



Stewardship

Spray Service Providers (SSPs) in action in Ghana

As far as one can see there are beds with vegetables; peppers, okra, carrots, but above all, tomatoes. We are in Ghana in the Volta region, around Keta. Thousands of farmers grow their vegetables here year-round thanks to irrigation systems. In early 2019, CropLife, in collaboration with the SNV HortiFresh program, selected and trained young farmers to become Spray Service Providers (SSPs). In just a few months', 268 SSPs graduated of which 90 are in the Volta region.

During the graduation ceremony, all SSPs received a full set of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), a ledger for record keeping and an Identity Card which states that they are trained SSPs.

A year on, the 90 SSPs in the Volta region have so far serviced 1,506 farmers by applying pesticides for them on their vegetable farms. The price for the service provided is negotiated between the farmer and the SSP. The pesticides used can be purchased by the farmer or the SSP and is not included in the fees charged.

SSP Aaron Gadagbui, arrives on a brand-new motorbike. When he removes his helmet, he proudly points to it: "I have saved up all the money that I made with my spraying activities, so I could buy this motorbike. Now I can reach even more farmers and I can earn more money."

Aaron lives in Kportorgbe, a small community in the Anloga district. He wanted to be trained as an SSP because he wanted, in addition to making some extra money, to help female farmers with the spraying of pesticides. He explains: "I see that for most female farmers the application of pesticides is not easy. They spend money on low quality chemicals that often do not give the expected results. When they hire me, they know I will only use good quality pesticides; they spend less money in the end and get higher yields in return."

Before becoming SSPs, young farmers are selected by their community and CropLife according to strict selection criteria. At the end of a 4-day technical and 1-day business trainer, they need to undergo a theoretical and a practical exam. Only those that pass both exams will become SSP.



SSP Aaron Gadagbui



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SSP Wonder Adukonu Gameli from Kportorgbe has happy clients. He says: “They see the advantages of good application. Already after a few days they notice they have less pests in their fields.” Wonder is also happy with the extra income he makes. “I produce seedlings and with the money I made from my spraying activities, I was able to lease more land to expand my seedling production area.”

The extra money is not the only advantage for Wonder: “I apply what I have learned on my own field which helps my seedling business. In addition, I came to realize the importance of always wearing my PPE. Before I was trained, I never wore any PPE and often had skin rashes. Now I have no problems any longer with my skin.”

After the initial training program, CropLife monitors the activities of the SSPs in the field. During these visits, SSPs can discuss any challenge they face. In addition, the ledgers are checked, and data is recorded to keep check of the performances of SSPs.

Another satisfied SSP is Richard Kofi Fiagbe from Anlago, although for the moment, he is not active as an SSP. He explains: “I have used the money that I earned as an SSP to enrol in a course at the Cape Coast University. I never thought I could make enough money to do this, but I managed.”

He admits that he learned a lot during the SSP course: “Especially the sessions covering spraying techniques and spray equipment which was really useful for me. I thought I knew these things, but our trainer Uncle Bob was able to teach me new things. Who knows one day, I will be able to train farmers to become SSPs.”



SSP Wonder Adukonu Gameli (left) with CropLife trainer Bob Adjakloe (right)

Manon Dohmen



SSP Richard Kofi Fiagbe



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CropLife Ethiopia Ramp up SSP Training Activities

CropLife Africa Middle East was a consortium partner with SNV Ethiopia (Netherlands development organization) in Phase (I) of the Horti-LIFE project which ended in June 2019. SNV decided on a Horti-LIFE Phase (II) which includes the full support of CropLife Ethiopia by setting up a Project Management Unit (PMU) within the CropLife Ethiopia national association. In August 2019, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the partnership agreement covering the support of SNV- Horti-LIFE and operational costs of the PMU for Spray Service Providers (SSPs) & Kebele Pesticide Agents (KPAs) was signed between the two parties in the presence of the CLAME team. The term of this agreement extends from August 2019 to June 2023,.

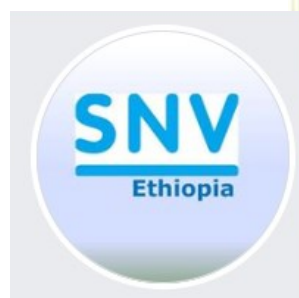
The MoU defines the roles and responsibilities of both parties and one of the core responsibilities of CropLife Ethiopia is to ensure that its member companies continue with the commitment to avail their staff for the training of 300 SSPs and 150 KPAs.

By closely working with the project team of SNV, training programs started to be rolled out as per the workplan, by trainers from CropLife Ethiopia and member companies in the project regions. In February 2020, four trainings were planned and executed in the Amhara region at two sites where a total of 55 SSPs/KPAs successfully graduated after an intensive four days training. SNV fully equipped the SSPs and KPAs with the required PPE, knapsack sprayers, record logbook and technical manual.

The SNV training will continue on 16 March 2020 in the Tigray region where 36 SSPs/KPAs will be trained. Coincidentally, CropLife Ethiopia is also running an awareness creation exercise in 4 regions and 11 woredas under the USAID funded, Feed the Future Ethiopia Value Chain Activities (FTFE-VCA) project. Areas to be followed will be by the selection of SSPs, training, provision of equipment, monitoring and evaluation activities. CropLife Ethiopia is the project subcontractor whereby an additional 165 SSPs will join the network in the country.

It is the vision and commitment of CropLife Ethiopia to continue serving the smallholder farming communities by encouraging them to engage in the safe and responsible use of improved inputs with due diligence to human health and environmental safety.

Seifu Rikiti – CEO, CropLife Ethiopia



Stewardship

ECOWAS Regional Agri-inputs Strategy

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is leading an initiative on behalf of the three regional economic communities (RECs) namely ECOWAS, WAEMU and CILSS. The initiative is aimed at increasing the sustainable availability, accessibility and use of agri-inputs for crop production, livestock and aquaculture across the sub-region.

The initiative benefits from the support of technical and financial partners such as USAID, the World Bank, and AfDB together with some regional institutions and organizations among which are IFDC, FAO, Rural Hub, Africa Rice, and AGRA. The West and Central African Council for Research and Development (WECARD/ CORAF) was assigned the formulation of the strategy which was discussed during a 3-day workshop on February 06-08 in Abuja, Nigeria. CropLife AME participated in the workshop together with more than 40 other delegates representing the 3 RECs, the above-mentioned funding partners, technical institutions and AFSTA the seed trade association and ROPPA the apex producers' organization.

The workshop discussed the draft strategy and made recommendations on the Logical Framework, the Strategic Plan and Operational Plan for 2021-2025 and the Implementing Coordination Unit.

A Task Force will be responsible for implementing the strategy of which CropLife AME will be a member together with the RECs, the member states, the technical and financial partners (USAID, WB and AfDB), regional institutions, and producers' organizations.

A workshop is planned for the first week of April in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, for the adoption of the strategy by the member states, with the participation of CropLife AME

Bama Yao



B Yao and The Permanent Secretary of CILSS-CSP (Right)



Group participants (below) were addressed by B. Yao (Above) on the importance of IPRs protection measures to ensure the quality of the agri-inputs under the strategy initiative.



Stewardship



CropLife Uganda, USTA and UNADA at their second collaboration meeting

CropLife Uganda Engages on a Sustainability Program

CropLife Uganda in collaboration with the Uganda Seed Trade Association (USTA) and UNADA have started engagement discussions to design a workplan for the three associations to consider strengthening their standing in terms of increasing the livelihood of farmers and growing in self-sustaining for effective operations and management. The 5-year project is being implemented by USAID-Feed the Future-Inclusive Agricultural market activities (IAM).

The activity aims at increasing incomes and improving the livelihoods of households through agricultural led inclusive economic growth, through facilitating sustainable market improvements that create opportunities for market actors. This vision is broken into three specific objectives

1. Increase the institutional capacity of Govt of Uganda institutions and agencies.
2. Increase the institutional (leadership, management, technical, adaptive etc.) capacity of the private sector and civil society organizations.
3. Create incentives for agro-industry and agribusiness organizations to respond to changes in the agricultural market system and invest in this.

To use the support of CropLife Africa Middle East to ensure that processes are put in place to guide the suggested activities.

Betty Atto



Evelyn Lusena, CLAME and Solomon Seruwo, CropLife Uganda, in discussion with the Commissioner Crop Inspection and Certification, Paul Mwambu.

Stewardship

CropLife Cote d'Ivoire Meets with the Director of Plant Protection Directorate

A delegation from the Plant Protection Directorate (DPVCQ) met with the Executive Committee of CropLife Cote d'Ivoire (CI) on the 26th February to exchange on joint cooperation. The delegation of DPVCQ headed by the Director, Dr. Koffi Adjoumani, who took office earlier this year, comprised of two Deputy-Directors and the Officer in charge of Phytosanitary Agreements.

The delegation from CropLife Cote d'Ivoire comprised the President Guy Liabra, the Vice-President, the Executive Director and the Executive Secretary. The meeting took place at the offices of CropLife CI.

Guy Liabra, President of CropLife CI welcomed the delegation of DPVCQ, then provided a brief on the support by the CropLife CI to the DPVCQ and the joint activities initiated and carried out during the past two years. These activities cover the training of retailers and applicators seeking certification by the DPVCQ, the SSP program, the capacity enhancement on regulatory issues and the contribution to the GEF-WB obsolete pesticides project.

This project provided an opportunity to strengthen the fight against the illicit trade of pesticides. The DPVCQ and CropLife CI have the opportunity to engage on many awareness raising programs and training workshops for the enforcement agencies and other key stakeholders through the departmental committees to fight illegal pesticides across the country.

The Director of DPVCQ thanked CropLife CI for the excellent support provided over the years and committed to provide an enabling environment to strengthen such a long-lasting cooperation in line of the public-private partnership. In this regard DPVCQ and CropLife CI will organize frequent meetings in order to formally handle any issue the pesticides industry may face.

Koffi R. Yeboue, CropLife Cote d'Ivoire



Group photo of the delegation of CropLife CI and of the DPVCQ headed by G. Liabra and Dr K. Adjoumani (2nd and 3rd R-L, respectively).

Regulatory Advocacy

Locust Outbreak in Eastern Africa

Introduction

The desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*) is one of most problematic pests in the agricultural sector, with a vast number of crop damage that has been recorded recently. The pest presents an important threat to farmers' income, food security and livelihoods as it continues to spread across countries. Showler (2008) mentioned that they can eat approximately an equivalent of their body mass mostly on green vegetation per day. The pest consumes a variety of crops including millet, rice, maize, sorghum, sugarcane, barley, cotton, date palm, vegetables, bananas and pines (Showler, 2008).

FAO has started with preventative and control programmes for the control of the current outbreak of desert locust in The Horn of Africa and parts of the Persian Gulf. This pest has caused a devastating plague to humanity, especially in Africa in the past. The first organized outbreak control started as a campaign in the second half of 19th century across Algeria (Buj Buj, 1995). However, there are still limited pesticides registered to combat this pest.

The following countries in Africa and the Middle East (Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Persian Gulf, Uganda, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Yemen) are still battling to control the pest as conditions are more favorable for their breeding due to climate change (FAO, 2020).



In addition, a different species of locusts called the brown locust (*Locustana pardalina*) has recently been reported in Namibia, Botswana and De Aar area, part of Karoo region (Roger, 2020). This species, as any other locust species fly distances with the wind and is reportedly originates from DRC

Control options

Monitoring and scouting of crops regularly is critical for early detection of the devastating pests. Earlier detection and application of appropriate pesticide can assist in minimizing crop losses. Farmers are encouraged to be vigilant and report any outbreaks to local agricultural agencies or Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) within the FAO.

The most effective control is having a correct integrated pest program (IPM) which combines manual control, use of biopesticides, and chemical pesticides as appropriate. Locust outbreaks are sporadic in nature, can breed fast, and multiply up to 20-fold from one generation to the next (Allsopp et al., 1990) in favourable conditions and thus make it difficult to conduct local bio-efficacy studies.



(*Locustana pardalina*)



Regulatory Advocacy

Emergency Registration of Pesticides

The locust outbreak situation, and limited availability of registered control products, shows the need for simplifying the emergency registration procedures for pesticides, so that access to pesticides that can control such outbreaks faster and thus limit crop damage is ensured.

On a general basis, many countries' regulatory agencies require the following information for emergency registration of pesticides:

- Efficacy data from another country where climatic conditions would be similar to the country where registration is being proposed
- Residue data for edible crops

Furthermore, the active substance may have to have been approved in the country for other uses.

With sporadic pest incidents such as the locust outbreaks being encountered, it's not always possible for crop protection companies to fulfill the emergency registration requirements especially if there is no policy guidance, for reasons mentioned above. Consequently, authorities need to consider establishment of emergency registration policies and or procedures to enable need registration approvals during such invasions to enable minimization of yield losses to the growers.

Mashumi Masemula (Corteva Agriscience), Molebatsi Malungane (Corteva Agriscience) and Stella Simiyu (CLAME)

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Pictures:

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Desert Locust (*Schistocerca gregaria*)



Anti-Counterfeiting Activities



Evelyn Lusenaka undertaking the CropLife presentation



AFYA II – Preoperational Meeting – Operation Against Illicit Goods and Pharmaceutical Crime, Harare, Zimbabwe, February 26 – 27

Under the umbrella of “Illicit Goods and Global Health”, INTERPOL undertook AFYA II – Preoperational Meeting – Operation against illicit goods and pharmaceutical crime in Harare, Zimbabwe on February 26 – 27.

The trade in illicit products represents a major challenge for the international law enforcement community and a huge risk to global public health. The term “trafficking of illicit products” encompasses practices such as falsification, counterfeiting, piracy, adulteration of products, smuggling and tax evasion. The types of goods affected are many and include pesticides.

CropLife Africa Middle East was invited to deliver a presentation on the impact of counterfeit pesticides which was given by Evelyn Lusenaka and by all accounts was highly appreciated.

The workshop attracted approximately 45 delegates from mainly 10 Southern Africa countries. The AFYA II operation will kick-off shortly with a coordinated press conference in mid-June and the final report issued in October.

Les Hillowitz



Group Photo



Plant Biotechnology

EPA Regulatory Review: Glyphosate Has No Human Health Risks

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released the results of its regulatory review of glyphosate in January 2020 after receiving and considering public comments. In their interim decision, EPA continues to find that there are no risks of concern to human health when glyphosate is used in accordance with its current label. According to the Interim Registration Review Decision, the agency has thoroughly evaluated the potential human health risk associated with exposure to glyphosate and concluded that there are no risks to human health from the currently registered uses of glyphosate and that glyphosate is not likely to be carcinogenic to humans.

Glyphosate is a widely used herbicide that controls broadleaf weeds and grasses and was first registered in 1974. EPA scientists conducted an independent evaluation of available data for glyphosate and found:

- No risks of concern to human health from current uses of glyphosate. When used accordingly, glyphosate does not result in risks to children or adults.
- No indication that children are more sensitive to glyphosate. After evaluating numerous studies from a variety of sources, the Agency found no indication that children are more sensitive to glyphosate from in utero or post-natal exposure. As part of this assessment, EPA evaluated all populations, including infants, children, and women of child-bearing age.
- No evidence that glyphosate causes cancer in humans. The Agency concluded that glyphosate is not likely to be carcinogenic to humans. EPA considered a significantly more extensive and relevant data set than the International Agency on the Research for Cancer (IARC).

No indication that glyphosate is an endocrine disruptor. Glyphosate has undergone Tier I screening under EPA's Endocrine Disruptor Screening Program and based on all available information, EPA concluded that existing data do not indicate that glyphosate has the potential to interact with the estrogen, androgen or thyroid signalling pathways.

From 1996 to 2018, herbicide tolerant (HT) crops, such as glyphosate and glufosinate tolerant crops, occupied the largest planting area of biotech crops. In 2018 alone, HT crops occupied 87.5 million hectares or 45% of the total 191.7 million hectares of biotech crops planted globally.

ISAAA



Plant Biotechnology



Bioengineered Late Blight Resistant Potato to Benefit 300,000 Smallholder Farmers in Uganda

In Uganda, stakeholders working on the new bioengineered late blight resistant potato dubbed as the "3R Victoria" are confident of its wide adoption. The yet to be released potato could help 300,000 smallholder farmers in Uganda achieve higher yields at lower production costs and less exposure to chemicals. The stakeholders estimate 40-50% adoption rate for the new variety after its release.

Studies conducted by the International Potato Center (CIP) and National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) scientists since 2015 have confirmed that 3R Victoria potato is completely resistant to late blight disease and safe for human consumption and the environment.

Dr. Marc Ghislain, senior biotechnologist at CIP and cluster leader for CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas said, "An estimated adoption rate of 40 to 50% represents a strong evidence that farmers in this country want to have access to these late blight resistant potatoes and will benefit from them in multiple ways."

ISAAA

Colombia Benefits Economically and Environmentally from 15 Years of Planting GM Crops

A study conducted by Graham Brookes of PG Economics Ltd. published in the journal *GM Crops and Food* finds that since 2003, crop biotechnology has helped Colombian farmers grow more food, feed, and fibre, using fewer resources and farm incomes increased by a total of over US\$300 million. Crop biotechnology has enabled Colombian farmers to obtain higher yields from better pest and weed control, reducing the environmental footprint associated with the production of cotton and maize.

The study finds that since 2003, about 1 million hectares of biotech cotton and biotech maize were planted in Colombia and in 2018, the technology was used on the equivalent of 90% and 36% respectively of the total cotton and (commercial) maize crops.

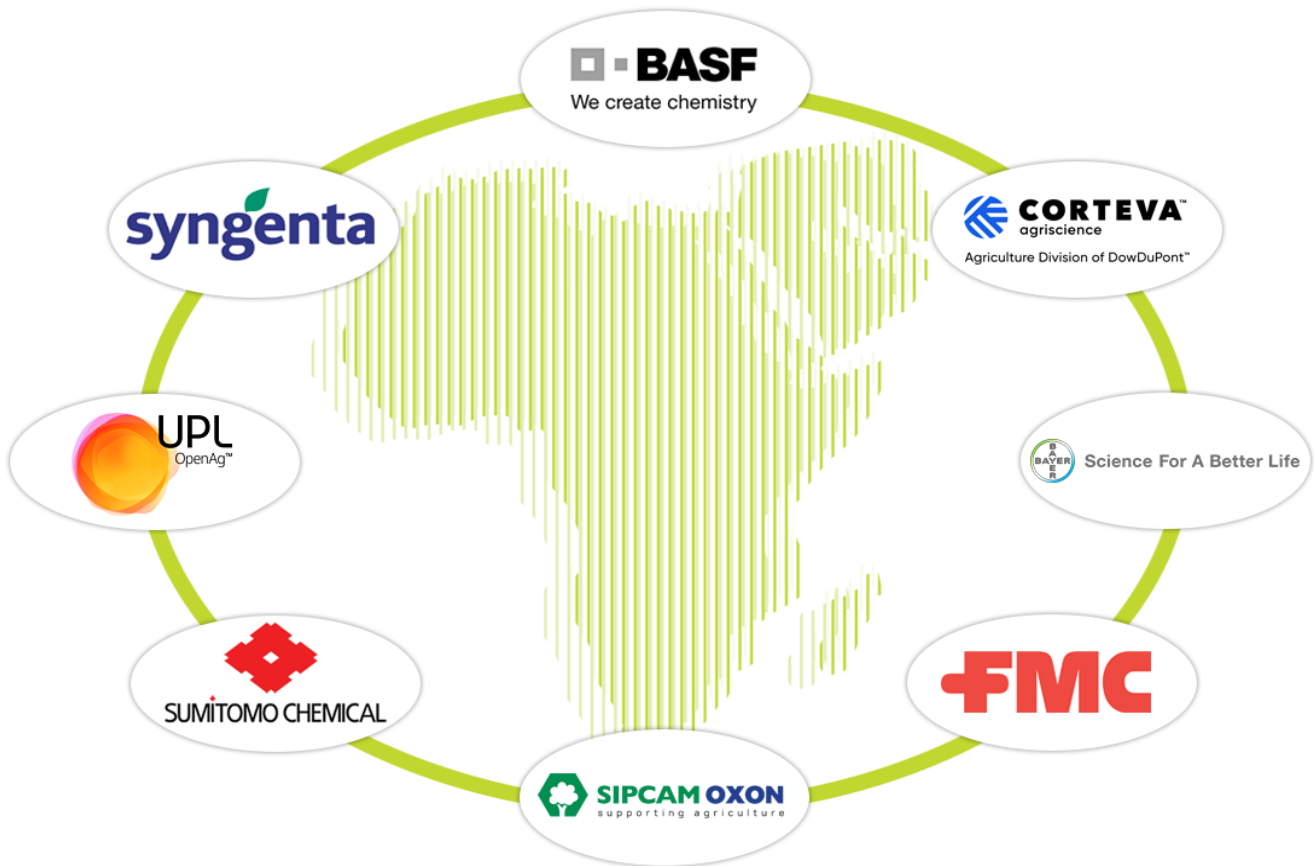
The extra production and reduced cost of pest and weed control helped maize farmers attain higher incomes equal to an average of US\$294/ha and an average return on investment equal to +US\$5.25 for each extra US\$1 spent on GM maize seed relative to conventional seed. For cotton farmers, the average increase in income has been +US\$358/ha, with an average return on investment equal to +US\$3.09 for each extra US\$1 spent on GM seed relative to conventional seed. The study also found that crop biotechnology facilitated cuts in fuel use, resulting in a reduction in the release of greenhouse gas emissions from the GM cotton and maize cropping area and contributed to saving scarce land resources.

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