



## Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/feed-future-works-ground-build-civil-leadership>

# Feed the Future Works from the Ground Up to Build Civil Leadership

From the earliest days of Feed the Future, the initiative has been driven by country-led priorities and rooted in partnership with governments, donor organizations, the private sector and civil society. That's because long-term success in food security means building the capacity of individuals, communities and institutions to drive momentum behind agriculture-led development and sustainably address hunger and undernutrition in their own countries.

Feed the Future is "country-owned" in the sense that investments are tailored to reflect the needs of individual countries through plans that are developed and led by country governments themselves. But governments alone can't solve hunger, which is why the initiative also works from the ground up to empower civil society actors to be leaders and advocates for food security in their countries.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Feed the Future's "Africa Lead" program aims to do just that, working across sectors to train a critical mass of leaders who will champion growth and innovation in agriculture at both the local and national levels in their countries. Participants in the program are expected to become not only partners in food security, but proactive leaders who drive their organizations and networks to back ambitious national food security agendas.

This capacity building program has yielded some powerful and measurable results. Take, for instance, Ghana's National Association of Poultry Farmers, a group of over 3,000 farmers who aim to advance commercial poultry farming in Ghana. In an effort to increase the competitiveness of Ghana's poultry sector, the Association endeavored for many months to lobby the national government to increase its support for poultry farmers by scaling up local production and incorporating eggs into school meal programs, but it was finding its engagement strategies unsuccessful.

After some of the Association's leaders were trained by Feed the Future's Africa Lead program, the organization completely shifted its approach to advocacy, rolling out a new strategy to build public awareness, urgency and support for key issues affecting poultry farmers in Ghana. The Association's revised approach included tapping into mass media outlets to educate the public about the importance of Ghana's poultry industry, using television and radio to disseminate information and mobilize other farmers to action. They also invested more time in policy research and stakeholder analysis, broadening the scope of key lobbying targets across the government, and honed their messaging so that representatives advocating on behalf of the Association would do so from a unified platform.

Not only did the Africa Lead program help equip the Association to successfully acquire a grant from the [Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund](#) to help finance these activities, but the campaign has yielded significant results thanks to the revised approach members devised after receiving training. Once members were successfully able to raise the public profile of key industry concerns for poultry farmers, the Association started to build its network and receive more opportunities, signing an agreement in August 2012 with the National Buffer Stock Corporation to distribute maize to poultry farmers for the first time. The Association also signed a major contract worth nearly \$165,000 with investor group Liberty Commodity to provide broiler chickens and eggs to a new national chain of poultry retail outlets.

"Before [the training] we were very abrasive with government. The training taught us how to engage government and other stakeholders on a win-win level," says John Torto, the Association's executive of programs. "With that spirit, we have had both the public and private sectors wanting to know our issues and offer assistance and solidarity. We changed the messages, we changed the approach, we even changed the medium."

To date, training under Feed the Future's Africa Lead has produced over 2,700 "champions of change" like Torto in 29 countries across the continent.

[Learn more](#) about Feed the Future's Africa Lead program.