
JICA SUPPORTS PARTICIPATORY IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT IN GHANA

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) together with the Ghana Irrigation Development Authority (GIDA) organized a workshop on Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) for farmers and managers of public irrigation schemes on 11th and 12th September, 2017 at the GIDA Training Center in Accra. The workshop was organized to develop the capacity of GIDA and farmers in efficient scheme oversight and water management in response to the promulgation of Legislative Instrument (L.I.) 2230 in May 2016. The L.I. enjoins farmers on public irrigation schemes to form Water User Association (WUA) under the supervision of GIDA. Considering that the WUA formation instructed by the L.I. 2230 is new in the country, it has become necessary for farmers and GIDA staff to be trained to ensure the effective functioning of the WUAs, hence the intervention by JICA to address this need. A WUA on an irrigation scheme is responsible for the operation, maintenance and management of the irrigation infrastructure and the efficient distribution of water to members within a defined service area.

Utilizing the experience of JICA PIM Projects in the Philippines, Prof. Ieko Kakuta, lecturer of the Asia University in Japan emphasized that: “for the successful operation of a WUA, it’s imperative for farmers to institute measures such as collective monitoring to prevent the emergence of free-riders” (those who use water but fail to pay for it). This she said is to “ensure equity in the distribution of water thus preventing conflicts”. Her recommendation follows from a survey she conducted on the piloting of a WUA in the Kpong Irrigation Scheme near Asutuare.

On his part, the Chief Executive of GIDA, Dr. Ben Vas Nyamadi, appreciated the support that JICA is providing to the Authority to ensure the successful operation and maintenance of the irrigation schemes across the country. He also advised his staff and the farmers “to take the training seriously as both parties have a collective responsibility in ensuring successful WUA and scheme oversight”.

Since the late 20th century, JICA and GIDA have had a successful bilateral cooperation in developing the irrigation sub-sector particularly in the area of improving irrigation farming systems and farmers' participation in irrigation management. Reference can be made to the Small Scale Irrigated Agriculture Promotion Project (SSIAPP: 1997-2002) and Project for Promotion of Farmers' Participation in Irrigation Management (FAPIM: 2004-2006). Currently, JICA together with GIDA are implementing the "Project for Enhancing Market-Based Agriculture by Smallholders and Private Sector Linkages in Kpong Irrigation Scheme" (MASAPS-KIS Project) from 2016 to 2021.

The MASAPS-KIS Project will benefit over 2,500 smallholder farmers in KIS in the area of increasing their productivity and profitability of rice farming, water management (through the establishment of WUA), operation and maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure and the marketing of rice. These favourable developments in the Scheme will also generate positive rippling effects on the activities of other value chain actors such as aggregators, processors and agriculture machinery service providers.

On their part, GIDA will benefit from several capacity development programmes to effectively execute their new mandate of performing both regulatory and oversight roles on the management of irrigation schemes. Also, GIDA will utilize the WUA training modules developed by JICA in training other WUAs in the remaining public irrigation schemes to enable them also efficiently utilize water for their activities as well as operate, maintain and manage the irrigation infrastructure.



Contact Persons:

Joseph Isaiah Mensah, Programme Officer
JICA Ghana Office
2nd Floor, The Elizabeth, No. 68A, Senchi Link,
Airport Residential Area, Accra (P.O. Box 6402, Accra- North)
TEL: 0302 760 781/2
E-mail: mensahjosephisaiah.gn@jica.go.jp

Kojo Williams, JICA Ghana PR Advisor
TEL: 0242903392 Email: kojo.o.williams@gmail.com