

CIVIL SOCIETY COALITION STRENGTHENS AGRICULTURE IN GHANA

In Ghana, nearly half of all people rely on agriculture for their livelihood. Many of them are smallholder farmers who grow food chiefly to feed their families and sell any surplus produce at local markets. Smallholder farmers in Ghana often have low crop yields, which leads to high rates of food insecurity and malnutrition. Their low yields occur partly because they lack agricultural resources. The Hunger Alliance of Ghana, which is supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development through Feed the Future and by the Alliance to End Hunger, helps farmers to get the resources they need.

More broadly, the Hunger Alliance links farmers and community-based [civil society organizations](#) (CSOs) with policymakers involved in the fight against hunger. It supports member lobbying efforts with policymakers, parliamentarians and other national institutions tasked to formulate and implement food security policies and programs to ensure that agriculture is a national development priority.

The Alliance connects its members with government stakeholders through regular conferences and meetings. In 2013, it also commissioned a nationwide mapping of the CSOs involved in food security and nutrition. Forty such organizations were identified and organized into networks which function under the Hunger Alliance umbrella. Through the Alliance, individuals from these and other CSOs meet to work on improving food security in Ghana.

Another Alliance activity has been to help farmers such as Nana Ampofo Obeng improve crop yields. At one time, Obeng didn't have the resources or skills to produce crops that supported the nutritional diversity his wife and five children needed. Although he produced a surplus that could be sold, it was so small that his wife could carry it to market on foot. The family didn't have enough income to afford school fees for the children or basic staple foods or household medicines.

That all began to change after Obeng joined the Hunger Alliance. At its trainings, he learned financial planning and, on demonstration plots, learned about crop rotation and pest control techniques for his farm. When he built a dugout well, he received technical support from other Hunger Alliance members.



*Alliance members show organizational goals.
Photo Credit: Hunger Alliance of Ghana.*

With additional Alliance support, Obeng applied for and received government-subsidized, drought-resistant seeds and fertilizer.

Within a year of joining the Alliance, Obeng's yield had doubled in size, and it now includes mangoes as an additional cash crop. The surplus harvest is so large it requires a truck to transport it to market. Sales from this surplus generate extra income that helps the family diversify its diet and enjoy improved nutrition. The Obengs now regularly consume tomatoes, spinach, okra, eggplant, plantain, onions and citrus fruits. The family also pays school fees in full and can afford needed goods like medicines and other household supplies.

For Obeng, joining the Hunger Alliance of Ghana empowered him to increase crop yields and better provide for his family. He continues to participate in its agricultural activities and plans to attend a policy meeting soon. He also has encouraged others from his community to join the Hunger Alliance so they too can benefit from participation. "The sky is the limit," he said, for what he and his community can now achieve to fight hunger and malnutrition in Ghana.

"The sky is the limit."

**- Nana Ampofo Obeng, Member
Hunger Alliance of Ghana**

By supporting civil society organizations like the Hunger Alliance of Ghana, Feed the Future is helping Ghanaian farmers, community-based organizations and policymakers improve food security and end hunger and poverty among vulnerable families in Ghana.