

GHANA – GROW



Ghana's economy is growing, but the gains it has made are not evenly distributed amongst its people. There are still pockets of food-insecurity due to poor crop yields, a lack of knowledge about nutritious diets needed for a family to thrive, and a lack opportunities for families to earn money to buy their food.



Creating business solutions to poverty

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QUICKFACTS

- Population - 25.2 million
- 28% live below poverty line
- 56% work in agriculture
- 11% unemployment
- Life expectancy – 61
- High levels of child malnutrition
- 1 in 9 children dies before age 5
- Literacy – 58%

Background

Over 50% of Ghana’s population are rural farmers, and more than 90% of farm holdings are less than two hectares.

While the south of Ghana is lush and tropical, northern Ghana is arid savannah.

There are large income disparities between the two as the south enjoys both more economic opportunities and greater agricultural productivity

due to two growing seasons.

Traditional small-scale farmers in the north are challenged by widespread poverty and chronic food insecurity.

Women play a central role in the provision of food and nutrition for their families.

They do a lot of the farm work, but productivity on farms is low and will become worse as rainfalls are reduced due to climate change.

As the men in their families follow distant opportunities for migrant labor, women are often left on their own to manage as best they can.

They lack access to nutritious foods, financial services and viable markets for their crops. They need opportunities to improve their incomes and reduce their dependency on food aid and safety net programs.

MEDA’s Assessment

MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) will improve food security for families in northern Ghana by helping women increase availability, access and utilization of a variety of appropriate and nutritious food by strengthening production and market linkages, increasing diversification in production and creating nutrition awareness.

The project, called GROW (Greater Rural Opportunities for Women), follows three key areas of focus, structured around three dimensions of food security:

Availability: Traditional farmers in Ghana have small plots, which limits how much they can grow. MEDA will help women grow more by encouraging the use of:

- alternate crops (soy beans), better quality seeds, fertilizer and pesticides to improve yields;
- simple irrigation systems, so women can cultivate dry season crops and significantly expand the foods available for family consumption year round.

Access: They need to supplement what they grow by purchasing food. MEDA will link women farmers to new buyers for their products, which increases family income.

Utilization: Women, who make the meals for their families, need to learn how to optimize food available to them and maximize their nutritional benefit. MEDA will raise awareness of the benefits of a safe and nutritious diet, within the context of cultural and social norms around diet and food choices.

Outcome | 6-Year Project Budget

- 20,000 women and their families will enjoy improved and sustainable food security through the GROW project
- Increased availability of a variety of nutritious food
- Improved access to food through increased incomes
- Better utilization of food as knowledge of nutrition is strengthened

