

# Gabriel Eshun, Christopher Tettey

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## Agrotourism development in Ghana : a study of its prospects and challenges at Adjeikrom Cocoa Tour Facility

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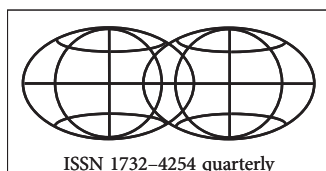
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## Agrotourism development in Ghana: A study of its prospects and challenges at Adjeikrom Cocoa Tour Facility

Gabriel Eshun<sup>1</sup>, CDFMR, Christopher Tettey<sup>2</sup>, CDFMR

<sup>1</sup>*Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Culture and Tourism Programme, P.M.B. Kumasi, A/R. Ghana; University of Johannesburg, School of Tourism & Hospitality, South Africa; e-mail: [gabriel\\_eshun\\_knust@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gabriel_eshun_knust@yahoo.co.uk) (corresponding author);* <sup>2</sup>*University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Geography and Rural Department, P.M.B. Kumasi, A/R. Ghana; e-mail: [tetteychristopher@yahoo.com](mailto:tetteychristopher@yahoo.com)*

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**Abstract.** Literature depicts agrotourism as a tool for environmental conservation and rural development. Nonetheless, there is a glaring lacuna in literature concerning agrotourism research from Western Africa. This paper seeks to contribute towards filling this gap in literature. The paper investigates the current situation of agrotourism at Adjeikrom in Ghana, the challenges facing Adjeikrom Cocoa Farm Tour Facility, the opportunities Adjeikrom offers as an agrotourism destination and the role of agrotourism in the socio-economic development of the people of Adjeikrom. Fifty questionnaires were administered to purposively selected residents from Adjeikrom, alongside interviews with the management of the agrotourism facility. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed that Adjeikrom Cocoa Farm Tour Facility is beset with challenges such as inadequate skilled personnel, poor state of the Visitor Centre, incoherent marketing of the destination, inadequate Government support and low record of domestic tourists. The study maintains that the Adjeikrom Cocoa Farm Tour Facility has huge prospects for growth if the aforementioned challenges are addressed.

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## 1. Introduction

Over the last five decades, international tourist arrivals have grown on average approximately 7% annually, making tourism one of the largest economic sectors contributing about 10% to the world's Gross Domestic Product, GDP (United Nations World Tourism Organisation [UNWTO] 2011). In 2010, international tourists' number was 940 million, with estimated US\$ 919 trillion in international tourism receipts (UNWTO, 2011). Globally, tourism is viewed as a means for national development by increasing employment opportunities and options, earning foreign exchange, securing balance of payment advantages and infrastructural development (Weaver, Fennell, 1997; Pizam, Mansfield, 1999; Brown, Reeder, 2007; Asiedu, Gbedema, 2011; Rogerson, 2012; Barbieri, 2013; Klamár, 2014). Reid and Bojanic (2009) add that tourism represents around 35% of the world's export of services and over 70% in Least Developed Countries. However, Page and Connell (2006) argue that due to the growing global competition between tourism destinations, increasingly nation-states are assessing their unique tourism resources to develop as attractions for sustainable competitive advantages. It is in connection with this that Vision 2020 which aims at making Ghana a middle income country, identified tourism as providing a key opportunity for economic development based on the natural, historical and cultural resources of the country (Eshun, 2011).

There is increasing diversification in agriculture, and rural landscapes offer great opportunities for tourism development, especially in developing countries where economic options are often limited (Phelan, Sharpley, 2011; Olya et al., 2014). According to Hamilpurka (2012), three main tourism niches are found in rural settings, namely; ecotourism, cultural tourism and agrotourism. Comparatively, the volume of research on ecotourism and cultural tourism dwarfs that of agrotourism, albeit agriculture is the mainstay of the economies of most developing countries. Furthermore, research on agrotourism currently lacks coherent frameworks (Phillip et al., 2010). Choo (2012) added that agrotourism research must focus on three main areas namely: the demand-side perspectives, supply-side perspectives and impacts of agrotourism. On the demand side, agrotourism research can focus on the characteristics of agrotourists; market size, their motivations, preferences, decision-making processes and buying behaviour (cf. Catalino, Lizardo, 2004; McIntosh, Bonnemann, 2006). For the supply side of agrotourism research, the themes can include the role and importance of infrastructure, service and organisations (e.g. transport, attractions, accommodation and intermediaries) that facilitate agrotourism activities. However, Flanigan et al. (2014), while recognising the import of the demand-supply binary, have also argued for research that teases out the two perspectives concurrently. Currently, there is a vibrant literature on agrotourism from Southern Africa (Rogerson, 2006; Rogerson, Visser 2004;

Viljoen, Tlabela, 2007; Reed, Kleynhans, 2009), however, research from especially Western Africa shows a glaring lacuna in agrotourism literature. Against this backdrop, this paper is geared towards bridging this gap in literature, by exploring the prospects and challenges of agrotourism development at Adjeikrom in Ghana. Adjeikrom was selected for the study, because the community remains the first place promoted as an agrotourism destination in the country, assisted by various organisations such as the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC), Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), Earthwatch Institute and Cadbury Ghana.

The remaining part of the paper is divided into four interlinked sections. The immediate section presents a broad review of the nexus between agriculture and tourism. The next section provides insights into the paper's methodological stance, details the case study of Adjeikrom Cocoa Tour Facility (ACTF) as an agrotourism destination, as well as the tools for data collection and analysis. Section four presents the results and discussion, with overt focus on the prospects and challenges facing ACTF. The concluding section echoes the need for strengthening agriculture-tourism relationships in Ghana, and highlights areas of importance for further research on this topic.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. The agriculture and tourism nexus in Ghana

Since 2000, the contribution of agriculture to total GDP has varied between 35.8% and 37%; agricultural growth increased from 4% in 2000 to 6% in 2005 but much of the recent growth has been stimulated by the cocoa industry (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2012). The largest constituent of the human resource of the agricultural sector is the 60% of Ghana's population which includes farmers, traders and processors (MoFA, 2011). Since the 1990s, there has been three main national policies in agriculture; the Medium Term Agricultural Development Programme (MTADP), the Accelerated Agriculture Growth and Development Strategy (AAGDS) and Food and Agricultural Sector De-

velopment Policy (FASDEP I & II). Currently, FASDEP II is the main agricultural policy in Ghana and was developed on the back of the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I and II), Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and the Economic Community of West African States Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP). With the national unemployment rate in Ghana estimated to be 21% and that of the youth ranging between 20% to 24%, the linkage of the FASDEP II, and poverty reduction cannot be overemphasized (MoFA, 2011). Ghana is a signatory to the Maputo Declaration, which seeks to prompt African governments to strive to allocate 10% of their annual expenditure to the development of their agricultural sector.

In Ghana, tourism is the fourth largest foreign exchange earner after gold, cocoa and remittances from abroad. That tourism is a viable economic activity in Ghana is amply documented (Eshun, 2011). Ghana is ranked 117<sup>th</sup> out of 140 countries in terms of the overall travel and tourism competitiveness, also in terms of business and infrastructure, the country is ranked 108<sup>th</sup>; and its human, cultural and natural resources is ranked 117<sup>th</sup> in 2013 (The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, 2013). Efforts for tourism development in Ghana are overseen by public sector tourism institutions such as the MoT, the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), which was established by the Tourism Act 817 in 2011 to replace the Ghana Tourist Board, the Ghana Tourism Development Corporation and the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Training Institute (HOTCATT). Private sector institutions include several peak associations, which are collectively represented by the Ghana Tourism Federation (GHATOF).

The need to make Ghana the tourism capital of West Africa is captured in the Vision Statement of the MoT: "to realize the sector's full potential in contributing to economic wealth, poverty reduction, environmental conservation, national cohesion, and achieve greater GDP growth" (MoT, 2012: 15). In 2011, Ghana passed the one million mark in international arrivals. Foreign tourism is quite concentrated in 8 markets – Nigeria (19%), the USA (13%), UK (9%), Cote d'Ivoire (5%), India (3%), Germany (3%), South Africa (3%), and the Netherlands (3%) – comprised 58% of all foreign arrivals in 2011. Building on the success of the first 15-Year National Tourism Development Plan

(for the 1996–2010 period), MoT with financial and technical support from UNDP, UNECA and UN-WTO, has crafted the second National Tourism Development Plan for the 2013–2027 period. This 15-Year plan seeks to assess how Ghana's tourism can become a leading sector in employment creation, revenue generation, environmental sustainability and national cohesion (Ghana Tourist Board, 2010; MoT, 2012).

Currently, Ghana's tourism economy is growing at 15% per annum and provides about 47,000 direct jobs and 115,000 indirect jobs in 2004 (Ghana Tourist Board, 2010; MoT, 2012). According to the 2013 Tourism and Travel Competitive Index Report, Ghana is ranked in 13<sup>th</sup> place in Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of its competitiveness in travel and tourism. However, Ghana's tourism offerings are often geared towards heritage and ecological tourism. A critical review of policy documents in Ghana shows that agrotourism is mentioned sparsely despite the country's considerable agrobiodiversity potential. Indeed, on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2004, Courage Quashigah, the then minister of MoFA, inaugurated a 14-member 'National Committee on the Development of Agrotourism' (Ghana News Agency, 2004). Nevertheless, the overt lack of collaboration with other key actors on tourism development in Ghana viz: MoT, GTA, GHATOF, HOTCATT, MoFA, Environmental Protection Agency, Universities and NGOs (e.g. Nature Conservation Research Centre, Earthwatch Institute and Ghana Wildlife Society) has stifled any major implementation based on their report.

## 2.2. Unravelling agrotourism and agrobiodiversity

A critical review of existing literature on agrotourism shows that there is no universal definition of the concept (also spelt as 'agritourism') (Schilling et al., 2006). This notwithstanding, the incorporation of the prefix 'agro' (or Latin 'ager'), has stemmed from the Greek word 'agros' meaning field, with its agricultural connotations. Agrotourism thus brings a major primary sector—agriculture closer to a major service sector—tourism. Tew and Barbieri (2012) buttress the point that the agrarian sector is not only a provider of material goods, but also immaterial goods, especially those connected with culture,

education, gastronomy and the environment. Gil Arroyo et al. (2013) researched in USA among actors concerned with agrotourism and showed that, the respondents urged that terms such as 'agricultural setting', 'entertainment', 'farm', and 'education' should be included in a good definition of agrotourism. Agrotourism is defined as an alternative form of tourism, which involves tourists travelling to farm settings for the purposes of recreation or education, and thus brings additional benefits to the farmer, environment and the local community. Privitera (2009) therefore adds that agrotourism must increase income of farmers, provide other employment, provide tourists with experience of agricultural life, promote typical agro-products and reduce rural-urban drift. Agrotourism thus is closely linked with 'agri-education', 'agri-tainment', 'farm tourism', and 'farm-based tourism' and is generally positioned as a subset of rural tourism (Flanigan et al., 2014). Okech et al. (2012) add that for tourism to be described as rural, it should mirror the characteristics that signify a rural area including small settlements, low population densities, agrarian-based economies and traditional societies. The term agripreneur, according to Tew and Barbieri (2012) is the individual involved in diversifying agricultural products. However, this term is cumbersome since it is not specific to tourism. Consequently, 'agritourpreneur'— i.e. farmer involved in tourism activity may seem a more suitable term.

Catalino and Lizardo (2004) researched on 'Agrotourism in the Dominican Republic' and defined a typology of agrotourists according to their preference levels, their behaviour in terms of Willingness to Pay (WTP), and factors that would discourage them from participating in agrotourism activities. First is the 'Authentic Agrotourists': these tourists do enjoy agrotourism, but they are not overly enthusiastic, and they exhibit the greatest WTP to engage in agrotourism activities. Second is the 'Discreet Agrotourists': these tourists do not feel particularly attracted to agrotourism, yet have a relatively high WTP for an agrotourism activity. They place importance on factors such as distance, transport prices, and personal security. Third is the 'Passionate Agrotourists': these tourists have a high preference for agrotourism, yet are less willing to pay for agrotourism activities. They assign an intermediate value to the factors that affect agrotourism. Fourth,



is the 'Demanding Agrotourists': these tourists have the highest preference levels for agrotourism, and exhibit a relatively low WTP. Furthermore, Flanigan et al. (2014) stressed the need for a typology of agrotourism that helps unearth the various types of agrotourism products. They used three main determinants namely presence of a working farm, tourists' interaction with agriculture and whether the experience is staged or authentic. Five sub-markets were identified, namely, non-working farm indirect interaction agrotourism (accommodation in ex-farm house property); non-working farm direct interaction agrotourism (e.g. agricultural shows and farm museums); working farm indirect interaction agrotourism (e.g. Farm house accommodation); working farm direct 'staged' interaction agrotourism (e.g. model farms) and working farm direct interaction authentic agrotourism (e.g. participation in tasks on farms).

The core of agrotourism is the attraction which is actually the 'agricultural biodiversity' (diminutive—'agrobiodiversity') which is the 'toured object' (Kameri-Mbote, Cullet, 1999; Flanigan et al., 2014). Agrobiodiversity is often a 'cultivated' or 'reared' biodiversity and includes genetic resources for food and agriculture. According to the National Biodiversity Strategy for Ghana (2002) the country's major agrobiodiversity are: Cereals (Ghana produces 51% of its cereal needs - e.g. rice, sorghum, maize, millet, wheat, barley and malts); Legumes (e.g. groundnuts, soya bean, cowpea and bambara beans); Tree crops (mango, Avocado pear, cashew, cocoa, oil palm and coconut); Animals (e.g. cow, sheep, goats- over 70% of Ghana's cattle production is located in the northern guinea savanna zone); and Fish (Ghana has about 392 marine species, freshwater fish includes 28 families, 73 genera and 157 species). About 121 species are found in the Volta system and 11 fish species in Lake Bosomtwe) and non-traditional animals (e.g. rabbits, grasscutters, honey-making bees and snail). The épatant agrobiodiversity in Ghana, may be a precursor for its agrotourism development, for example: Ejura Sheep Breeding Station; Mena Adoma Farms at Akuakrom (e.g. ostrich, turkey and cattle); Blue Sky Outgrowers (e.g. citrus and pineapple); Akomodan Irrigation Project (e.g. tomatoes); Top Farm (e.g. ostriches and pigs); Oke Banana Farm; Das Continental Farm on Lake Bosomtwe (e.g. tilapia and catfish), Tetteh Quash-

ie Cocoa Farm, Ghana Rubber Estate (e.g. rubber plantation); Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Farms (e.g. cattle, poultry and oil palm) and the Oil Palm Research Institute (the sole producer of oil palm seeds in Ghana).

### 2.3. Agricultural paradigms and diversification

Global economic dynamics have created a situation where many local economies have to adjust, in order to maintain or sustain their socio-economic viability (Viljoen, Tlabela, 2007; Asiedu, Gbedema, 2011). In 2008, half of the world's population was marked as living in cities. For developing countries, about 70% of their population are still living in rural communities and are engaged mainly in agriculture. The focus of these agriculturists is often steeped in the productivist paradigm, i.e. they are mainly concerned with the cultivation of plants and rearing of animals, and their returns on investments often fluctuate along the dictates of market forces. Conversely, the post-productivist paradigm is concerned with introduction of new marketing opportunities, adding value to agricultural produce, and diversifying and bolstering income sources. The post-productivist system therefore introduces advantages for qualitative priorities in food production, alternative income options for farmers and sustainability of agricultural lands. The full range of agrotourism products and services can be classified into three categories namely, fixed attractions (e.g. living farms; arboretums; exotic gardens; food processing facilities and craft markets), events (e.g. fairs and festivals) and services (farm tours; rural bed and breakfast; spas and agro-processing).

Rogerson and Visser (2004: 8) aver that tourism has begun to experience much wider recognition as an economic sector which has the potential to make a contribution towards development in destination areas. Over the past three decades there has been an increase in farm diversification, and according to McGehee et al. (2007: 280) the predominant factors which contributed to this are 'environmental pressures, climate change, a decline in terms of trade in agriculture, an over reliance on raw products and the commodification of the markets'. Jensen et al. (2014: 1) add that agrotourism can serve as a means

for farmers to diversify their operations to add to farm income, even on small farms. According to Ilbery (1992), farm diversification essentially takes two forms: agricultural and structural diversification. Agricultural diversification focuses on alternative forms of agriculture production, and widens the notion by including farm-related activities such as agroforestry, organic farming and non-traditional crops and livestock. Structural diversification dichotomizes into two distinct categories namely, tourism (participating in agriculturally-based tourism) and value added products. Structural diversification therefore is geared outwards from the farm and towards the public. Increasingly, small-scale farmers are moving away from the traditional methods and scale of crop and livestock production as this has become unprofitable. These farmers are moving towards alternative forms of economic activities such as organic farming and provision of farm house accommodation (Flanigan et al., 2014; Olya et al., 2014). For example, in USA and Europe, changing lifestyles and demographic dynamics are creating new opportunities for farmers to diversify and increase their income brackets because many urban residents are seeking for tourism experiences that are perceived to be green, pristine and rejuvenating (cf. Barbieri, 2013).

#### **2.4. Basic principles and elements of agrotourism**

According to Sznajder et al. (2009: 5) there are three characteristics that differentiate agrotourism from other tourism types. Firstly, agrotourism offers the opportunity for tourists to participate in the process of food production. Secondly, there is the opportunity for tourists to learn more about the lives of the rural people. Finally, agrotourism offers the tourists possible opportunity of direct contact with domestic animals and the countryside which is not part of their quotidian experience. These foregoing characteristics of agrotourism are coterminous with the three principles of agrotourism which evoke that at an agrotourism destination, there should be: something for visitors to see (e.g. animals, farms, culture of the village - e.g. dress and festivals); something for visitors to do (e.g. participating in fish harvesting, cooking and participating in rural games) and

something for visitors to buy (e.g. rural crafts and farm-gate processed food).

The nexus between agriculture and tourism plays out in three main areas, i.e. tourism that takes place in a farm setting may be primary, complementary or supplementary to the agricultural operation (Lobo, 2001). In a primary agrotourism business, the agrotourism activity that takes place on the farm, forms the dominant activity, thus the main economic activity is tourism. Put differently, in primary agrotourism business, the agro-based activity becomes secondary to tourism. For example, a farmer may set up demonstration farms solely for visitors to learn about new agronomic practices or newly improved breeds. When an agrotourism activity is complementary, this is when an agrotourism activity share equal footing with the agro-activity, and as a result does not take precedence over the latter. The focus here is that, the agritourpreneur allows visitors to come to the farm and may provide accommodation. For example, on a coffee farm, there can be coffee shops, where visitors can take coffee drinks or purchase other coffee products. Lastly, a supplementary agrotourism activity is when an agrotourism takes place on the farm as a minor activity to support other products on the farm. As a result, the tourism activity is not the main focus of the agritourpreneur. The focus here is that the agritourpreneur concerns himself or herself on incidental tourism activity on the farm. For example, school excursions to farms and processing plants. Whether agrotourism is practiced as a primary, complementary or supplementary enterprise, it must take place in a farm setting and the farmer must be creative and plan effectively in order for the agrotourism to be successful. Moreover, for agrotourism to occur there should exist four main elements namely: farmer (the farmer entertains the guest and fills all the service gaps); farm (the attraction must have a unique selling proposition); village (this location is often far from the city and may lack urban facilities but is rich in agrobiodiversity) and agrotourists.

#### **2.5. Prospects of agrotourism development**

The inexorable trend in agrotourism especially in Europe and America is based on the premise that

agrotourism offers to farmers and visitors a unique opportunity to contribute to development and conservation in rural landscapes (Page, Connell, 2006). Hamzah et al. (2012) researched on the socio-economic contribution of agrotourism in Desa Wawasan Nelayan community in Malaysia and found that, it has contributed to the social empowerment system, strengthening and developing social skills, increase income levels and provided jobs. Early on, Gannon (1994) had indicated that agrotourism helps to address various economic problems through economic diversification and stabilization, employment creation, infrastructural improvements, protection and improvement of both natural and built environment.

Agrotourism as a niche tourism is growing in many parts of the world, including Australia, Canada, the United States, and the Philippines. According to Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA, 2009), about a third of Canadians (34%) participate in at least one agrotourism activity per year. In Italy, agrotourism started in the mid-1960s as a way to revive its agricultural industry and remains Europe's leader in agrotourism (Page, Connell, 2006). For Privitera (2009), one of the key benefits of agrotourism in Italy, is its potential to provide markets for agro-products. Hamilpurka (2012) has indicated that agrotourism in Karnataka in India, has improved farmers' income and also contributed to educating the tourists and local communities on sustainable agriculture. Brown and Reeder (2007) have also suggested that farms with farm-based recreation tended to have a higher net worth. In Africa, there is apathy of the youths towards agriculture; this is due to the low return on investment in agriculture as well as the labour intensiveness in the sector due to the dominance of rudimentary technologies. Agrotourism thus may become the catalyst to rejuvenate interests among the youth towards agriculture in Africa; this is very important since more than 50% of the continent's population is below 30 years old. The interests of the youth are central to the sustainability of agriculture on the continent (Domfeh, 2013). For example, Leif Ryman, the founder of Green Bug Adventures offers tours for families from especially developed countries to visit Ghana and stay in rural areas and work with farmers to cultivate crops organically in rural areas in Ghana, and the agrotour

starts at US\$800 per person for the first month of stay (Greenberg, 2012). Rogerson (2012) therefore indicates that the involvement of small producers in tourism supply chains as part of the emerging 'inclusive business' models help to provide economic opportunities especially for the rural poor.

## 2.6. Challenges of agrotourism development

According to Lack (1997: 93) "many farm operators are no longer able to increase their incomes by producing more...thus, they have had to adjust their business plans in order to find alternative sources of income". Che et al. (2005: 22) add that small farmers are faced with various challenges which include changing economic and social conditions on the farms, increased global competition, falling commodity prices and capital intensive production methods. In research on agrotourism in British Columbia Lack (1997) categorized its challenges as follows: lack of training, lack of marketing, lack of quality control, lack of appropriate insurance, lack of finance, conflict of agrotourism with primary agricultural activity, distance from markets, infrastructure limitation and farm disease. Di Domenico and Miller (2011: 2) also indicated that demand for more housing in rural and semi-rural areas has placed agricultural land under severe pressure. In Africa, the foregoing issues are compounded by land grabbing for large scale commercial agriculture and estate development with the concomitant impact on rural food security and vibrant local economies (Malkanathi, Routry, 2011; Schoneveld, 2011).

Agrotourism also faces the uncertainty of disease outbreaks. For example, in 2001 in UK, the outbreak of foot and mouth disease restricted public access to the countryside costing US\$4 to 5 billion in tourism revenue loss (Thompson et al., 2002). Le Gall and Leboucq (2004) have estimated that in Africa a lot is spent in controlling foot-mouth-diseases than any other veterinary disease. Furthermore, both agriculture and tourism in the developing countries are heavily dependent on external markets, and this may impact negatively on their economic viability and sustainability. Overall, the onus is on all stakeholders concerned with agrotourism development to do a critical assessment on the business and put



in strategic measures that help address to a great extent the uncertainties facing the business.

### 3. Approach and methodology

#### 3.1. The study area

According to Ghana's 2010 population census, there are about 24.22 million Ghanaians, on average 56.2% of them are living in rural areas, with Upper East registering as high as 84.3% of its residents living in rural areas (GSS, 2012). To the majority of these Ghanaians living in rural landscapes, agriculture is the principal source of employment and the sector employs more than half of Ghana's population and accounts for almost half of the country's GDP. However, agriculture in Ghana is predominantly on a smallholder basis and about 90% of farm holdings are less than 2 ha in size which spread across 5 main agro-ecological zones: Rainforest, Deciduous Forest, Transitional Zone, Coastal Savanna and Northern Savanna (MoFA, 2011). Cocoa plantations are often found in the Rainforest and Deciduous Forest Zones. In 2006, agriculture contributed 30.4% of GDP as compared to 48.8% by the service sector and 20.8% by industry (MoFA, 2011). Cocoa cultivation plays an integral contribution to the Ghanaian economy, contributing 4.7% to GDP in 2006 (MoFA, 2011). Currently, about 1,600,000 ha of land is cultivated with cocoa in Ghana, and about 800,000 families in rural communities are engaged in cocoa farming on plots of less than 3 ha (MoFA, 2011; Cocoa Producers Alliance [COPAL] 2011). Ghana's cocoa export accounts for about 40% of total exports (Earthwatch Institute, 2007). In 2009, a total of 75% of the cocoa beans from Ghana was exported to 8 countries, namely the Netherlands, France, UK, Japan, Turkey, Malaysia, Germany and Switzerland (COPAL, 2011). The cocoa market in Ghana is controlled by the Cocoa Board that advises the Government of Ghana on cocoa production and setting of prices. Consequently, cocoa beans in the country are sold at fixed prices to the Cocoa Marketing Board (CMB). Currently, 4 of the 8 largest cocoa producing countries are in Africa, viz: Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, Nigeria and Cameroon, involving 10 million African farmers (Vorley, 2003). Ghana seeks to resolutely add value to the cocoa beans,

and about 40% of the cocoa beans are processed in the country (MoFA, 2011). Besides, 14<sup>th</sup> February of each year is marked as a National Chocolate Day to boost cocoa consumption in the country. This said, the Government of Ghana has so far taken only limited actions towards developing the country's agrotourism to reflect its rich agrobiodiversity.

The ACTF provides three main attractions; namely, Cocoa Tour, Mountain Hiking and Village Tour. The cocoa tour gives the visitor an opportunity to tour rural cocoa farms and learn how cocoa is grown and harvested. Ghana's cocoa is known as the world's premium as a result of the meticulous handling by local farmers (see Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Adjeikrom Cocoa Farm

Source: Cocoa Producers Alliance

After harvesting, the cocoa pods are broken and the beans are fermented on the farms and then carried to the village for drying. Consequently, the cocoa tour takes visitors through the entire process, from the initial planting to the time pods are harvested and dried and then taken to the cocoa marketing companies for sale. The mountain hike takes 2 to 3 hours and begins with a short stroll through the village farm. The hiking activity becomes more strenuous as the hiker climbs to the top of the escarpment. From the edge of the cliff that overhangs Adjeikrom, a visitor gets a picturesque view of the village and its surrounding villages. The last part of the tour component takes the visitor through the historical background of the village as well as some places of historic significance in the village. Visi-

tors get the opportunity to visit the birthplace of Arko Adjei, one of the members of the 'Big Six' (i.e. Ghana's historical figures at the core of gaining the

country's political independence). The Adjeikrom village is located in the Fanteakwa District of the Eastern Region of Ghana (see Fig. 2).

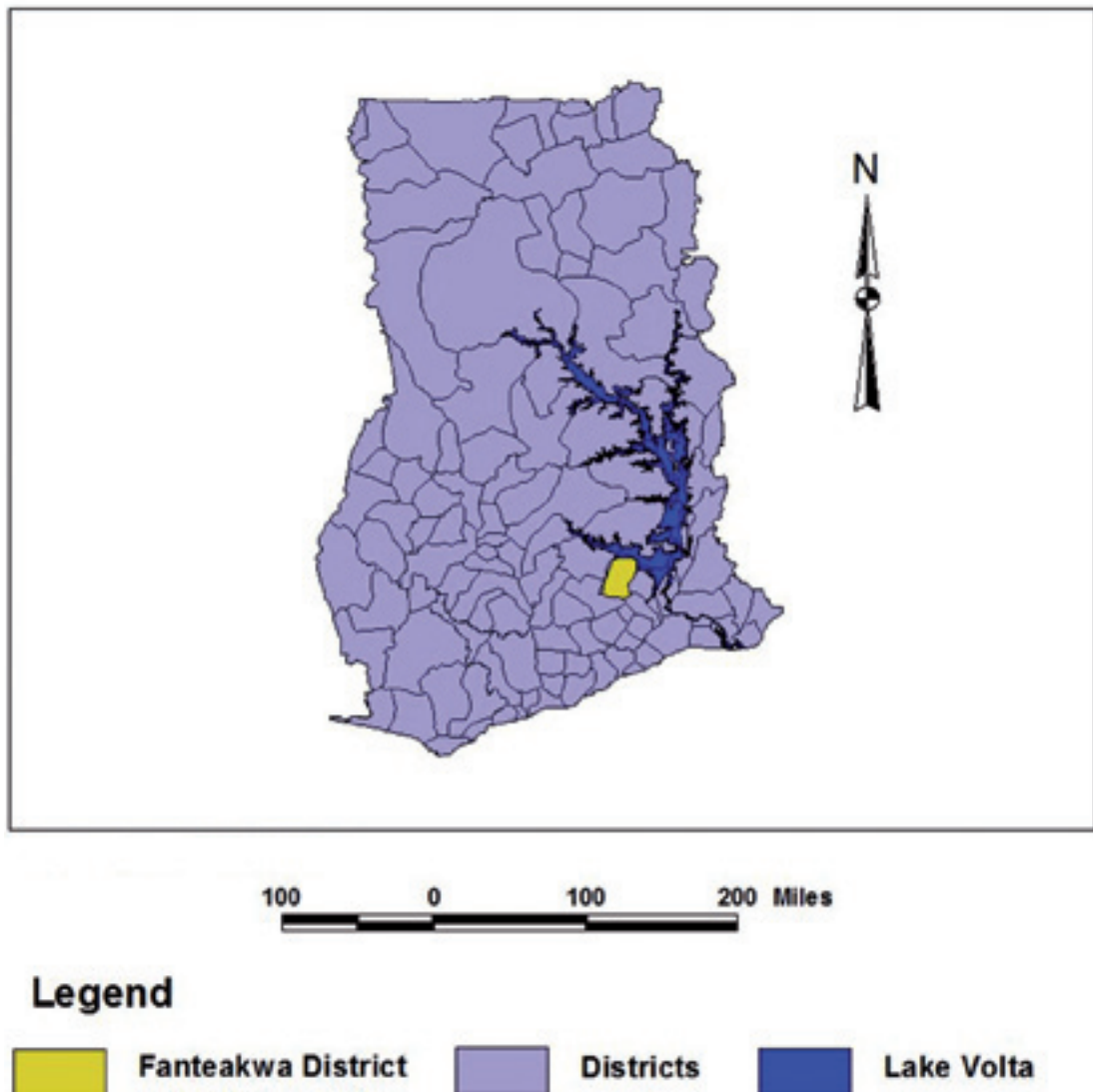


Fig. 2. The study area in National Context

Source: Survey Department, Accra modified by Department of Geography, KNUST

Adjeikrom is located on the main Osiem-Begoro road, off the Koforidua-Kumasi highway. The village has a resident population of about six hundred people with farming as their predominant occupation. Apart from the growing of food crops the people of the community also grow cash crops such as cocoa and oranges. The Fanteakwa District is one of the 21 Districts in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The District lies between longitude  $0^{\circ}32.5'$  West and longitude  $0^{\circ}10'$  East and between

latitude  $6^{\circ}15'$  North and latitude  $6^{\circ}40'$  North (see Fig. 3). The District lies 762m above sea level and  $24^{\circ}$  Celsius as an average temperature. The predominant vegetation type found in the District is the most semi-deciduous forest with well drained forest ochrosols which can support cash crops like cola nuts, citrus, cocoa, rubber and fruits. Food crops like maize, cassava, cocoyam, plantain and vegetables also do very well in the District. The hilly nature of the District's topography coupled with in-

tensive farming activities have led to severe erosion and deforestation activities which have posed a major threat to the sustainability of the forest vegetation and its animal populations. The District is very rural in its outlook with a high level of infrastruc-

tural deficit. Almost all the settlements in the District exhibit linear or nucleated settlement pattern and this is partly attributed to the hilly topography of the District.

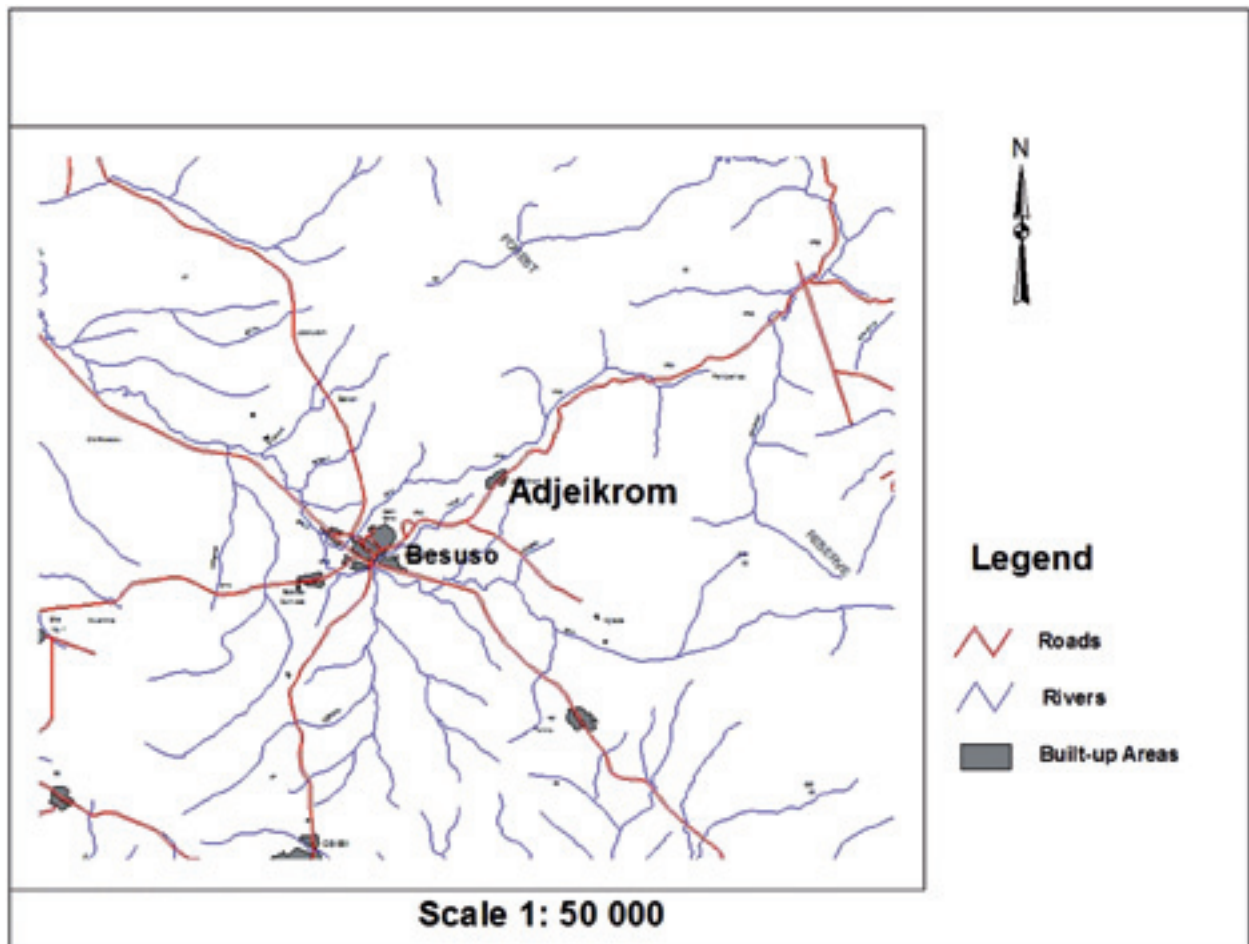


Fig. 3. Map of Fanteakwa District showing Adjeikrom

Source: Survey Department, Accra modified by Department of Geography, KNUST

The major settlements here are Osino, Bosuso and Begoro. Other settlements in the District are Adjeikrom, Miaso and Ehiamenkyere. Begoro, the District capital is located to the Southern part of the District (see Fig. 2). The rest of the settlements are mostly concentrated in the northern part of the District, and are tiny villages. The village is also unique because the inhabitants of the village are Ga-Adangbe, a tribe which has their traditional geography different from their current location which is surrounded by communities which are predominantly

Akan. This is because the village's founder—Samuel Adjei, was from the Ga-Adangbe ethnic group, who then purchased the land from the Akims who are from the Akan ethnic group in 1863.

### 3.2. Sampling techniques, data collection and analysis

The data collection took place in January to February, 2013. Fifty semi-structured questionnaires

were administered to purposively selected residents from the Adjeikrom community. According to Anderson (2009: 202), purposive sampling is where a sample of participants is chosen for their experience and perspectives relating to the investigation. Two individuals connected specifically with the management of ACTF were interviewed. Furthermore, the researchers engaged in participant observation to gain further meanings into agrotourism-related activities in the Adjeikrom community. The data from the semi-structured questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 16) in line with the purpose of the study. The study applied descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to ascertain the prospects and challenges facing ACTF and Adjeikrom as an agrotourism destination in Ghana. The deployment of the descriptive research approach is to describe the nature of the situation that exists at the time of the study at ACTF, and to explore the prospects and challenges of agrotourism based on the cocoa farms in the local community.

The interview and participant observation data were analysed qualitatively in three steps namely – description, classification and interconnection (Dey, 1993). The description involved transcribing data from the interviews and participant observation into a mass of text. The classification step involved relating the transcribed data to where they fitted best in the whole research analysis. Thirdly, the interconnecting step involved making sense of the themes in relation to the study objectives. It also worth adding that, literature on agrotourism in Ghana is nascent, thus this research is exploratory in perspective, and seeks to blaze the trail for other research to be conducted on agrotourism development in the country.

#### 4. Results and discussion

The results and discussion section addresses the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents at Adjeikrom, general contestations on agrotourism development at Adjeikrom, prospects of agrotourism at ACTF and the challenges facing agrotourism development at ACTF.

##### 4.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

There were 50 respondents involved in the study, with 52% representing males and 48% representing females. Furthermore, out of the 50 respondents, 32 were married representing 64% while 16 respondents representing 32% were single, with 2 respondents representing 4% being in the widow/widower category. Furthermore, 4% of the respondents have been resident in the area for less than 1 year, 8% have been residents in the area for between 1 to 3 years, 4% have stayed for 4 to 6 years and 84% have stayed for over 7 years. Most of the respondents, 24 representing 48% had basic level of education, those with secondary level education are 10 and formed 20% of the population, and respondents with tertiary level education are 6 and constitute 12% of the sample population (see Table 1). In addition, 20% of the respondents had no formal education. Since most of the residents have acquired only basic education, it becomes difficult for them to be involved in agrotourism meaningfully so as to help ensure that the requisite benefits of agrotourism accrue to their community.

**Table 1.** Educational level of respondents

Educational level	Total	Percentage (%)
Basic	24	48.0
Secondary	10	20.0
Tertiary	6	12.0
None	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2013

Tew and Barbieri (2012) have cautioned that sufficient management and entrepreneurial skills are required in order for a farmer to receive the maximum returns from the time and money invested in agrotourism operations. Okech et al. (2012) also add that any successful tourism development depends on factors such as the quality of the product, accessibility and infrastructure of the destination, availability of skills and interest of investors. The study shows that 52% are farmers, 12% are teachers, 8%



are petty traders, and 6% are in vocational professions. Finally, 22% of the respondents are engaged in other activities classified as 'others' (e.g. herbalists, weed clearers, fuel-wood pickers and hunter). However, the majority of the respondents are farmers producing cocoa and other food crops such as plantain, banana, cocoyam, maize and cassava. According to MoFA (2011) agriculture in Ghana is mainly practiced on family-operated farms using rudimentary technology to produce about 80% of the country's total agricultural output. Furthermore, the huge dependence of farmers on rains leads to a situation where farmers cultivate similar crops at the same planting season, thus causing glut on the market, with the concomitant low prices. Besides, the inadequate post-harvest technologies in Ghana, deprive majority of farmers of good prices for their produce in the lean seasons. Tourism thus may be an option to succour the dismal income regimes of rural areas in the country by offering alternative livelihoods to farmers. However, Hall and Page (1999: 195) have cautioned, "agrotourism is a better supplement for a thriving and diverse economy than as a mainstay of rural development". Furthermore, although none of the respondents stated that they are chainsaw operators (i.e. those in the timber industry); the researchers observed that few of the individuals are involved in such a business. This is worth mentioning as the activities of illegal chainsaw operators are potentially in conflict with the concept of sustainable development, the bedrock for various forms of environmentally-focused tourism.

#### 4.2. Agrotourism development at Adjeikrom

The researchers sought to find out the current state of the agrotourism attractions at Adjeikrom. As much as 94% of the respondents maintained they have visited the attractions before, however only 14% out of the 94% have visited the attraction for tourism purposes. This is probably due to overfamiliarity with the attractions. One 31 year old female farmer explained: *"the problem at Adjeikrom is that most of us are cocoa farmers and what the community really needs is training or community awareness campaign to help bring home the fact that cocoa farm can bring a lot of people to visit the farms and*

*bring in revenue just as the cocoa beans"*. Besides, respondents were asked what attracts people to Adjeikrom and they all affirmed that visitors come to the village based on the three major tourism attractions in the community, namely; Cocoa Farm Tour, Village Tour and Mountain Hiking. Agrotourism principally seeks to offer something for visitors to see, do and buy; thus at ACTF, visitors can tour the cocoa farms, participate in harvesting and breaking of cocoa pods, engage in activities such as mountain hiking and buy some foodstuffs such as banana, cassava and plantain. The respondents were asked to describe the current state of the agrotourism resources in the community. As many as 67% of the respondents stated that the community is endowed with 'very good' agrotourism resources and 33% stated 'good', with none of the respondents responding in the negative.

Agrotourism, like the other forms of alternative tourism, seeks quintessentially to enhance environmental sustainability and socio-economic wellbeing. Consequently, this study sought to unravel the impact of ACTF on the socio-economic condition of the Adjeikrom residents. The study reveals that 84% of the respondents agree that the production of cocoa, the major cash crop cultivated in the area, has increased since the commencement of the agrotourism project in the community. A number of reasons were given as the cause of the increase in cocoa production. Personal motivation of farmers because of the association of tourism with cocoa production in the village, training on the modern methods of cocoa production and subsidized inputs such as agrochemicals given to farmers, were given as factors contributing to the increase of cocoa production. MoFA (2011) maintains that an increase in agricultural production such a cocoa production in rural Ghana will help farmers to see increase in income. Besides the increase in cocoa yield, 74% of the respondents stated that their families benefit from ACTF by some of them being employed as tour guide, providing accommodation, and selling agro-products and foodstuff to tourists. Indeed, some food vendors in the village make more sales often when tourists visit their community; there are special cooks in the village who prepare food for visitors at the ACTF. The study further sought to determine the relationship between the level of education and the benefits derived from agrotourism (see Table 2).



**Table 2.** Relationship between Educational Level and Agrotourism Benefits

		A	B
Level of education	Pearson Correlation	1	.250
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.080
	N	50	50
Benefit of families from agrotourism activities	Pearson Correlation	.250	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.080	.
	N	50	50

Explanation: A - level of education; B - benefit of families from the activities of tourism

Source: Field survey, 2013

The Pearson Coefficient Correlation was used because the researchers wanted to measure the linear relationship between educational level and the benefits derived from agrotourism. The value of correlation( $r$ ) is 0.25. This means that, there is weak linear relationship between educational level and benefits from agrotourism. Consequently, implying that, as the level of education increases, benefits from agrotourism also increases but at a weaker rate. Again, ( $r^2$ ) is 0.0625, implying that; the coefficient of determination is 6.25%. This means that, 6.25% of the changes that occur in the benefit from agrotourism are accounted for by a change in educational level with the rest which is 93.75% is caused by extraneous variables.

The respondents were asked whether there are some projects that have been undertaken in the village due to the development of agrotourism in the village. All the respondents stated that drilling of boreholes, provision of plastic chairs and student mattresses for hiring during major events in the community are some of the projects that have been instituted in the village. Observation further revealed that Cadbury Ghana has instituted scholarship package in the community for pupils at the basic school level, in which some of the pupils are beneficiaries.

#### 4.3. Prospects of agrotourism at ACTF

The study sought to capture the diverse views of the residents on the prospects of Adjeikrom as an agrotourism destination. When the residents were asked to express their views on whether they think the agrotourism resources in the village can attract

more people to the village, 98% of the respondents responded with a 'yes'. The underlying reason for the given answer is due to cocoa's instrumental role in foreign revenue generation in Ghana, and indeed, Government continues to give the cocoa sector an unequalled attention compared to the other crops cultivated in the country. Additionally, some of the respondents explained that the three tourism resources in the village on which agrotourism rests are still attractive and can serve as a pull factor drawing visitors to the village. In addition, 44% of the respondents said that even though visitors from the major towns and cities visit the village, the rate of their visitorships is low. Observation further revealed that visitors to ACTF are mainly students from secondary schools, tertiary institutions as well as researchers. Correspondingly, the respondents were asked whether the destination attracts foreign tourists, and 78% of the residents admitted that foreign tourists come to the village frequently. Furthermore, it was revealed that majority of the client base of the ACTF are international tourists from Europe mainly United Kingdom, Netherlands and Germany and the USA.

On the benefit of ACTF to the Adjeikrom community, 60% of the respondents explained that cocoa farmers in the community have received training from Cadbury Ghana, NCRC, Earthwatch Institute and CRIG on the modern methods of cocoa production and best agronomic practices (e.g. removal of chupons, weed control, controlling bushfires, good drainage practices to prevent blackpod disease, regular harvesting and proper fermentation practices). Some of these supporting organisations have also provided subsidized fertilizers, weedicides, and pesticides—however these have

not been extended to the other surrounding villages. A correlation between age of respondents and their perception of image of the tourism resources at Adjeikrom was undertaken. From Table 3, the value of correlation( $r$ ) is 0.34.

**Table 3.** Relationship between Age and Image perceived of Adjeikrom

		A	B
Age of respondent	Pearson Correlation	1	.340(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.016
	N	50	50
Image of Adjeikrom	Pearson Correlation	.340(*)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	.
	N	50	50

Explanation: A – age of respondents; B – Image of Adjeikrom

Source: Field survey, 2013

This means that, there is weak linear relationship between age of respondents and perception of image of Adjeikrom tourism resources. Thus implying that, as the age increases the perception of the image of Adjeikrom changes towards a positive direction but at a weaker rate. Again, ( $r^2$ ) is 0.1156, implying that; the coefficient of determination is 11.56%. This means that, 11.56% of the change that occur in the perception of image of Adjeikrom is accounted for by a change in age with the rest—88.44% attributed to extraneous variables. Statistically, the age of respondents has nothing to do with the way they view agrotourism resources and as such what constitutes a good agrotourism project cannot be differentiated with age. As to whether the seasonality of the tourism industry also posed a challenge to the agrotourism at Adjeikrom, the results proved to be more of a prospect than a challenge. It was revealed from the study that 92% of the respondents agreed that visitors visit the village all year round, in moderate numbers.

Two reasons were given. First the three attractions in the village spread the activities of tourism throughout the year. Second, cocoa, the major crop on which agrotourism in Adjeikrom rests is no more seasonal since the introduction of the new variety of cocoa—‘hybrid cocoa’, which spreads cocoa production throughout the year. Therefore, un-

like conventional tourism that is very seasonal in terms of visitorship numbers and activities, agrotourism based on the cocoa farms at Adjeikrom can ensure a year round activity. The year round visitorship will ineluctably sustain the interest of the residents towards agrotourism in the community, and all things being equal, help in improving their socio-economic standards. Furthermore, the availability of accommodation facility at Adjeikrom help solves the problem faced by many visitors to rural landscapes in Ghana. In addition, the presence of the accommodation facility in Adjeikrom, to an extent helps maximize the benefits of agrotourism to the local community. Tew and Barbieri (2012) stress that well-developed agrotourism systems in rural communities have the potential to reverse negative economic ramifications by bringing in visitors and creating new job opportunities and local business ventures for rural dwellers.



**Fig. 4.** Signpost to Adjeikrom Cocoa Tours

Source: Gabriel Eshun/Christopher Tetley

A couple of signposts are erected at vantage points in the region to inform people about the attractions in the village as well as giving direction to prospective visitors (see Fig. 4). The village is also marketed in the ‘Tourist Guide Book’ which is usually kept at the offices of the GTA and Kotoka International Airport (KIA). Furthermore, there are brochures that are kept at the regional offices of the GTA, and some major hotels in the region to inform potential visitors about the village and its

attractions. The management of ACTF added that additional advertising of the village on FM radio stations will draw attention to the attractions. However, observations showed the marketing efforts to be incoherent and lacking greatly in continuity; this is because marketing programmes are at the dictate of the supporting organizations.

#### 4.4. Challenges of agrotourism at ACTF

Although all the respondents agreed that there is an accommodation facility (known as the ‘Visitor Centre’), the majority lamented the poor state of the facility. The study revealed that lack of electricity and readily available portable water (despite the provision of some boreholes by Cadbury Ghana in 2004) are among the challenges facing the smooth development of agrotourism in the village. A 31 year old male teacher in the community aptly summarised: *“the only accommodation facility for visitors is in bad shape; in fact it is largely deprived of electricity, no portable water and the surrounding landscape is overgrown with weeds”*. The foregoing statement gives a picture of the state of the accommodation facility at Adjeikrom. Furthermore, the study reveals that the challenges facing agrotourism at Adjeikrom include inadequate funds; incoherent marketing programmes; lack of skilled personnel and inadequate attention by the Government of Ghana. The overt absence of permanent and trained tour guides

is captured squarely in the words of one respondent: *“it is advertised extensively that Adjeikrom has a lot to offer visitors, however, who to take visitors round any time they visit the village is even a problem”* (Female, farmer, 51 years).

Currently, payment by visitors to the attractions is the main source of funding at ACTF; this is however woefully inadequate in running the Visitor Centre properly. Similarly, Baum (2012) has indicated that lack of funds is eroding the potential of rural tourism as a catalyst for development in rural Poland. Also, the highest educational qualification of the staff of ACTF is a Basic School Certificate; this to a great extent limits their communication with international tourists. Adanu et al. (2013), point out that in local communities where there seem to be inchoate knowledge about tourism business, the resultant benefits remain largely minimised. Phelan and Sharpley (2011: 132) reiterate this by stating that farmers often lack the fundamental business competencies which are required to run an agrotourism business successfully. Correspondingly, Malkanthi and Routry (2011: 55) add that, Sri Lankan agritourpreneurs have basic knowledge on farming but lack the requisite entrepreneurial and managerial skills for running an agrotourism business successfully. Thus, for agrotourism to achieve its potential there is the urgent need to provide the necessary training for the stakeholders in the sector. A SWOT analysis on ACTF further illuminated the state of agrotourism in the village (see Table 4).

**Table 4.** SWOT Analysis for Agrotourism at Adjeikrom in Ghana

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong agrotourism attraction (the cocoa tour, mountain hiking and the village tour).</li> <li>• Attractions spread the activities of tourism throughout the year</li> <li>• Adjeikrom is connected well to the main Kumasi and Accra road</li> <li>• ACTF has first mover advantage</li> <li>• Strong agrotourism attraction (cocoa farms)</li> <li>• Land litigation issues less likely to occur</li> </ul>	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agrotourism is forecasted to rise</li> <li>• Potential for creating new jobs in rural areas</li> <li>• Empowerment for rural areas</li> <li>• Promotion of local customs and traditions</li> <li>• Provides alternative markets for local produce</li> <li>• Opportunity for interaction with the outside world</li> </ul>
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequacy of business training for farmers</li> <li>• Absence of Legislation on agrotourism development</li> <li>• Lack of water and electricity at the Visitor Centre (Accommodation centre)</li> <li>• Bad road to other surrounding rural areas</li> <li>• Issues of health and security facilities</li> </ul>	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is danger of massification of agrotourism</li> <li>• There is danger of lixiviation of cultural viability, vibrancy and authenticity</li> <li>• There is little political will and dedication</li> <li>• Lack of transparency in the revenue allocation and usage</li> </ul>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Indeed, 62% of the respondents indicated that the image of Adjeikrom as an agrotourism destination has deteriorated over the years. The villagers indicated that they were promised many benefits during the introduction of the agrotourism project; however several years later the benefits remain largely a mirage. Early on, the Global Research on Cocoa (2006:7) estimated that agrotourism in the Fanteakwa District will draw “a minimum of 4,000 paying visitor days per year by the end of 2007, with at least US\$36,000 in revenue per year”. Baum (2012) has cautioned that tourism must not be positioned as a cure-all solution to the myriad structural problems in rural communities in the world. One 40 year old farmer in the village surmised: *“as of now, we cultivate and maintain our cocoa farms, but not really for people to come and see—we carry on with our activities with less attention to visitors because all the promises that were made tantalizingly during the introduction of the agrotourism project now seems like a dream”*. As a result, agrotourism is more of a supplementary activity at Adjeikrom, although it had earlier been publicized to be a primary source of income generation in the community.

## 5. Conclusion

The paper sought to unravel the prospects and challenges of agrotourism development based on cocoa farms at Adjeikrom in Ghana. The residents cited the benefits derived from agrotourism development to include increased in cocoa production, provision of tour guide services, interaction with visitors, access to hybrid cocoa, selling of local agro-products, subsidized agro-chemicals and occasional provision of training programs to cocoa farmers by some organizations such as NCRC, CRIG and Earthwatch Institute. The study further revealed that provision of boreholes has helped in improving access to potable drinking water in the village. Cadbury Ghana, one of the organisations associated with agrotourism development in Adjeikrom has instituted a scholarship package of which some of the village pupils are beneficiaries. These supporting organisations have also provided plastic chairs

and mattresses to the village so that visitors can hire to help mobilize funds for the development of the village.

Currently, the ACTF has conference room and accommodation facility. However, the residents loathe the deplorable state of the accommodation facility. Also, ACTF is bereft with other challenges such as lack of funds, incoherent marketing programmes and lack of skilled personnel. Definitely, the lack of skilled personnel at ACTF has crippled product development and marketing. Furthermore, many of the residents maintain that the revenue collected benefits some members of the village, a scenario that is developing into an insidious apathy towards agrotourism development in the village. Although ACTF has a first mover advantage in the agrotourism market in Ghana, these burgeoning constraints have shrunk its market share considerably.

Arguably, there are several interconnected strands that would be worthy of future investigations. At the forefront of these, is the urgent need to study the supply-side perspective and demand-side perspective to agrotourism development in Ghana. The supply-side perspective, should include a critical assessment of the country’s agrobiodiversity potential (that goes beyond focusing only on cocoa farms, oil palm and rubber plantations), the financial analysis of farmers ability to diversify into tourism, the business acumen of farmers to engage fully in tourism, the viability of agrotourism compared to other land uses. On the demand-side perspective, there is the pressing need to critically unravel and categorise the characteristics of the agrotourists to Ghana, generating countries, spending power, preferences, length of stay, identifiable behaviours and motivations. Further local research on agrotourism can also employ Flanigan et al. (2014) typology on agrotourism to help bridge the demand and supply perspectives. Such research can help to develop definitive and competitive products. This said, in final analysis, the Government of Ghana and the quasi-governmental organisations connected to tourism must take proactive stance towards agrotourism development as new institutional frameworks are needed to realise its potential for sustainable development.



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