

U.S. EMBASSY BANJUL
Media Advisory

For Immediate Release

May 21, 2012

U.S. Donates Half a Million Dollars to the Gambia food security

The Embassy of the United States of America, Banjul in partnership with USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) is pleased to announce that the United States is providing \$500,000 to address food insecurity concerns across the Gambia.

Crop failure, poor rains and increased food prices prompted Ambassador Pamela White to declare a disaster emergency for The Gambia on May 8, 2012. A USAID humanitarian team recently conducted an assessment in country and found that many families have already depleted their household food stocks, triggering the start of the lean season two to three months earlier than normal. In addition, decreased crop production prevented farmers from collecting the seeds needed for the upcoming planting season.

The funds provided by the U.S. Embassy in Banjul will help provide seeds and fertilizer needed to improve the chances of a successful 2012 harvest. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) will use the money to purchase 100 metric tons of certified quality groundnut seeds from Kano, Nigeria. The FAO in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture and National Disaster Management Agency plans to distribute the seeds by June 15th. Without assistance, farmers would have lacked the resources to plant crops during the June-to-October rainy season.

Ambassador White is extremely pleased that the United States of America is able to provide much needed resources to address the dire food situation that faces The Gambia. The American people truly do care about the health and welfare of Gambians.

The U.S. government is committed to helping people in the Sahel break the cycle of drought, hunger and malnutrition by supporting programs that build resilience in their community. This year alone, the U.S. has provided more than \$218 million in humanitarian assistance to the region

For phone or in-person interviews with Ambassador White and General Services Officer Kerrie Nanni regarding this donation please contact njiemm@state.gov

For more information on the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance please visit:
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/

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