



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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Putting Rain to Work for Agriculture in Senegal



USAID / Zack Taylor

Diara Mané draws water for her onion garden. The wells have ample water thanks to Feed the Future projects that recharge the water tables in Senegal's lowlands.

Diara Mané fills her watering cans from a USAID-supported well. With access to sufficient water for her crops, she has been able to expand the plot she farms in Senegal where she grows onions, okra and eggplant throughout the year.

"The new well allows me to grow enough to help feed my family and supplement my income by selling the rest," she says.

But the well is only part of the story.

Mané lives in the Kaymor Rural Community, located along an ancient drainage system in Senegal known as the "Bao Bolong." Since the 1970s, decreased rainfall combined with rising sea levels have permitted salt water from the Gambia River estuary to infiltrate adjacent land, killing forests and rendering the land useless for farming.

A USAID-constructed anti-salt dike is keeping the rising river at bay and isolating water for use by farmers like Mané. By keeping the saltwater out, this dike has opened up more than 250 hectares of previously non-arable land, which can now be used for reforestation and growing rice, vegetables and grains.

The dike also protects the local water table and ensures fresh water in the community's wells, mitigating tradeoffs between water for household use and commercial agricultural production. This has enabled Mané to grow more for her family and the market.

During the rainy season, the dike prevents water from flowing back into the river and out of the lowlands, instead creating a small lake that raises the water table, keeping community wells full. It also provides an oasis for the thousands of commercially-raised animals such as cows, goats and sheep from the nearby villages.

The dike represents part of USAID's efforts under Feed the Future to combat the devastating effects of climate change in Senegal and improve food security through recovered agriculture, forest and grazing lands. A dam farther inland, in Ndenderling, is another example of these efforts. It also forms a lake and captures rainwater, enabling villagers in the surrounding lowlands to use natural water resources resulting in more productivity all year long.

"Since the dam was built, our crops have doubled," said Serigne Cissé, a farmer in the area. "For the first time, we have attracted seasonal workers to earn money assisting us...Our relatives visit us at harvest season when we are flush with rice

and onions."

And just like in Kaymor, the reservoir formed by the dam in Ndenderling recharges the water table, keeping community wells full and making it easier for villagers to dig new wells for household and agricultural use.

[***Learn more about the dam in Ndenderling.***](#)