

# Concept notes - Sowing Seeds Program

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## 1. Executive Summary:

Africa Another Way aims to launch a scalable farming project for 30 farmers with at least 2 acres of land each in Northern Ghana to combat Poverty (SDG 1), Hunger (SDG 2), and Gender Equality (SDG 5). Activities include providing quality seeds and fertilizers, delivering training on modern farming techniques, and establishing a credit program for farmers.

### 1.1 Brief Overview of Activities:

- **Distribution of High-Quality Seeds and Fertilizers:** Provide seeds and fertilizers optimized for local conditions to significantly enhance crop yields and productivity.
- **Comprehensive Training Programs:** Conduct workshops and field demonstrations on advanced farming techniques, including pest management, irrigation, crop rotation, and financial literacy to empower farmers with essential skills.
- **Credit Program Implementation:** Establish a structured credit program to offer seeds and fertilizers on loan, with repayment plans scheduled post-harvest to ensure affordability and sustainability.

### 1.2 Funding Requirements:

- Farm Inputs and Supplies: €1,713
- Training & Field Operations: €3,782
- Logistics: €1,000
- Financial Services: €500
- Program Support and Development: €300
- Administrative Costs: €250
- Project Management: €2,500
- **Total: €10,045**

### 1.3 Expected Outcomes:

- **Increase Crop Yields:** Utilize high-quality inputs and improved farming techniques to boost crop yields.
- **Improve Farmers' Income:** Enhance yields and better market access to increase farmers' income.
- **Enhance Food Security:** Improve agricultural productivity and efficient resource management to ensure a stable, sufficient, and nutritious food supply for farming families and communities.

## 2. Introduction

For the past 8 years, our focus in West Africa has been on education and community initiatives, aiming to help people escape poverty and hunger through learning. While education is a fundamental tool, it is a long-term solution. Research, including studies from the World Bank, shows that agriculture can quickly lift people out of poverty and hunger if they have the right training, financial support, and access to land and markets.

### 2.1 Problem Statement

According to the World Food Programme's 2020 comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis, an estimated 11.7% of Ghanaians are food insecure. The prevalence of food insecurity varies significantly by region, with the northern part of Ghana experiencing the highest levels, ranging from 23-49%, compared to 4-10% in the southernmost regions. This high level of food insecurity in the north correlates with higher rates of poverty, as food insecurity is both a cause and a consequence of poverty.

#### Specific issues the project aims to address :

- **Poverty:** Agriculture offers a direct path out of economic hardship for many families. Our project supports farmers with the necessary skills, resources, and market access to transform farming from subsistence to a sustainable source of income, thereby elevating their financial stability.
- **Malnutrition and Hunger:** We aim to improve nutritional outcomes and alleviate hunger by increasing access to a diverse range of locally grown, nutritious foods. Our interventions include training farmers in sustainable agricultural practices that boost agricultural productivity and efficiency, ensuring families have enough food throughout the year.
- **Involvement of Women in Farming:** Women play a crucial role in agriculture and household nutrition. Our project focuses on empowering women farmers by providing them with targeted training, resources, and support. This involvement not only enhances their economic status but also promotes gender equality within the community.

## 2.2 Organizational background

Africa Another Way, a Hungarian NGO, is dedicated to enhancing education in West Africa. We focus on funding educational initiatives, providing training, and supporting community development. We have successfully delivered over 40 projects to schools and communities since 2016 in three countries in West Africa; Ghana, Mali and Senegal.

While our direct experience in farming is limited, we have extensive expertise in managing projects across West Africa and other regions globally. To support our agricultural initiatives, we will leverage the knowledge of Ghanaian PhD and Masters students based in Hungary for research and advisory roles. Additionally, two seasoned field officers in Northern Ghana will oversee the practical implementation of these projects. This blend of academic insight and local expertise uniquely positions our NGO to effectively enhance education and development in the region.

More information about the Africa Another Way : [www.africaanotherway.com](http://www.africaanotherway.com)

## 3. Project Description

### 3.1 Project objectives

1. Increase crop yields by 30% in the first year
2. Improve the income of farmers by 25% by the end of the second year
3. Enhance food security for farmers by the end of the second year

### 3.2 Step by step actions to achieve the objectives

- Provide quality seeds and fertilizers for farmers
  - Selection: Identify and source high-quality seeds and fertilizers suitable for the local soil and climate conditions.
  - Distribution: Organize the timely distribution of these inputs to farmers before the planting season.
  - Instruction: Provide guidelines on the proper use of seeds and fertilizers to maximize their effectiveness
- Deliver training to farmers on farming methods, business and nutrition
  - **Workshops:** Conduct workshops covering modern farming techniques, including pest control, irrigation, and crop rotation.
  - **Field Demonstrations:** Implement practical field demonstrations to show the application of training.

- **Business Training:** Include training and sessions on financial management, nutrition marketing, and business planning to help farmers run their farms more profitably
- **Offer seeds** and fertilizers on loan for farmers
- Establish a credit program where farmers can receive seeds and fertilizers at the beginning of the planting season and repay after the second season.

### 3.3 Time line

1. January: High-quality seeds and fertilizers sourced; credit program set up.
2. February: Distribution of seeds and fertilizers; initial farm visits and instruction on use; helpline and resource materials provided.
3. March: Workshops and business training conducted.
4. April - September: Monthly field visits for monitoring and support; ongoing field demonstrations.
5. October: Pre-harvest visits conducted.
6. November: Final feedback collected and improvements implemented.

## 4 Target beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries of this project are 30 smallholder farmers in Tamale, Northern Ghana, each owning at least 2 acres of land. These farmers are predominantly women, who face significant barriers to agricultural success, including limited access to quality seeds, fertilizers, and modern farming techniques. By focusing on these farmers, the project addresses gender inequality (SDG 5) and empowers women to improve their livelihoods and contribute to community development. Continuous communication between farmers and our local field officers will ensure needs and insights shape the project's implementation and adjustments.

We already engaged with the target farmers, examined their land (soil tests), resources, and tools, and conducted interviews (see annex 1) to better understand their specific requirements. This preparatory work is crucial for customizing the training, tools, and resources that will be most effective for them. The initial year will serve as a pilot phase.

Additionally, the project indirectly benefits the wider community, including:

1. **Farmers' Families:** Improved crop yields and incomes will enhance food security and nutrition, ensuring that families have access to three nutritious meals per day.
2. **Local Economy:** Increased agricultural productivity will stimulate economic activity, create jobs, and promote market access, contributing to overall economic growth in the region.
3. **Youth and Future Farmers:** Training programs will provide valuable skills and knowledge, encouraging the younger generation to engage in sustainable agriculture and continue the cycle of improvement.

## 5. Project Management and Staffing

To manage the Sowing Seeds project with 30 farmers effectively, we organize the work into three main teams:

1. Local field officers (Ghana)
  - Conduct training sessions for farmers.
  - Monitor the progress and health of the crops.
  - Liaise with suppliers to ensure timely delivery of seeds, fertilizers, and other materials.
2. Team of academics students (Hungary)
  - Conduct research on optimal farming techniques and seed varieties.
  - Monitor data collected from the field to analyze the effectiveness of farming practices.
  - Advise on improvements and innovations in farming techniques.
3. Project management team (Hungary) - 1 person
  - Coordinate all aspects of the project.
  - Facilitate communication between teams.
  - Prepare and present progress reports to the board and donors
4. Board (Hungary / The Netherlands)
  - Provide strategic oversight and guidance.
  - Make high-level decisions on project direction and resource allocation.

## 6. Collaboration

Collaboration with third parties and subject matter experts is crucial for Sowing Seeds as it brings in specialized knowledge, resources, and innovative practices essential for project success. Partnering with local and international organizations enhances our ability to address complex challenges, ensures alignment with best practices, and strengthens our impact through shared expertise and resources

**Ghanaian Academics:** Ghanaian students in Hungary studying agriculture (Master's or PhD) will provide research and insights into optimal farming techniques. Their dual understanding of Ghanaian and Hungarian contexts will bridge cultural gaps and enhance project effectiveness.

**Local Field Officers:** Local experts in Tamale will train farmers, monitor progress, and ensure smooth execution. Their deep community ties will facilitate navigating local regulations and engaging with the farming community.

**Farmers:** Farmers are central to our project. We work with them, not just for them, to identify needs and implement sustainable solutions that improve crop yields and income.

**Governmental Agencies:** Collaborating with governmental agencies will support infrastructure development, promote local produce, and provide incentives like tax adjustments. These partnerships align our project with government objectives and SDGs. Here is an agency we are in process to engage with :

- **Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) - Northern Regional Office**
- Contribution: Offers resources, technical expertise, and aligns project goals with national agricultural strategies.

**Other NGOs:** Partnering with NGOs allows us to share knowledge and resources, enhancing our collective impact. We have reached out to several NGOs to explore collaborations.

- **CARE International in Ghana**
- Contribution :Offers knowledge-sharing, collaborates on agricultural training programs, and provides logistical support for project implementation.

**Suppliers of Seeds, Fertilizers, and Pesticides:** Local suppliers will provide quality inputs tailored to local conditions. As the project progresses, farmers will be encouraged to produce their own seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides for greater sustainability.

## 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

### 7.1 Performance indicators

Measuring progress and performance is important because it provides feedback on our training and strategy, helping us determine if adjustments are needed. Here are indicators we are planning to use :

- **Farmers attended training** : # of farmers attended training and completed the exam
- **Crop Yield Improvement:** Tracking the increase in crop production per acre.
- **Income Growth:** Measuring the rise in farmers' incomes from improved agricultural practices.
- **Adoption Rates:** The percentage of farmers using new techniques or crops.
- **Loan Repayment Rates:** Monitoring how many farmers successfully repay the loans provided for seeds and fertilizers.

## **7.2 Data collection methods**

The collection of data will be during our field visits and training which is planned to be regular. The data will be collected using mobile phones so the data is synced real-time and available for use.

## **7.3 Evaluation plan**

Sowings Seeds evaluation plan is designed to assess the effectiveness and impact of its program whether this is in the first (pilot) year or the years after. This plan encompasses several key components to ensure that outcomes are evaluated against objectives.

### **1. Baseline Data Collection**

Before the implementation we will collect baseline data. This initial data serves as a reference point to measure changes and impacts accurately. This process involves gathering detailed information on farmers' current crop yields, income levels, and farming practices

### **2. Regular Monitoring**

Throughout the duration of their project we continuously collect data to monitor progress. This involves regular field visits and the use of mobile technology to gather real-time data.

### **3. Mid-term Evaluations**

At the midpoint of the project, we conduct mid-term evaluations. These evaluations assess the progress made towards the project's goals and objectives. They help in understanding the effectiveness of the interventions and provide an opportunity to make mid-course corrections if needed.

### **4. End-of-Project Evaluation**

At the conclusion of the project, a comprehensive end-of-project evaluation is conducted. This involves a thorough analysis of the collected data to measure the overall impact of the project. The evaluation compares the end results with the baseline data.

## **8. Sustainability**

To ensure lasting success and growth of the Sowing Seeds pilot project, our strategy focuses on empowering farmers and strengthening the community. Demonstrating successful outcomes in pilot projects attracts more farmers, donors, and local governments. When farmers see tangible improvements in crop yields and income, they are more likely to adopt new practices. Utilizing mobile apps will enhance efficiency in data collection, farmer training, and communication. Mobile technology can provide farming information, reaching more farmers at a lower cost.

## 8.1 Community Involvement

Engagement and training for local stakeholders to continue efforts are crucial. Our program focuses on three key elements of sustainability:

### 1. Capacity Building:

- **Agricultural Training:** Educate farmers on best practices such as crop rotation, pest management, and soil health.
- **Financial Literacy:** Provide essential financial skills to help farmers manage their resources and plan for the future.

### 2. Community Leadership:

- **Training Local Leaders:** Develop leaders within the community who can support and train other farmers.
- **Farmer Field Schools:** Establish practical training sites where local leaders demonstrate techniques to their peers.

### 3. Crop Diversification:

- **Introducing New Crops:** Promote the cultivation of high-value crops to decrease dependency on a single crop, improve income stability and promote nutrition into the daily food supply of farmers and their families.

## 8.2 Scalability

The Sowings Seeds project will develop in three phases, each bringing farmers closer to self-sustainability and financial independence. This will help farmers earn more money over time.

### Phase 1: Establishing Sustainable Self-Sufficient Small-Scale Farms - Pilot year

- **Purpose:** Cultivate diverse crops using eco-friendly techniques.
- **Outcome:** Create resilient farms ensuring food security for 30 farming families.

### Phase 2: Community Farming - Year 2

- **Purpose:** Establish a cooperative farming model.
- **Outcome:** Improve efficiency, crop yield, and community resilience through resource sharing and collaboration.

### **Phase 3: Value Addition and Market Expansion - Year 3 and beyond**

- **Purpose:** Enhance product value and market reach.
- **Outcome:** Increase farmers' income by processing products and accessing new markets.

## 9. Budget

Category	Items	Amount (GH¢)	Amount (€)
<b>Farm Inputs and Supplies</b>		<b>26,544</b>	<b>1,713</b>
	Seeds		71
	Fertilizers		852
	Crop protection products (Pesticides)		125
	Crop protection products (Weedicides)		204
	Tools and equipment (Knapsack Spraying Machine)		148
	Tools and equipment (Hoes)		114
	Tools and equipment (Cutlasses)		199
<b>Training &amp; Field Operations</b>		<b>58,621</b>	<b>3,782</b>
	Food and Water for training and weekly visits		500
	Training material		300
	Transportation for field staff		710
	Field staff salaries and allowances - one year		2,272
<b>Logistics</b>		<b>15,500</b>	<b>1,000</b>
	Distribution costs for delivering supplies to farmers		700
	Warehousing costs - produce		300
<b>Financial Services</b>		<b>7,750</b>	<b>500</b>
	Credit program costs		500
<b>Program Support and Development</b>		<b>4,650</b>	<b>300</b>
	Research and development for new farming techniques and products		300
<b>Administrative Costs</b>		<b>3,875</b>	<b>250</b>
	General overhead costs		250
<b>Project management</b>		<b>38,750</b>	<b>2,500</b>
	Travel costs of project manager - 2 visits		1,600
	Accommodation - 2 x 10 days stay in Ghana		900
<b>Total costs</b>		<b>155,690</b>	<b>10,045</b>
Euro vs GHc	15.5		

## **Annexes**

[Tamale farmer research material](#)