

SUCCESS STORY

Leaders Bring Training to Women Farmers

USAID training for African agriculture leaders inspires participants to pass on new knowledge to rural women farmers

In February 2011, Lydia Sasu attended a five-day USAID-sponsored training on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), an African-led initiative to reduce hunger and poverty through strategic investment in agriculture. Now she's using the skills, knowledge, and materials from the workshop to educate scores of rural women farmers in Ghana.

As Executive Director of the Development Action Association (DAA) and a small-scale farmer, Lydia recognized the potential impact of sharing the CAADP message directly with farmers, especially women. "The training creates an awareness of the issue of food security. Everyone has to play a role to increase production," she says. Together with colleague and fellow trainee Stella Effah, the two women have trained 161 rural farmers – over 80% female – in dozens of communities in Sege, Amasaman, Obuyedru, and greater Accra. They plan to train many more.

Lydia and Stella both attended workshops given by the USAID-financed Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building Program (AFRICA

LEAD), which is part of the Feed the Future global food security initiative. To adapt the experience to the reality of rural women, trainings were conducted in three local languages (Twi, Ga-Dangbe, and Ga) and relied heavily on pictures and graphics from training materials. Participants learned about strategic planning, discussed local challenges to increasing production, and brainstormed possible solutions for their communities.

In addition to leadership training, AFRICA LEAD develops capacity to promote food security by conducting institutional assessments and matching key leaders with relevant technical training. By mid-2011, the program will have trained over 900 agriculture leaders across the African continent.



Photo: Development Action Association/Stella Effah

Lydia Sasu uses USAID training materials to discuss food security with rural farmers in Sege, Ghana.

"The majority of farmers do not know much of the policies which eventually affect them. Using the local language and pictures, rural women were able to understand the program [CAADP] and can now become involved."