

Factors Influencing Farmers' Awareness and Choice of Indigenous Practices in Adapting to Climate Change and Variability in Northern Ghana

S. I. Alhassan^{1*}, M.T. Shaibu², J.K.M. Kuwornu³ and O.T. Damba⁴

¹*Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, College of Basic and Applied Science, University of Ghana, P. O. Box LG 68, Legon, Ghana.*

²*Council for Scientific and Industrial Research – Animal Research Institute (CSIR-ARI), Tamale*

³*Department of Food, Agricultural and Bioresources, School of Environment, Resource and Development, Asian Institute of Technology, Pathum Thani 12120, Thailand*

⁴*Department of Climate Change and Food Security, Faculty of Agribusiness and Communication Sciences, University for Development Studies, Tamale.*

* *Corresponding author; Email: issahsuhiyini@yahoo.com / isalhassan@st.ug.edu.gh*

Abstract

Farmers in Northern Ghana adapt to the adverse effects of climate change using traditional practices. However, farmers' awareness of these practices is a spring-board to their choices of available indigenous climate related adaptation strategies. This study examined farmers' awareness and usage of indigenous adaptation strategies using the Heckman Two-Stage Sample Selection Model. Questionnaire was administered to 285 randomly selected households to determine the factors influencing farmers' awareness and choice of indigenous adaptation strategies. The empirical results showed that majority of farmers are aware of and employed soil related indigenous adaptation strategies. Education, membership of farmer-based organisation, farmer-farmer extension contacts and farming experience significantly determine farmers' awareness of indigenous adaptation strategies. Farmers' level of education, farming experience, farmer-farmer extension contacts, membership of farmer group, labour hours and age significantly influenced farmers' choice of indigenous climate related adaptation strategies. Based on these findings, it is recommended that farmers should endeavour to form groups to serve as a platform to share knowledge on indigenous farming practices for effective climate change adaptation.