

# POLICY BRIEF



## FERARI

FERTILIZER RESEARCH & RESPONSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION



A fertilizer distributor's warehouse

### Authors:

Y. Iddrisu<sup>1\*</sup>, T.B. Aremu<sup>1,2</sup>,  
W.K. Atakora<sup>1</sup>, R. Wheeler<sup>1</sup>,  
P. Annequin<sup>1</sup>, F. Gyasi<sup>1</sup>, C.Y.  
Freeman<sup>3</sup>, P.S. Bindraban<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> International Fertilizer  
Development Center, USA

<sup>2</sup> Mohammed VI Polytechnic  
University, Ben Guerir, Morocco

<sup>3</sup> University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana

\* Correspondence:  
pbindraban@ifdc.org  
yiddrisu@ifdc.org

### Contributing partners:



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## STAKEHOLDERS IN GHANA DISCUSS HOW A NATIONAL FERTILIZER PLATFORM COULD ADDRESS FERTILIZER SECTOR ISSUES

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

During the FERARI survey on the proposed National Fertilizer Platform (NFP), stakeholders seized the moment to voice key issues facing Ghana's fertilizer sector. They expressed strong views on how this multi-stakeholder platform could help address fertilizer issues moving forward.

The team surveyed over 36 public and private sector stakeholders, including farmers, researchers,

agro-dealers, fertilizer companies/businesses, policy and law makers, and regulators, across Ghana.

The evidence for the statements in this policy brief has been captured through rigorous analyses in two reports.<sup>1, 2</sup>

### CHALLENGES IN THE FERTILIZER VALUE CHAIN

The stakeholders identified key fertilizer sector challenges, particularly along the value chain, as follows.

In terms of production/blending, one of the major challenges is a lack of fertilizer recommendations for specific crops and soils, largely due to weak manufacturer, researcher, and farmer linkages and the presence of poor-quality products (blends) in the system.

Regarding fertilizer supply and distribution, the stakeholders complain of lengthy bureaucracy in obtaining import permits and clearance delays of fertilizer imports, limited supplies caused by the subsidy quota system, and a general lack of fertilizer transport and storage/warehouse facilities in the farming areas.

With respect to policies and regulations, those surveyed speak of the need to review and update the legal and regulatory framework for effective quality control and assurance, as well as a lack of data to inform policy to strengthen the enabling environment for the fertilizer sector.

<sup>1</sup> Aremu, T.B., Freeman, C.Y., Laamari, A., Iddrisu, Y., Atakora, W.K., Bindraban, P.S., 2020. Toward establishing a Ghana multi-stakeholder fertilizer platform: Insights from stakeholder and network analyses. IFDC FERARI Research Report No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Iddrisu, Y., Bindraban, P.S., Atakora, W.K., Aremu, T.B., Annequin, P., Kouassi, K., Fernando, A., Wheeler, R., Gyasi, F., 2020. Ghana Fertilizer Platform study. IFDC FERARI Research Report (TBA).



*The Multi-Stakeholder Fertilizer Sector Platform will address sector challenges of fertilizer availability and accessibility*

Limited availability of financing was identified by all actors along the value chain as a major challenge affecting fertilizer importation, manufacture/ blending, distribution, and end-user access to fertilizer.

The challenges with financing, supply, distribution, and limited crop- and soil-specific products have a compounding effect that limits availability and accessibility of fertilizers to farmers, resulting in low application rates and low yields.

### BRIGHT FUTURE

Despite these challenges, stakeholders see the fertilizer sector as one with a bright future in terms of opportunities in view of increasing fertilizer demand and use. They believe this will continue to rise, even after the conclusion of the Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) program of the Ghana Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Fertilizer and agro-chemicals are seen as crucial to agriculture. Survey participants have observed that the soils are really poor, which translates to the need for an effectively functioning fertilizer sector. Stakeholders understand that the decreasing availability of agricultural land will require use of more inputs (including fertilizer) to produce more and healthier food. They realize that intensification is the way forward and fertilizer and input use will increase.

Researchers believe that there are prospects, as they are conducting demonstrations and research on the

importance of fertilizer, its use, and the right timing for application. They hold the view that the fertilizer sector portends a vibrant future, because new blends are being formulated to meet soil- and crop-specific needs. They attest that the fertilizer sector will witness enhanced opportunities with the inception of the Ghana Fertilizer Expansion Programme (GFEP) and Fertilizer Authority, as well as construction and operationalization of the fertilizer production plant in Ghana.

### NATIONAL FERTILIZER PLATFORM

The majority of stakeholders hail the concept of the NFP as very necessary, a great idea, and a morale booster and are thus advocating commitment and participation, secured funding, information confidentiality, and effective decision-making for its realization and sustainability. They are optimistic that anticipated difficulties with trust building, reaching consensus, education and sensitization, equal distribution of power, and stakeholder engagement are surmountable.

Furthermore, the stakeholders have outlined priority issues that could comprise the goals of the platform. These include an enhanced fertilizer sector enabling environment, improved fertilizer (formulas/blends/compositions) production quality, an improved fertilizer subsidy program implementation (through PFJ), and improved fertilizer availability, accessibility, and application.