

Growing Crops, Building Confidence



For many years, 30-year-old Jennifer from Ul-Kpong Bakonoyiri in the Ullo Traditional Area of Ghana's Upper West Region struggled to earn a living.

A mother of three, she relied on buying unshelled peanuts, cracking them by hand, and selling the kernels in local markets. The work was labor-intensive, and the returns were unpredictable.

"Some days I made a small profit, but other days I earned nothing whatsoever," Jennifer recalled.

The inconsistent income made it difficult for Jennifer to contribute to her household's needs. Beyond the financial challenges, she often felt isolated from her community.

"When people gathered for social events, I usually stayed away because I couldn't afford to contribute anything. I felt ashamed and preferred to keep to myself," she said.

Everything began to change in 2023 when Jennifer joined Self-Help International's Agriculture and Entrepreneurship Development program. Through the support of generous donors, she received her first loan of GHS 700 (approximately \$55).

But the loan was only part of the support she received. Jennifer participated in agricultural and business training where she learned improved farming practices, proper land preparation, crop management, and the importance of investing in income-generating activities. Armed with new knowledge and determination, she invested her entire loan in cultivating 1.5 acres of groundnuts.

Her hard work yielded positive results. At harvest, Jennifer produced six bags of groundnuts, approximately 648 kilograms. The harvest provided food for her family and generated enough income for her to successfully repay her loan while setting aside funds to invest in the next farming season.

Jennifer's commitment and successful repayment qualified her for a second loan of GHS 4,000.00 (approximately \$310). Building on the skills and confidence she had gained, she expanded her farming activities and cultivated three acres of sorghum. At harvest, she produced 30 bags, approximately 1,500 kilograms, transforming what began as a small opportunity into a growing source of income and food security for her family.

Today, Jennifer's life looks completely different. She now contributes financially to her household and supports her husband in meeting family expenses. Her family enjoys greater food security throughout the year, and she no longer worries about where the next meal will come from.



Most importantly, Jennifer has regained her confidence.

"I can now attend community gatherings and socialize with my friends. Before, I stayed away because I had nothing to contribute. Now I am proud to join others and participate in community activities," she shared with a smile.

Jennifer is deeply grateful to the donors whose support made her transformation possible.

"Because of the help I received, I am no longer hiding. I can stand among my friends with confidence. Thank you for helping me build a better life for my family."