku West      | (1) MOFA provides support in the form of agricultural inputs
(2) ACDEP gives loans directly | (1) Staff, budgetary and infrastructure restrictions make support delivery difficult |

**Community Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Community Narratives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bawku Municipal</td>
<td>(1) Collective action yields more results than individual action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Groups can't afford to open a bank account therefore they cannot register</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Bawku West      | (1) Collective action yields more results than individual action
(2) If a group is already registered it can be more easily identified by the district and/or NGOs and can more easily receive assistance |
|                 | (1) Individual women can't afford to join groups (the most marginalized women are still left out) |
|                 | (2) Groups can't afford to open a bank account therefore they cannot register        |
|                 | (3) Putting money in the bank makes it more difficult to access in case of an emergency |

*Most limitations identified were limitations in the process of registration rather than limitations to being registered*
POLICY REVIEW AND ANALYSIS: HOW WOMEN and FBOs ARE ADDRESSED in POLICY and DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The following sections describe policy frameworks that attempt to identify and integrate a gender perspective into their objectives and strategies. The analysis is based on an extensive web-based inquiry of available data from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs/the Department of Women, and the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing, as well as data gathered during in-depth interviews with representatives of some of those same ministries.

Women in Agriculture: the Ministry of Food and Agriculture

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture is “responsible for developing and executing policies and strategies for the agriculture sector within the context of a coordinated national socio-economic growth and development agenda.” The aims of MOFA are outlined in the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) and the Medium Term Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (METASIP 2010-2015). The latest FASDEP objectives are noted in FASDEP II. According to the MOFA website, the mission of the Ministry is “to promote sustainable agriculture and thriving agribusiness through research and technology development, effective extension, and other support services to farmers, processors and traders for improved livelihood.” The objectives outlined in FASDEP include:

- Food security and emergency preparedness
- Improved growth in incomes
- Increased competitiveness and enhanced integration into domestic and international markets
- Sustainable management of land and environment
- Science and Technology applied in food and agriculture development
- Improved institutional coordination

(FASDEP II, 2007:22)

While MOFA policy addresses a variety of issues by presenting a number of strategies for various agriculture-related topics, this analysis will primarily focus on how gender is accounted for in MOFA policies. Furthermore, the information collected by the research team will be used to help analyze policy and to determine how the information noted by the study’s participants is reflected or addressed in policy.
As part of its broader policy initiatives, gender is a key principle of both the Ministry’s policy development and how the policy is implemented. According to FASDEP II, all policies and programs are designed using a gender perspective so as to “work towards greater gender equality in the agriculture sector” (FASDEP II, 2007:23). In FASDEP II MOFA acknowledges “gender inequality and discrimination against women” as a crosscutting constraint in its previous FASDEP I policy (FASDEP II, 2007:6). In more specific terms, including terms related to women and their access to resources, FASDEP II conveys how women in agriculture are marginalized; they have limited access to land, labor, and capital, primarily due to cultural and institutional factors (FASDEP II, 2007:11-12). In addition, women’s access to land is typically restricted to usufruct rights only, and women cannot obtain credit because they do not have assets to use as collateral (FASDEP II, 2007:11-12). While the majority of agricultural produce traders are women, official credit programs do not usually cover trading activities. Therefore, women are not given the opportunity to invest in their agricultural trading activities (FASDEP II, 2007:11-12). In addition to these constraints, culturally, women are characterized by their reproductive roles, such as bearing children and taking care of the family. However, these reproductive roles tend to interfere with their “productive roles” in relation to work, and more specifically, farming or other subsistence or income-generating activities (FASDEP II, 2007:11-12). FASDEP II clearly states the institutional and cultural challenges associated with women in agriculture, but also indicates how such conditions impede agricultural development for not only women, but for the country as well.

Even within FASDEP II, MOFA reveals that “gender inequality in the agriculture sector has undermined the achievements of sustainable agricultural development because programmes and projects are not systematically formulated around the different needs, interests, roles, responsibilities, status and influence in society of women and men” (FASDEP II, 2007:17). This recognition of gender inequality begins with the internal structure of MOFA. According to the policy, gender inequality within MOFA itself is still fairly common, with only 16% of its total employees being women (FASDEP II, 2007:17). Furthermore, MOFA admits that only 20% of its agricultural-related services reach women (FASDEP II, 2007:17). Efforts to improve gender sensitization and training programs for staff impact individual awareness, but are not translated into practice. In addition, the lack of disaggregated gender data hinders the ability for MOFA to initiate gender sensitive planning.
for sustainable agricultural development of the agency and subsequently both the women and men farmers which MOFA tries to assist (FASDEP II, 2007:17). While MOFA indicates that it is necessary to establish a “desk” to coordinate gender mainstreaming into it’s work as a means to tackle gender inequality in the agricultural sector and create conditions that improve the productivity of women farmers and producers, this gender desk at the national level was not examined by the Emory research team and cannot be validated (FASDEP II, 2007:17). However, the research team did speak with district-level, female agriculture officers; detailed information regarding the role of these officers will be discussed later in this section.

According to FASDEP II, there are two critical issues that impede the development of women in agriculture. The first issue is the heavy workload of women farmers and producers, which subsequently undermines their activities and earnings. The second issue is poor farmers’ (male and female) limited access to key productive resources such as land, credit, information, and technology (FASDEP II, 2007:17). The policy indicates that MOFA “promotes the formation of viable farmer groups and Farmer-Based Organisations (FBOs) with gender equity to enhance their knowledge, skills, and access to resources along the value chain, and for stronger bargaining power in marketing” (FASDEP II, 2007:27). However, this policy fails to provide directives on how these groups would be created and how it would be implemented across the government levels.

With regard to extension services – which many male and female farmers in the UER rely upon greatly – MOFA notes that “public service delivery, e.g. research and extension, has come under scrutiny with concerns over sustainability” (FASDEP II, 2007:15). According to the policy, attempts to implement extension services have come from the private sector indicating the following:

…the few pilots on the ground show that private sector service providers have their strengths in group development and business related services rather than in the delivery of technical information. Engagement of private sector service providers for the promotion of private sector participation in extension service delivery should therefore be based on their specific competences as well as cost effectiveness.

(FASDEP II, 2007:15)
During our interviews with women and with extension agents, private sector service providers were not frequently mentioned in Bawku West or Bawku Municipal. However, participants mentioned private banks requiring group registration prior to issuing loans to female and male farmers. As indicated in the above policy excerpt, the banks facilitated group formation but did not improve technical expertise. The feedback received from Bawku West and Bawku Municipal female farmers mirrors the FASDEP II statements.

In relation to some of the issues and concerns voiced by women in the communities, FASDEP II does mention such concerns, but again fails to provide specific directives and steps for implementation or improvement. FASDEP II addresses issue of irrigation:

*Irrigation is seen as a necessary instrument for the modernisation of agriculture, and in particular, for reducing vulnerability of smallholders to rainfall variability. However, the expansion in irrigation is slow and the productivity of public systems is low due to poor management. Yet not much attention is given to informal systems largely patronised by smallholders. The use of small individual water lifting devices has contributed to increased food production in the Upper East Region and can be replicated in other parts of the country. Water Users’ Associations can contribute substantially to the management of irrigation schemes but governance systems need to improve to include women. (FASDEP II, 2007:16)*

Despite this direct mention of the Upper East Region, the women did not describe these improved irrigation devices and typically indicated that they were in need of irrigation mechanisms and potable water. FASDEP indicates that it has a means to monitor the indicators of irrigation activities, but they do not specifically address irrigation and women. One particular monitoring method states, “record number of new irrigated schemes and farm roads developed and/or started during the considered year, and number of schemes and farm roads implemented with environmental mitigation measures” (FASDEP II, 2007:66). None of the monitoring methods, with regards to irrigation, target women.

In the FASDEP *Matrix of Harmonised Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators*, and with regard to gender equity and other outlined MOFA strategies mentioned earlier in this section, women are only addressed once in the “cross-cutting interventions and policies” section as part of MOFA’s pro-poor agriculture interventions. The outlined strategy recommends to, “design and implement special interventions for the resource poor, including the women” (FASDEP II, 2007:69). This statement provides no specific ways to
monitor the intervention and its effect on women nor does it effectively address how to incorporate women into agriculture.

MOFA’s gender mainstreaming policy strategies include: strengthening institutional capacity for effective gender mainstreaming, advocating affirmative action in recruitment and training in MOFA, ensuring gender disaggregation of data in MOFA, ensuring collection, use and maintenance of gender disaggregated data at all levels, prioritizing a key gender mainstreaming strategy annually for implementation, and promoting systematic and regular gender analysis of agricultural programs to ensure they do not increase the workload of poor women and men farmers (FASDEP II, 2007:45). However, there is no gender mainstreaming framework outlined in FASDEP. Gender mainstreaming is not part of the matrix noted above; instead, it is only listed under its crosscutting interventions and policies (FASDEP II, 2007:63). While the notion of gender appears to be important to MOFA, as it continually refers to “gender equity” and “gender mainstreaming” as crosscutting policies, it is not addressed concretely. Additionally, gender appears to be an “add-on” to most of the proposed strategies and interventions and is not a main component to the agriculture policy.

In addition to outlining MOFA structural issues, FASDEP also provides strategies to strengthen financial assistance through distribution and access. These strategies are outlined as follows: strengthening capacity of operators in credit management; strengthening loan monitoring; streamlining loan application procedures; intensifying education of farmers on loan procedures; promoting linkages between formal and informal financial services for delivery and recovery of loans; promoting flexibility in types of collateral demanded by financial institutions; strengthening informal and micro-financial institutions in rural area; resource poor operators will be targeted with group lending approaches; strengthening capacity of FBOs to facilitate delivery of financial services to their members; advocating an Agriculture Development Fund to serve as a core source of medium to long-term funding; and enhancing rural women’s access to financial services (FASDEP II, 2007). However, the last strategy is the only one that makes specific mention of women with regard to financial services. There are no detailed measures outlined in the policy as to how this will be done throughout the country, nor is it accounted for in the strategy matrix.
While it is apparent that no food and agricultural policy can be fully comprehensive, Ghana’s FASDEP and FASDEP II provide a basic insight as to how to address MOFA’s issues and needs related to gender, finance, and ministry structure. While the policy provides information on what the issues are and what the strategies should be in order to better incorporate gender into the agriculture sector, it fails to fully address how these efforts should be implemented, causing a gap between what national policy mandates and what, in reality, can be done by those who are implementing it.

Now that the national policy has been examined, it is important to use this information when evaluating women in agriculture at the district and community levels. In Bawku West and especially in Bawku Municipal, efforts are hindered by limited mobility and funding. In Bawku Municipal, MOFA director, Mr. Apombora, indicated “some years ago MOFA would help processing groups by giving them machines and equipment. But because of the conflict most of the processing machines are now broken or were confiscated and we do not have the funds to do a similar program.” Again, the national level strategy does not take into account the specific circumstances and implementation limitations at the district and community levels. While this may not be the role of national officials and their subsequent policies, the limitations of fully implementing policies at the district and community levels cannot be ignored. Many of the limitations associated with suggested FASDEP strategies were identified by officials and women in all of the communities. For example, the FASDEP strategies do not outline how women can increase the initial capital in their bank accounts so that they can obtain more substantial loans. However, many groups we spoke with indicated that they had money in the banks, but still did not have enough money to qualify for a loan. Since many of the women brought up the need for irrigation, it is evident that the proposed MoFA strategies address the needs of the women/communities, but fail to provide steps or directives on how to implement proposed strategies (FASDEP II, 2007:41).

Through our interviews with MOFA officials at the district level, as well as farmers in both Bawku West and Bawku Municipal, the farmers, both men and women, are encouraged to establish and maintain farming groups. However, in Bawku Municipal the Women in Agriculture Officer, Hasnau Apam, indicated that due to the high cost of fuel and
limited mobility, extension agents are limited in their ability to go to communities. In an effort to assist with this, Ms. Apam has recruited women volunteers in the communities to serve as liaisons among the women/groups and the district MOFA office. However, according to MOFA policy, the use of contact farmers (in the case of Bawku Municipal the women volunteers) for assistance has worked but can often limit the access of poor, risk-prone farmers to extension services (FASDEP II, 2007:15). The policy claims that extension agents “prefer to work with farmers who are outgoing and can demonstrate ability to utilise technologies” (FASDEP II, 2007:15). Ms. Apam’s efforts, however, appear to be more basic, and focus primarily on the sharing information and providing support.

Ms. Apam also noted the limited funds that MOFA in Bawku Municipal now receives. As a result, MOFA’s primary purpose in relation to women is to conduct and provide education related to land. Ms. Apam indicated that the land is traditionally not given to women as stated MOFA’s policy. Circumstances have changed slightly over the years. Now, women are being given land, but the land is unproductive. MOFA now tries to meet with opinion leaders in communities to encourage men/husbands to release productive land to women for crop production. MOFA in Bawku Municipal is also doing a livestock project where women in the municipality are given livestock to rear. The government also provides seeds and fertilizers. Ms. Apam explained that MOFA in Bawku Municipal prefers to work with groups, but because the groups tend to not have land, much of the government subsidies are given to individuals instead. MOFA in Bawku Municipal works with the Bawku East Women Development Association, but indicated that they do not work with the Community Development Office, despite the CDO’s assertion that MOFA was one of it’s primary “partners.”

MOFA in Bawku West encouraged the formation of groups. Through conversations with Ms. Achema (agricultural extensionist in Bawku West), MOFA in Bawku West appears to be more active in assisting with registration of groups, etc. This could be a result of lack of mobility issues and more hands-on MOFA management. Many of these strategies were expressed by both officials and women in all of the Bawku West communities. However, many groups we spoke with indicated that they had money in the banks, but still did not have enough money to qualify for a loan. At the district level, efforts by MOFA to assist women and women’s groups are limited. The need for financial support was listed as a
primary concern for the overwhelming majority of the groups interviewed. As mentioned previously, FASDEP strategies do not provide clear steps as to how women can increase initial capital in their bank accounts so that they can obtain additional financial assistance for the investment in and operation of their particular group activities.

At the community level, the structure of the community leadership also greatly affects group operations. For example, when asked who or which office they sought assistance from, the majority of the women’s groups responded that they did not know who to ask. For most groups, if they had a problem that needed to be addressed, they would either ask the Queen Mother or the Chief. This type of response reveals that many of the groups function and operate within the community level only. Besides the process of group registration, which requires them to seek assistance from district level officials, women’s groups still function within the traditional system, deferring to the rules of the Chief, Queen Mother, and community leaders rather than those at the district offices. While when probed, women’s groups indicated that they would seek assistance from their assemblymember, never did the women’s groups name their assemblymember as the first person they would seek assistance from when facing a problem. While there is a national policy that outlines how to better assist women and gender in the agricultural sector, the policy is only effective if those for whom it is written are aware of the policy. As mentioned above, women at the community level still primarily function within the realm of traditional governance. They can and do seek assistance from district officials, such as Ms. Achema or Ms. Apam, but the women of both districts still remain marginalized despite the efforts to improve the status of gender in agriculture at the national level. The policy exists, but it is not translatable in the context of both districts and their communities††.

The Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs and the Department of Women

The Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs is Ghana’s national governing body charged with coordinating and implementing national level policies focused on the promotion of gender equality and progressing the rights of women and children. The Ministry was created in 2001 in response to international encouragements from the United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) for institutional rearrangements of

†† The research team was unable to speak with a representative from MOFA at the regional level
MOWAC’s mandate is to “formulate policies to promote gender mainstreaming across all sectors that will lead to the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women and facilitate the survival, development and growth of children” (MOWAC, 2012). MOWAC focuses primarily on human trafficking, early childhood care and development, and domestic violence. The Ministry’s main policy is the National Gender and Children Policy, whose overarching goal is “to mainstream gender and children’s concerns in the national development process in order to improve the social, legal/civic, political, economic and cultural conditions of the people of Ghana, particularly women and children” (NGCP, 2004:6). The primary policy objectives include:

- Redressing imbalances which arise from existing gender inequalities through policy review, legal reforms and enforcement of existing legislation
- Providing a national framework from which policies are derived
- Implementing activities designed to strengthen women’s roles in economic development
- Implementing activities designed to promote children’s development and protection
- Promoting women’s equal access to, and control over economically significant resources and benefits
- Enhancing the survival, development and protection of children

(NGCP, 2004:11)

While there is no explicit link made in the policy document between these stated objectives and natural resources management, the fifth objective noted above could easily be interpreted as relating to water use and natural resources management. Unfortunately, more specific strategies are not provided for how to promote a more gendered understanding of access to, and control over, economically significant resources. The policy document does identify water and sanitation as an integral aspect in national development strategies, but focuses more on framing water in the discourse of health than in natural resources management. Finally, the policy explicitly states that the responsibilities for any program implementation aimed at poverty reduction and development, including strategies focused on water and sanitation, belong to local District Assemblies (NGCP, 2004:21). The document provides recommended strategies for DAs to consider when addressing poverty
reduction programs, including “enhancing capacity” and “ensuring equitable devolution of power” (NGCP, 2004:22) but unfortunately the strategies lack specificity, including clearly defined indicators and measurable outcomes.

MOWAC is supported in its work by two departments: the Department of Children and the Department of Women. These departments are considered “the implementing agencies in the delivery of (MOWAC’s) mandates” (MOWAC, 2010). The Ministry strongly emphasizes promoting a multi-sectoral approach to gender and development, and recognizes its responsibility to work closely with other ministries, organizations, and sectors not only in policy planning but also in monitoring and evaluation due to the stated understanding that issues relating to women and children are “cross-cutting” (MOWAC, 2010).

According to Joycelyn Adii, acting Director of the Department of Women in Ghana’s Upper East Region, the national-level Ministry emphasizes that each Department take a region-specific approach to addressing women’s issues and concerns, therefore the specific mandate for each regional office varies. In the Upper East, the mandate of the Department of Women is focused primarily on female genital mutilation and women’s equality (GBV is included under the umbrella of promoting women’s equality). The Department achieves these mandates primarily through education and sensitization programs. In our first interview with Adii, a strong emphasis was placed on the role of the Department as an “umbrella organization” through which multiple sectors and organizations could collaborate and work together to achieve said mandate. This primary identity as an instrument of facilitation and collaboration is important because it adheres to the official national narrative of the role of MOWAC and its supporting departments, and also creates the impression that the institutional linkages in place in the Upper East are relatively strong and aimed at promoting a gendered approach to development in all sectors. Adii repeatedly emphasized that the Department “works through allies”, which include a variety of actors and stakeholders, from representatives from other regional offices such as the Department of Social Welfare, to NGOs/CSOs and formal and informal women’s groups and networks.
A deeper analysis of the Department of Women and its supporting policies, however, highlights certain disconnects between what MOWAC/DOW and its policies claim to be doing and the actual issues and concerns raised by the women with which we spoke.

Despite the national and regional rhetoric on departmental collaboration, regional and district level departments continue to be plagued by certain structural barriers, such as limited finances and staff. In our follow-up interview with Adii, when describing to her the types of issues and concerns that the women identified during our fieldwork, including issues related to health (potable water and clinics), education (day care services), and access to loans and capital, Adii made it clear that those types of issues were the responsibility of other ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, and therefore did not fall under the Department's mandate of FGM and GBV. When asked why she thought that the majority of issues and concerns identified by the women of the UER were not listed and/or being addressed by the policies of the Department of Women, Adii responded that the Department’s limited mandate, resources and staff made it difficult to address women’s issues that fell outside the realm of female genital mutilation and gender based violence.

Currently, the main strategies of policy implementation for the Department of Women include education and sensitization programs administered through the district level Gender Desk Officers (GDOs). GDOs are part of the District Assembly, and are responsible for coordinating activities and programs related to gender at the district level, including disbursing public funds and gathering and processing data concerning gender programs. Primary outreach and education programs are focused on domestic violence. According to Adii, “many of the households are still very patriarchal and male-dominated, and women are seen as submissive, therefore there are many cases of domestic violence that occur” that go mostly unreported. Therefore the primary policy that is used and distributed in the Upper East through the Department of Women is the Domestic Violence Act (Act 732). However, domestic violence was not mentioned as a primary issue or concern in our conversations with the women of the Upper East. While it is a safe assumption that the women most likely felt uncomfortable or unsafe discussing such sensitive and private issues with outside researchers, it is still interesting to note that very few of the other issues and concerns
identified by the women in the focus group discussions have been identified by the UER Department of Women.

Adii did, however, express that, in reference to the concerns identified by the women about their own financial constraints, the Domestic Violence Act that forms the basis of the DOW’s mandate explicitly links economic abuse to a form of “non-maintenance” domestic violence. According to Adii, men are culturally responsible for providing income for household consumption goods and services, such as paying children’s school fees, but in most households male income is not contributed to the overall household structure; it is instead kept and spent on things like alcohol and cigarettes. This is characterized as “non-maintenances” domestic violence. Unfortunately reporting rates of “non-maintenance” domestic violence cases are extremely low, and although identified as a form of domestic violence, little attention is spent on “Economic Abuse” in the Domestic Violence Act 732 as compared to physical and emotional abuse. Therefore, little is currently done to address economic abuse.

The Department would benefit greatly from increased partnerships across departments as well as with national and international NGOs. So many of the NGOs currently operating in the Upper East are focused on women’s issues, and by working through partnerships, the Department could potentially address the broad spectrum of women’s issues that include more than just FGM and GBV; the rhetoric of collaboration currently exists, however the institutional linkages between organizations and departments seems low or non-existent.

Women and Water: the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing, Community Water and Sanitation, and the National Water Policy

The Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing, and its accompanying National Water Policy (NWP), attempt to integrate gender by including a “Gender Mainstreaming and Good Governance” focus area in the NWP (NWP, 2007:50). This focus area, however, falls only under the responsibility of the Community Water and Sanitation (CWS) sub-sector, one of many sub-sectors in the MWRWH, and the gender and policy recommendations take up only one page of the seventy-page NWP document.
The policy identifies two challenge areas to mainstreaming gender and good governance in Ghana: (1) adhering to the principle of integration of women and gender sensitivity, and (2) ensuring active involvement of women in decision making in promoting transparency and accountability (NWP, 2007:50). These two challenges highlight the difficulties in not only incorporating a gender perspective into policy, but also ensuring that women are represented in decision-making processes. In order to overcome those listed challenges, the NWP outlines two specific objectives and three measures and actions. The objectives are: (1) to ensure active participation of women as a tool for empowering them to take responsibility of water and sanitation issues at all levels and (2) to ensure that there are transparent processes for accountability of managing and delivering the NCWSP (National Community Water and Sanitation Program) (NWP, 2007:50). The measures and actions include: (1) empowering women through training at all levels to perform their roles in part with their male counterparts, (2) ensuring accountability and transparency through timely reporting and participatory discussion of results, and (3) facilitating effective coordination of the sector and harmonizing development partners (DP) activities and collaboration particularly between the MWRWH and MLGRD (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development) (NWP, 2007:50). What these policy objectives and measures/actions fail to specify are the actual steps necessary to implement said recommendations. For example, what does “active participation of women” actually look like in practice, and what are women’s “roles” in relation to “their male counterparts”?

Interestingly, Joycelyn Adii did relay that the DOW had recently been identified as a key stakeholder by Community Water and Sanitation (CWS - under the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing) based on the recognition that the responsibility for many water-related activities, such as fetching water, fall disproportionately on the shoulders of women, proving that there is room for potential collaboration between governmental sectors in relation to gender. During our follow-up interview, Adii explained that this stakeholder identification was an important acknowledgement of the CWS in their commitment to ensuring their approaches to water management at the community level were truly gender integrated. As previously mentioned in the review of the National Water Policy, one of the primary policy objectives to ensuring gender mainstreaming and good governance included the “active participation of women”. The CWS is responsible for a number of Water and
Sanitation Boards, which have in the past included at least one female representative (NWP, 2007:43). But, as Adii explained:

*Before, if you looked at the Water Boards at the community level, they (the CWS) would pick 7 or 8 men and just 1 woman to be on the Board, and they called that gender. They think that just because they included 1 woman means they think they are addressing gender issues.* (Joycelyn Adii, Action Regional Director, DOW)

Adii continued to express her hopes that the newfound partnership between the Department of Women and the Community Water and Sanitation sub-sector would prove a beneficial collaboration that could help both the Department of Women and the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing meet their individual mandates of sectoral collaboration and gender mainstreaming.

**CONCLUSION**

Thus, based on the research conducted by the Emory graduate student research team in conjunction with the work on participatory action research currently being conducted by the IWM-CIRAD team in the Upper East Region of Ghana, we can conclude the following: women in the UER are embedded in multiple activity areas, including farming, processing, and trading/retailing, and many of these activity areas are highly gendered; there are a number of women-specific issues and concerns that are directly linked to the activities they engage in, but many of these issues and concerns are not currently being addressed by policies; to address some of these issues and concerns, such as lack of financial assistance, women (and men) form FBOs to pool certain resources such as capital, labor, and knowledge, and to more easily gain access to available support and services such as agricultural inputs and financial credit; ministries recognize that the provisioning of services is easier to FBOs than to individuals, but despite this recognition service provisioning is still difficult due to barriers involving staff, budgets, and transportation; the rhetoric of gender mainstreaming and integration is evident in most, if not all, policy documents, however the means and resources to achieve gender integration currently do not exist; there is great potential for collaboration among sectors (at least
rhetorically), and the recent partnership between the Department of Women and Community Water and Sanitation serves as a promising example of this.

While the study is in no way exhaustive of the entire UER, it does provide some baseline data and insights into the complex lives of women in the region. Ultimately it can be concluded that while national policies focused on agriculture, gender and water are at least attempting to incorporate a gender lens into their strategies and objectives, there still remains a pervasive disconnect between what those policies aim to achieve, and the realities and barriers that still exist at the regional and district levels in reference to implementation. Unfortunately, women remain marginalized by said policies, but also by existing patriarchal cultural attitudes and beliefs, traditional chieftaincy structures, and by their own modes of social organization which keep them isolated within villages and do not seem to extend beyond the realms of their communities.

The conclusions of this study can provide valuable insights to organizations like IWMI and CIRAD on how to appropriately integrate the women of the UER into future research and programming efforts. In addition, the study’s analysis of policies and how they fail to fully address gender in the agriculture and water sectors will hopefully engage government officials and involved non-governmental organizations to improve current policies so that women in agriculture are no longer marginalized.
# APPENDIX

## Appendix A: Women’s Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household Chores</td>
<td>Sweeping Compound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fetching Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gathering Firewood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Rearing</td>
<td>Small Ruminants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guinea Fowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Season Farming</td>
<td>Weeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Onion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Okra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lettuce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet Season Farming</td>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sorghum/Millet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soybeans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing</td>
<td>Sorghum Malt Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rice Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dawa-dawa Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shea Nut/Butter Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Pito Brewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Porridge Making/Selling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade/Retailing</td>
<td>Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fertilizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Petty Trading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Occupations</td>
<td>Hairdressers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tailors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix B: Groups Identified in Interviews and Focus Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>Group Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Binduri</td>
<td>Asungtaba</td>
<td>Shea butter extraction, dawa-dawa processing, rice processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ateygam</td>
<td>Petty trading, malt processing, spice trading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madagile</td>
<td>Rice parboiling, shea butter processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ateygam</td>
<td>Petty trading, malt processing, spice trading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nafkuliga</td>
<td>Asungtaba</td>
<td>Weeding (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pito Brewing Groups</td>
<td>Pito Brewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rice Processing Group</td>
<td>Rice Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bansi</td>
<td>Asungtaba</td>
<td>Onions, dawa-dawa, shea butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ateltaba</td>
<td>Dawa-dawa processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almalteng</td>
<td>Soy beans, rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asongteng</td>
<td>Pito brewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zongoyiri</td>
<td>Mother to Mother</td>
<td>Organized by the clinic for health education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asungtaba</td>
<td>Pool labor, capital and knowledge – purpose varies depending on need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binaba</td>
<td>Asungtaba</td>
<td>Pito brewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ate’el taaba</td>
<td>Onions, rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widnaba</td>
<td>Anungtaba</td>
<td>Women’s farming group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zalego</td>
<td>Mixed farming group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: entire groups were not interviewed, but at least one representative from each group was present during focus group discussions.
Appendix C: Interview/Focus Group Discussion Guides for Women

I would like to first thank you for agreeing to meet with us today. My name is ___________ and this is ___________________. We are from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and we want to ask you some questions about women in your community; how they’re connected and what their issues and/or concerns are. We are talking to many people within your community and other surrounding communities. With the information you provide us we hope to better understand what you do, and what is important to you.

We will be taking notes, but we would like to tape-record our discussion so we can refer back to points you raise, and so we also do not miss anything you say. Our discussion will remain completely confidential. The information you provide will only be used for this particular project. Is it okay to tape-record the discussion? ____.

I will also be writing down your answers as you provide them. Again, your responses will only be shared with the research team. If at any point you do not feel comfortable answering one of our questions, please let us know. Our interview will last approximately one hour. Are there any questions before we start?

(Sub-bullets are possible probes and/or follow-up questions)

1. Please tell us about yourself (name, age, what you do, etc.)

2. Tell me about your ‘typical’ day. What do you do during a typical day? (Activities)
   a. What activities do you do on your own?
   b. What activities require you to interact with other people?
      i. Who are those other people? (names/numbers/position)
   c. Which of your activities do you need/rely on water?
      i. How?

3. What do you talk about with other women?
   a. Generate a list of issues. For each issue identified:
   b. With whom do you talk about issue/concern X? (names/numbers/position)
      i. If they identify a group/assn/org → ask “group” questions
      ii. If they identify an individual → ask the following questions
   c. Where is she located?
   d. How often do you interact with that person?
   e. What do you ‘do’ with that person (ex: do you just talk, or do you ask for support/help, make a decision, sell/buy/exchange information, etc.)
   f. Who else is important to consider for this activity, even if you do not interact with her?
g. If I had to meet a few of the people you have just mentioned, which ones would you recommend and why? Could you please give me their contact details?
   i. If they don’t have their contact information, ask if they know someone who does.

4. What do you talk about with men?
   a. Generate a list of issues. For each issue identified:
   b. With whom do you talk about issue/concern X? (names/numbers/position)
      i. If they identify a group/assn/org → ask “group” questions
      ii. If they identify an individual → ask the following questions
   c. Where is he located?
   d. How often do you interact with that person?
   e. What do you ‘do’ with that person (ex: do you just talk, or do you ask for support/help, make a decision, sell/buy/exchange information, etc.)
   f. Who else is important to consider for this activity, even if you do not interact with him?
   g. If I had to meet a few of the people you have just mentioned, which ones would you recommend and why? Could you please give me their contact details?
      i. If they don’t have their contact information, ask if they know someone who does.

5. How/do you think women can address these issues and concerns?

6. Which groups/associations/organizations are you involved in?
   a. With whom do you interact and for which purpose? (names/numbers/position)
   b. Which of these groups/associations/organizations are exclusively for women?
   c. Where do these groups/associations/organizations meet?
Appendix D: Individual Interview Guides for Government Representatives

I would like to first thank you for agreeing to meet with us today. My name is ______________ and this is ______________. We are from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and we want to ask you some questions about the work that you do in the region/district and how it relates to women. We are talking to many people within the region and districts. With the information you provide us we hope to better understand what this ministry/department does and why.

We will be taking notes, but we would like to tape-record our discussion so we can refer back to points you raise, and so we also do not miss anything you say. Our discussion will remain completely confidential. The information you provide will only be used for this particular project. Is it okay to tape-record the discussion? ____.

I will also be writing down your answers as you provide them. Again, your responses will only be shared with the research team. If at any point you do not feel comfortable answering one of our questions, please let us know. Our interview will last approximately one hour. Are there any questions before we start?

1 Please tell us about yourself (name, age, what you do, etc.)

2 What do you do during a typical day (activities)?
   a Sub question: how important are women for your activities?

3 Does this department belong to/participate in any group/associations/organizations (which one)?
   a Sub-question: can you tell us who else participates in this group/org/association – identify departmental linkages

4 Which activities does this department focus on? Are any exclusively women’s activities? Does it require collaborative action? If so, how does that collaborative action happen?

5 Regarding activities XXX:
   a With whom do you interact? (men and women)
   b Where is this person located?
   c How often do you interact with her/him?
   d What do you ‘do’ with that person (ex: do you just talk, or do you ask for support/help, make a decision, sell/buy/exchange information, etc.)
   e Who is important to consider (even if you do not interact with her/him)
   f If I had to meet few of the persons you mentioned previously, who will they be? Why? Can you give me their contact details?
6 What do you think are women’s issues/concerns in the area?

7 How are those concerns addressed and by whom?

8 Regarding water (and more broadly natural resource management):
   a With whom do you talk?
   b Where is she located (community, another community, district, Bolga, elsewhere)
   c How often do you interact with that person?
   d What do you ‘do’ with that person (ex: do you just talk, or do you ask for support/help, make a decision, sell/buy/exchange information, etc.)
   e Who else is “important” to talk to regarding issue/concern X (even if you do not interact with her/him)
   f If I had to meet few of the persons you mentioned previously, who will they be? Why? Can you give me their contact details?


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