

# Community Extension Agents Update

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## AFTER FOUR MONTHS OF CEA SERVICE

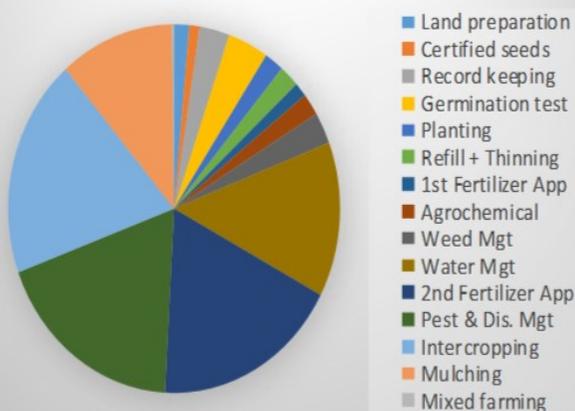
A total of **10,333** need-sensitive extension messages have been delivered to the farmers receiving the **DIRTS Community Extension Agents** package with **3,691** messages delivered in July alone.

Eighty-one (81) communities located in 12 districts in the northern Region of Ghana have CEAs who interact with **10 pre-selected farmers** every week either at their homes or farms to disseminate audio and video format extension messages. These messages are delivered to the farmers using Android phones after a real time need assessment has been conducted.

## Number of Messages by District

District	Frequency	Percentage
Central Gonja	555	5
Karaga	958	9
Kumbungu	1,076	10
Mion	1,367	13
Saboba	877	8
Sanarigu	730	7
Savelugu/ Nanton	799	8
Tatale	382	4
Tolon	1,063	10
Yendi	1,410	14
Zabzugu	1,116	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,333</b>	<b>100</b>

## Messages Delivered



## Activities undertaken by CEA farmers

In July, the major activities carried out by most of the farmers receiving CEA-administered extension messages were: weeding, land preparation and planting of maize in rows with 31, 15 and 14 percent respectively adopting the recommended agronomic practices. Other activities undertaken by the farmers were: application of recommended agrochemicals, thinning out and refilling, and fertilizer application.

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## FAQs

### Some frequently asked questions by farmers were:

1. How do I do my germination test?
2. Can we plant soya beans and beans on the same piece of land?
3. What is the right time for fertilizer application?
4. How do I keep farm records?
5. How will I do water management?

During the interactions, most farmers said the practices described in the messages were either new to them or they did not follow them during the last farming season. As many as **91 percent** of targeted farmers mentioned that the message on **germination test** was new, while **88 percent** said they did not practice the test in last year's farming season. Germination tests entails testing seeds to establish their germination potential before planting on the main farm land. Also, **record keeping, second fertilizer application and water management** were the other featured messages which were new to a great number of farmers. Eighty-nine (**89 percent**) said the water management processes to better preserve water sources and moisture on the farm for healthy crop growth was new to them.

## THIS MONTH'S FEATURE: RESEARCHERS' VISIT & PROJECT LAUNCH



*Prof. Chris Udry, Prof. Dean Karlan and the DIRTs team visit farms of intervention target farmers at Tigu*

In July 2014, approximately 13 weeks into the start of the CEA program, Principal Investigators (PIs) **Prof. Christopher Udry** and **Prof. Dean Karlan** from Yale University visited the project. The PIs and the project team visited Tigu, one of DIRTs partner communities receiving the CEA intervention. The team interacted with a few CEAs and farmers. They observed at first-hand how farmers were implementing the agronomic extension messages delivered by the CEAs. The farmers at Tigu were found to be practicing the extension messages delivered by the CEA. The visiting team observed that most of the intervention targeted farmers were practicing the recommended farming

practices like **planting in rows** and **planting one seed per hole**.

Within the same period, a **dissemination event** was hosted by IPA at Gillbt Training Centre in Tamale to **launch the various interventions under the DIRTs project**. The event was attended by several stakeholders, including: the northern Regional Director of Ministry of Food and Agriculture, several District Directors in the Northern region, Research Scientists from Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (SARI), Trias Ghana, the World Bank and the local media. Participants at the dissemination event gave interesting feedback after the presentations on different arms of the project. The launch event also presented opportunity for participants to network, share experiences and explore partnership opportunities.