

## Project Update: January 2016

Roads connect farming areas to local and regional markets. However, the degree to which improved roads influence farm size and commercial farming is uncertain. Through regression analysis on road quality, household size, labour, farm plots, and other household characteristics obtained from 300 farmers in 10 communities in rural Ghana, it was found that improved roads reduce the rate of farm expansion but increase commercial farming regardless of farm size.

- a. Farmers in the hinterlands (unpaved road areas) consume almost all their food crops because they cannot transport them to the market due to poor road conditions.
- b. Improved road farmers sell almost all their farm produce because they have ready market.
- c. Improved road farmers are able to intensify farming since they get more profit some of which is used to buy farm inputs.
- d. The most used method of producing more farm output in the hinterlands is to expand farm size at the expense of forest cover.

Strategies to promote commercial farming with minimal farm expansion as well as improve the livelihoods of farmers should therefore consider road improvement as a major component.



Left: Paved road in farming areas. Right: Unpaved road in farming areas, Ghana.