Guidelines for stakeholder analysis and interviews

1. **Understanding the context and situation of the school**
   Before starting a project, it is important to understand the functioning of the school, whether the director is willing and able to take up the project and whether the board will support it. The overall questions that need to be answered through stakeholder interviews are:
   - Who plays a key role in the school? The Director? The Board? The parents?
   - Who is part of the board of the school? What is their degree of influence?
   - How does the school communicate with parents?
   - Is there enough equipment available for children such as papers and pens?
   - Are teachers able and willing to adopt new teaching methods?
   - Who is responsible for the building and surrounding grounds?

2. **Understanding the link between the schools, the parents and the children**
   The role of both parents and children and their willingness to participate in the school gardens is essential for its success. It is therefore recommended to ask different stakeholders, including children, about their perceptions of the school and opinions of the project. The information should be cross-checked and validated between different stakeholders.
   - How parents they perceive the school? Are they satisfied? Are there things they would like to improve?
   - Are there parents who are interested in becoming the main point of contact between the parents and the school about the school gardens?
   - What are the reasons for children to go to school? What are reasons not to go to school?
   - How much time is divided between teaching, singing, playing, or other activities?
   - What do children, teachers and parents think of the facilities in the school (sanitation, books, desks, papers etc.), both in terms of quantity and quality?
   - What do the children, teachers and parents expect children to learn in school?
   - What do children, teachers and parents think of setting up a school garden, and of the school addressing malnutrition, including agriculture in the curriculum?

3. **Understanding the role of local leaders**
   Local leaders often have their own agenda and vision on what should be happening in the communities and the schools. Their support is essential to project success. Questions that could be posed to them are:
   - What do leaders think of setting up a school garden?
   - What do they think of the school and how it functions?
   - What difficulties do they foresee?
   - What influence do they have in the community?
   - What role do they think they can play?
   - Can they make some extra land available?

4. **Understanding the link between the private sector and the schools (in case of Ghana: Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs))**
   As they have access to planting materials and inputs, the role of traders and other private actors can be very important for the sustainability of the garden. Questions that can be posed to them are:
• What role do they play in the community?
• Do they fund specific community projects?
• Is the LBC involved in the school? If so, how?
• What do teachers think of the LBCs in the community? Do they trust them?

The LBCs in Ghana are the economic power house of the cocoa communities. They may want to invest in a school garden project to improve the loyalty of their farmers; this project can be seen as a type of CSR program for the LBCs.

The Purchasing Clerks (PCs) are usually responsible for procuring cocoa from farmers. In various cocoa sustainability projects, they have been charged with new roles like training farmers or distributing fertilizers. Their role in the community is slowly changing. The lead farmers or field officers attached to the LBCs could play a role in setting up and maintaining school gardens. In that way, the connection between the school garden and cocoa production is strengthened.

5. Understanding the role of NGOs
NGOs are often the actors that already play a role in projects such as school gardens or school feeding programs. They may have long term involvement with the community and may have good relations with traditional leaders. They are often experienced in getting different stakeholders together. It is important to understand which NGOs are influential, which are interested and which possess relevant expertise.

In Ghana, school gardens were set up by the Ghana Organic Agriculture Network in Kumasi. This is a national NGO with an experienced instructor who assisted the schools with the initial set up, and supported them on a longer term basis.

Existing local NGOs may be willing and able to get into the business of school gardens. For example, they may be able to assist with the marketing of garden produce. In this way, revenues from the sales can be reinvested into the school garden. NGOs could also be involved in building the gardens, training teachers and liaising with local leaders and local government.

6. Understanding the role national ministries can and are willing to play
Introducing a school garden, together with a curriculum and new teaching methods, requires the approval of the national government in most countries in West Africa. Even though changes can be made in the curriculum at local level, consultation and involvement at the national level will likely lead to a structural adjustment of the curriculum. Getting insight into the role and interest of the ministry of education and agriculture is the first step to be taken. Based on the results, it can be decided whether it’s realistic to attempt involvement at the national level. The link with the national level is not always easy to establish in these types of projects.