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Growing Vegetables — and Profits

Mariama, a 48-year-old mother of six, lives in a rural community in northern Ghana, the region with the highest malnutrition, child and maternal mortality rates in the country. For years, Mariama and her neighbors struggled to feed their families by farming small plots in this drought-prone area. Traditionally, crops were only planted during the very short rainy season, which often led to shortages of food during the long dry season. Malaria is rampant in the region, killing almost one-quarter of children under five each year.

A partnership between Episcopal Relief & Development, the Anglican Diocese of Tamale (which serves northern Ghana) and its development agency, ADDRO, has significantly improved conditions for Mariama and her neighbors.

A women's farming cooperative was formed and each woman in the cooperative also received \$100 in start-up capital and training in basic accounting and bookkeeping. Within one year, they earned a profit of over \$3,000 — more than tripling their initial total investment of \$1,000. They used the profit to expand their farming activities.

The women learned new farming methods including dry season vegetable gardening. Mariama, her children and her community are no longer hungry. The children aren't needed to work the farm any longer, and Mariama can afford to send them to school.

Additionally, *NetsforLife*[®], a program partnership between Episcopal Relief & Development and sponsors, is working with ADDRO to prevent malaria, and is protecting children and pregnant women from this deadly disease.