

The role of Agricultural Development Bank in the Development of Rural Women in Agriculture (A Case Study of Wa-West District).

Adinan Bahahudeen Shafiwu (1) Andrews Salakpi (2) Freda Bonye (3)

1. Faculty of Mathematical Sciences, Examinations Unit, University for Development Studies, Navrongo Campus, Ghana.

2. Department of Accountancy, School of Business and Law, UDS-Wa Campus, Ghana

3. Department of Math's, Faculty of Mathematical Sciences, UDS- Navrongo Campus, Ghana.

Correspondent Email: *yshafiwu@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study shows the role of the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) in assisting rural women in agriculture, a case study of the Wa-West District notably Ponyentanga, Gaa and Nyoli. The study looks at the way rural women in Agricultural are equipped with ADB loans to improve upon their farming practices. The study critically examines the loan size, mode of payment and interest rates aiming at evaluating its efficacy towards improve farming methods. The values and ideas of these women farmers were examined to find out whether there have been changes in their methods of farming and improve living condition as a result of loans rendered by ADB, Wa Branch to them. Questionnaire was used to find out the extent to which ADB operates in those areas. In all, one hundred (100) questionnaires were administered to one hundred respondents. Analysis of responses to questionnaires clearly shows that services render by ADB in these areas were ineffective. They further showed that, loan size, interest rate and mode of payment used by bank are inappropriate. As a consequence, there is no much improvement in their way of lives and farming practices. It is recommended that, mode of payment be extended, interest rate reduced, loan size increased and method of payment be determined by farmers. It is also recommended that, training programmers' should always be organized alongside execution of loans to improve the performance of women beneficiaries.

Keywords: Agricultural development Bank (ADB), Development, women in Agric, loans, Wa west District.

1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 Background

Rural women farmers play a vital role in food production and food security. They account for 70% of the agricultural workers, 80% of the food producers, and 100% of those who process basic food stuffs and undertake 60% to 90% of marketing their farm produce (Fresco, 1998). Four out of ten agricultural workers in the world are women (U.N., 1986). Women take part actively in farming activities and in the processing of farm produce, in addition to their domestic and reproductive responsibilities.

It is often stated that women are responsible for more than half of the world's food production overall and produce up to 60 to 80% of basic food stuff in Africa (Fresco, 1998). The role women play in agriculture and the rural society is fundamental to agricultural and rural development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA, 1993) reported that women in Africa make up more than one third of the work force. However, there is some division of roles in agriculture. To a large extent men are responsible for the clearing and preparing of the land while women are responsible of the planting, weeding, applying fertilizer, harvesting, transporting and marketing of the produce (Todaro and Smith, 2009). According to the 1984 census data in Ghana, (15 years +) made up approximately 47% of the labour force in Agriculture. This increased marginally to 49.4 by 2003 as compare to 51.7% of the male population (FAO, 2003). However, in agriculture the majority of women are food producers working on joint family farms and tending their own land for household food production while only a small percentage is independent farmers (Duncan, 2004)

About 90% of women in Ghana are self-employed or work as unpaid family labour in farming, agro-based enterprises, or small scale manufacturing in the informal sector with low productivity and low incomes (Fontana and Joekes, 1998). According to (Duncan, 2004), the low productivity in agriculture is as a result of a multiplicity of factors such as limited application of science and

Technology, dependency of weather and inadequate government support in terms of subsidies and access to credit. But with these problems it was estimated that women produce about 70 – 80% of the food consumed in Ghana. Apart from food security and other activities and domestic responsibilities for women farmers, most of them are becoming increasingly responsible for the educational and other marital needs of the wards, especially female – headed households.

According to a World Bank report, women farmers are disadvantaged in many ways including their access to financial service, access to education and training facilities and representation at the policy making and

implementation level as compared to their male counterparts. As such they may not necessarily be the focus of programmes and policies designed to enhance agricultural productivity, but they may end up bearing the brunt of these policies and programmes.

It is for these important roles that women play and their inability to have access to credit in agriculture that, Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) has in its line of operations, made various efforts to help women in agriculture with credit facilities and farm inputs.

1.2 Problem Statement

Women are poor because they have fewer economic opportunities and less autonomy than men. Their access to economic resources, education and training and support services are limited. They also have very little participation in decision making. The rigidity of socially prescribed roles for women and tendency to scale back social services have increased the burden of poverty on women in Ghana and Northern Ghana in particular (GPRS, 2000).

Women enterprise takes myriad forms and so do their needs for credit. Access to financial services is necessary simply to help an income generating activity to continue. This is so for both men and women however small scale women entrepreneurs in the study area are engulfed in 'little opportunity cycle' – their businesses are characterized by unstable employment, lack of capital to start or even expand, little or no access to credit, low income generating activity as well as low productivity. But in their efforts to finance their businesses they either resort to borrowing from friends, personal savings or money lenders who some time exploit them by charging high interest rates. In some cases they do not even exist (Ayeetey, 1995).

The principal constraint that poor women face, especially those in the rural setting in their attempt to improve their living standards is simply lack of sufficient income. 1995). the provision of credit will not only increase their income levels but also equip women with the knowledge and training required for a successful enterprise. Women in the study area lack agricultural training as a result of their low level of formal education. This hampers their ability to access information to support services for improving the business operation.

Experience from past credit schemes have been fatal due mainly to the problem of default and low recovery rate of credit. Most banks also require collateral from customers before granting such credits. Giving the problem of lack of collateral by the rural population, ADB in general does not emphasis on collateral as a prerequisite for granting credit (Field Notes). Therefore, this study intends to find out the level of women's accessibility to credit by the ADB and the contribution of this credit towards the development of rural women in agriculture.

1.3 Research Question.

Is ADB credit accessible to rural women in agriculture?

1.3.1 Research Objective

1.3.2 General Objective

To assess how effective ADB Loans impact in the development of rural women in agriculture in Wa West District.

1.3.3 Specific Objective

- To find out women access to loan from ADB;
- To identify problems of women in accessing funds from ADB;
- To determine the proportion of rural women and men in agriculture within the District who access loan from ADB; and
- To come out with recommendations that can help address the financial needs of the women in the study area.

1.4 Relevance of the Study

The relevance of the study lies in the contribution it will make towards the sustainability of micro credits and provision of agricultural support. This work outlines the contribution of Agricultural Development Banks towards rural women in Agriculture. It will serve as a basis for policy makers to intervene appropriately and again provide a benchmark for assessing their performance. The study will also be beneficial to development agencies aimed at improving the living stands of the rural women through credits and agricultural packages.

1.5 Research Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used to collect and analyse data. Data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources like article and journals, relevant standard text book records and credible internet sources. The study population consists of rural women farmers, the services of ADB in the study area and ADB itself. The sample unit involves rural women farmers within the Wa–West District.

The sample size consisted of 100 rural women farmers within the District. Both probability and non probability sample methods have been used. Under the probability sampling, systematic random sampling was used and under the probability sample the purposive sample was considered

1.6 Data analysis and Presentation

Data is analysed using both qualitative and quantitative tools. Tables, graphs are used in analyzing quantitative data while analysis of qualitative data is basically descriptive. However, data is presented in the form of cross tabulation, graphs, pie charts among others using programs like SPSS, Microsoft excel etc. The presentation is to aid the visual appreciation of the data. This was followed by descriptions and explanations of the data.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This is divided into three parts and it draws on social science literature relevant to the issues under study to give an in-depth understanding of the problem under discussion. Part one focuses on the concept of Agricultural Development banking system in Ghana. Part two deals with the institutional microcredit delivery policies and administration, while part three is on the impact of micro-credit on rural women.

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK

The Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) was set up in 1965 by an Act of Parliament (ACT 286) under the name, Agricultural Credit and Co-operative Bank, to promote and modernize the agricultural sector and allied economic activities through appropriate financial intermediation. However, the Act stated that the main objective of the Bank was 'to provide credit facilities to agriculturists and persons for connected purposes.' In 1967, the name of the Bank was changed to the Agricultural Development Bank. Its functions were further broadened by the passage of the Act of Parliament 1970 (Act 352). It is also the first development financial institution established by the Government of Ghana and is one of the twenty six licensed commercial banks in Ghana. (www.agricbank.com)

The bank is owned by the Government and Bank of Ghana with 51.83 percent of the total paid-up capital by Government, while the Bank of Ghana holds the remaining 48.17 percent. (www.agricbank.com). The bank maintains a network of fifty (50) branches located in all areas of Ghana. There are also an additional four (4) farm Loan Offices and ten Agency offices. This adds up to a total of sixty-four (64) services outlets, in addition to the bank's headquarters (www.agricbank.com).

In accordance with the established legal instruments, the functions of ADB are, among others, the following: The provision of credit facilities for the development and/or modernization of agriculture and allied industries; the identification and promotion of agricultural enterprises in Ghana, whether singly or jointly, with persons or institutions, both local and foreign; the initiation of, or participation in, the conduct of research and training designed to promote agricultural development in general; the mobilization of financial and human resources to meet the country's development needs in agriculture; investment in processing and transportation of agricultural produce; operation of current, savings and fixed deposit accounts; financing of cottage industries; management of special funds and loans granted to the Government of Ghana by other governments and international organizations and undertake international banking. (<http://www.proghana.Com>).

However, in line with its functions, ADB is guided in its operations by a mission which commits to the building of a strong customer-oriented Bank, run by knowledgeable and well-motivated staff, providing profitable financial intermediation and related services for a sustained and diversified agricultural and rural development (www.agricbank.com).

2.2 Products and Services

ADB primarily provides specialized financial intermediation and related services with the objective of promoting a sustained and diversified agricultural and rural development as a foundation for the country's overall development. In addition to cultivate effective linkages between the agricultural sector and the rest of the economy and to complement the provision of banking services throughout the country, ADB also provides ordinary commercial banking services, as well as servicing other sectors of the economy. The range of the services includes;

First, regarding consumer banking services, the bank has Current account service; Salary account service; Savings deposit account service; Personal loans; Local payment service; ATM service etc. Second, International Banking, the bank has Foreign exchange account held locally; foreign deposit account; International funds transfer; Short-term export finance; Export documentation and processing; Export advisory service an Import financing. Also, the bank has Treasury Management which includes; Cedi account deposits; Special Call Deposits; Fixed Deposits; BOG Treasury Bills/Bonds; Foreign currency deposits in US Dollars or British Pounds for periods ranging from 30 days to 1 year. Again, with their Western Union Money Transfer, payment of inward remittances is ease; there is convenience and speed from every city in the world in local currency to the beneficiary in accordance with an agreement with the sender. Finally, Corporate Banking includes; foreign

account service at designated branches to cater for the foreign business needs of the business community. (www.agricbank.com)

2.3 Institutional Microcredit Delivery Policies

Formal institutional credit schemes for Small Scale Enterprises (SSEs) development dated from late 1969, with the establishment of the Credit Guarantee Scheme by Bank of Ghana to assist entrepreneurs who generally found it difficult to benefit from bank credit. However, enterprises that were covered by the Scheme included those in agriculture, livestock breeding, manufacturing, and mining among others (Thomi and Yanakson, 1985 to 83)

Not with standing, in 1970, the government set up the Ghana Business Promotion Programme, which became the Ghanaian Enterprise Development Commission in 1975, to administer the small Business Credit Scheme. The objective of the commission was to provide financial and technical assistance to newly established and existing SSEs and Ghanaian Managers of formerly alien-owned manufacturing enterprises (Aryeetey, 1995). April 1990, the commission and the National Board for Small-Scale industries (NBSSI) were merged under the latter in order to avoid duplication of efforts in SSE promotion.

In addition, the government established a credit line under the programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment and Development (PAMSCAD) to assist SSEs in the financial needs. This is part of the measures adopted by government to cushion the hardships brought to some vulnerable groups, especially under its Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The credit is being managed by the NBSSI to assist entrepreneurs to procure scarce but essential raw materials. (EMPRETEC Ghana, 1991).

Furthermore, there are also the rural banks in Ghana which has been established to help SSEs in their credit needs. These are independent unit banks whose operation seek to bring banking facilities to the doorsteps of rural people, by making institutional credit available to them, mobilizing saving in the rural communities, extending credit to farmers and other rural producers and serving as a catalyst in rural development. This catalogue of credit schemes indicates the laudable intentions of government in helping to promote the development of SSEs in the country.

2.4 Credit Delivery Schemes

Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) offers a number of credit delivery schemes. One of these schemes is group credit. A group system is a method of loan delivery in which loans and their repayment are made the responsibility of organized groups rather than individuals. Here, credit resources may be generally attributed through small groups rather than the loans being allocated on an individual by individual basis (Aryeetey, 1995). Solidarity groups make an efficient use of local knowledge and social relations and are characterized by social cohesion and mutual trust. Therefore, in the absence of enforceable contracts and collateral in microcredit, social 'connectedness' guarantees inter-temporal commitments (Alin, 1995).

The second scheme is individual credit. Under this scheme, individuals are granted credit and they are solely liable for repayment and default. Many of the programmes operating on this policy have been most successful in areas where good infrastructure coverage is available and marketing has been stimulated (Aryeetey, 1995). It also made possible in formal financial institutions where beneficiaries are required to produce some form of collateral security.

Supervised credit is another scheme. Credit to borrowers who lack education and ability to keep records, is best administered under close supervision (Aryeetey, 1995). Therefore credit should be granted only after a thorough investigation of activities of the borrowers and may also provide other credit related services such as education and training

2.5 The Concept of Micro-Credit

Micro-credit delivery is a form of financial inter-mediation performed by both banking and non-bank financial institutions (Dere1997). It is used to denote a special kind of contractual agreement that facilitates the transfer of temporal free resources of individuals or organizations to others who have temporal need for them. Thus micro-credit refers to any financial or material resources mobilized by the bank or non-bank financial institutions, with the aim of lending to small-scale borrowers. This is usually to assist them get out of their depressed economic circumstances. Patrick (1975) shares this view when he asserted that micro-credit is a means that enables persons to extend their control as distinct from ownership of a small amount of resources, to temporally meet their socio-economic objectives. However, for micro-credit schemes to be sustainable and effectively address the needs of the poor especially the skill and education level of beneficiaries need to be considered. Thus a training and educational package should constitute an integral part of the scheme.

2.7 Criteria and Category of Beneficiaries

Determining who the poor are and who qualifies to benefit from a micro- credit scheme, calls for a different methodological approach. These differences are bound to occur since people have different conceptions about

poverty. There is, therefore, the possibility to exclude the actual target beneficiaries from a micro-credit scheme. The ability of a micro-credit programme like those instituted by the Agricultural Development Bank to identify the actual beneficiaries of credit would in itself be a success and thus an important strategy for sustainable micro-credit delivery regarding poverty reduction. Inability to identify actual beneficiaries of a micro-credit scheme will worsen the poverty situation of the poor in communities and thereby defeating the objectives of micro-credit programme (Field Notes).

2.8 Challenges of Accessing Microcredit

The measures of government and other organizations to promote the development of SSEs in both urban and rural areas by making banking facilities close to their doorsteps have failed. This is as a result of poor monetary structures and policies in place. Credit from government or institutional sources often involves delay and completion of many facilities, too complicated for the unsophisticated small-scale and often illiterate local entrepreneurs. In addition, collateral requirements, complex procedures, poor communication and inadequate banking network are all factors which restrict the availability of institutional credit to the majority of households. (Aryeetey, 1995).

2.9 Interest Rate and Size of Credit

Interest rate is the leverage that influences everything that financial institutions do as well as activities of borrowers, especially their profit. It therefore constitutes a pervasive element in the financial world. Micro-finance practitioners have always debated on this issue especially when their financial target is the poor. While some charge as high as fifty percent (50%) or above, others see it unjustifiable. However, the need to charge interest in order to recover the cost of managing credit and to ensure programme sustainability cannot be over emphasized. This should, therefore, be done in a manner that the poor is not left with nothing after paying back borrowed funds. Another issue of concern is the fact that a useful micro-credit scheme aiming at reducing poverty and food insecurity should take critical consideration of the size of credit. Every form of business requires certain amount of capital for effective utilization. If the amount of capital or credit available is far less than required for investment in a particular venture the entrepreneur may be busy working for little or no returns. On the other hand, excess credit over the capital requirement may lead to inefficiency in management resulting in losses. Oppong (1987) shared this same opinion when he asserted that, the size of credit should vary with the size of the business financed

2.9.1 Micro-Credit and Capacity Enhancement

Awareness of the importance of women and their enterprises to economic development has only grown in recent years. Availability of credit for poor women is now a concern. According to Steward (1997), lack of access to credit is not the only factor militating against the ability of women entrepreneurs to expand their businesses and make them more profitable. Steward argued that, due to the virtual exclusion of women, micro-enterprise owners from all but the lowest level of education in many developing countries often lack the basic managerial skills necessary to expand their businesses without supplementary technical training. Such skills may include proper record keeping, entrepreneurial abilities and inventory control. Credit projects with strong training components have higher possibility of success, especially as far as women micro entrepreneurs are concerned. The view is that, borrowers who already have assets and skills are able to make better use of credit. Furthermore, health and family size also contribute in holding women back.

2.9.2 Micro-Credit and Development of Rural Women

According to Smanowitz et al (2004), micro credit, is a key strategy in reaching the Millennium Development Goals and in building global financial system that meet the needs of most poor people. "Little field et al (2003) state 'micro-credit is a critical contextual factor with strong impact on the achievement of the MDGs. Micro-credit is unique amount development interventions: it can deliver social benefits on an ongoing, permanent basis and on a large scale". However, some school of thought remain skeptical about the role micro-credit play in helping to reduce poverty, Hulme and Mosley (1996) concluded from the research on micro-credit that "most contemporary schemes are less effective than they might be" (1996:134). The authors argued that the micro-credit is not a panacea for poverty alleviation and that in some cases the poorest people have been made worse. This notwithstanding micro-finance has emerged globally as a leading and effective strategy for poverty reduction with the potential for far-reaching impact for transforming the lives of poor people. It is argued that micro finance can facilitate the achievement of MDGs as well as national policies that target poverty reduction, empowering women, vulnerable groups and improving standards of living. As pointed out by the former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan during the launch of the International Year of Micro-Credit (2005).Sustainable access to micro finance helps alleviate poverty by generating income, creating jobs, allowing children to go to school, enabling families to obtain health care and empowering people to make the choices that best serve their need" (Annan, 2003). Although, micro finance is not a panacea for poverty reduction and its related development

challenges, when properly harnessed it can make sustainable contribution through financial investment leading to the empowerment of people, which in turn promotes confidence and self-esteem, particularly for women. This study suggests that, credit should given to beneficiaries base on the size and capital requirements of their businesses in order for it to be effective and efficiently utilized. The role women play suggest that providing women with the needed capital by way of credit would enhance their economic position which will be reflected in the statuses of their households.

3.0 Data Analysis and Presentation

According to Kerlinger (1993), analysis is the ordering the breaking down of data into constituent parts in order to obtain answers to research questions and to test research hypothesis. He asserts that the analysis of research data and interpretation of data is necessary. To interpret is to explain, to find meaning. Interpretation takes the results of analysis, makes inferences

Pertinent to the research relations studies, and draws conclusions about these relations. The researcher who interprets research results searches for their meaning and implications (Kerlinger, 1964; 1973).

The focus is to examine whether or not Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) WA branch provides credit facilities to rural women in agriculture in the Wa West District. This will also determine the problems and the proportion of women and men in agriculture who access loan from ADB. Relevance statistical tables and figures are used to clarify the primary data compiled from the field for the presentation of the findings. The presentation of the findings are organized under respondents socio-demographic characteristics, credit accessibility, credit delivery procedures, credit size, interest rate, savings ability, repayment or servicing of loan.

3.1 Sex Characteristics of Respondents'

The study administered one hundred (100) questionnaires involving one hundred (100) respondents. The respondents skewed towards only females because of the subject matter. In all, one hundred percent response was achieved.

3.2 Age Distribution

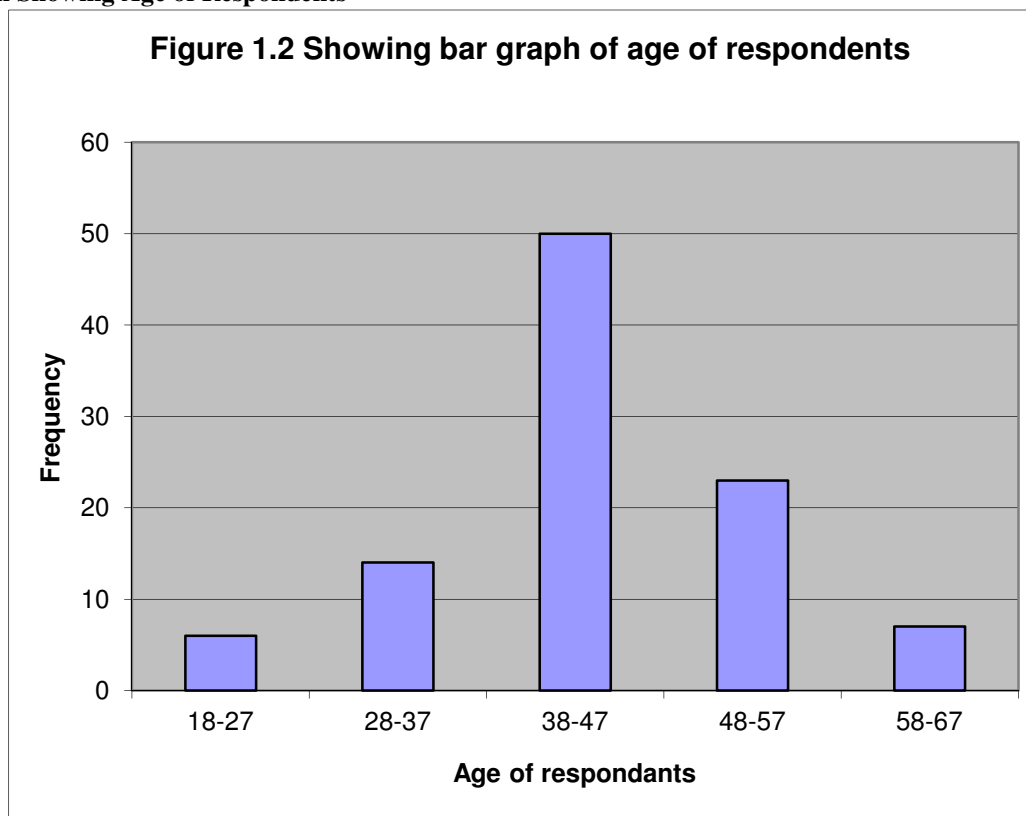
The age distribution of any population determines the structure of labour force of any society. The structure may be broadly categorized into two. The first is the dependent group mostly children aged (0-14) and the aged (65 and above years). The second category is the active group aged between fifteen (15) and sixty-four (64). The first category is dependant and the second category, seen as economically active for their survival. Data collected from the field indicates that the ages of respondents ranked from eighteen (18) to sixty-seven (67) years (see fig 4.1). All respondents are within the active group. The assumption is that, women in this category especially the married parents who form fifty-three percent (53%) of the respondents from table (fig 4.2) when given credit, may increase their level of productivity and better the needs of their dependents.

Figure 1.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency
18-27	6	6	6
28-37	14	14	20
38-47	50	50	70
48-57	23	23	93
58-67	7	7	100
Total	100	100	

Source: Field Survey June, 2011

Bar Graph Showing Age of Respondents



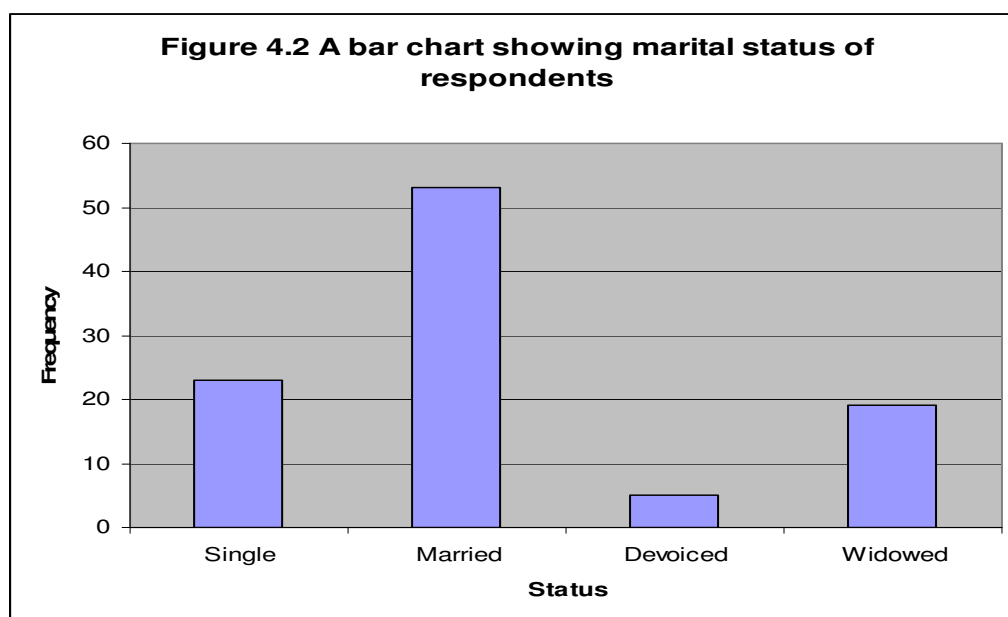
3.3 Marital Status of Respondents

Respondent marital status was categorized as single, married, widowed and divorced. Available data from the field showed that fifty-three percent (53%) of the respondents are married as compared to twenty-three percent (23%) singles, nineteen percent (19%) widowed and five percent (5%) divorced. None was separated. This is because the term is not a characteristic of rural communities in Ghana since people of such categories will either preferred to be termed as married or divorce in rural areas. Single parenting which includes singles, widowed and divorced constitute about forty-seven percent (47%) makes the economic burden of most single parents especially the poor unbearable. Information gathered from the field survey indicated that, children needs with regards to feeding, clothing, education and health among others are their sole responsibility. One of the respondents stated verbally that “the credit has helped to cater for my children’s needs” but was quick to add that the interest rate and time of repayment was not favorable.

Figure 1.3 Depicts Marital Status of the Respondents.

Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	23	23
Married	53	53
Devoiced	5	5
Widowed	19	19
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey June, 2011



3.4 Credit Delivery Procedures

The following are the pre-requisite for qualification to enjoy the credit facilities.

1. Applicants must engage in any of the following;
 - i. Farming (rain fed and irrigation) ii. Agro-processing, iii. Fishing and IV. Livestock;
2. Applicants must belong to a solidarity group of six (6) or more and
3. Applicants must operate savings account with the bank

Funds are given to group members through their leaders which is relatively simple, less bureaucratic and collateral free in terms of properties. The joint and several liabilities are used by the bank as collateral. This is likely to increase accessibility to credit by the poor and may also lead to high repayment as a result of social pressure since the credit are given to beneficiaries in groups. The three selected communities within the Wa-West District women groups qualify under the categories listed above and hence accessed credit from ADB Wa branch.

3.5 Savings

The data as indicated in table 4.2. Revealed that seventy-one percent (71%) have experienced improvement in their personal saving. Twenty-five percent (25%) have their savings level slightly increased and four percent experienced no change. Out of the seventy-one percent, thirty-five percent are married women and then thirty-six percent (36%) goes to single parents (divorced, widowed and single). Out of the twenty-five percent (25%) of the respondents whose savings level was better, sixteen percent (16%) constitute married women while nine percent (9%) goes to single parent. The four percent (4%) who have their saving level being the same has two percent (2%) to single parents. The low percentage in savings level of single parents could be due to the burden put on single parents in catering for their children's needs and hence unable to make meaningful savings. On the other hand, the two percent (2%) of married women who had their savings level being the same could be as a result of neglect on the part of their husbands in shouldering family responsibilities.

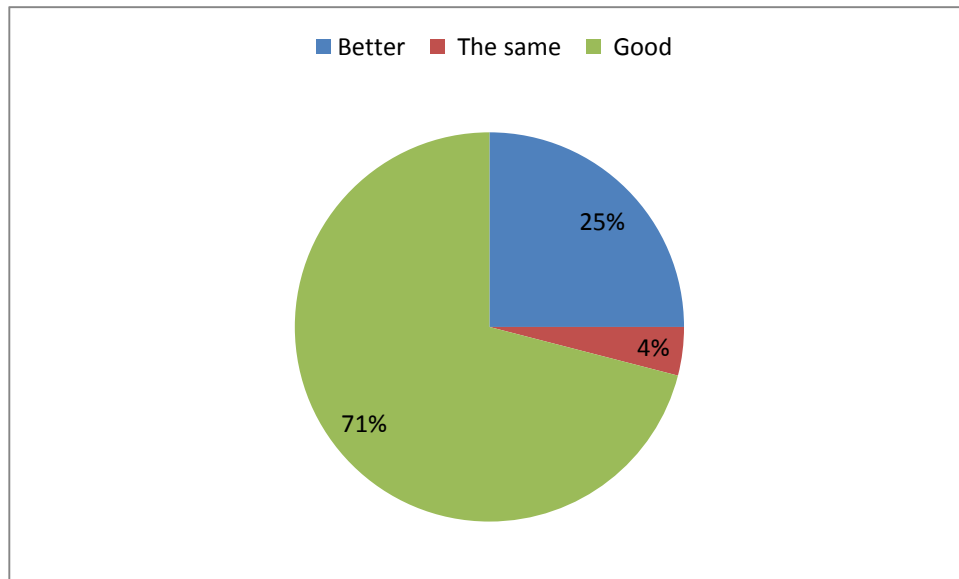
Even though, most of the beneficiaries admitted to have made some savings all of them express interest in taking further credit or loan to improve upon their standard of living.

Fig 1.4 Showing Beneficiaries' Level of Savings

Responses	Married		Devoiced		Widowed		Single		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Worse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Better	16	16	1	1	5	5	3	3	25
The same	2	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	4
Good	35	35	3	3	13	13	20	20	71
Total	53		5		19		23		100

Source: Field Survey June, 2011.

Figure 1.4 Pie Chart Illustrating the Savings Level of Respondents



3.6 Income Status of Respondents

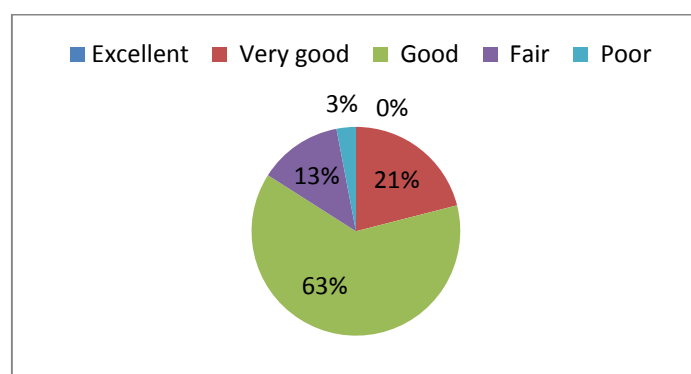
Table 4.6 represented that eighty four percent (84%) of respondents experienced improvement in their income levels. Improvement in their incomes was manifested in the ability to purchase household items such as utensils, cloth catering for their children’s education and health needs and in some cases undertaking building projects it further revealed that sixteen percent (16%) have their situation worse-off. Most of these women attributed the situation to untimely release of funds, high interest rate and mode of payment

Figure 1.5 shows the frequency distribution of income status of respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	-	-
Very good	21	21
Good	63	63
Fair	13	13
Poor	3	3
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey June, 2011.

Figure 1.6 Pie Chart Illustrating the Income Status of Respondents.



3.7 Credit Accessibility

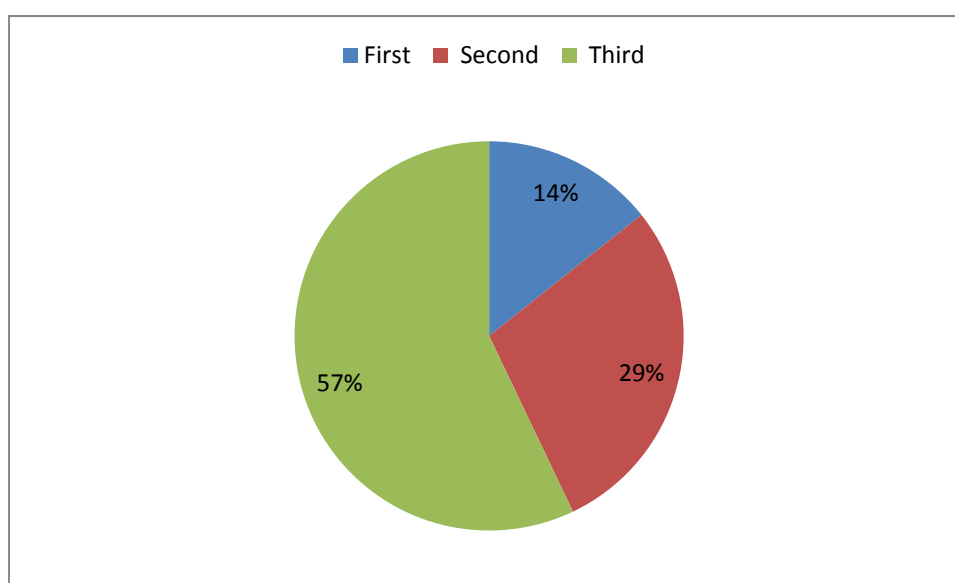
Credit for small scale enterprise throughout the country can be obtained from either institutional or formal (commercial, development and rural banks) or non-institutional or in-formal sources such as friends, money lenders, relatives and other nongovernmental organization. Field data showed that, though these institutions exist most respondents in the three selected communities are only aware of the agricultural development bank. This makes it impossible for them to access loans or credit from other institutions. It was revealed that fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents were not aware of other institutional credit sources. This may be attributed to the illiteracy level of beneficiaries. Also, forty-six percent (46%) of respondents were also aware of agricultural development bank credit facilities and other sources of credit but said they have never have access to such loans due to bureaucratic procedures and collateral requirement (Field Notes).

The group leaders revealed that, an amount of One Hundred Ghana Cedis (GH¢100) was the initial amount started with as the loan size but increased to two Hundred Ghana Cedis (GH¢200) to Four Hundred Ghana Cedis (GH¢400). A number of times a group can borrow money from the bank depend on their repayment ability. However, project officers from ADB Wa branch stated that all applicants and even those who get are not given the required amount applied for. This is an indication of supply falling short of demand for credit and this is a major challenge to the bank.

Figure 1.7 shows the levels of credit accessibility of respondents

	CREDIT SIZE GH¢	PERCENTAGE (%)
1 st	100	14.3
2 nd	200	28.6
3 rd	400	57.1
Total	700	100

Fig 1.8 Pie Chart Depicting Levels



3.8 Credit Accessibility of Respondents

3.8.1 Repayment

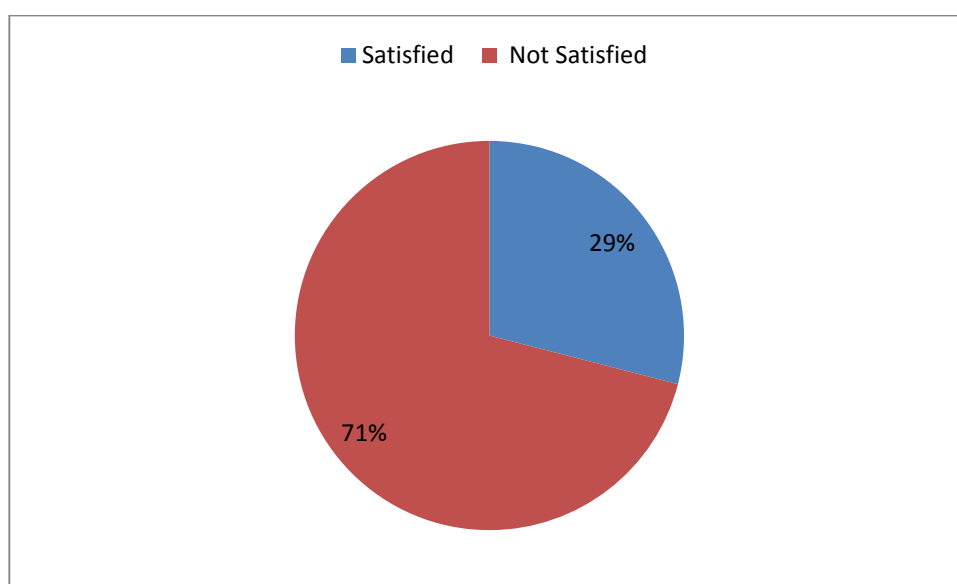
On repayment, seventy-one percent of respondents who are crop farmers were not satisfied with the twelve months (12 months) repayment schedule. They were of the view that prices for farm produce are always too low during harvesting and that is the time they are supposed to pay the loan. They suggested eighteen months (18 months) duration and the choice should be given to beneficiaries on the mode of payment. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of respondents were satisfied with the twelve months (12 months) duration.

An interview with loan officer of the research bank showed that repayment among women is marvelous compared to their male counterparts. A statistics of fifteen (15) women groups and eighteen of men groups in the selected communities revealed that the default rate of 45.45% of women is far lesser than the 54.55% of men.

Figure 1.9 shows the frequency distribution of the responses of the repayment period

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES (%)
Satisfied	29	29
Not Satisfied	71	71
Total	100	100

Fig 2.0 Pie Chart Showing the Repayment Period



3.9.2 Proportion of Loan Disbursement

With the fifteen (15) women groups in the three selected communities made up of hundred respondents and the eighteen men groups from the research bank also within the three selected communities revealed that, the proportion of loans that ADB gives men is far greater than that of women. 45.45% of women in the selected communities as compared to 54.55% of men had access to ADB credit. The difference between males and females who accessed credit from ADB is 9.1%. Therefore the default rate is higher on the males. The reason being that, some of them have the impression that, the facility is a gift from government coupled with the fact that their situation may be worsened by poor harvest, pest and diseases.

4.0 Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Findings

This study analysed data on socio-demographic characteristics which include sex, age, and marital status of respondents. Based on these characteristics, the study showed that women in the marital category are likely to increase their level of productivity and better the needs of their dependents. Also, any measure taken to reduce poverty and increase productivity in the area especially through the provision of credit if not accompanied with training may not be successful. The credit size given to beneficiaries was not enough for their business requirement. The interest rates and the repayment period was also an impediment to their business activities. With these problems, there have been improvements in both their income and savings levels. This was manifested in their ability to purchase their household items and paying their wards school fees.

4.1.1 Major findings

4.1.2 Credit Size, Interest Rate and Repayment

The average credit size of three thousand –five hundred Ghana cedis (GH¢3500.00) to four thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢4000.00) to a group which is seen by eight-nine (89%) percent of respondents was enough. They see it to be enough because of the limited time of twelve months given to them to repay. If the credit was more than that with the same duration, they would see it as not enough. Eleven percent of respondents are not satisfied with the size of the credit and sees it to be too small for agriculture activities.

The interest rate of 15% to 21.95% was seen by sixty percent of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction. Forty percent (40%) were satisfied with the interest rate of 15% to 21.95%.

However, the mode of repayment of twelve months (12months) was seen not to be reasonable by seventy-one percent (71%) of the respondents.

As indicated by the respondents, 84% have increased their personal income. This assessment was based on the fact that they are now able to pay children school fees, provide uniform and improve diet. About 16% stated that they never benefited from the scheme with some of them having their situations worse-off. This they attributed to high interest rate and mode of payment (Field Notes).

4.1.3 Credit Accessibility

They have been tremendous increased in credit accessibility and size. The credit size to women groups in the three selected communities in the district has increase from GH¢350 to GH¢4000. The research also shows that beside the increase in credit size, credit accessibility has been easy due to less bureaucratic procedures (Field Notes).

4.1.4 Savings and Assets Acquisition

In spite of the fact that 71% of respondents registered improvement in their personal savings they still expressed interest in taking further loans since most of them conceived savings as the assets they have acquired. For the 29% percent who do not experienced any improvement in their saving level claimed the high interest rate has resulted in the situations where savings are used to service credit repayment (Field Notes).

6.0 Conclusion

The Agricultural Development Bank has made several attempts to address the credit needs of women in the Wa-West district the women are, however, faced with the problems of untimely disbursement of credit, small size of credit coupled with high interest rate, which the study sees as threats to the sustainability of the project.

As a District characterized by high illiteracy among women, the Bank seems not to place much emphasis on capacity building of its beneficiaries especially literacy and health education. Nonetheless, the study concludes that the Agricultural Development Bank Wa branch credit project sponsored by Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) has contributed to the socio-economic development of women. Extension of the project to others outside the scheme is therefore desirable

5.0 Recommendations

In order to ensure a successful credit delivery that will help most beneficiaries in the selected communities within Wa-West District, this study recommends the following measures.

First, the Bank could reduce the current interest rate of 15% to 21.95% to single digit of 7% as expressed by respondents provided operation cost could be recovered at such reduced lending rate. This will enable beneficiaries make enough returns from their savings. The credit project should always take an in-depth assessment of the size and capital requirements of applicants. Also the time of repayment of credit and mode of payment should always be given to beneficiaries to decide in line with the rules and regulations of the bank. In addition, the Bank should always hold periodic consultations with groups before disbursement so that members should not always see credit as a gift from the government. District Assemblies should make their roads accessible especially during the raining seasons to enable bank get to the remote communities for assessment.

7.0 References:

1. Alin, (1995). Urban Small Loans Programme in Togo. Togo: Arid Lands Information Networks. Aryeley, (1995). Small Enterprises Credit in West Africa. British Council / Issuer Publication.
2. Boateng, E. A. Ed. (19680). Ghana Junior Atlas, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd London.
3. Cobley L.S, (1965). An Introduction to the Botany Of Tropical Crops, Longmans, Green And Co. Ltd, London.
4. CTA, (1993). A Woman's Rightful Place. Spore Bi-Monthly Bulletin. Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), Netherlands. No 44.
5. Dere, (1997). Microfinance and Poverty alleviation in Northern Ghana, Pointer to development of Sustainable Financial Services: Northern Regions of Ghana: the case of Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions of Ghana.

6. Duncan B. S, (2004). The Women's Movement in Ghana. Published by Friederich Ebert Foundation Ghana.
7. Fresco, L.O., (1998). Higher Agricultural Education: A Sustainable development department, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), for the United Nations.
8. Ghana statistical service (1984). Population Census of Ghana: Demo-graphic and Economic Characteristics, Total Country Report
9. Ghana (2003). Annual Report. Food and Agriculture Organizations, Ghana: Ministry of Food and Agriculture.
10. Ghana (1996). Annual Report. Food and Agriculture Organizations. Ghana Ministry of Food and Agriculture.
11. Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, (2002). An Agenda for Growth and Prosperity_Analysis and Policy Statement.
12. Hulme, D. and Mosley, P (1996). Finance against Poverty Volumes 1 and 2, London: Rutledge.
13. Agriculture Development bank of Ghana.
14. Kancheli, GW, (2000). Evaluation of the Extension Services of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in Promoting Sorghum Production in Ponyentanga Area of Wa District. An Unpublished Long Essay Presented in partial fulfillment For the Award of Master Of Arts Degree, University of Ghana, Chap.3.
15. Kerlinger, F.N, (1993). Foundations of Behavioral Research, 2nd ed. Holt Rinehart and Winston Inc. New York. Littlefield, E., Murdugh, J. and Hashemi, S, (2003)._Is Microfinance an Effective Strategy to Reach the Millennium Development Goals? Focus Note Series no 24. Washington: CGAP Consultative Group to Assist the Poor.
16. Martin, J.H. and Leonard, W.H,(1970). Principles of Field Crop Production,(2nd Ed) Collier-Macmillan, London.
17. Todaro and Smith, (2009). Economic Development: New York University and Population Council.
18. Todaro and Smith, (2000). Economic development; New York University and Population Council and The George Washington University.

Authors Details:

Name: Mr.Adinan Bahahudeen Shafiwu (1)

Work: A Senior Admin Assistant (2013 till date) UDS Research/Teaching assistant (2011/2012) FELB- UDS, Ghana.

Qualifications' and Awarded institutions: B.A (Economics and Entrepreneurship development) UDS- Ghana. Single Subject Diploma (Bus\$ Admin) ICM- Bournemouth, England.

Name: Mr. Andrews Salakpi (2)

Work: A Lecturer (2009 till date) Department of Accountancy, School of Business and Law, UDS-Wa Campus, Ghana.

Qualifications' and Awarded institutions: MBA (Banking and Finance) KNUST-Ghana, B.ED Social Science (Accounting) UCC- Ghana, ICE-GH, and ACCA-Intermediate.

Name: MRS: Freda Bonye (3)

Work: An Assistant Lecturer, Department of Math's, Faculty of Mathematical Sciences, UDS-Navrongo Campus, Ghana.

Qualifications' and Awarded institutions: Msc (Finance and Management) Cranfield University-UK, Bsc (Mathematics) KNUST-Ghana