**Concept Brief**

**8th Pre-harvest Agribusiness Event**

**2018**

**Presented By:**

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**Concept**

**Agriculture has long been recognized, in particular, by developing economies, as the critical sector that could help achieve the much needed global goal of poverty reduction, in a much more sustainable way. In Ghana, this view runs true. However, disappointingly, the action one finds on the ground seem almost the opposite for a lot of reasons which include misplaced priorities.**

**For instance, as much as Ghana has been acknowledged as one of the countries in this part of the world that has successfully transitioned from “a subsistence-farming society to a more commercially focused one” (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa), the performance of agriculture, generally, has been on the decline.**

**So, as much as the sector employs about 45% of the population, expansion has slowed down in recent years, declining from a growth rate of 5.7% in 2013 to just 0.04% in 2015 (World Bank). According to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), at the end of 2017, the sector accounted for 18.5% of GDP, down from 29.8% at the end of 2010. This decline, from our deduction, is largely due to government’s fixed focus on export crop crops such as cocoa to the detriment of others.**

**“Some of the decline in the sector can be linked to the low budget allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture…” was the explanation the Minister for Food and Agriculture gave to Oxford Business Group just late year.**

**This background only goes to underscore the importance of complementary contribution of organizations, other than government, to the on-going national effort to develop the sector and sustain its growth, knowing how invaluable the sector is to Ghana’s national aspiration to eradicate hunger and achieve food sufficiency.**

**Consequently, the idea of the Pre-Harvest Agribusiness Event comes as a necessary response to this need to come in as a facilitator providing the right platform for bringing commodity buyers, agribusiness service providers and farmers to establish business relationships and discuss contracts and explore and exploit other growth possibilities.**

**The Rationale**

**Notwithstanding the above, agriculture business, investment and development in Ghana has largely taken place in the south of the country with the massive farming of tropical (forest), cash crops, like cocoa and oil palm. Therefore, the agricultural potential of the northern zone and irrigation possibilities is largely untapped?**

**The North, with at least 8 million unused agricultural land with highly suitable soils, is open for large scale farming, development of modern agro-industry supply chains, poultry and vegetable oils, rice sugar, cotton, cassava, shea, high added value tree crops, livestock, aquaculture, etc. (credit: commercial agric investment guide).**

**Essentially, Agrihouse, in partnership with USAID, WFP, Ministry of Food and Agric, together with other private and international organization, seeks to assist farmers and agri-businesses to expand their businesses before and after harvesting, and to create enabling environment for new partnerships to promote the growth of Ghana’s agricultural sector. Aside market growth, we also aim to help farmers adopt best practices to ensure that the achievements made within the industry are sustained.**

**Goals and Objectives**

* **Assist farmers and agri-businesses to expand their businesses before and after harvesting, and create an enabling environment for new partnerships to promote the growth of Ghana’s agricultural sector.**
* **Help farmers adopt best practices to ensure that the achievements made within the industry are sustained.**
* **Provide a platform for commodity buyers and farmers to establish business relationships and discuss contracts for the harvest of their produce.**

**Activities**

**Building on the successful 2017 event in the Northern Region of Ghana, the 8th Pre-harvest Agribusiness Event will highlight the Agro-economic opportunities to an audience of investors, policy-makers, business leaders, academics, finance professionals, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and key Government Ministries, non-governmental and corporate bodies, farmers and farming associations, representatives from the Agribusiness civil society, investors, financial institutions, input dealers, seed companies district chief executives and relevant stakeholders.**

**Pre-Harvest Agribusiness event is an event that has been on for the past seven years. It is a 3 full day conferencing event, presentations, exhibitions, and market place for business-to-business meetings. Speeches will be delivered by representatives from World Food Programme (WFP), USAID, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, ADVANCE, the Agriculture Technology Transfer project and lead sponsors, leading to the official opening of the event.**

**Participants will break out into commodity sessions to discuss marketing opportunities and make deals. The event will feature an exhibition showcasing leading agricultural organizations in the areas of seed production, fertilizer, storage, machinery and technology. Participants will have the opportunity to network with over 1000 agribusinesses.**

**Expected Result**

**In October 2010, USAID ADVANCE started the event in Tamale in the Northern Region. To allow for further growth, sustainability and expansion, the USAID ADVANCE project, has partnered with and subsequently handed over the organization of Pre-Harvest event to Agrihouse Foundation.**

**For the past years, the event has provided an effective environment to learn and share ideas, discuss the season’s outlook on production, identify critical policies to support competitive marketing and to establish firm marketing relationships for the forth coming harvest. Over the years, the event has helped farmers to access new market opportunities and higher yielding seeds to increase agricultural productivity. This will continue.**

**The event will remain one of the leading events in the country, where farmers, businesses, government and ideas people meet to network, build capacity, learn and explore business opportunities, sign deals and close contracts.**

**It has been praised as a one-stop shop location for business-like discussions between businesses, investors, financial companies, farmers and buyers on varying topics including volumes, prices, contracts and timing.**

**With its consistency, it will continue to provide that sectoral growth facilitation that has largely been missing from government’s end. Pre-harvest Agribusiness Events will continue to ensure that the attention of the nation is not just focused on cocoa and other largely export produce and this will help Ghana achieve and maintain even growth in the agriculture sector.**