



April 5, 2011

Economic Growth Office

Feed the Future Initiative Bi-weekly Highlights

Accomplishments

- USAID/PCE finalized the Senegal Competitiveness Report in partnership with the Technical Committee of the Accelerated Growth Strategy unit (SCA) presided by the Minister of Economy and Finance. The report presents an in-depth analysis of Senegal's economic performance on 120 indicators and compares it with selected benchmark countries. Both good performance and constraints are explained with conclusions and recommendations to improve Senegal's productivity, growth rate and competitiveness in international markets. A French version will be completed in March.
- USAID/Education and Research in Agriculture (ERA) Project introduced the "group-ware" platform Google Aps to University of Gaston Berger, *Centre National de l'élevage* and the *Ecole National Supérieur en Agricole* (ENSA). The software will permit instant communications between other universities and the Virginia Tech managing team in Dakar. The "group-ware" program permits easy sharing of documents, scheduling and event planning information on-line among members of the USAID/ERA Technical Working Groups.
- USAID/YAAJEENDE project staff are meeting with stakeholders in each selected rural community to determine the constitution of a General Assembly to act as a leadership body for project activities and to fairly and inclusively represent the voice of the target beneficiaries.
- US African Development Foundation (USADF) awarded a four-year grant in the amount of CFA 97, 685,560 (\$ 208, 589) to the *Association de Lutte contre l'Exode Rural* (ASSOLUCER). ASSOLUCER is a federation of 138 village small enterprises (GIEs) in the Sedhiou region that purchases sesame from its members, which it in turn packages and resells in bulk to meet a growing demand from Indian, Chinese, and French buyers. The total sesame production by ASSOLUCER members will increase from a baseline of 1,127 tons in 2010 to 2,750 tons by the end of the project.



"We know that countries are more likely to prosper when they encourage entrepreneurship; when they invest in their infrastructure; and when they expand trade and welcome investment."

*- President Barack Obama,
Announcement of the new US
Development Policy at the UN General
Assembly, September 2010*

- USAID/ Wula Nafaa assisted members of the COPROCA, *Cooperative of Casamance Producers* to finalize their legal status. The cooperative organizes cashew nuts producers so that they can enhance their bargaining power through a scaling up of production and collective price negotiation. Sensitization missions are being planned to inform cashew producers of Ziguinchor, Sédhiou and Kolda. The number of new members has increased from 100 to over 500. Producers of Niaguis (new name) have asked for a local convention to assure that cropping is coordinated at the same time once the cashew is ripe enough so that the quality and prices are better.
- USAID/ Wula Nafaa facilitated access to credit while training facilitators and enterprises on credit applications at a recent session in Kolda with local credit institutional partners IMCEC and CMS. As result, facilitators and enterprises have a better understanding of credit procedures and local enterprises have a better understanding of the credit institutions' needs. During the session, 7 applications were prepared and reviewed by credit agents. The correctly-filled applications will be submitted to the Credit Committees next week.
- USAID/PCE completed the construction of four storage facilities in Thiaré and Nganda (Kaolack) to be integrated into a consolidation system in accordance with certified sorghum market standards.

Upcoming Activities

- Dr. Ozzie Abaye, Professor of Agriculture from Virginia Tech, will provide a workshop entitled "Grasslands Conservation and Food Security" between the 25th to the 29th of April at ENSA in Thiès. The workshop will bring together experts in Senegal as well as at least one representative from each of the Agricultural Educational and Training institutions from the USAID/ERA community.
- The project team will make a final selection of the villages in the target CRs where we will initiate Conservation Farming (CF) activities. We will be targeting 3 villages per CR. Target villages will demonstrate an enthusiastic interest in CF, contain sufficient numbers of dynamic agricultural producers, and offer promising potential for other USAID/YAAJEENDE activities in nutrition and agribusiness in order to encourage a fully-integrated approach in each community and to prevent activity stove piping.
- USADF is sponsoring two persons from an ADF-financed project, Koba Club, and one person from its local Senegal partner staff to attend the Shea 2011 conference and the Global Shea Alliance launch in Accra, Ghana the first week of April. Koba Club is a small enterprise based in Kedougou. The 24 members of Koba Club buy cereal and shea from local producers, which they process into market-ready products. Though the bulk of their revenue comes from cereal processing, they also produce shea products, which now account for 10-15% of their total revenue. Last year, Koba Club attended an agricultural exhibition in France, where they sold their entire supply of shea butter. This success has motivated Koba Club to expand its shea production, which will allow them to diversify their income sources and improve the incomes of its members.

- USAID/PCE, in partnership with ENSA, will officially launch the graduate training program on Value Chain Development and Agri-food Entrepreneurship. The ceremony is scheduled for April 12.
- USAID/PCE, in partnership with APIX, is organizing a workshop on agriculture financing on April 13.

CAADP Updates

- Nothing to Report

Visitors:

Name/ Organization	Length of stay	Purpose
Tjeu Van Den Berg, Sheladia Associates	March 28 – April 19	Conduct formative research and review technical options to develop a comprehensive irrigation strategy for the USAID/YAAJEENDE project.
Idrissa Diédhiou	58 days (beginning on January 11, 2011)	Bore hole drillers’ training and follow up on drilling quality
Maria Elisa Christie, PhD Gender expert, Virginia Tech	March 28 to April 6	To provide advice on strategies and procedures for assuring that gender relations affect the achievement of sustainable results of the project, specifically on the application of gender principles to agricultural projects infrastructure control
Gora Biteye enterprise	4 months, beginning February 20	Horticulture investment over 10 ha
Ngor Diagne	5 months, beginning February 20	Horticulture investment (5 perimeters) control