



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/article/peace-corps%E2%80%99-master-farmer-program-boosts-food-security-and-economic-growth-senegal>

Peace Corps' Master Farmer Program Boosts Food Security and Economic Growth in Senegal



Photo by Joyce S. Lee, Peace Corps

During an open field day, master farmer Ibrahima Diaxate explains the manual rope pump he created to local community members in Tawa Fall, Senegal.

Today the President visited Senegal and **participated** in a Feed the Future food security event where he met with farmers, innovators, and entrepreneurs whose new methods and technologies are improving the lives of smallholder farmers throughout West Africa. Learn more about the Peace Corps' food security programs below.

Washington, D.C., June 28, 2013—Peace Corps volunteers around the world are working with their local communities at the grassroots level to increase food security through improved agricultural practices, food processing, nutrition education and innovative approaches to food production. In 2012, more than 900 Peace Corps volunteers in 23 countries around the world worked to spur economic growth that increases incomes and reduces hunger, poverty and undernutrition.

In Senegal, more than half of volunteers currently serving participate in food security activities through a variety of projects that include the Master Farmer program. The Master Farmer program is a joint effort between Peace Corps Senegal and the U.S. Agency for International Development in Senegal that seeks to improve local communities' food security by developing a plot of land for demonstration and training.

With support from the presidential initiative *Feed the Future*, the Peace Corps hosts a series of trainings at Master Farms that offer community members the opportunity to learn basic agriculture and agroforestry techniques, basic accounting, and how to create demonstration plots. The training participants then receive funds and seed—such as rice, millet, corn, sorghum, and cowpeas—to start a small demonstration plot of their own. Each Master Farmer commits to demonstrating the improved techniques they've learned on their farm to train other community members. As of May 2013, there have been a total of 26 open field days hosted by 14 different Master Farmers, which is when neighbors are invited to Master Farms to learn more about the techniques that have helped the farmers improve their food production.

Dembo Tigana, a lifelong farmer in Senegal, has been a part of the program since 2010. Working with Peace Corps volunteers, Tigana learned how to plant demonstration plots by placing the same crop side by side, and then altering one component of his planting to show which practices yield better crops. The Peace Corps trains volunteers and community partners on how to grow improved varieties of field crop and vegetables, incorporate trees into an agricultural system to prevent soil and wind erosion, and improve soil nutrients. Using improved farming techniques, Tigana produced four times the amount of corn than he produced before the Master Farmer training.

Tigana is committed to passing what he has learned onto other farmers, and since attending the Master Farmer program training in 2010, he has organized eight trainings and hosted four open field days. In 2012, Tigana trained nearly 200 community members on new farming techniques.

Inspired by Peace Corps Senegal's Master Farmer program, Peace Corps The Gambia will start implementing two Master Farmer projects this year.

Feed the Future is the U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative that leverages the strengths and resources of 10 federal departments and agencies. The Peace Corps plays a unique role in Feed the Future by taking important food security messaging and practices to the grassroots level. Today, Feed the Future released its 2013 Progress Report—read it [here](#).

To watch a short video about the Master Farmer program, visit <http://bit.ly/1ajg72k>. For more information on Feed the Future, visit <http://www.feedthefuture.gov/>.

This press release originally [appeared](#) on the Peace Corps website.