



## *Briefing Paper*

# **THE PUBLIC AGRICULTURAL BUDGET ANALYSIS PROCESS IN GHANA**

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October 2011

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## **AUTHORSHIP AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This document was prepared by Dr. Kwabena Asomanin Anaman, Messrs. Kojo Impraim and Charles Yaw Okyere. This paper is an output of the Poverty, Inequality and Sustainable Development (PISD) programme of the Institute of Democratic Governance (IDEG). Dr. Anaman is the Director of Programmes, IDEG and also the Co-ordinator of the PISD programme. Mr Impraim is a Project Officer, IDEG and Mr. Charles Yaw Okyere is a Research Assistant at IDEG. The work involved in the development of this paper was funded by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) under its Public Expenditure and Smallholder Agriculture project.

## **ABSTRACT**

We present a brief discussion on the process of developing and analysing public budgets for the agriculture sector in Ghana. The overall budget process as pertaining the presentation of the national government budget is discussed indicating periods that budgets cover and the principal actors involved with the development of the budgets. Policy documents and frameworks underpinning government priorities for the agriculture sector are presented. Selected stakeholders and institutions which deal with agricultural budget analysis are identified and some of their contributions over the last 12 months (2010/2011) are discussed. The limitations of the overall national budgeting process and the agricultural budgeting process in Ghana are indicated. We also argue that the public agricultural budget process is not independent of the national budget process and hence public agricultural budget analysis needs to appreciate this important linkage. We conclude by making some recommendations to help improve public agricultural budgeting in Ghana.

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Agriculture is an important sector of the economy of many countries in Africa. This is because majority of the working population are directly involved in this sector as farmers, fishermen and agro-business persons. The importance of agriculture is further highlighted by its role as a source of food, major export earner and inputs for industries. Since 2001, several governments in Africa including Ghana have become assertive and have pushed for an increasing role for the State in the agricultural sector through the restoration of subsidies for fertilisers and expanded role for government in poverty-alleviation schemes through a revitalised agricultural sector. This assertiveness replaced the wide acceptance of structural adjustment reforms in the 1980s and 1990s when government subsidies and support systems for agriculture were severely reduced. This newly-found assertiveness of African governments was sealed in 2003 when African political leaders in their annual meeting at Maputo, Mozambique issued a communiqué that all country members of the African Union (AU) should devote a minimum of 10% of its government spending to the agriculture sector. This communiqué known as the Maputo Declaration has influenced the development of new policies to assist the agriculture sector in many African countries including Ghana.

Increased public expenditures for the agriculture sector are considered important as a means of poverty alleviation and enhanced socioeconomic development. However a mere transfer of public resources to the agriculture sector is not enough. These public resources must be effectively and efficiently used to enhance the welfare of farmers and rural people and to reduce poverty. It is therefore important for public resources devoted to agriculture sector be analysed to determine whether the best use of these resources is being achieved. Traditionally, quasi-government agencies such as the Auditor's General Department and judicial tribunals have been used to monitor the effective use of public resources including those earmarked for use in the agriculture sector.

Since 1990s, civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

have become more involved in the monitoring of public budgets and expenditures and have contributed considerably to shaping budgets of national, regional and local governments. This has been done through an activist role in the analysis of budgets reflecting increasing role and space for democratisation around the world. Krafchik (2005) suggests that civil society organisations can influence national and local government budgets in at least six ways. These are (1) simplifying the budget and deepening debate, (2) collating, synthesising and disseminating budget information, (3) independent critical analysis, (4) bringing new information to budget decision making, (5) training of legislature, mass media and other stakeholders and (6) building accountability through assisting citizens and legislature to enforce the rules and laws related to public accountability of duty bearers.

The role of civil society in shaping the public budget agenda has occurred in Ghana where the emphasis has been on influencing public budgets to address the needs of the poor, marginalised, disadvantaged and disabled people. In the monitoring of public expenditures, efforts have been directed at making government and public agencies more transparent in the performance of their duties. For example, in Ghana, the Institute for Democratic Governance organised a three-day national workshop on civic participation in the national budget process in 2006 that helped to get funding for youth employment programmes in the 2007 national government budget (IDEG, 2007).

This paper briefly discusses the process of developing public budgets for the agricultural sector in Ghana. Policy documents and frameworks are the essential bedrock for developing public budgets for the agriculture sector. Hence these frameworks both for the entire national economy and specifically for the agriculture sector are discussed. We also identify the stakeholders and institutions which are actively engaged in agricultural budget analysis. The rest of the paper is organised as follows: the next section provides a summary of the role of agriculture in the economy of Ghana and an overview of the national budget process in

Ghana. This is followed by a presentation of national policy documents and frameworks for the whole economy and specific policy frameworks for the agriculture sector. The stakeholders and institutions involved in agricultural budget analysis are then identified with some discussion on their work and role in influencing the processes of public budgets. The final part of the paper deals with conclusions and some recommendations for improved budget analysis for the agriculture sector.

## 2. THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN THE GHANAIAN ECONOMY

The role agriculture plays in providing livelihood opportunities for people especially those in the rural areas is immense. Available data from the Ghana Statistical Service, based on the recently-released rebased gross domestic product (GDP) figures, indicate that between the period, 2006-2010, agriculture contributed on the average

30.5% of the country's GDP making it the second largest sector. Over this period, the services sector was the largest accounting for about 49.6% of GDP (refer to Tables 1 and 2). In 2010, the agriculture sector was worth about 13.037 billion Ghana cedis and represented about 30.2% of GDP. The Ghana Statistical Service defines the agriculture sector as being composed of five industries. These five industries are (1) crops other than cocoa (2) cocoa (3) livestock (4) forestry and logging and (5) fishing. Ministry of Food and Agriculture MoFA is charged with implementing government policies, research and extension work in all five industries except cocoa. The cocoa industry is serviced by COCOBOD which undertakes management functions affecting the industry including extension work, mass spraying of cocoa farms to deal with pests and diseases, research work through the Cocoa Research Institute, marketing regulator and exporter.

Table 1: Sectoral Contribution to GDP, 2006 to 2010, Based on Gross Domestic Product in Current Prices (in millions of Ghana Cedis)

| Year | Agriculture | Services | Industry | Total    |
|------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| 2006 | 5,415.0     | 8,690.4  | 3,704.3  | 18,705.1 |
| 2007 | 6,319.8     | 10,921.6 | 4,513.5  | 23,154.4 |
| 2008 | 8,875.0     | 13,934.6 | 5,854.5  | 30,178.6 |
| 2009 | 11,343.0    | 17,543.0 | 6,776.0  | 36,598.0 |
| 2010 | 12,910.0    | 22,184.0 | 8,039.0  | 46,232   |

Source: Ghana Statistical Service May 2011.

Table 2: Relative Sectoral Percentage Contribution to GDP, 2006 to 2010, Based on Gross Domestic Product, in Current Prices, in Millions of Ghana Cedis.

| Year    | Agriculture | Services | Industry | Total  |
|---------|-------------|----------|----------|--------|
| 2006    | 30.40       | 48.80    | 20.80    | 100.00 |
| 2007    | 29.05       | 50.20    | 20.75    | 100.00 |
| 2008    | 30.96       | 48.61    | 20.42    | 100.00 |
| 2009    | 31.67       | 49.47    | 18.86    | 100.00 |
| 2010    | 29.9        | 51.4     | 18.6     | 100.00 |
| Average | 30.46       | 49.65    | 19.89    | 100.00 |

Source: Authors` Compilation from Ghana Statistical Service May 2011.

\*Provisional

### 3. OVERALL NATIONAL BUDGET PROCESS IN GHANA

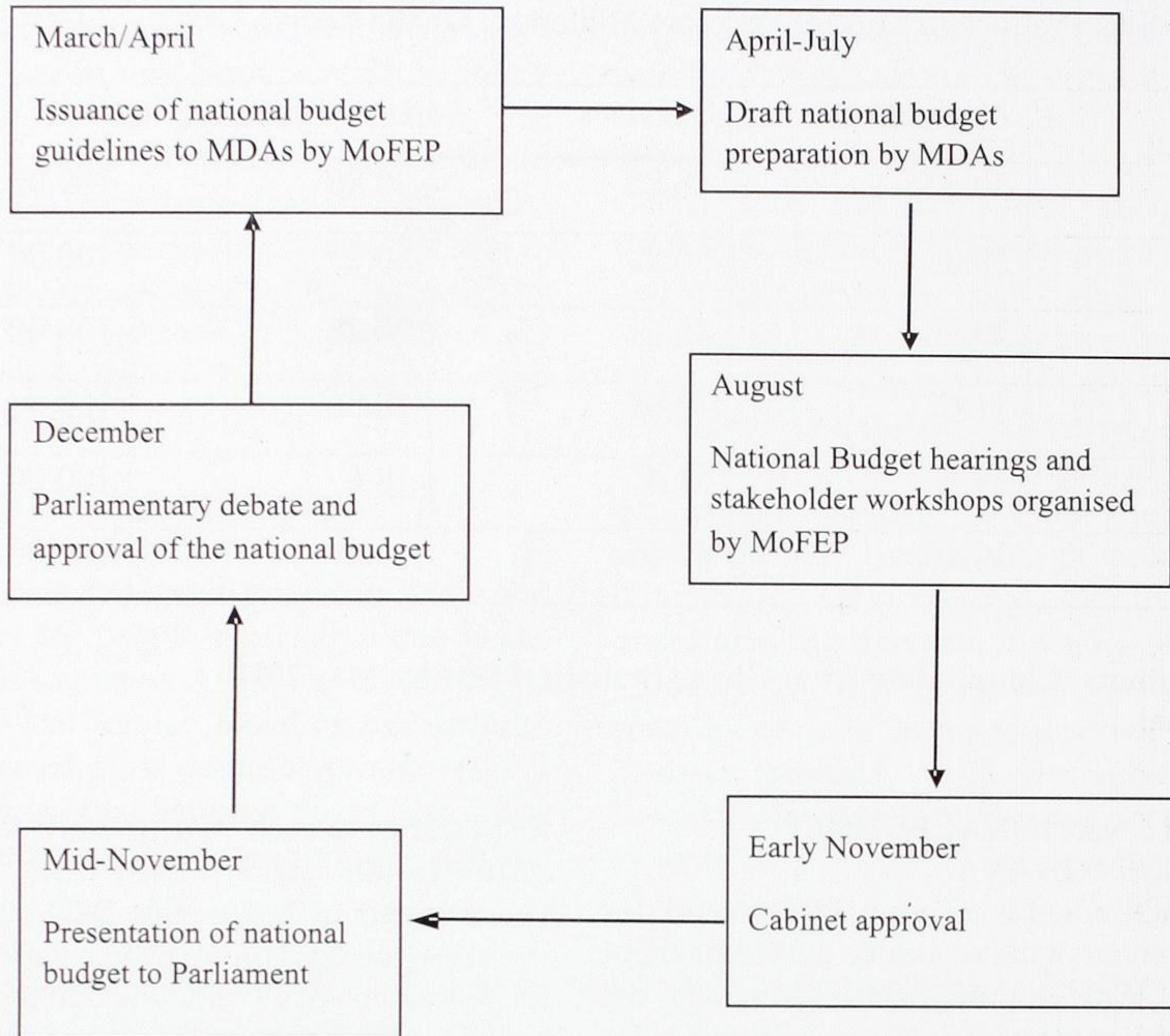
The national budget is an annual framework for the management of the economic development of a country. It is the way through which the concerns and needs of the citizens of a particular country are addressed. Therefore, the national budget is an essential policy instrument for a government to deliver goods and services to citizens of a country. The preparation of a national budget in Ghana takes its legal backing from the 1992 Constitution. Article 179 (1) of the Constitution states that "the President shall cause to be prepared and laid before Parliament at least one month before the end of the financial year, estimates of the revenues and expenditure of the Government of Ghana for the following financial year." The national budget involves revenues and expenditures charged on the Consolidated Fund and other funds approved by Parliament.

The budget allocated to the agriculture sector is part of the national government budget prepared by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP). The allocation for the agriculture sector is directed to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), one of over 100 organisations receiving direct funding from the Government of Ghana. This national government budget is presented by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning in the middle of November of the preceding year. By the end of the

first quarter of each year or early April, MoFEP requests all government line Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to provide the estimates for running their various units for the following year. Following that the directors of MoFEP meet directors and representations of the various MDAs to review their planned budgets for the following year.

This review involves sensitisation workshops for MDAs to analyse and comprehend the priority areas of the national government's medium term development framework. From August to September, budget hearings are held with stakeholders including the private sector bodies, civil society organisations and farmer groups. Thus the national budget is also prepared in consultation with various stakeholders including civil society organisations, private sector organisations and business groups which provide inputs directly to MoFEP at various consultative workshops. By the beginning of October, MoFEP has a draft budget which is circulated within top government circles and Cabinet. In early November, the Cabinet meets to discuss and approve the national budget for it to be presented by the Minister in mid-November. There is also supplementary budget which is normally presented in the middle of the year. Figure 1 shows the national budget cycle in Ghana.

Figure 1: Illustration of the Ghana's National Budget Cycle



**4. NATIONAL POLICY DOCUMENTS AND FRAMEWORKS IN GHANA**

Policies for the agricultural sector are based on policy frameworks including poverty reduction strategies developed by the national government. In other words, specific policy documents for the agricultural sector are not in isolation but are directly linked to national development strategies. Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century of the Common Era of Human Civilisation, various governments in Ghana have developed overarching national development strategy frameworks. The three main strategy frameworks are (1) Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I), 2003-2005 (2) Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II), 2006-2009 and (3) Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA), 2010-2013.

The GPRS I was particularly concerned with the reduction of absolute poverty in Ghana and outlines strategies to reduce poverty which included strengthening the agricultural sector and advancing rural development (Government of Ghana, 2003). The GPRS II was a continuation

of GPRS I but emphasis was shifted towards growth to allow the country to attain middle-income status by 2015 (Government of Ghana, 2006). In order to achieve the targets set under GPRS II, the agricultural sector was expected to grow at about six per cent per annum. The GPRS II outlined several interventions to address factors inhibiting growth in the agriculture sector. These policy interventions included improving access to global and regional markets, enhancing the efficiency and accessibility of national markets, strengthening firms' competency and capacity to operate effectively and efficiently, facilitating private sector access to capital, facilitating the removal of institutional bottlenecks, enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship and improving the quality of public services.

The Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA) is the current national government development strategy framework (Government of Ghana, 2010) and it covers the period, 2010-2013. This framework aims to achieve continued macroeconomic stability while

placing the economy on a path to higher and shared growth, reducing socio-economic inequalities and ensuring rapid reduction in poverty. The framework covers areas such as Economic and Industrial Development, Good Governance, Agricultural Modernization and Natural Resource Management and Human Development, Productivity and Employment

The policy issues with regards to agricultural modernization are national ownership modernized agriculture, increased agricultural competitiveness and enhanced integration into domestic and international markets, developing strong and foreign agricultural markets, as well as improving post-production management in the agriculture sector. The government's interventions include the introduction of participatory research methodologies for the purpose of modernizing the agricultural sector; increased access to agricultural extension services and education and mainstreaming gender throughout the policy objectives.

## 5. POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN GHANA

The policy of transforming and modernising agriculture as a basis for enhancing agricultural productivity, supporting industry, reducing poverty and providing stable income for farmers has been stated in various forms by successive governments since independence in 1957<sup>1</sup>. MoFA is the lead government agency implementing policies for the agriculture sector. As highlighted in the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II)<sup>2</sup>, the national vision for the food and agriculture sector entails the modernisation of agriculture culminating in a structurally transformed economy that provides food security, employment opportunities and reduces poverty (MoFA, 2007). This emphasis on agriculture modernisation is also linked to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Agricultural Policy, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Development Goals.

FASDEP II has been recently replaced with the Medium Term Agriculture Sector Investment

Plan (METASIP) which covers the period, 2011-2015. This new agriculture development policy was developed in September, 2010 by MoFA in consultation with various stakeholders in the agriculture sector. METASIP is a medium term investment plan which covers the period of 2011-2015 which seeks to implement programmes to advance the development of agriculture and follows the basic structures of FASDEP II. It has been developed to achieve a target agriculture GDP growth of at least 6% annually in order to halve absolute poverty by 2015 in consonance with the first Millennium Development Goal. METASIP is a review of FASDEP II with similar objectives and vision. METASIP seeks to achieve is to incorporate the new idea of agriculture being the leading sector for economic growth as presented in the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA).

METASIP is consistent with the ECOWAS Agriculture Policy and NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (ECOWAP/CAADP). The latter two programmes provide an integrated framework to support agricultural growth, rural development and food security in the African region (MoFA, 2010a). The implementation of METASIP adopts the application of a sector-wide approach (SWAP) to bring on board sector stakeholders for effective coordination of programmes and increased participation of stakeholders especially farmers. Its implementation is broad based factoring ideas of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), NGOs, Donor agencies, Civil Society Organisation (CSOs) among others (MoFA, 2010a).

## 6. STAKEHOLDERS AND INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN AGRICULTURAL BUDGET ANALYSIS IN GHANA

### 6.1. Introduction

The public budget process is influenced by stakeholders and institutions through enlightened budget analysis that explores various possibilities for shaping public policy. This influence can be exerted through two ways: ex-ante (before the official budget is read) and ex-post (after the budget has been read and implemented). The ex-ante approach allows for various stakeholders to present their views to appropriate authorities to be included in the

budgets. The ex-post approach entails evaluation of the degree of success of budgets for achieving the goals of government and society in general.

In general in Ghana as is probably the case in other African countries, accessibility of national and local government budget statements by smallholder farmers is very limited if non-existent. Smallholder farmers are generally not conversant with the impact of government policies on their production and livelihood, except for export crop farmers such as cocoa farmers. A few CSOs have attempted to fill the smallholder lack-of-policy information by engaging directly duty bearers in influencing and accessing government budgets information for the benefit of smallholder farmers with some degree of success.

In Ghana, a few CSOs are actively involved in the analysis of government budgets including tracking and monitoring government expenditures. The prominent ones include the Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana (PFAG), the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), the Ecumenical Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (ECASARD) and the Ghana Aid Effectiveness Forum. In general, the six suggested ways of influencing government budgets outlined by Krafchik (2005) are adopted by Ghanaian CSOs and NGOs. The next section briefly outlines activities of the five CSOs in Ghana in the area of budgetary analysis with emphasis on their activities during the twelve-month period covering 2010 and 2011.

### **6.2. Budget Analysis Activities of PFAG**

PFAG is made up of several farmer groups and individuals in all ten regions of Ghana. The main thrust of the association is to improve livelihood opportunities of small farmers and families. The Association holds regular workshops to facilitate improved understanding of farmers of the public budget process and how they can contribute inputs into the development of national government budgets to reflect their concerns and aspirations. For example, in the run up to the presentation of the 2012 national government budget, PFAG has been conducting workshops around the country to explain the national government budget process and encourage the

submission of inputs by farmers and farmer groups to MoFA and MoFEP for consideration. The organisation stresses the crucial linkage between the budget and the medium and long term development plans of the country. As such an understanding of the government's medium term development framework is seen an initial step to evaluate the nature and quality of budgets.

### **6.3. Budget Analysis Activities of ISODEC**

(ISODEC) is probably the pre-eminent non-governmental organisation engaged in budget advocacy work in Ghana. Through its Centre for Budget Analysis, it aims to improve the government budget process and the efficient use of public resources. This is to be achieved through the promotion of a better budget process that entails consultation and participation of all stakeholders; accountability by public officials; and transparency in public financial transactions.

ISODEC has been extensively involved with analysis of national budget processes for all sectors of the economy including agriculture and welfare issues. For example, in August 2011, ISODEC in collaboration with Plan Ghana organised a budget training workshop for the youth of Awutu-Senya district in the Central Region of Ghana. A major component of the workshop dealt with researching into issues (ISODEC, 2011).

### **6.4. Budget Analysis Activities of IDEG**

IDEG is currently involved as Ghana's representative in the execution of the Public Expenditure and Smallholder Agriculture Project (PESAP) being sponsored by Idasa, an African democracy institute based in South Africa. PESAP falls under the Economic Governance Programme of Idasa which aims to democratise economic decision making processes and improve resource management for sustainable development in Africa. As part of the programme, IDEG is involved in budget training and advocacy for farmer-based organisations in the Mpohor Wassa East district in the Western Region of Ghana. IDEG executes budget advocacy programmes for farmers using the Governance Issues Forum (GIF) programme initiative. GIF is a civic empowerment and accountability programme which aims to improve citizen participation in local economic

governance based on interactions with duty bearers. The implementation of GIF revolves around network of individuals and organisations called Governance Issues Forum Network (GIFNet)

GIF is currently operational in 18 districts in all ten regions of Ghana including Mpohor Wassa East district. However, PESAP is currently operational in the Mpohor Wassa East district. A specific budget training workshop was held for farmers and farmer-based organisations (FBOs) in the Mpohor Wassa East district in October 2010 and 2011. An advocacy plan was developed to monitor the formulation and implementation of the District Assembly's budget for agriculture and was useful in allowing farmers and FBOs to make inputs into the district budget planning processes. The FBOs participated in the budget hearing of the District Assembly medium term development plan in May 2011 in Daboase, the district capital. GIFNet and FBOs offered a useful platform for smallholder farmers to engage policy makers at the local government level in terms of allocation of funds for agriculture. IDEG prepares one budget analysis brief per year for participants.

Farmers and FBOs have relatively limited capacity to analyse information contained in national and district government budget statements. Given this limitation, IDEG trains a core group of budget analysts to undertake independent budget analysis at both national and project district levels. This training is at two levels: (1) training of trainers and (2) training of smallholder farmers. The training of trainers involves IDEG staff and focal persons identified in the district who constitute a faculty responsible for undertaking training at the second level. The second level training is targeted at smallholder farmers and FBOs.

#### **6.5. Budget Analysis Activities of the Ecumenical Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (ECASARD)**

ECASARD is a decentralised network of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and farmer-based organization (FBOs). It was established in 1991 and is currently operational in seven out of the ten regions of Ghana (Brong-Ahafo, Ashanti, Volta, Western, Central, Eastern, and Greater Accra Regions). It is a non-profit

making, non-political and nongovernmental organisation. An example of ECASARD's recent budget analysis activities is described below.

In May 2011, ECASARD sought the advisory service of IDEG to implement a project titled: 'strengthening the capacity of small scale farmers on agricultural policies for engagement with policy makers at the local government level'. The objective of this project is to equip small scale farmers' organisations to adequately influence agricultural policies and development at the local and national levels. This project is being carried out through dialogues, farmers' deliberative sessions and stakeholder consultations. Other activities of the project include assessing farmers' awareness and knowledge level of agricultural policies, and building their capacity to track the agriculture components of District Assembly budgets.

In June 2011, ECASARD in conjunction with IDEG organised a four-day workshop in Koforidua, capital of the Eastern Region of Ghana, for representatives of several FBOs in the Ga East and Pru Districts. The aim of this workshop was to strengthen the capacity of small scale farmers to analyse and understand agricultural policies for improved engagement with policy makers at the local government level. Topics covered during this workshop included introduction to policies shaping Ghana's agriculture, policy tracking, national budget process, district budget process, agriculture and budget advocacy for small scale farmers.

The workshop used various agricultural policy documents such as FASDEP 2 and METASIP as background material. One major observation of this workshop was that there seemed to be little coordination and involvement in public agricultural budgeting and implementation as far as small scale farmers are concerned. There is the need for grassroots participation in public agricultural budgeting and implementation. This could be achieved by continuous efforts at building the capacity of farmers in order to play meaningful role in the drafting of public agricultural budgets and monitor their implementation.

#### **6.6. Budget Analysis Activities of the Ghana Aid Effectiveness Forum**

Ghana Aid Effectiveness Forum (GAEF) is coalition of national and sub-national non-

governmental, community-based organisations and individual activists. The Forum is hosted by SEND Ghana. GAEF negotiated a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with MoFEP on budget information needs of civil society organisations in Ghana in early 2011. This MoU has formed the basis of partnership between GAEF and MoFEP to facilitate the access of CSOs and citizens to information in a timely and reliable manner on government budget policies, monitoring and implementation. GAEF has also entered into an agreement with the International Budget Partnership to organise a number of national budget capacity training workshops for CSOs in Ghana. The first training workshop took place in June 2011 and the second workshop is being held from October 18 to 21 2011. These workshops assist CSOs to monitor national and district assembly budgets, expenditures and also to evaluate the underlying policies to ensure that the citizen receives value for his/her tax money.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of civil society in analysis and shaping of public budgets for the agriculture sector in Ghana is increasing. This paper reviews some of the evidence of the increasing role of public budget analysis by stakeholders including CSOs within the context of medium term development frameworks and strategies of national and local governments in Ghana. It appears that efforts have concentrated heavily in the area of analysis of national government budgets for the agriculture sector. It is important that more efforts are directed at analysis of budgets of District Assemblies with emphasis on expenditures earmarked for agriculture and rural development. This has even become more pressing given the recent increase in the number of districts in Ghana from 170 to 212 as announced by the Minister of Local Government and Rural Development in October 2011. It is imperative that the average citizen is adequately informed at the local level on the major contents and policies of national government budgets that are translated in language easily understood by people. Hence we advocate the preparation and publication of the citizen budget statements, which involve layperson presentation of government budget statements, by MoFEP.

There is weak linkage in the decentralised

planning system that has been implemented in Ghana since 1988. There are two levels in the statutory planning of the decentralised administration practised in Ghana; the National Development Policy Framework (NDPF) and Sector Medium-Terms plans at the national level, and the District Medium-Term plans at the district level. The sector and the district medium term plans are derived from the NDPF so sectors and districts need to wait until the national framework is out for them to pick their priority policy objectives. Districts must also wait for the sector strategy to start their plans but the district has the flexibility to adopt and adapt to sector strategies depending upon its own circumstances. There is need to build capacity across policy planning units at both the sector and district levels to enhance development planning at the sector and district levels. This is important given that agriculture sector budgeting which is done at the sector level by MoFA cannot be done in isolation from the preparation of the national agricultural budget. The linkage of agriculture sector budget to the overall national government budget needs to be appreciated for more effective agricultural budget analysis by CSOs and NGOs.

One issue that affects good agricultural budget analysis is how to track the performance of the agriculture budget. Again, what constitutes agricultural budget is often not well-defined. This is because several Ministries, Departments and Agencies are involved with agricultural-related activities and this makes it difficult to delineate the portion of the budget given to the agriculture component to allow for a specific agricultural budget analysis. An important issue that affects successful agricultural budget analysis is the change of government and the consequent change in objectives of national development strategy. Governments need to commit themselves to continue viable programmes of their predecessors rather than abandoning them to score cheap political points. Further, there appears to be excessive dependence of foreign aid by the national government for implementation of activities in the agriculture sector in Ghana. The overdependence of the national government budget on foreign donors needs to be reduced through increased mobilisation of internally-generated funds at both the national and district levels.

## ENDNOTES

1. *The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I, 2003-2005); Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II, 2006 – 2009); Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy – FASDEP II (Ministry of Food and Agriculture, 2007); and the draft Long Term National Development Plan, Volume 1: Towards a Development Policy Framework (2008).*
2. *FASDEP provides the framework for modernising the agricultural sector and making it the catalyst for rural transformation.*

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