

# McGovern-Dole School Feeding Program in Senegal Supports School Garden and Nutrition Education

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After three years of successfully feeding children in 112 primary schools and 21 pre-schools and mothers and infants in 58 maternal and child health nutrition (MCHN) centers in the Matam region of Senegal, USDA recently renewed its agreement with Counterpart International (CPI) under its McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition (McGovern-Dole) Program for another three years.



**School meals allow children to focus on school work rather than where their next meal will come from. (Photo by Counterpart International.)**

and used the proceeds to provide a daily lunch to 17,774 primary school children and 1,800 pre-school children.

Most people in the Matam region are extremely poor and face high rates of malnutrition. In addition, the area receives little rainfall and food prices are inflated, making food unaffordable for vulnerable households. As a result, roughly 30 percent of children under the age of five are stunted in height and 58 percent of women of child-bearing age suffer from anemia.

To ameliorate this situation, USDA donated more than 9,500 tons of crude degummed soybean oil, vegetable oil, textured soy protein and barley valued at more than \$6 million to CPI under a three-year McGovern-Dole Program agreement starting in fiscal year 2007.

CPI sold the U.S. commodities in Senegal

After nearly three years of operation, this school feeding program has achieved a large measure of sustainability. Successes achieved by CPI include:

- National and local governments created school feeding divisions, allocating more than \$2 million to school feeding activities and setting aside additional funds to purchase supplementary food ingredients.
- Nearly 450 teachers and Parent-Teacher Association members were trained in managing school feeding activities and providing proper nutrition.
- More than 22 villages are implementing school garden activities by growing cabbage, lettuce, onions, tomatoes, eggplant and carrots.

- Nearly 250 head nurses, community health workers, pre-school teachers and pre-school management committee members at MCHN centers were trained in weighing techniques, infant nutrition, breastfeeding, hygiene and illness prevention.
- In addition, a joint project with the U.S. Peace Corps is reducing dependence on fuel wood for cooking by providing mud stoves to select recipients to prepare school meals and training people in 30 villages on mud stove construction techniques.

The renewal of USDA's McGovern-Dole agreement with CPI gives the private-voluntary organization the opportunity to achieve an even greater degree of sustainability.

*For more information about CPI's development work, visit <http://www.counterpart.org>.*