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SUCCESS STORY

USAID Spurs Household Vegetable Growth in Senegal

USAID-supported vegetable gardening is enabling more than 13,400 women in northern Senegal to improve their families' food security situation



Photo Credit: USAID/OFDA

Women in Podor irrigate a CECI-supported vegetable garden with water drawn from a nearby well. The success of the gardens has enabled them to feed their families and purchase other household needs with profits made selling surplus vegetables.

“This year we have easy access to food, especially vegetables. The family eats rich and varied meals daily.”

- Kadiata Ly, president of her gardening group in Podor's Louraine town

Prior to joining a USAID-supported gardening program, Kadiata Ly and her household of 15 people—including seven children—rarely consumed vegetables. Like others in northern Senegal, Kadiata and her family are subject to erratic rainfall and frequent drought, causing crop failures and poor food security and nutrition conditions among vulnerable households.

To assist vulnerable families and bolster their resilience to future shocks, USAID has supported the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) to provide more than 68,500 people like Kadiata with food security and livelihood assistance.

Among other agricultural activities, CECI is assisting women to start group vegetable gardens, enabling them to not only achieve household-level food and nutritional security, but to generate income by selling surplus vegetables in local markets.

In 2016, more than 13,400 women in northern Senegal's Kanel, Podor, and Ranerou departments are participating in group gardens, watered by local wells. As part of the program, the women receive agricultural tools, vegetable seeds, and training on soil, water, pest, and disease management. From June 2014–July 2015, nearly 4,500 women in the three departments participated in gardening groups, producing approximately 528,000 pounds of vegetables—enough food to feed each household for a month and a half. The women sold the surplus vegetables in local markets, earning more than \$10,000 to purchase additional seeds and other household needs.

Thanks to USAID-supported gardening activities, Kadiata was able to remain in her village rather than migrating during the lean season, enabling her children to continue attending school.

“This year we have easy access to food, especially vegetables,” Kadiata says. “The family eats rich and varied meals daily.”

Gardening has also improved social cohesion among Kadiata and her community. “The garden has strengthened our friendship and family ties in the villages,” says Katya, whose gardening association elected her president. “We want to enlarge the garden and continue gardening for vegetables all year round.”