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USAID Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance to Provide More than \$3.7 Million in Aid in Response to Global Food Security Situation

DAKAR, Senegal, March 17, 2009 – As part of the President's Global Food Security Response, the US Agency for International Development's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) has obligated more than \$3.7 million in funds to lower rates of malnutrition and increase food security in households.

The first grant will award \$2.7 million in funds to Catholic Relief Services in partnership with Christian Children's Fund, to improve community-based nutrition efforts and agriculture production in the regions of Ziguinchor, Sedhiou and Kolda in Senegal. The funds will be implemented over a 22-month time frame, from February 19, 2009 through December 31, 2010.

Some of the on-the-ground activities for the grant include identifying malnourished children; community awareness building about the importance of nutrition and how to prevent malnutrition, working with farmers to teach the benefits of improved seed varieties; holding seed fairs where improved varieties would be made available, and provision of microcredit.

The second grant of \$1,050,000 is awarded to the Food & Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to provide regional coordination of food security and agriculture efforts. The program's goal is to strengthen livelihoods and improve the nutritional status of the most vulnerable rural, peri-urban and urban households affected by rising food prices. The funds will be implemented over a 36-month time frame, from January 20, 2009 to January 22, 2012.

"These targeted funds will assist thousands of families struggling to cope with the immediate impacts of the global food and financial crisis on their households," said Regina Davis, Principal Regional Advisor of USAID/OFDA's Regional Office for West and North Africa, based in Dakar. "We hope these projects will provide viable alternatives to increase self-sufficiency and lower overall malnutrition rates in vulnerable households," she said.

USAID/OFDA, part of USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, is responsible for facilitating and coordinating US Government disaster assistance overseas.

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