

Digital Green in Ghana



About Us

Digital Green is a not for profit international development organization that uses an innovative digital platform for community engagement to improve lives of rural communities across South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. We partner with local public, private and civil society organizations to share knowledge on improved agricultural practices, livelihoods, health, and nutrition, using locally produced videos and human mediated dissemination. In a controlled evaluation, the approach was found to be 10 times more cost-effective and uptake of new practices seven times higher compared to traditional extension services.¹

Till date, we have produced over 2,800 videos in more than 20 languages, reached 3,000 villages and over 330,000 farmers. We currently implement projects in seven states in India and in select areas in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania in Africa in partnership with over 20 partners.

Our Approach

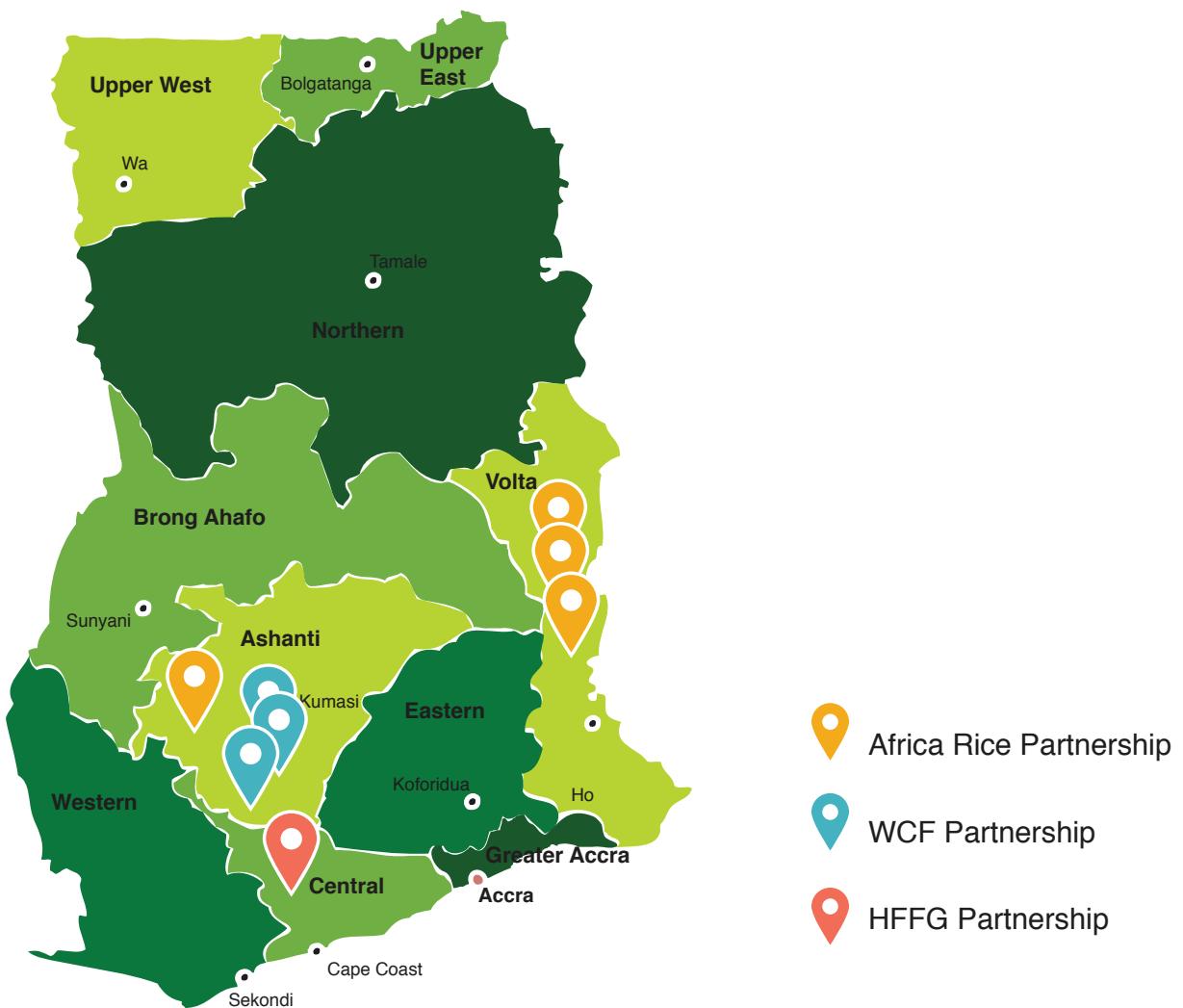
We engage with and empower rural communities to produce participatory localized videos, leveraging pre-existing group structures to disseminate these videos through human mediation. These videos are of the community, by the community and for the community. The approach includes: (1) a participatory process for video production on improved livelihood practices, (2) a human-mediated learning model for video dissemination and training, (3) a hardware and software technology platform for data management customized to limited or intermittent Internet and electrical grid connectivity, and (4) an iterative model to progressively address the needs and interests of the community with analytical tools.

Our data management software called Connect Online | Connect Offline (COCO) and Analytics dashboard suite customized to low resource settings are used to collect and analyse near real-time data on dissemination, adoption, and community interest.

¹ Gandhi, R., R. Veeraraghavan, K. Toyama and V. Ramprasad (2009). "Digital Green: Participatory Video for Agricultural Extension", Information Technologies for International Development, MIT Press. <http://itidjournal.org/itid/article/view/322/145>

Our Projects in Ghana

To test the feasibility and effectiveness of our approach in multiple geographies, we initiated work in West Africa in Ghana in 2012. By working with government and non-profit extension systems, we aim to improve livelihood opportunities, food security, as well as the nutrition and health status of poor rural households. At present, we have reached 2,000 households through our agriculture-focused partnerships. In the coming year, we will expand our operations to engage farmers on agronomic practices related to cash and food crops, as well as reproductive, maternal and child health practices.



World Cocoa Foundation

Geography: 1,800 households, 52 communities, three districts within Adansi North & South areas and Ahafo Ano South, Ashanti region

We partnered with the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) in Ghana in 2012 to implement a pilot project that promotes key agricultural behaviors related to cocoa farming. This pilot adapts the Digital Green approach to extend

WCF's agricultural interventions as part of the Cocoa Livelihood Project (CLP). CLP focuses on strengthening farmer groups by providing them access to extension and credit through community-based Business Service Centers (BSCs). We are working with WCF's CLP in three districts, where we provide training and supportive supervision to WCF staff and Ghanaian government cocoa community extension agents (CEAs) and district-level Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) staff on video production and

dissemination, quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation.

The pilot project embeds the Digital Green approach with groups that received good agricultural practices (GAP) trainings and groups that did not. Existing farmer groups, each comprising approximately 30 farmers, attend disseminations conducted by CEAAs and group-appointed local community facilitators (LCFs). Till date, we have reached approximately 1,800 farmers of which approximately 85% adopted at least one best practice. In total, 18 videos have been produced on topics such as pest and weed management, harvesting, post-harvest care and storage. The partnership with WCF expanded to two additional sites to effectively collaborate with WCF's industry partners, Noble and Armajaro.

Formative research and process evaluations show a great demand among the farmer groups and other community members for videos on cocoa best practices. A cost-effectiveness study is also being conducted in these areas.

Africa Rice

Geography: 1,125 households, 15 communities, three districts – Kejebe, HoeHoe and Jasikan, Volta region

We have entered into a knowledge-based partnership with the research group AfricaRice to disseminate rice cultivation technologies to farmers in the Ashanti and Volta regions in Ghana. Africa Rice partnered with the Crop Research Institute (CRI) working with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) to strengthen the capacities of farmer groups through participatory learning and action research implementation.

CRI staff and MoFA's agriculture extension agents (AEAs) were trained by our trainers on video production and dissemination and are engaging approximately 1,125 farmers with community-based videos in the Volta region. Approximately 16 videos are being produced and disseminated through these collaborations and are following the cropping calendar of Ghanaian rice farmers. These videos showcase agronomic best practices associated with inland rice farming land development.



Hope for Future Generations

Geography: 3,250 households, 20 communities and 15 schools in Ajumako Enyan Essiam, Volta region

We partnered with Hope for Future Generations (HFFG) to implement a pilot project to promote key sexual and reproductive health rights and maternal, neonatal and child health practices in the Ajumako Enyan Essiam District of the Central Region. This pilot seeks to layer the Digital Green approach with existing social groups. It will reach out to beneficiary communities and schools through three types of small community self-empowerment groups (mummies' clubs, daddies' clubs, youth clubs) as well as pupils in select basic schools organized as School Health Clubs. This collaboration will not only target direct audiences such as pregnant and lactating women,

but also key household decision-makers such as husbands and mother in-laws.

HFFG, a well-known health organization in Ghana, has created a cadre of community mediators within each community by working with the Government-established, Ghana Health Services (GHS). HFFG has also partnered with the Ghana Education Service (GES) to increase sexual and reproductive health awareness of youths in schools. The three agencies - HFFG, GHS and GES – will work in tandem to produce and share health-related videos to engaged communities. Staff members from these three agencies have been trained on video production and are producing videos on topics such as 'the effects of early sexual activity.' Representatives of each of the government agencies are considered subject matter specialists for video content approval.

