

# Empowering women, promoting rural development and food security!

A project to empower women in rural areas of Ghana for equal participation in the agriculture and food sector

## Background

Women living in rural areas have a key function that is largely unrecognised in terms of its importance to society: women make up more than 40 percent of the workforce in the agricultural and food sector in countries of the Global South. Women play a decisive role in rural development, agricultural production and food security – also in Ghana. Primarily as a result of the sustainable development goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, the empowerment of women is increasingly regaining significance – a reminder that the sustainable development goals cannot be achieved without women’s participation.

## Objective

The objective of the project run by the dlV-LandFrauen gGmbH (German Association of Rural Women) is to empower women smallholders and, indeed, all women in rural areas of Ghana, since they play a crucial role in areas, such as food security and rural development. Improving the economic, social, health, and political situation of women and their families in the rural areas of the Volta, Oti, Bono East, Greater Accra, and Northern regions is a means of promoting equal participation in the agricultural and food sector. Men are involved in activities relevant to the success of the project.

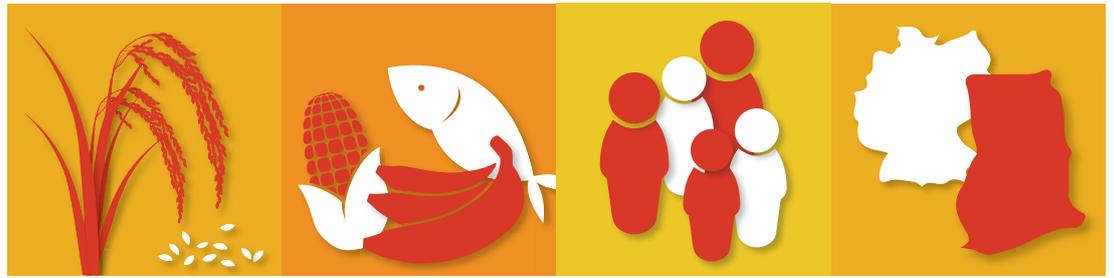
## German Association of Rural Women

The dlV-LandFrauen gGmbH is implementing the project independently as the international representative of the German LandFrauenverband e.V. (dlV). The dlV is the country’s largest association representing women (and their families) living in rural areas. Since its foundation in 1948, it has sought to improve the quality of life, working conditions, and social participation in rural settings. The dlV represents the political interests of all women in rural regions throughout Germany as well as the interests of women farmers as a profession. Since 2017, the dlV has been taking advantage of its collective strength and decades of experience to advocate the cause of women in rural areas of Ghana.

## Local partner structures in Ghana

On the ground, the dlV collaborates with “Women in Agriculture Development” (WIAD), a department within the Ghanaian Ministry of Food and Agriculture that promotes women’s interests. The project is also being implemented in cooperation with Ghanaian farmer-based organisations: the “Farmers Organization Network Ghana” (FONG) and the “Development Action Association” (DAA).





## Activities

As a means of promoting food security and rural development in Ghana, the project is implemented in accordance with the principle of a “Bottom-up” approach. Exchange and networking among women are a key component of the activities, including dialogue between women living in rural areas in Ghana and Germany.

### Organisational development and representing the interests of women associations

Developing effective and efficient organisations in agriculture is the driving force behind rural development, making it easier for members to access resources and know how to utilize them, and as well give women farmers a voice at the political level. For this reason, the dlV supports the development of selected women associations – members of DAA and FONG – to represent their interests at various levels, most importantly, at grassroots levels. In addition to advanced training in organisational development and advocacy (representation of their interests), the project focuses on enabling participants to learn about the structures of the German Association of Rural Women and foster direct interaction between Ghanaian and German rural women. Ghanaian women become acquainted with innovative approaches, which they can subsequently put into practice in their local women’s associations, adopting them as required to local needs.

### Business model development for rice women associations

The aim here is the empowerment of rice women associations through training in business model development in areas such as marketing, accounting and quality assurance. One specific area of focus is the professional networking

of women rice farmers across several regions as a means of empowering these networks and, thus, enhancing their competitiveness. This can improve the position of the women’s associations in the rice value-added chain in Ghana and increase members’ income.

### Nutrition education through the creation of home gardens

Promoting the consumption of a balanced diet including locally available foodstuffs and creating home gardens contribute to food security and assist to reduce malnutrition. In a tandem model, women nutritionists from WIAD in Ghana and German rural women are networking with one another to develop a training concept. Ghanaian women then receive training, enabling them to function as “multipliers” by subsequently passing on their acquired knowledge to their communities and DAA and FONG women’s associations.

## Cooperation

The follow-up project of the dlV-LandFrauen gGmbH in Ghana is implemented within the scope of the “Global Programme on Strengthening Farmers’ Organisations for Sustainable Agricultural Development” of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. It is financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as part of its special initiative “ONE World – No Hunger”.

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### Contact

dlV-LandFrauen gGmbH  
 Claire-Waldoff-Straße 7, 10117 Berlin  
 Phone: +49 30 28449291-0  
 E-Mail: [info@landfrauen.info](mailto:info@landfrauen.info)  
[www.landfrauen.info](http://www.landfrauen.info)



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