



Kwame Nkrumah
University of Science
and Technology



BUREAU OF INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR REPORT



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MESSAGE FROM THE PROVOST, CANR



PROFESSOR
**DADSON
AWUNYO-VITOR**

*Provost, College of Agriculture
and Natural Resources,
Kwame Nkrumah University
of Science and Technology*

As one of the six Colleges of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources' mandate is to train, conduct research, and disseminate knowledge in the areas of sustainable agriculture, renewable natural resources management, and rural development. The College consists of the Faculty of Agriculture, the Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources, and the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD), a dedicated Research Centre."

Being the lead research Centre with over 4 decades of experience in KNUST, BIRD's mission is to provide an interface between

the university and rural communities while transferring innovations and other services available at the university to promote rural development aimed at enhancing the quality of life in rural areas.

BIRD conducts comprehensive interdisciplinary research, training, consultancy and advisory service in rural development. The Centre also undertakes high-quality research projects, seminars, and publications across a wide range of areas, including rural development, rural enterprise development, natural resource management, project planning and management. It has built a strong track record in training, capacity building, and rural institutional development.

BIRD has working experience in all the sixteen Regions in Ghana and is at the forefront of discussions on many



contemporary issues related to rural development. BIRD has a reputable interdisciplinary team of research and development professionals who are well accomplished in their disciplines.

BIRD has worked with numerous institutions and organizations which include: Central Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Bilateral and Multilateral Aid Agencies, International Academic Institutions and Non-Governmental Organizations.

I am excited about BIRD's achievements for the 2023/24 academic year, which has been highlighted in this document.

The highlights for the year include; problem solving, community engagement activities, securing significant research grants to conduct impactful studies in rural development in Ghana, as well as the opportunity to strengthen collaborations with government agencies, development partners and local communities.

I look forward to seeing BIRD being transitioned to an Institute soon so it can take on more ambitious projects, achieving greater success, and making a lasting impact in the field of rural development in Ghana and beyond.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF BIRD



Monica Addison (PhD)

*Director, Bureau of Integrated
Rural Development,
Kwame Nkrumah University of
Science and Technology*

It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I present the 2023/2024 Academic Year Report of the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD). This report shows our steadfast commitment to advancing rural development through rigorous research, capacity-building initiatives, and innovative community engagement. Over the past academic year, BIRD has consistently fulfilled its mission to serve as a bridge between academia and rural communities, fostering inclusive and sustainable development across Ghana and beyond.

The achievements documented herein reflect the dedication, resilience, and expertise of the entire BIRD team. During the reporting academic year, BIRD secured

substantial research grants to carry out impactful research and solidify our position as a leading research centre in rural development in Ghana and beyond. Our research activities have addressed critical challenges that not only underscore our relevance in addressing the complex issues faced by rural populations but also reaffirm our commitment to fostering equitable and sustainable progress.

A noteworthy highlight of this year has been our ability to establish and strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders, including government agencies, development partners, and local communities. These collaborations have been pivotal in translating research findings into actionable solutions that directly



benefit rural populations. Additionally, our extensive engagement with communities through training programs, workshops, and outreach activities has reinforced our reputation as a trusted partner in rural development.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, we also look to the future with optimism and resolve. BIRD remains committed to pursuing excellence by fostering innovation, enhancing capacity, and prioritizing inclusivity, diversity, equality and equity in all our endeavours. Our vision is to effect transformative change by empowering

rural communities and ensuring no one is excluded from the development process.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our partners, stakeholders, and the dedicated BIRD team for their invaluable contributions to this shared journey. Your unwavering support and collaboration have been instrumental to our success, and I am confident that together, we will continue to make a meaningful impact.

Let us move forward with a collective resolve to create a brighter, more equitable future for all.

■ ABOUT US



The Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD) is the foremost University-based rural development and research Centre in Ghana and a leading research centre of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

BIRD aims at conducting impactful research and rendering services to communities including community engagement, extension services and undertaking capacity building and advocacy to promote rural development to enhance the quality of life in rural areas.



VISION STATEMENT

The vision of BIRD is to be an institution of excellence in Africa for the promotion of inclusive and sustainable rural development



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of BIRD is to provide an interface between the University and rural communities. It transfers innovations and other services available at the university to promote rural development and enhance quality of life in rural areas through research, teaching, extension and consultancy services.



WHAT WE DO

BIRD has a reputable interdisciplinary team who are well accomplished in their various disciplines. It conducts comprehensive interdisciplinary research in rural development. Our high-quality research projects, seminars and publications encompass almost all areas of rural development, rural enterprises development, natural resource management, project planning and management, training, capacity building and rural institutional development. BIRD has working experience in all the sixteen Regions in Ghana and is at the forefront of discussions on many contemporary issues related to rural development.

KEY AREAS OF OUR WORK

BIRD offers services in seven key areas namely: Rural Development and Innovations, Capacity Building and Institutional Development, Gender and

Development, Private Sector and Rural Development, Rural Health, Social Protection and Evidence Generation. The specific areas of competence under these broad service areas are as follows:

<p>RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy planning and implementation ✓ Local economic development (LED) ✓ Decentralization and local governance ✓ Agricultural development planning and management ✓ Natural resources management and governance ✓ Climate change mitigation and adaptation ✓ Transfer of innovations 	<p>CAPACITY BUILDING AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Building and strengthening the capacity of local institutions and community-based organisations ✓ Strengthening the capacity of chieftaincy institutions ✓ Public institutional reforms and transformation ✓ Development of tailor-made training programmes ✓ Institutional strengthening and capacity-building ✓ Promotion of public/private partnership and management models ✓ Civil society and civic engagement Network support for NGOs 	<p>PRIVATE SECTOR AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small and medium-scale enterprise development ✓ Training in business development and management ✓ Rural finance mobilisation and management ✓ Feasibility studies of raw material-base for rural economic ventures ✓ Enterprise product appraisal and development ✓ Value chains and inclusive market development ✓ Private sector engagement
<p>GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gender mainstreaming into development ✓ Women's organizations and development ✓ Gender analysis and gender-responsive programming 	<p>RURAL HEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Agricultural health and safety ✓ Healthy ageing ✓ Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) ✓ Health impact assessment ✓ Health programme planning and evaluation 	



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION

- ✓ Child labour and trafficking
- ✓ Cash transfer programmings
- ✓ Productive inclusion
- ✓ Population management and migration for development
- ✓ Food and nutrition security
- ✓ Youth development
- ✓ Disability-inclusive development
- ✓ Social protection systems strengthening
- ✓ Inclusive rural development

EVIDENCE GENERATION (RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND DATA ANALYTICS)

- ✓ Rural development-driven research
- ✓ Baseline studies and specialized sector studies
- ✓ Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)
- ✓ Evidence syntheses (systematic reviews, realist reviews, meta-evaluation, scoping reviews)
- ✓ Impact evaluations and policy analyses
- ✓ Data analytics and visualisation

SIGNIFICANT ACHEIVEMENTS

RESEARCH PROJECTS

BIRD has had a highly productive year conducting research and evaluation studies on agriculture, child labour, climate change and gender responsive budgeting, and other rural development issues. A total of two grants (2) and nine (9) consultancies were carried out during 2023/ 2024 academic year, amounting to over \$800,000.00.

PUBLICATIONS

Over the past academic year, researchers at BIRD produced nineteen(19) publications in peer reviewed journals, seven (7) book chapters, six (6) conference papers in conference proceedings and seven (7) technical reports for clients.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Twenty-four (24) courses taught in various departments at KNUST.
- Supervision of 8 PhD students; 21 MSc students; 12 undergraduate students
- Three hundred (300) graduates and interns received hands-on training in contract research and consultancy practice
- Two (2) short courses were mounted, including systematic review and our maiden short course Digital Marketing Mastery, comprising 27 and 36 participants, respectively.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of our flagship University Community Engagement programme. BIRD organised a one-day capacity building workshop for 17 young people from Kwamo Community. The participants were introduced to Information Communication and Technology, and how to exploit its potentials to promote business. The specific skills acquired include: graphic design, use of AI, advertising of product and services using ICT, design of flyers, T-shirts among others.

MEDIA

In 2023/2024 academic year, BIRD's media profile increased significantly including a revamp of the Bureau's website. Our researchers were involved in radio and television interviews as well as panel discussion. Facebook friends and Twitter followers continue to build with no sponsored advertising.





OVERVIEW OF **PROJECTS**

Tables 1 and 2 provide an overview of projects/grant proposals worked on by staff in 2023/2024 Academic Year.

Table 1: Research Grants, 2023 – 2024 Academic Year

No.	Full Project Title	Funding Body	Date Commissioned	Proposed funding	BIRD Contact Staff
1	The Impact of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices on Social and Emotional Development in Diverse Early Childhood Classrooms in Ghana	IDRC	Jan 2024	CAD\$499,500	PSM, SEE, EOA, EFA
2	Investigating Pathways towards cocoa producer-focused climate policy in Ghana	Harvard University	October 2024	\$38,459	AAA

Table 2: Commissioned Research Activities, 2023 - 2024

No.	Full Project Title	Funding Body	Date Submitted	Proposed funding	BIRD Contact Staff
1	Evaluation of Helen Keller International Food Security Projects	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	September 2024	\$80,000.00	EOA, BW, IB, TY, MA, NMO
2	Households Listing Exercise for the Grain Grading and Certification Project (GGCP) in Ghana	School of Agriculture, University of Ghana, and African Development Bank	April 2024	\$32,898.00	IB, TY, AAA, BW, MA, NMO,
3	Baseline Survey for the Grain Grading and Certification Project (GGCP) in Ghana	African Development Bank	May 2024	\$80,000.00	IB, TY, AAA, BW, MA, NMO,
4	Evaluation and Revision of Ghana's National Rural Development Policy (2019-2023)	Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development	July 2024	GHC 700,000.00	EOA, BW, MA, EFA SEE, PSM, TY, IB, AAA
5	Evaluation of Gender-Transformative Cash Transfer Pilot	International Cocoa Initiative	August 2024	GHC 999,000.00	AAA, MA, BW, EOA, IB, TY, NMO, ROT
6	Baseline Assessment for the Alliance for Change Project	International Cocoa Initiative	September 2024	GHC419,948.75	AAA, MA, IB, NMO

Table 2: Commissioned Research Activities, 2023 - 2024

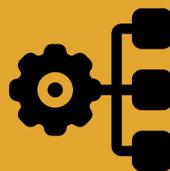
No.	Full Project Title	Funding Body	Date Submitted	Proposed funding	BIRD Contact Staff
7	Baseline assessment of Child and Forced Labour Project in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire	Fairtrade International	August 2023	€50,470.00	AAA, EOA, IB, TY, BW, NMO, ROT, MA
8	Strengthening Investments in Gender-Responsive Climate Adaptation (SIGRA)	Co-water International	August 2023	CAD\$64,414.00.	AAA, EOA, IB, TY, BW, NMO, ROT, MA
9	Consulting Services for follow-Up Studies on Impact Assessment of Local Raw Material Sourcing	GUINNESS GHANA	Sept., 2023	GH₵ 707,630.00	EOA, TY, MA, IB, PSM, AAA, BW, NMO, ROT

Notes on staff initials: AAA: Dr. Albert A. Arhin; MA: Dr. (Mrs.) Monica Addison; PSM: Prof. Paul Sarfo-Mensah; EFA: Prof. (Mrs.) Ernestina Fredua Antoh; EOA: Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo; SEE: Prof. Sampson Enyin Edusah; TY: Dr. Thomas Yeboah; IB: Dr. Isaac Bonuedi; BW: Dr. (Mrs.) Bernice Wadei; NMO: Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum.



BIRD Pays courtesy call on the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization, and Rural Development

UNITS AND PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2023/2024 ACADEMIC YEAR



BIRD as a research centre currently has three units. These units would be converted into departments following

the conversion of BIRD to an Institute. The description of the units and their functions are highlighted below.

Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (EnSuDU)

The Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (EnSuDU) exists to provide research, training, professional development, consultancy and advisory services, policy analysis and tools to individuals, corporate, governmental, or CSOs to contribute to good governance, safe, just, sustainable, socially inclusive and environmentally responsive development. The department also aims to cultivate, undertake, facilitate, and produce multi-disciplinary, collaborative, and innovative

research focused on sustainable environment, rural development, (peri) urban sustainability, and social resilience. The department brings together scholars from multi-disciplinary backgrounds to critically inform research, public debate and seek solutions to pressing challenges posed by environmental and climate changes, urbanization, policy choices, hazards, and transboundary crises (e.g. epidemics). Project highlights for 2023-2024 include:

Baseline Studies for the Child Labour and Forced Labour Prevention and Remediation Programme for Ivorian and Ghanaian Cocoa Small Producer Organisations

Over the past decade, various efforts and initiatives targeted at addressing child labour and forced labour in cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana have been carried out by a number of organizations including Fairtrade. However, the prevalence of child labour and forced labour in cocoa-growing areas in these countries has been a persistent and challenging issue. As part of effort of tackling child labour, this programme, implemented by Fairtrade, seeks to disburse funds to successful Fairtrade certified applicants for initiatives that focus on essential but often underfunded elements of strengthening children's rights and ending harmful practices. The programme is designed to complement existing funding allocated by Small

Producer Organizations (SPOs) and other entities for prevention and remediation efforts, rather than replacing them.

BIRD was contracted to undertake the baseline studies for this programme to achieve the following specific objectives: (i) To provide a better understanding of the implementation context for the programme at the onset of the programme. i.e., gathering data on the prevalence and nature of child labour and forced labour in the programme intervention areas; (ii) To help validate the assumptions in the programme's Theory of Change (ToC) and targets of the indicators in the programme's Monitoring Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Framework and (iii) to establish starting points or baselines for all indicators in the MEL framework, suggesting revisions in their formulation if and where necessary.

Team Member: Dr. Albert Arhin, Dr. Thomas Yeboah, Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo, Prof. Paul Sarfo-Mensah, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi and Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum.

Baseline Child Labour Prevalence Survey for the Alliance for Change Project by the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI): On-going

Child labour is a serious phenomenon in the cocoa sector. Established in 2002, the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) has been a leading organisation promoting child protection in cocoa-growing communities. In September 2024, ICI launched a baseline survey in 10 primary schools in cocoa growing communities in Ghana for the

"Alliance for Change" Project. BIRD has been contracted to undertake the baseline studies on the prevalence of child labour in the project communities. A quantitative baseline survey was conducted in 10 primary schools spread across 10 communities in Bekwai District - Ashanti Region, Ghana.

Team members: Dr. Albert Arhin, Dr Monica Addison, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum.



■ Investigating Cocoa Producer-Focused Climate Policy in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana: On-going

During the year, BIRD obtained a subgrant from the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences to support collaborative research entitled, “Investigating Cocoa Producer-Focused Climate Policy in Ghana”. The primary objectives of the research in Ghana are: To understand the impact of the Living Income Differential (LID) and related policies on cocoa producers; to assess the impact of climate change on

cocoa production, livelihoods, and producer health; to identify governance and policy steps that can be drawn from the research findings to develop a producer-focused climate policy; to engage cocoa producers in a participatory action approach to co-design solutions and enhance adaptive capacity. The project is still in its inception phase and data collection and project activities are expected to begin in earnest in 2024/ 2025 academic year.

Team members: Dr. Albert Arhin, Richard Tetteh

Gender, Social Change and Development Unit (GSCDU)

The Gender, Social Change, and Development Unit (GSCDU) is dedicated to advancing research, capacity building, and consultancy services that address critical social issues and gender-related challenges. It promotes inclusive growth and community transformation in Ghana and beyond. The unit conducts multidisciplinary research on rural livelihoods, education, migration, health, microfinance, and rural poverty, providing evidence-based insights

to inform policy and practice. With a focus on improving well-being and addressing gender inequalities, GSCDU works to empower individuals and communities through innovative solutions and inclusive development strategies. The unit has a team of skilled researchers and academics with varied expertise and several years of experience in both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. Project highlights for 2023-2024 include:

Endline of the Gender-Transformative Cash Transfer Pilot by the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI): On-going

In May 2023, the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) and its partners launched an experimental design to test whether cash transfer impacts differ depending on whether men or women receive the money, and to assess the effectiveness of cash transfers when combined with other interventions to promote gender equality and financial inclusion. After one year of implementation, BIRD has been contracted

to undertake an endline assessment of the study. BIRD conducted a quantitative survey among a sample of approximately 1100 households spread across 79 communities and 5 districts in Ghana. A qualitative assessment of the modalities of the project design, using Focus Group Discussions and key informant interviews from 10 selected communities were also undertaken.

Project Team: Dr. Albert Arhin, Dr Monica Addison, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Prof. Olivia Agbenyega, Dr Bernice Wadei, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum, Dr. Thomas Yeboah,

Strengthening Investments in Gender-Responsive Climate Adaptation (SIGRA)

Ghana, just like many other African countries, is experiencing the impacts of climate change, posing remarkable challenges to the livelihoods and well-being of its population, particularly women, girls, and vulnerable groups. These groups of individuals are disproportionately affected by the climate change impacts. As such, climate change adaptation-related projects aimed at improving the resilience of these individuals are essential for national development. SIGRA project aims at delivering technical assistance and support to strengthen governance and national systems with key central level Ministries, Departments, and Agencies while providing direct grants to five Districts funding local

gender responsive climate adaptation projects. The ultimate goal of the project is to improve resilience of Ghanaian citizens, particularly women, girls, and vulnerable groups, through increased investments in inclusive and gender-responsive climate adaptation initiatives. SIGRA will also support regional government stakeholders in the Accra, Northern and Volta regions and strengthen the ability of targeted Districts to plan, implement, and report on climate adaptation initiatives. The project is implemented by Co-Water International. BIRD has been undertaking baseline studies to support the SIGRA project.

Project Team: Dr. Albert Arhin, Dr. Bernice Wadei, Dr Ebenezer Owusu-Addo, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Dr. Mrs. Monica Addison, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah Odum, Mr. Richard Tetteh



Households Listing and Baseline Survey for the Grain Grading and Certification Project in Ghana

GGCP is a three-year research and outreach initiative in Ghana, which is aimed at exploring the potentials of leveraging proper grading and certification of grains in sub-Saharan African countries to promote investments in grain quality enhancement to increase consumption of safe and healthy food locally, and open opportunities for grain exports into global markets. In addition, GGCP seeks to investigate whether there is a business case for independent third-party provision of grain grading and certification. With financial support from the Korea-Africa Economic Cooperation Fund (KOAPEC), GGCP is implemented by the African Development Bank, Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire (AfDB) and the School of Agriculture (SoA), University of Ghana, Legon. The anticipated results of the GGCP include: (i) empowering smallholders in market negotiations, allowing them to receive a premium price for higher quality grain; and (ii) encouraging uptake of technologies that increase production and resilience of grain suitable for high-value processing and exportation. The Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD) was

contracted by SoA, University of Ghana and AfDB to support with household listing and baseline data collection respectively for the project.

The household listing exercise was conducted between April and May 2024 in about 298 communities, spread across 19 districts in the Ashanti, Bono, Bono East, Central and Eastern regions of Ghana. A total of 26,301 households were listed across the 298 communities. Out of the 16,023 successfully interviewed households, 13,593 (84.8%) engaged in crop farming, and 81.2% (11,020) of these crop farmers reported growing maize during the 2023 farming season. The remaining 18.8% indicated they did not cultivate maize during the reference season due to inadequate rain, pest infestation (predominantly fall army worm), little or no access to fertilizer and other agro-chemicals, and other supply-side challenges which resulted in poor harvest, as well as poor market prices and low market demand. The listing data showed that majority of the crop farmers (83.3%) were aware of aflatoxin contamination in maize, which they attributed to improper drying and storage (especially during the rainy season). However, further probe

revealed that most farmers were not aware of its health implications.

The baseline survey for the GGCP assignment was undertaken in July 2024, following a 4-day intensive training of enumerators. A total of 3427 randomly sampled maize farmers (70% male, 30% female) (from the listing database) were interviewed. The baseline survey gathered data on household characteristics, crop production, marketing, credit system, agricultural technologies, and food security status. The baseline data will enable the

project team, comprising of seasoned researchers from the AfDB and SoA, to plan for the implementation of grain quality grading and certification interventions, as well as to monitor and evaluate their impact on price for high quality grain, improved technology adoption, and household wellbeing in Ghana.

Team members: Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Dr. Thomas Yeboah, Dr. Albert Abraham Arhin, Dr. (Mrs.) Bernice Wadei, Dr. Mrs. Monica Addison, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum and Mr. Richard Oblitei Tetteh.



BIRD staff in a pose with the GGCP team from the African Development Bank and School of Agriculture, University of Ghana, Legon.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Unit (MELU)

MELU is a multidisciplinary unit that aims to promote development effectiveness and inclusive growth through the production of rigorous, high-quality and independent evaluation and research evidence that meet the highest standards of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The Unit is staffed

by a team of experienced evaluators and researchers who bring a broad range of expertise from agriculture, health, education, housing, climate change, labour markets, microfinance, and rural development among others. Highlights of projects worked on include:

Socio-Economic Impact of Guinness Ghana Breweries PLC's Local Raw Material Sourcing

Since 2012, GGB Plc has progressively increased its reliance on locally sourced raw materials for producing its premium brands, with a long-term goal of achieving 70% reliance on local sources. The company has raised the proportion of local raw materials from a modest 12% in 2012/2013 to 56% by 2023. This milestone coincides with the 10th anniversary of GGB Plc's strategy to leverage the Government of Ghana's concessions, which offer favourable tax incentives to manufacturers substituting imported raw materials with local alternatives for producing excisable goods.

In 2014, GGB Plc conducted a baseline study, followed by assessments in 2017 and 2019, to evaluate the social and economic impacts of its Local Raw Materials Sourcing (LRMS) initiative. With the initiative reaching its 10th year, GGB

Plc commissioned a new impact study in 2023 to assess the incremental social and economic effects of the LRMS initiative since the 2019 evaluation and to measure its overall impact over the past decade compared to the baseline.

The study adopted a concurrent mixed-method approach, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. Data collection involved administering a structured questionnaire to 935 beneficiary smallholder farmers cultivating sorghum and maize in Ghana's Upper West, Upper East, Northern, and Bono East regions. Additionally, the evaluation team conducted 13 focus group discussions, 25 in-depth interviews (IDIs) with smallholder farmers, and 15 key informant interviews (KIIs) with aggregators and other stakeholders in the project's area of influence. Data collection took place between August and September 2023 and was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques for quantitative data and thematic and narrative synthesis for qualitative data.

The findings reveal that since its inception in 2014, the LRMS initiative has significantly contributed to reducing rural poverty by enhancing the productivity, income, and resilience of smallholder farmers. The results highlight that LRMS delivers both business advantages and developmental benefits to society. By enabling private sector companies like GGB Plc in developing markets such as Ghana to increase their local sourcing, the initiative generates substantial socio-economic impacts for smallholder farmers and agribusinesses. It also allows local companies to amplify the developmental outcomes of their investments.

Evidence from the study demonstrates that, in addition to benefiting GGB Plc, local sourcing has notable developmental effects on society. These include immediate benefits such as increased local incomes and employment, as well as longer-term benefits that support structural economic transformation. Furthermore, GGB Plc's LRMS initiative is a vital tool for achieving the agricultural sector's goals of improved productivity and rural poverty alleviation in Ghana. The initiative directly adds value

to the local economy and stands as a key means by which GGB Plc supports and enhances capabilities within local communities in Ghana.

The study recommends that the government consider adopting business and public policy decisions that could enhance these impacts while maintaining a business-friendly environment to encourage ongoing private sector investment. Market actors are advised to strengthen linkages between value chain stakeholders—such as agribusinesses, aggregators, and smallholder farmers—and to improve the enabling environment for local market participants. Additionally, GGB Plc is encouraged to regularly review the prices offered to local aggregators and farmers to ensure competitiveness, promote sustainable farming practices, and advocate for zero irresponsible drinking.

Evaluation Team: Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Dr. Thomas Yeboah, Dr. Bernice Wadei, Dr. Monica Addison, Dr. Albert Arhin, Prof. Paul Sarfo-Mensah, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum, and Mr. Richard Tetteh.





Interviews with project beneficiaries

Evaluation of Helen Keller International Food Security and Nutrition Projects in Cote d'Ivoire: On-going

Malnutrition is a major public health problem in Côte d'Ivoire, where almost half of the population lives in poverty and approximately 22% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition. There is also a high prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15 to 49 years, by pregnancy status (50.9%) (WHO, 2022). To address the problem of malnutrition, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) provided grants to Helen Keller International to implement food security and nutrition projects between 2017 and 2024. The project specifically targeted women within the reproductive age and children under five.

BIRD was commissioned by LDS to evaluate the project after seven years of implementation. The purpose of the evaluation was to ensure that the Church's funds were used as intended and that the desired impact of reducing the incidence of malnutrition in Cote d'Ivoire had

occurred. The fieldwork was carried out in the Korhogo Prefecture of Cote d'Ivoire covering all 25 project communities.

The evaluation findings showed that the project had contributed to addressing development priorities by targeting chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies among children and women of reproductive age in the Poro region in Cote d'Ivoire where malnutrition rates were among the highest in the country. Interactions with the women beneficiaries revealed that the LDS support laid solid foundations for more gender equal relations, outcomes, and healthier current and future generations. The women beneficiaries and community leaders interviewed indicated that the project had been transformative and touched on multiple aspects of livelihood improvement, economic empowerment, and social cohesion.

Team members: Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo, Dr. Bernice Wadei, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum, Dr. Thomas Yeboah.



Situational Analysis of Rural Development in Ghana

The Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development (MLGDRD) commissioned BIRD to conduct a situational analysis of rural development in Ghana in to inform the development of the revised rural development policy. The analysis covered the state of rural development in Ghana, indicators for rural development, frameworks and governance structures for rural development in Ghana, and a rapid assessment of the implementation of the 2019-2023 rural development policy. The situational assessment involved interviews with key rural development actors and a review of existing and past project documents and analyses of data from the Ghana Statistical Service and other relevant sources.

One of the key findings and conclusions from the situational analysis is that mainstreaming rural development in the Ministry's agenda has the potential to improve public service delivery, reduce poverty and stem rural-urban migration. The study has shown that some gains have been made in terms of improvements in rural development indications with multi-dimensional poverty reducing from 64.6% in 2020 to 37.7% in 2024. Access to electricity in rural areas also increased from 50.83% in 2013 to 71.60% in 2022.

Despite these gains, the status of rural development indicators is generally poor compared to urban areas.

The overall achievement of the implementation of the national rural development policy (2019) is 42%, which is at the lowest level of the satisfactory score (40-60%). It is clear from the assessment that to effectively prosecute the rural development agenda, a strong coordination mechanism is required at the MLGDRD to plan, facilitate coordination between MDAs, development partners, NGOs and other stakeholders. However, whatever institutional reform or change that may be adopted to promote rural development and successfully achieve rural development policy objectives, political will and adequate financial support would inevitably be key determining factors. A validation workshop was held on the situational analysis report bringing together the stakeholders in the rural development sector.

Team Members: Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo, Dr. Bernice Wadei, Prof. Ernestina Fredua Antoh, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Dr. Thomas Yeboah, Dr. Monica Addison, Dr. Albert Arhin, Prof. Paul Sarfo-Mensah, Prof. Sampson E Edusah, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum, Prof. Clifford Amoako, Prof. Nicholas Awortwi.

Development of Revised National Rural Development Policy (2025-2033) and Implementation Plan: On-going

In 2019, the Ministry of Local Government Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLDRD) developed a National Rural Development Policy (NRDP) to provide the needed focus and attention to rural areas over a five-year period (2019 to 2023). The overall aim of the policy was to achieve economic and social development of rural areas with better opportunities for poverty alleviation and enhanced quality of life for residents. The Ministry commissioned BIRD to develop a revised NRDP covering the period 2025-2033.

The preparation of the revised NRDP began in August 2024. The policy was developed by considering the emerging rural development trends, national aspirations, and international protocols and commitments such as the SDGs and The African Union Agenda 2063. Participatory approaches were adopted throughout the policy development process. A situational analysis and a review of the 2019 NRDP were conducted to inform the development of the revised policy. Policy dialogue sessions were held with relevant

rural development actors to elicit input into the policy. The MLGDRD formed an Inter-Sectorial Technical Committee with membership from Ministries of Food and Agriculture, Finance, Health, Education, Tourism, Interior, Works and Housing, Lands and Natural Resources, Sanitation and Water Resources, Ghana Institute of Planners, LUSPA, and development partners (USAID, GIZ) to provide input into the policy.

The policy aims to ensure harmonized and coordinated sequencing of development interventions in rural communities, to promote inclusive economic growth and support initiatives that contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable social and economic development. It also outlines strategies to ensure that rural development protects the environment and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Team Members: Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo, Dr. Bernice Wadei, Prof. Ernestina Fredua Antoh, Dr. Isaac Bonuedi, Dr. Thomas Yeboah, Dr. Monica Addison, Dr. Albert Arhin, Prof. Paul Sarfo-Mensah, Prof. Sampson E Edusah, Mr. Nathaniel Mensah-Odum, Prof. Clifford Amoako, Prof. Nicholas Awortwi.

KIX Project: On-Going

The KIX Project is collaborative research between KNUST and KIX-GPE (or Knowledge and Innovation Exchange and Global Partnerships for Education) on the Impact of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices on Social and Emotional Development in Diverse Early Childhood Classrooms in Ghana. The project was selected through a competitive call for proposals, it was adjudicated by external experts and selected by the KIX Executive Committee, and an agreement signed for its commencement on the 1st of July 2024 and scheduled to last for 24 months ending on the 30th of June 2026.

The project, which is being facilitated at KNUST by BIRD, seeks to explore the use of culturally responsive pedagogies (CRPs) or teaching practices to promote social and emotional development of early learners. The research grant is worth CAN\$ 499,500 and it is being provided by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of the Canadian Government. The grant includes sponsorship for two MPhil graduate students to do research on Early Childhood and Care Education (ECCE) at KNUST.

The key justification for the project is that literature has shown that Ghanaian classrooms often utilize Western

pedagogies that ignore cultural assets non-Akan ethnic groups possess. This discrepancy frequently leads to disengagement among early learners. In 2019 a new KG curriculum was introduced in Ghana for Early Child Education. Though this curriculum is good, it appears to be weak in dealing with the cultural dimension needed to help in the socio-emotional development of the children. Thus, even the play-based pedagogy emphasized in the curriculum and exemplars used in teaching the children appear to be Eurocentric. Moreso, current teaching and learning resources promote more of intellectual development and less of socio-emotional development capacities. The study will address these biases by developing and accessing culturally responsive interventions to strengthen teacher practice and diverse learners' social and emotional development in diverse early childhood contexts. Findings will guide scalable culturally responsive models embedded through policy, pre-service and continuous professional development modules to sustain advances in early grade practices that reflects Ghana's diversity and enrich inclusion and equity from the start of schooling.

Assess Project

The USAID West Africa Regional Economic Growth Office (REGO) funded the Analytical Support Services and Evaluations in Sustainable Systems in West Africa (ASSESS-WA) project from March 2014 to December 2023 with 25 million USD. KNUST through BIRD of CANR was one of the three key partners that implemented the project across West Africa. The other two partners were US Department of Agriculture and the University of Rhode Island, USA. Two major contributions the USAID West Africa Regional Economic Growth Office (REGO), which was the main client of the project, made to BIRD and the College that ought to be emphasized and appreciated are the following: 1. donation of 270 Perkins Generator and a Ford Mondeo Saloon car plus 20 pieces of moderately used laptops at the end of the project to support energy, transportation and data processing needs of BIRD; 2. provided technical and financial (50,000 USD) support on three PhD research projects that were jointly managed by the College and Department of Industrial Art on the impact of the COVID-19 on perishable fruits in agriculture, and dress making in the apparel industry. Indeed, this is the first of its kind that staff of USAID worked directly with the College in graduate research studies and actively participated in editing and criticizing students' output in virtual

calls. All three PhDs were successfully completed in 2023.

In addition to the above, several KNUST faculty members gained exposure through the project by serving as consultants on evaluation teams in the four key service demand areas by the client (REGO) i.e. Agriculture, Environment, Trade and Energy. This has led to enhanced capacity building at KNUST in baseline, midterm and endline evaluations.

The performance of KNUST in the ASSESS project also triggered other collaborations from USDA and USAID. The former facilitated an agreement between KNUST/ BIRD and Agromovil, a private technology firm incorporated in the US which works in connecting farmers to other actors in agricultural commodity value chains to enhance efficiency and profitability of all actors. BIRD collaborated with Agromovil to pilot the Agromovil App and platform in northern Ghana amongst Guinness Ghana Breweries PLC (GGBPlc) selected aggregators and their out-grower farmers who produce and supply Sorghum to GGBL. Funding worth about 600,000 USD was provided by USDA for the collaboration between Feb 2022 and March 2024.

TECHNICAL REPORTS AND WORKING PAPERS PRODUCED

The following technical reports and working papers resulting from the various assignments undertaken by the Bureau were produced during the year under review.

1. Arhin A. A., Yeboah T., Owusu-Addo E., Bonuedi I., Sarfo-Mensah, P. and Mensah-Odum N. (2024). Baseline Studies for the Child Labour and Forced Labour Prevention and Remediation Programme for Ivorian and Ghanaian Cocoa Small Producer Organisations. Prepared by the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development, KNUST, for FAIRTRADE
2. Arhin, A.A., Addison, M., Bonuedi, I., Agbenyega, O., Wadei., Mensah-Odum, N. and Yeboah, T. (2024). Endline of the Gender-Transformative Cash Transfer Pilot. Prepared by the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development, KNUST, for the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI)
3. Arhin A. A., Owusu-Addo E., Bonuedi I. Wadei, B., Yeboah, T., Addison, M., Mensah-Odum N., Tetteh, R. and Fiscian, B. (2024). Baseline Studies for the Strengthening Investment in Gender Responsive Adaptation Project (SIGRA). Prepared by the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development, KNUST, for Co-Water International, Canada
4. Arhin, A.A., Addison, M., Bonuedi, I. and Mensah-Odum (2024). Baseline Studies of the Alliance of Change Project. Prepared by the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development, KNUST, for the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), Switzerland.
5. Arhin, A.A., Addison, M. Wadei, B., Agbenyega, O., and Bonuedi, I. (2024). Endline evaluation of the Gender-Transformative Cash Transfer Pilot- A Qualitative Study. Prepared by the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development, KNUST, for the International Cocoa Initiative (ICI), Switzerland
6. Bonuedi, I., Yeboah, T., Arhin, I., Wadei, B., Addison, M., Mensah-Odum, N. and Tetteh, R.O. (2024). Households Listing and Baseline Survey for the Grain Grading and Certification Project in Ghana. Prepared by the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development, KNUST, for the African Development Bank (AfDB).
7. Owusu-Addo, E., Wadei B., Antoh EF., Bonuedi I., Yeboah T., Addison M., Arhin A., Sarfo-Mensah P., Edusah SE., Mensah-Odum N, Amoako C., Awortwi N. (2024). Situational Analysis for the National Rural Development Policy. Accra: MLGDRD.

PUBLICATIONS FOR 2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR



The following publications were made by the staff with high impact Journals and as Book chapters.

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

1. Sumberg, J., Holland-Szyp, C., Yeboah, T., Oosterom, M., Crossourd, B., & Chamberlin, J. (2024). Young people, Livelihood building and the transformation of African agriculture: A reality check. *Global Food Security*,41,100759
2. Boafo, J., & Yeboah, T. (2024). Understanding ecological grief as a response to climate change-induced loss in Ghana. *Climate and Development*, 1-11.
3. Yeboah, T., & Boafo, J. (2024). 'Side-hustling' in commercial agriculture among young university graduates in Ghana. *Geo: Geography and Environment*, 11(2), e00154.
4. Wadei, B., Fredua Antoh, E., Addison, M., and Yeboah, T. (2024). An Overview of the Obstacles to Gender Equality Processes in Rural and Urban Ghana: A Comparative Analysis. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096241235290>
5. Addison, M., Bonuedi, I., Arhin, A. A., Wadei, B., Owusu-Addo, E. Fredua Antoh, E. and Mensah-Odum, N. (2024). Exploring the impact of agricultural digitalization on smallholder farmers' livelihoods in Ghana, *Heliyon*, Volume 10, Issue 6, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e27541>.
6. Acheampong, P.P., Addison, M., Wongnaa, C.A., Baafi, E. and Opoku, M. (2024). Assessment of impacts of adoption of improved sweet potato varieties in Ghana: accounting for differences in male and female farmers, *Gender, Technology and Development*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718524.2023.2289499>
7. Owusu-Addo, E., Bennor, D. M., Orkin, A. M., Chan, A. W., Welch, V. A., Treweek, S., ... & Brijnath, B. (2024). Recruitment, retention and reporting of variables related to ethnic diversity in randomised controlled trials: an umbrella review. *BMJ open*, 14(8), e084889.

8. Dewidar, O., McHale, G., Al Zubaidi, A., Bondok, M., Abdelrazeq, L., Huang, J., Owusu-Addo, E... & Melendez-Torres, G. J. (2024). Motivations for Investigating Health Inequities in Observational Epidemiology: A Content Analysis of 320 Studies. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, 111283.
9. Brijnath, B., Muoio, R., Feldman, P., Ghersi, D., Chan, A. W., Welch, V., ... & Owusu-Addo, E. (2024). "We are not invited": Australian focus group results on how to improve ethnic diversity in trials. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, 170, 111366.
10. Owusu-Addo E, Renzaho AMN, Sarfo-Mensah P, Sarpong YA, Niyuni W, Smith BJ. (2023) Sustainability of cash transfer programs: A realist case study. *Poverty & Public Policy*, 15:173–198
11. Yeboah, T., & Boafo, J. (2023). The social significance of children's work in cashew supply chain activities in Ghana. *Children's Geographies*, 1-16.
12. Arthur-Holmes, F., Yeboah, T., & Busia, K. A. (2023). Dimensions of women's mobility, livelihoods and vulnerability in artisanal and small-scale mining-induced local economy. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 101, 103061.
13. Arthur-Holmes, F., Yeboah, T., Cobbinah, I. J., & Busia, K. A. (2023). Youth in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) and higher education nexus: Diffusion of innovations and knowledge transfer. *Futures*, 103201.
14. Osei, L., & Yeboah, T. (2023). Imagining a future from the pit: Future aspirations of young artisanal-small scale miners in rural northern Ghana. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(1), 2167316.
15. Boafo, J., Yeboah, T., Guodaar, L., Stephanie, Y., & Nyantakyi-Frimpong, H. (2023). Understanding non-economic loss and damage due to climate change in Ghana. *Climate and Development*, 1-10.
16. Addison, M., Ohene-Yankyera K., Adjei, P.O.W., Mujawamariya G. and Asante, B. (2023). Uptake and income distribution effects of targeted farm technologies on rice farmers in forest and Guinea Savannah Zones of Ghana: Does gender matter? *Journal of Agriculture and Food Research*,11:100516. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jafr.2023.100516>
17. Addison, M., Anyomi, B.K., Acheampong, P.P., Wongnaa, C.A., Amaning, T.K. (2023). Key drivers of adoption intensity of selected improved rice technologies in rural Ghana. *Scientific African*, Vol. 11: e01544. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sciaf.2023.e01544>

18. Ntow, T.K., Wongnaa, C.A., Nyadu-Addo, R., Addison, M., Awunyo-Vitor, D. and Abokyi, E. (2023). Effects of entrepreneurial behaviour on market outlets choice: Evidence from rice producers in Ashanti Region, Ghana. *Sustainable Technology and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 2 (2):100037 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stae.2023.100037>
19. Owusu-Addo, E., Owusu-Addo, S. B., Bennor, D. M., Mensah-Odum, N., Deliege, A., Bansal, A., ... & Odame, J. (2023). Prevalence and determinants of sexual abuse among adolescent girls during the COVID-19 lockdown and school closures in Ghana: A mixed method study. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 135: 105997.

BOOK CHAPTERS

1. Teye, J.K., Yeboah, T., and Setrana, M.B. (2024). The Sustainable Development Goals, Migration and Regionalism: evidence from Africa. In the *Elgar Companion to Migration and the Sustainable Goals*. (Pp. 355-375). Edward Elgar Publishing.
2. Kandilige, L. and Yeboah, T. (2024). West African Migration Regimes and the Externalisation of EU Migration Management Policies. In Heck, G., Sevinin, E., Habersky, E, and Sandoval-Garcia., C. (eds). *Making Routes: Mobility and Politics of Migration in the Global South*. (pp. 127-150). American University in Cairo Press.
3. Owusu-Addo, E (2023). Evaluation. In: Cross R (Ed) *Health Promotion and Health Education in Nursing*. London: SAGE, pp 158-182.
4. Okyere, S., Boamah, E. F., Asante, F. A., & Yeboah, T. (2023). Children's Work in Ghana: Policies and Politics. In Sumberg, J., and Sebates-Wheeler, R. (eds). *Children's Work in African Agriculture* (pp. 204-232). Bristol University Press.
5. Kumi, E., Yeboah, T., Kusi, N. K., Fomunjong, J. C., & Vandyck, C. K. (2023). Shifting the Narrative: Localisation and Shift the power in the African context in *Reimagining Civil Society Collaborations in Development*, 190-204
6. Yeboah, T., & Egyir, I. (2023). Children's Work in Shallot Production on the Keta Peninsula, South-Eastern Ghana. In *Children's Work in African Agriculture*. Bristol University Press.
7. Agyei, K.d., Manteaw, B.O., Nyamekye, A.B., Enu, K.B., Yeboah, T. (2023). Pathways Towards a Circular Economy in Ghana: The Contribution of Waste Transfer Stations and the Informal Waste Collectors in Solid Waste Management. In: Erdiaw-Kwasie, M.O., Alam, G. M. M. (eds) *Circular Economy Strategies and the UN Sustainable Development Goals Series*. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3083-8_18



PAPERS PUBLISHED IN CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

1. Owusu-Addo E, Owusu-Addo, SB. (2024) Using a Realist Evaluation Framework to Evaluate a Healthy Public Policy Intervention: Reflections. Proceedings from the 15th European Evaluation Biennial Conference, September 23-27, 2024, Rimini, Italy.
2. Owusu-Addo E (2023) Evaluating Public Policy Interventions Using a Realist Evaluation Framework: Reflections. Proceedings from the 6th International Conference on Public Policy, June 27-29, 2023, Toronto, Canada.
3. Owusu-Addo E, Owusu-Addo SB. (2023) The Impact of COVID-19 on Adolescent Girls' Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights: A Mixed Method Study. Proceedings from the International Society of Child Abuse & Neglect International Conference, September 23-27, 2024, Edinburgh, UK.
4. Owusu-Addo E., Padilla K., Yoshikawa M., Christiana D., Lu M., Amo-Adjei J., Fry D. (2023). The prevalence of sexual violence against children and young women between 2011-2021 in Ghana: Findings from a systematic review. Proceedings from the International Society of Child Abuse & Neglect International Conference, September 23-27, 2024, Edinburgh, UK.
5. Yoshikawa M., Rashid S., Han S., Lu M., Owusu-Addo E., Padilla K., Amo-Adjei J., Fry D. (2023). Proceedings from the International Society of Child Abuse & Neglect International Conference, September 23-27, 2024, Edinburgh, UK.
6. Addison, M., Arhin, A., Bonuedi, I. and Wadei, W. (2023). Exploring the impact of technological transformation on smallholder farmers' livelihood in Ghana. A paper presented at 27th ICABR virtual conference 2023, on the theme: "Institutions and Sustainable Transformation in the Bioeconomy Chain," Centro Cultural de la Ciencia - C3, Buenos Aires, Argentina. July 5-8, 2023.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES



Academic staff continued to serve as Editorial Board members and reviewers of International Journals. Senior members play the roles of Principal Investigators, Coordinators, Moderators and Members of Committees, Boards and also as technical consultants/advisor to both National and International Institutes. Staff also served on various KNUST boards and committees, professional associations and other national and corporate organization boards. In the year under review Staff of BIRD engaged in several community engagement activities within KNUST and its immediate environs, nationally and internationally.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN KNUST AND ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS

1. University Community Engagement Committee, comprising the Estate Officer, the Director of the Energy Center, and the Head of Community Health, College of Health Sciences, chaired by Prof. Paul Sarfo-Mensah rolled out some interventions at the Ayeduase Community. The team

facilitated the implementation of interventions in electrification, sanitation and health. The Committee has already shared a report with the Vice-Chancellor.

2. As part of its community engagement activities with surrounding communities of KNUST, BIRD organized a one-day capacity building workshop for 17 young people from Kwamo Community. The training took place at International Centre for Innovative Learning (ICIL) Building on 31st October 2024. The workshop exposed participants to the Information Communication and Technology, and how to exploit its potentials to promote business. The specific skills acquired include: graphic design, use of AI, advertising of product and services using ICT, design of flyers, T-shirts among others. At the end of the workshop each participant was provided with a certificate of participation in the training. Many of the participants expressed great satisfaction with the workshop and indicated that they are hopeful of

utilizing the knowledge gained in their different endeavours.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Nana Prof. S. E. Edusah has served as a Commissioner of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) since 2016 and contributed to the preparation of the following National documents

- i. The Medium-Term Development Plan: The Agenda for Jobs II, and
- ii. Vision 2057 - Long-Term National Development Perspective Framework

Dr. Albert A. Arhin contributed to the following national assignments:

- » Member of Technical Group working with cocoa sector stakeholders to prepare cocoa-sector action plan for the readiness of Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive
- » Member of the Team of Technical Advisors working with COCOBOD to prepare cocoa-sector child labour monitoring system in Ghana
- » Member of the Team of Technical Advisors for Oxfam on its national research on cocoa pricing pathways for co-Prospective Framework for farmers

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- » Dr. (Mrs.) Monica Addison has been a subject Editor for Social Sciences & Humanities Open, an Elsevier journal, since October 01, 2024.

- » Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo is an Editorial Board member of the International Journal of Health Promotion and Education.

Dr. Albert A. Arhin contributed to the following international assignments:

- » Member of a Global Research Team working on Climate Change Adaptation in West Africa: Strategies, Initiatives, Actions and Pathways. Coordinated by African Policy Research Institute
- » Member of Trust Africa's Regional Team working on Assessing Cocoa Pricing Mechanisms and Cost of Production Across Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire and Sierra Leone.

Dr. Thomas Yeboah contributed to the following international assignments:

- » Presented a keynote speech on Ethical Considerations of Youth Inclusion in Policy-Oriented Research for Research Enterprise Systems in partnership with MasterCard Foundation in Nigeria. This event was organised virtually on 29th August 2024
- » Served as a member of expert advisory group for the Status of Rural Youth in Agrifood Systems Report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome, Italy

Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Addo contribute to the following global research.

- » Global Research Team Working on the STROBE (STrengthening the Reporting of OBservational studies in

- Epidemiology) Equity Extension (2022 - 2026)
- » Global Research Team Working on Reporting Extension of Consort and Spirit for Inclusion, Diversity, Ethnicity and Race – RECONSIDER (2022 - 2025)
- » World Health Organisation Expert Group for the Development of Operational Framework for Monitoring of Social Determinants of Health Equity (2021-2023)

EDUCATION & TRAINING



TEACHING/ SUPERVISION OF STUDENT PROJECT WORK/ THESIS

The academic staff of BIRD continued to dedicate about 30% of their time to teaching and supervision of students' project works in various departments within the University. BIRD staff teach a total of 24 courses at selected colleges, which include Faculty of Agriculture and Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Department of Economics, Department of Geography and Rural Development and Department of Planning of the College of Art and Built Environment (CABE). Staff supervised 8 PhD students, 21 master's students and 12 undergraduate students during the period under review.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXAMINATION

The academic staff continued to serve as External and Internal Examiners for the

School of Development Studies (SDS), University of Energy and Natural Resources (UNER), University of Cape Coast and the Centre for Sustainable Development (CESDEV) at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and graduate students within CANR and other Colleges of the University.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES (SHORT COURSE)

In the 2023/2024 academic year the Bureau developed six (6) new short courses to be approved by KNUST Short Courses Committee. These include work-life balance and ethics, digital marketing mastery, leveraging AI for effective leadership and management in the digital age, Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) development and management, post-harvest technology and agricultural value chain financing and enterprise development for practitioners. In total, BIRD currently has twelve (12) short courses to be mounted in collaboration with the Centre for Capacity Building and Innovation

(CCBI), under the Vice Chancellors Office. The existing approved short courses are systematic reviews and evidence synthesis, leadership and adaptive management, participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation, microfinance management in Ghana, understanding the concept and implementation strategies of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and market access, rural entrepreneurship and Local Economic Development (LED).

During the year under review, two of the short courses namely Systematic Reviews and Evidence Syntheses and Digital Marketing Mastery were rolled out. The Systematic Reviews and Evidence Syntheses course aimed to introduce participants to the methodology of systematic reviews and evidence syntheses. Participants were exposed to the various stages involved in conducting a systematic review and had the opportunity to gain practical experience of the tasks involved at mini workshops. The course was organised from May 6 to 10, 2024 at the IDL Conference Centre, KNUST. The number of participants was 27. The participants comprised Commissioners of Research/Evaluation and Evidence Syntheses, Public Health Specialists, Development Specialists, Clinicians, Researchers, Lecturers, Postgraduate Students, and other professionals.

Similarly, from November 7 to 9, 2024, BIRD mounted a second short course on Digital Marketing Mastery at the ICIL Block in collaboration with the Department of Computer Science, KNUST. This course aimed to equip participants with the knowledge, tools, and strategies necessary to excel in the dynamic field of digital marketing. Participants were introduced

to a comprehensive understanding of the digital landscape and gained practical skills to effectively engage with audiences, enhance brand visibility, and achieve measurable results. The number of participants was 36, comprising professionals and students from diverse sectors, including rural banks, insurance companies, postgraduate students, CSIR, researchers, NGOs, and other professionals

THE YOUNG CONSULTANT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (YCDP)

Under the Young Consultant Development programme (YCDP), BIRD recruits and trains graduates (MSc/MPhil/ PhD) who are early professionals, with an interest or qualification in development and research-driven consulting in the rural and international development sectors. The programme offers graduates the opportunity to develop and refine their technical skills and provide experiences across the key thematic areas of rural/international development within BIRD's portfolio. The programme aligns with the Vice-Chancellor's mission of entrepreneurship training and is geared towards promoting research-based and consulting entrepreneurship.

During 2023/ 2024 Academic year, BIRD reviewed the entire programme to determine whether it was worth committing resources to. The finding suggests the beneficiary contributed significantly to BIRD activities and benefited immensely from the programme. The finding showed the knowledge, skills and experience the beneficiary gained from BIRD opened job opportunity for him after the programme.

Based on the success of the programme, BIRD intends to advertise and recruit a qualify graduate to benefit from the programme in next academic year.

TEMPORAL EMPLOYMENT FOR UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES

During the year under review, BIRD engaged a total of more than 300 unemployed graduates and interns in implementing

various commissioned research and evaluation studies. Aside the creation of temporal employment for these unemployed graduates, the Department contributed to building their capacity and equipped them with employable skills in research, evaluation and data analytics.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT



BIRD STAFF SHOWCASES THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCIENCE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ON NATIONAL PLATFORM

On 22nd July 2024, the Bureau of Integrated Rural Development (BIRD) participated in the “Let’s Talk About Science – Ma Yenkasa Enfa Science Ho” television program, aired on Garden City TV and organized under the auspices of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

During the program, BIRD highlighted its pivotal role in research and development, addressing its achievements, challenges, and significant contributions to the socio-economic growth of Ghana and beyond.

The program featured insightful contributions from Prof. Paul Nana Sarfo and Dr. Albert Arhin, who engaged in discussions that emphasized the

transformative impact of science and technology in shaping sustainable development.

This platform provided BIRD an opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to leveraging research and innovation for the advancement of communities, aligning with Ghana’s development goals and broader global aspirations. Details of the engagement can be viewed from here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leOpBJU3gVs>

BIRD STAFF PARTICIPATES IN PANEL DISCUSSION AS PART OF GRAPHIC'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES.

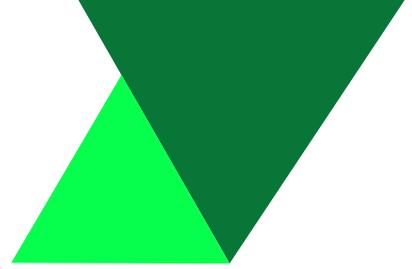
Similarly, on October 28, 2024, at Graphic National Development Series, which is an initiative of the Graphic Communication Group Ltd (GCGL), a platform was given to

political parties to outline their manifesto promises regarding the promotion of agriculture and agro-processing to harmonise the nation's efforts towards achieving food sustainability and security. It was held on the theme: "Transforming Ghana's Agriculture through Diversification and Entrepreneurship for Food Security and Sustainable Development" in partnership with the Agricultural Development Bank, Calighana and KGL. The series aimed to harmonize national efforts in transforming Ghana's agriculture sector. The event brought together experts from academia and industry players to discuss the country's potential in the agricultural sector to propose ways of harnessing the prospects for national development.

Contributing to the conversation as a panellist, Dr. (Mrs.) Monica Addison, shared her thought on the necessity of modernizing Ghana's agricultural practices. She advocated for a shift from traditional rain-fed farming to innovative, sustainable methods to enhance productivity and resilience against climate change. She highlighted that climate change has led to significant losses for farmers, underscoring

the importance of adopting adaptive measures to mitigate its impact. She called for the implementation of modern farming techniques, technologies and infrastructure to support this transition, aiming to improve food security and the livelihoods of farmers nationwide. Her insights contribute to the ongoing dialogue on agricultural transformation in Ghana, focusing on sustainable development and resilience in the face of environmental challenges.

The other panellist, Dr. Camillus Wongnaa emphasized that inadequate infrastructure, particularly poor road networks in farming communities, hampers the efficient transportation of produce from farms to markets. He recommended a robust food warehousing system to improve storage capabilities and reduce these losses. This often results in produce rotting before reaching consumers. He advocated for the development of a robust food warehousing system to improve storage capabilities and reduce these losses (<https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/ghana-news-at-graphic-national-development-series-40-locally-produced-fruits-vegetables-go-waste-agric-economist.html>)



CONVERSION OF BIRD INTO AN INSTITUTE

The conversion of BIRD into an institute can bring several strategic benefits, which include; enhancing its capacity, visibility, and impact. In the year under review, the concept paper for the conversion of BIRD to an Institute was approved by the Planning and Resources Committee, pending approval at the Academic Board. The proposed Institute will be called the

INSTITUTE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION STUDIES (IRDIS), when it is finally approved by the Academic Board and the University Council. When BIRD is transitioned into an institute, its ability to address societal challenges would be enhanced to contribute to policy and practice and achieve its mission on a larger scale.

CONSTRUCTION OF BIRD OFFICE COMPLEX



During the reporting period, BIRD completed the procurement process for the construction of the office complex which began in July 2024. A sod cutting ceremony was done by the Chancellor

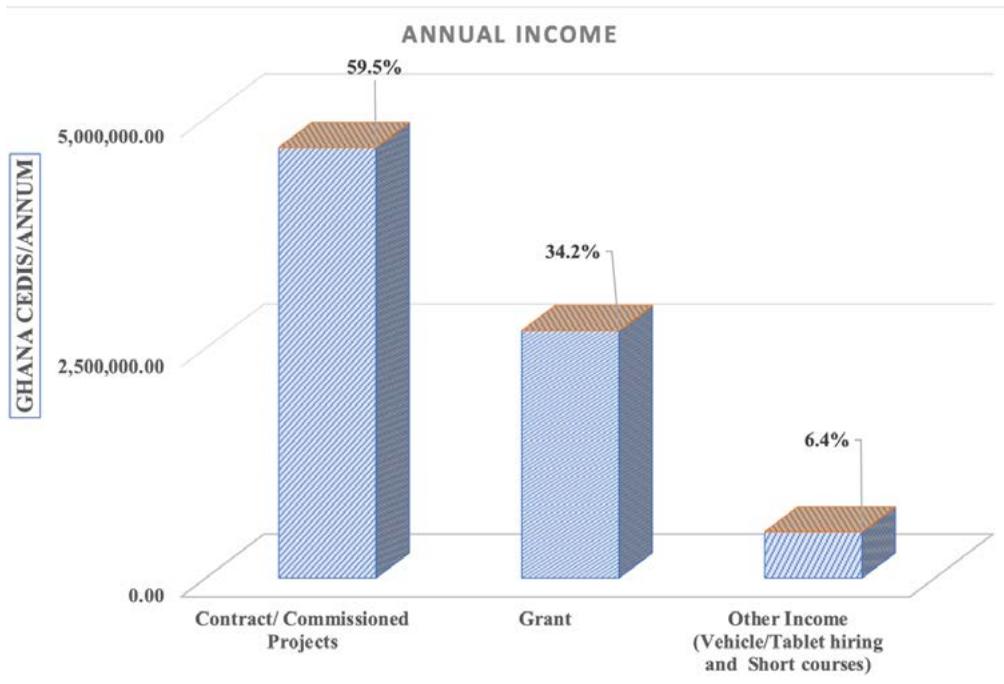
of the university, in November 2024. The first phase of the building is expected to be completed by June 2025. When the building is completed, it shall comprise of two large lecture rooms and 10 offices.



FINANCES

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE 2023/2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

Revenue	GHS
Contract/ Commissioned Projects	4,680,763.87
Grant	2,688,903.00
Vehicle Hiring Income	371,696.30
Interest on Call Account	86,043.45
Tablet Hiring Income	120,820.00
Refund of Unused Fund	84,043.45
DSA Retention	22,000.00
Part Payment of Loan Advanced to College	300,000.00
Overheads (Assess Project)	299,659.05
Short Courses (Systematic Review and Digital Marketing) Income	10,000.00
Total Revenue	8,663,929.12
Expenditure	GHS
Project Running Expenses	3,088,354.40
Staff Welfare Benefit	1,267,452.29
Internal Operational Expenses	592,165.07
Others (Investment + Taxes)	1,253,250.13
Total Expenditure	6,201,221.89
Net Cash Flows/ Cash at Hand (Excluding Dollar Inflows)	2,462,707.23
Fixed Deposit	1,745,573.44
Dollar Account	USD
Opening Balance as at Oct. 2023	509,532.16
GGCP (less \$40,000.00 used for field activity)	39,930.00
Helen Keller International Food Security Project	40,000.00
Total	589,462.16
Less PI share	16,199.76
Cash at Hand as at October 2024	573,262.40



COLLABORATION



International collaborations: The Bureau collaborated with the under-listed international organizations on various tasks:

1. Winrock International
2. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
3. Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, Erasmus University, Rotterdam.
4. PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency
5. University of Iowa, USA.
6. United State Department of Agriculture (USDA), Washington Office
7. United State Agency for International Development (USAID), Accra Office
8. University of Rhode Island, USA
9. National Ageing Research Institute, Australia
10. International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC), UK

11. The International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED)
12. African Development Bank (AfDB)
13. Knowledge and Innovation Exchange/ Global Partnership in Education (KIX/ GPE), Ottawa, Canada
14. International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ottawa, Canada
15. International Cocoa Initiative (ICI)
16. Co-Water International

Furthermore, the Bureau collaborated with the under-listed local institutions and organizations on various tasks:

1. Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGDRD)
2. Sekyere Afram Plains District Assembly
3. Sene East District Assembly
4. Ghana Educational Service



HOW YOU CAN HELP



Rural development, as it is proceeding now in Ghana, is not likely to meet the socioeconomic Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. More pragmatic and sustained efforts are required to promote sustainable and

inclusive rural development in Ghana. BIRD is committed to this agenda through our research, teaching and outreach programmes focused upon improving the wellbeing and livelihoods of rural people. There are many ways you can get involved and make a difference.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT ENDOWMENT FUND (RDEF)



BIRD has had preliminary engagement with different actors on establishing Rural Development Endowment Fund. The objective of the RDEF is to provide a stable and predictable funding for BIRD to design and implement strategic development interventions in rural Ghana. These interventions will be designed and implemented using a co-creation

approach with district and community level stakeholders. We count on your generous contributions to support this fund.

For further information about how you can support BIRD-KNUST, please call +233 (0) 322493501 or email us at bird@knust.edu.gh

