Fencing and trapping Cutting Grass

Recognize the problem
The cutting grass (grass cutter) destroys crops of farmers in many parts of Africa. Chemicals have proven to be both hazardous and unaffordable and do not control the cutting grass.

Background
Fences with traps are a cheap and effective control of the cutting grass. Many of the materials are local. The traps are safe to use and cutting grass that are trapped through fencing are good to eat. However, certain traps for cutting grass can be hazardous.
• It is possible to hurt yourself while setting the trap.
• Dangerous snakes that are trapped on their tails may hide to bite the farmer.
• With time cutting grass may come to know the dangers of traps. Then they avoid the traps and bust open the fence and get into the farm field.

Management
Fencing and traps are made with available local materials such as sticks, ropes, palm fronds and wires. Though wires are not local materials, very strong ropes can be used to replace them. But even so, wires are mostly available and are inexpensive.
Start by brushing two to three feet wide around the farm. Sticks about four feet high are firmly placed in the soil around the farm at nine feet intervals. Then palm fronds are put in between the sticks. Use small sticks to bring together and neatly hold the palm fronds.
Make six inch by six inch square holes in the fence about every nine feet. Make the traps near the holes, so that the cutting grass will be trapped as they enter the garden through the holes in the fence.

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Ghana, Sierra Leone

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