

MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (MOFA)

ICT POLICY STATEMENT

PREAMBLE

The Government of Ghana is committed to pursuing an ICT for accelerated Development (ICT4AD) Vision aimed at improving the quality of life of the people of Ghana by significantly enriching their social, economic and cultural well-being through the rapid development and modernization of the economy and society using information and communication technologies as the main engine for accelerated and sustainable economic and social development.

The main mission of the Ghana ICT4AD vision is to transform Ghana into an information-rich, knowledge-based and technology-driven high income economy.

The Government is committed to pursuing a number of key strategies towards the achievement of its vision. Key among them are to:

1. Transform Ghana into an information and knowledge-driven ICT literate nation
2. Promote the development and exploitation of information, knowledge and technology within the economy and society as key drivers for socio-economic development.
3. Use ICTs to improve and expand access to information on tourism services, facilities and administrative functions and operations.

The Government as part of its vision acknowledges the role that ICTs can play in agricultural planning, development, promotion and marketing. It is therefore committed to facilitate the implementation of a reliable national agricultural information system (database) to facilitate planning, marketing and quality service delivery within the agricultural sector towards the development of an overall comprehensive National Information and Communication System.

The government of Ghana as part of its strategy to speed up the process of development of ICTs in the society and economy in order to develop an ICT literate

nation is committed to rapid development, utilization and exploitation of ICTs within the agricultural sector for both private and public organisations.

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) is responsible for the formulation of policies and planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure the development and promotion of agricultural sector.

VISION STATEMENT

We aim for the highest efficiency in agricultural sector management, which ensures that Ghana becomes a buoyant middle-income agro-based economy by the year 2015.

MISSION STATEMENT

To modernize the agricultural sector to substantially improve agricultural value-added and yield; and develop a dynamic and vibrant export-oriented agro-business industry; and to promote sustainable agriculture and thriving agri-business through research and technology development, effective extension and other support services to farmers, fishermen, processors and traders for improved human livelihood.

STRATEGIES FOR ATTAINING STATED MISSION

To accomplish its mission, MOFA will pursue the following strategies:

- Establish a robust, diversified and commercially based agricultural sector that ensures food security, supplies adequate raw material to industry, contributes to export earnings and provides producers with incomes comparable to earnings outside agriculture.

- Promote the modernisation of agriculture to encourage rural development in order to achieve a long-term growth in the agricultural sector and the economy as a whole.
- Encourage and support the modernisation and commercialisation of the operations of the key sub-sectors of the agricultural sector.
- Ensure effective and efficient export diversification by making the agricultural sector more price-competitive and export-oriented.
- Promote and facilitate the development of the agro-business industry.
- Strengthen the development, application and transfer of agro-based technologies to support sustainable agriculture production.
- Increase crop, livestock and fisheries production and processing through the use of more efficient methods and inputs.
- Improve the quality of value addition in agriculture.
- Ensure the availability, affordability and utilisation of food in sufficient quantities all year round.

MOFA's ICT DEPLOYMENT AND EXPLOITATION GOALS

In line with the ICT for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD) Strategy Policy, MOFA's ICT Policy will seek to achieve the broad objective of promoting the deployment and exploitation of ICTs to support the activities of the agriculture sector including, the production, processing, marketing and distribution of agriculture products and services.

Specifically, the ICT policy will seek to:

- Develop Geographical Information Systems (GIS) applications to monitor and support sustainable environment usage in areas like land and water management, yield assessment and livestock management.
- Develop food insecurity and vulnerability information mapping systems to assemble, analyse and disseminate information on who the food insecure are, where they are located, and why they are food insecure.
- Revitalise agriculture extension services by empowering and equipping farm extension service workers with relevant ICT tools and skills.
- Establish an agriculture information system to provide support for the planning, production, storage and distribution of crops, livestock and fisheries products.
- Encourage market research through the use of ICTs to improve access to established foreign markets and to break into new markets for both traditional and non-traditional exports.
- Utilise ICTs to link farmers' groups and association to resources and services that they need to improve their livelihoods.
- Deliver real-time information and customised knowledge to improve farmers' decision-making ability to align farm outputs with market demands and to improve productivity.
- Establish clear forward and backward linkages between agricultural education (formal and informal), research and development, farming, agro-industry and marketing.

ICT DEPLOYMENT AND EXPLOITATION COMMITMENTS OF MOFA

MoFA is strongly committed to replacing the existing paper based information systems with an electronic system, which will promote speed of data collection, analysis, information generation and dissemination for efficient and effective decision making throughout the agricultural sector. In this connection it will ensure:

- The establishment of a Wide Area Net Work (WAN) that will link MoFA Headquarters with Regional and District offices, Agricultural Information centres within MoFA, Agricultural Research Institutions, Agricultural Colleges and Universities, other MDAs and Development Partners.
- The development of web-based distant self-learning facilities for varied clients, including students, farmers, extension workers, subject matter specialists, field professionals, researchers and managers.
- The creation of on-line extension services to provide decision support systems for local problems, expert systems for diagnosis of crop and livestock production problems
- Establish information management systems to improve accounting and auditing systems, research and extension services.
- Establish interactive websites for interaction with stakeholders, dissemination of information and web-based discussion groups.

THE FOCUS OF THE ICT PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

- The Ministry in consultation, collaboration and cooperation with the relevant MDAs, stakeholders will execute programmes and implement initiatives

which are focussed at facilitating and ensuring that its mission to modernise the agricultural sector to substantially improve agricultural value-added and yield; and develop a dynamic and vibrant export-oriented agro-business industry; to promote sustainable agriculture and thriving agri-business through research and technology developing, effective extension and other support services to farmers, fishermen, processors and traders for improved human livelihood.

- In pursuance of its vision in aiming for the highest efficiency in agricultural sector management, which ensures that Ghana becomes a buoyant middle income agro-based economy by the year 2015.
- The Ministry is enhancing its wide area network and website to establish effective linkages with Regional, Districts, Agricultural and Research Institutions and stakeholders for dissemination of information about agricultural sector to the general public and also serve as a feedback system

