

The National Forest Plantation Development Programme (NFPDP) in Ghana was launched in 2001 with a view to restoring degraded forest areas and creating employment. Consequently, a shift is taking place from forest-based to tree-based livelihoods. This infosheet reports on a study that aimed to study the livelihood effects of two commercial and one government (HIPC)-funded plantations.

The MSc study was carried out in the Asubima and Kwamisa Forest Reserves in Offinso Forest District. The plantations cover 256 ha, 1,024 ha and 200 ha, respectively, and were planted mainly with *Tectona grandis* (teak) (95%), with *Cedrela odorata* (Cedrela) and some indigenous species covering the remaining 5%. On these plantations, 145 plantation workers as well as the private developers and plantation supervisors were interviewed. This generated information on the plantations, their workers and the livelihood effects.

General plantation characteristics

The commercial plantations differ from the government-funded one in that they provide temporary shelter, pieces of farming land or a free food supply. Because it takes many years before the trees can be harvested, cultivating and selling food crops and rearing chicken, sheep and goats are means of earning money in the meantime. The workers are therefore occupied with planting and harvesting food crops in addition to tree planting and maintenance. In one case, the workers are em-



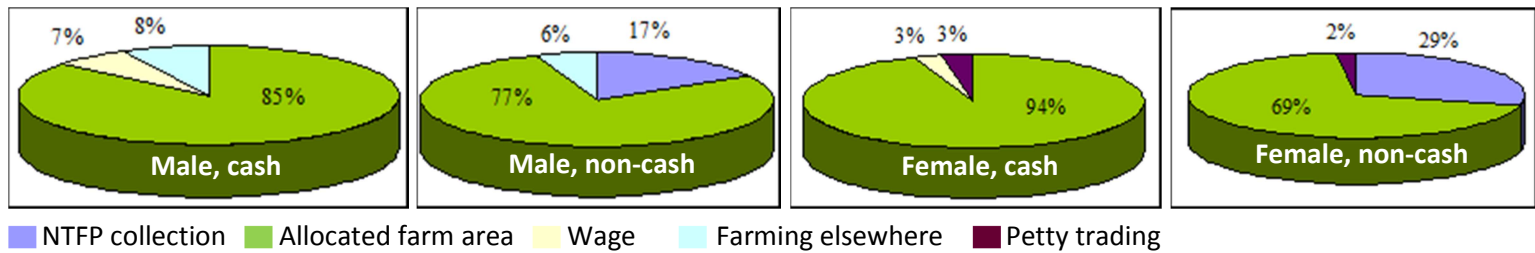
ployed fulltime, and their wages paid from the proceeds of the food crops. In another case, the labourers are only paid when they work for the developer, but are given their own small farming plot. The workers at the HIPC-funded plantation grow food crops in between the trees, although in smaller proportions and for individual use only. In this case, the workers also hold farming land in their village.

Characteristics of the plantation workers

Most of the plantation workers (79%) are migrants, most of them coming from the three northern regions of Ghana (Upper East, Upper West and Northern Regions). The proportion of migrant workers (84-94%) is higher on commercial plantations than on the HIPC-funded plantation (60%), as no housing is provided on the latter. All ages are employed, from 18 up to 72, with the average being around 37 years. Overall, there are more male than female plantation workers (57% vs. 43%), but on one of the commercial plantations females outnumbered the males (55% vs. 45%).



Cash and non-cash components of livelihoods at plantation 'B'



Livelihood benefits

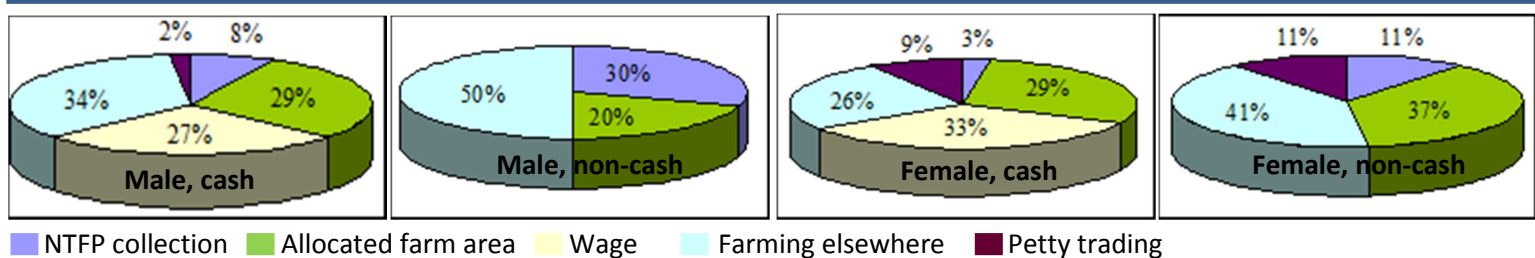
Workers appreciate the plantation scheme primarily because it provides them with a permanent job and the possibility of cultivating their own food crops. Remarkably, cash income is not the most important source of livelihood of plantation workers as payment of a fulltime wage is uncommon. Most cash and non-cash income comes from growing food crops in between the trees, on the farm plot allocated to the workers, or farming land that they hold outside the plantation (see diagrams). In addition, the plantation provides firewood and other non-timber forest products, like bushmeat. Overall, most workers are happy with their living and working conditions, but improvements could be made as far as timely payment, working outfit and equipment are concerned. Benefits and incentives for the investors could possibly be increased by linking up with climate-related financial schemes.

Recommendations

- Providing housing is important to migrant workers but also reduces transportation costs for workers from adjacent communities, while increasing safety and fire prevention. It is therefore recommended to provide shelter on HIPC-funded plantations as well.

- Providing the opportunity to grow food crops on the plantation area is important, as this contributes substantially to the workers' livelihoods.
- Adjacent communities are entitled to 2% of the timber revenues, in return for contributing to fire prevention and tree property protection. However, more training and awareness raising is needed to increase their commitment.
- Timely payment of HIPC-funded plantation workers would make their life less insecure and prevent them from falling into debt due to late payment of wages.
- The provision of adequate working outfits and equipment, including Wellington boots, rain-coats and cutlasses could be improved.
- It would be worthwhile exploring whether plantations are eligible for the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) or Payments for Environmental Services (PES) schemes.
- Despite all their benefits, forest plantations cannot act as substitutes for natural forest. It is therefore recommended that government, civil society and the private sector join forces to stimulate the conservation of remaining forests.

Cash and non-cash components of livelihoods at HIPC plantation



This infosheet is an output of the 'Governance for Sustainable Forest-related Livelihoods' project, carried out under the Tropenbos International Ghana programme by researchers from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and the University of Amsterdam (UvA). The content is the sole responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of the institutions.