

## Amina's story: an agribusiness relationship that delivers



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Amina Wajah, rice farmer in Lemu, Sene West District

When Allah is Able Agrochemicals Limited opened its agro-input shop in Kwame Danso in 2005, it was business as usual: put up a sign, display products and hope that interested customers will come and buy. This was the practice until 2017, when the UK DFID-funded Market Development Programme for Northern Ghana (MADE) introduced the Farm Enterprise Advisor (FEA) model to its agribusiness partners.

Amina Wajah, a smallholder farmer in Lemu, Sene West District, was already a customer of the shop. “I used to only buy fertiliser and agrochemicals from Allah is Able for my rice and maize farms,” she recalls. Now, however, it has become much more than just a shop for her. “Following the introduction of FEAs three years ago, the inputs are delivered directly to me,” she says.

Under the model, partner firms have received support from MADE to engage FEAs, to advertise their products

and services on local radio, and to print product leaflets. Agribusinesses supported by MADE no longer wait for farmers to come and buy from them; the FEAs reach out all over Northern Ghana to generate sales leads and ensure the timely delivery of an integrated package of improved inputs and extension services. FEAs also monitor production, recover input credit and support partner firms to set up model farms that demonstrate the benefits of good agricultural practices.

*“The FEA model is a very good intervention introduced by MADE. It has helped us to reach out to more smallholder farmers resulting in increased sales. The delivery of an integrated package of inputs and farm advisory services has helped us to recover our input credit and secure more supply contracts and partnerships.”*

**Adam Ishack, Managing Director of Allah is Able**

“Before the start of the production season, the FEAs help me to plan my production, assess my input needs and advise me on the right type of seed and agrochemicals to buy, how to prepare my land, plant my seed and apply fertiliser,” says Amina.

With nine FEAs employed in 2017, Allah is Able increased its customer base from fewer than 1,600 farmers to over 3,000 in 2018 and over 5,000 in 2019. This resulted in a corresponding increase in sales from under GHS 6 million in 2017 to over GHS 18 million in 2019. Today the company employs 21 FEAs.



*Amina talks to Bismark Ansah, Executive Director of Okyerefo Consult, a partner of Allah is Able*

As the FEA model has helped Allah is Able innovate and grow, it has also brought benefits to other actors along the agricultural value chain. The FEAs themselves have gained valuable employment and the training to make a difference in their communities. Two other local firms, Okyerefo Consult and Segrace Enterprise, partner with Allah is Able to deliver mechanisation and aggregation

services to a growing number of smallholder farmers. And the farmers – like Amina – see the difference in their productivity.



*Amina Wajah on her rice farm*

*“Working as an FEA has given me a secure source of income compared to my previous work as an itinerant agrochemicals seller. FEA training delivered by MADE has equipped me for my job. I am now able to effectively share my knowledge of farming and agrochemical application with smallholder farmers.”*

**Maxwell Chechade, FEA in Sene East District**

Where she used to just take a trip to the agro-input shop to buy fertiliser, Amina now looks forward to visits from her local FEAs, whose knowledge is as important to her as the inputs they deliver. The difference this has made for Amina is the ability to grow a better crop. “Through the support of the FEAs and Allah is Able, I have now shifted from the cultivation of low-yielding to high-yielding rice varieties preferred by buyers,” she reports. She has more than doubled her harvest per acre and is expanding her farm; recently, she began producing certified rice seed on an eight-acre plot for Allah is Able to sell to other farmers. With her inputs and practices optimised, farming is a better business than ever.



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