



EMPOWERING WOMEN FARMERS TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION, AND INCOME

MEDA'S GREATER RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN (GROW) PROJECT

DURATION: 2012–2018

REGION: Upper West Region, Ghana

FUNDERS: Global Affairs Canada, MEDA



TALKING BOOKS REACHED **23,368** WOMEN FARMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Reaching Low-Literate Women Farmers

MEDA's Greater Rural Opportunities for Women (GROW) project needed to reach and train women farmers to improve agricultural production, nutrition, and income. But low literacy among women in northern Ghana was a challenge. Other barriers included poor road conditions, local languages, and lack of access to electricity or Internet.

Delivering a Talking Book Listening Program through Lead Farmers, VSLAs

Recognizing the limitations of other information and communication technologies, including radio and mobile phones, MEDA chose the Amplio Talking Book audio device to strengthen agricultural extension and training in GROW communities. With Talking Books, MEDA provided on-demand access to local language information. Topics included sustainable agriculture, value chains, financial literacy, health, nutrition, and gender roles.

For the GROW project, Talking Books were distributed to lead farmers to share with their Village Savings and Loan Association groups. The women listened to Talking Books during their weekly VSLA meetings, individually, and with their households. If a farmer missed a meeting or training session, she could borrow a Talking Book to listen at home and explore topics of interest.

Amplio Ghana worked with MEDA to plan and produce the content, provide training, and manage the devices in the field. The team updated Talking Books and collected data and user feedback on a quarterly basis, to align with the growing season.

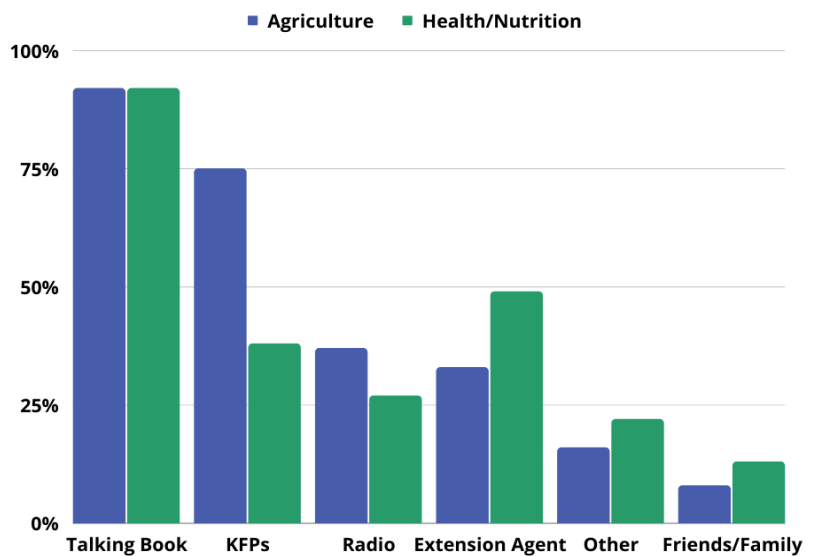
“Thanks to the knowledge I gained from Talking Books, my family has income choices from soya every day. My success has encouraged other women farmers too.”

— GROW PARTICIPANT



A Key Source of Information for All Topics

When the project ended, a close-out survey showed that Talking Books were the top source of information across all GROW districts, for all topics covered. For the health/nutrition category, 92% of respondents cited Talking Books as a key source of information and 49% cited health workers. Agriculture results were similar, with Talking Books ranked the highest (92%), followed by key facilitating partners (KFPs) (75%), and extension workers (39%). For value chains and gender information, the gap was even greater.



MEDA described the Talking Book as the GROW project’s most important tool for training and community outreach other than GROW field agents.

An Inclusive Digital Solution

Recognized by UNESCO as an inclusive digital solution, the battery-powered Amplio Talking Book is designed for low-literate adults and youth. It delivers hours of audio content in any language. Users can play message on demand and record their feedback. A built-in speaker allows families and groups to listen and learn together. Amplio’s technology collects usage data and user feedback, so partners can monitor program engagement, identify issues and trends, and continually update and improve content for greater impact.

