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*Feed the Future is the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative. For more information, or to **subscribe to this publication**, please visit www.feedthefuture.gov.*

HIGHLIGHTS

Hot Topics: From Grassroots to the White House, Peace Corps Ramps Up Food Security Efforts Under Feed the Future

President Obama Highlights Feed the Future at Peace Corps and USAID 50th Anniversary Event

On November 23, President Obama joined USAID Administrator Shah and Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams at the White House for an event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps and USAID. At the event, President Obama commemorated "50 years of progress dedicated to saving lives, building partnerships, and promoting peace and prosperity for the developing world and the American people." He also highlighted Feed the Future's role in promoting food security and sustainable growth.



President Obama speaks at 50th anniversary event at the White House. Photo credit: Kate Kuo

Administrator Rajiv Shah discussed the value of USAID's engagement with the Peace Corps and announced new plans to add Feed the Future-focused Peace Corps Volunteers in the near future. Assistant to the Administrator Paul Weisenfeld spoke about the importance of investing in food security and the role of Feed the Future programs in addressing poverty and hunger.

[Continue reading about Peace Corps in Hot Topics.](#)

Partnerships

Feed the Future Helps to Launch Global Food Safety Partnership

On Saturday, November 12, during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings in Honolulu, Hawaii, an innovative new public private partnership pledged a total of \$1 million for the creation of the Global Food Safety Fund. Based on APEC's food safety capacity building initiatives, the Global Food Safety Partnership is focused on improving systems and regulations that lead to better health outcomes, reduced risk of food-borne hazards, expanded participation of farmers and producers into higher value and global food supply chains, and improved food security. USAID, Mars Incorporated, and Waters Corporation each contributed to the \$1 million pledge, with USAID announcing a \$250,000 pledge under Feed the Future, through which the U.S. works with partners to develop new means for reducing agricultural and food safety threats, such as contamination of the food supply. The fund, which will be managed by the World Bank, will support country-led efforts to produce safe, nutritious foods and is the first of its kind focused on food safety. [Read the full press release.](#)

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Feed the Future Makes Insurance Payments to 650 Kenyan Pastoralists

For the thousands of people devastated by the drought in the Horn of Africa, one of the major obstacles to recovery is that they are uninsured against risk. The lack of access to financial services such as insurance leaves rural families vulnerable to crisis and poses a serious threat to food security. In the drought-prone arid and semi-arid lands of northern Kenya, Feed the Future is working to mitigate risk and build trust between financial institutions and local communities through an index-based livestock insurance program for pastoralists, creating a buffer against livestock losses due to calamities. On October 21, in the wake of the worst drought in sixty years, insurance payments were made to 650 pastoralists who had purchased insurance coverage for their animals earlier in the year.



Pastoralist household in northern Kenya. Photo credit: ILRI 2009

Under this insurance program, a series of eight pilots are taking place in various Feed the Future focus countries. These pilots bring together the expertise of researchers from the university communities in the United States and Feed the Future countries and private sector partners from financial and insurance institutions. USAID's [Assets and Market Access Collaborative Research Program](#) at the University of Wisconsin will evaluate the impact of these pilots in the hopes of scaling up the most successful models. For those pilots that demonstrate the greatest impact, their implications could have broad applications for financial services and risk management across the developing world.

Building on their past collaborative efforts under this insurance program, [USAID and Swiss Re recently launched a partnership](#) that will develop innovative insurance products to promote food security and sustainability in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Grow Africa Forum Aims to Boost Investment in Agriculture

The African Agricultural Growth and Investment Task Force (AAGIT), in coordination with the [African Union](#), the [New Partnership for Africa's Development](#), and the [World Economic Forum](#) (WEF), hosted the first [Grow Africa Forum](#) November 8-9 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The Grow Africa Forum was conceived as a friendly investor forum to support country-led initiatives to attract private-sector investment into the agricultural sector in Africa. Over 130 individuals participated in the Forum, which included country delegations of government officials, the private sector, and donors from six Feed the Future focus countries: Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Ghana. USAID is a member of AAGIT, and numerous Missions were in attendance at the Forum.

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The Forum gave Feed the Future focus countries a platform for showcasing economic opportunities: for example, the Ghana delegation presented three initiatives to support fast-tracking commercial farm development as part of a flagship program developed and supported by the Government of Ghana in conjunction with USAID and the World Bank. The Forum's private sector participants were excited to hear that so many opportunities exist for commercial agriculture investment in Ghana and expressed interest in seeing the ideas developed into concrete investment opportunities. A second Grow Africa Forum will be held in May 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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Visit our improved website and stay tuned for new content in the coming months.



Science & Technology in Agriculture

USDA's Bean Project Uses Genetic Science to Boost Crop Productivity in Developing Countries

Since 2010, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) National Institute of Food and Agriculture has funded the Bean Coordinated Agricultural Project (BeanCAP), which aims to increase the number of plant breeders available to the public and private sectors through a training program focused on early career recruitment and practical training in breeding and genomics. In association with World Food Day on October 16, BeanCAP took a major step toward broadening the genetic tools available to bean breeders in developing countries by donating more than 1,575 bean SNPs to the [Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research](#). SNPs (pronounced "snips") is a technical term referring to "single nucleotide polymorphism," an advanced molecular marker system used widely in genetic science. However, SNPs have not been available in critical amounts to bean breeders until this landmark release. By reducing not only time but also cost, the use of SNPs for molecular breeding greatly increases the efficiency of crop breeding. This means it has high potential for improving food production in the tropics by developing new varieties better adapted to increasing environmental challenges.



Logo credit: USDA/NIFA

The U.S. BeanCAP team of plant breeders and geneticists is led by Project Director Dr. Phil McClean of North Dakota State University. “This transfer is consistent with the USDA Feed the Future commitment to be actively engaged in global food security efforts,” Dr McClean observed. “It supports the research objective to seek gains in productivity through adoption of improved technologies that will promote development of more nutritious, environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient crops. Transfer of these molecular markers is consistent with a USDA strategy that envisions outcomes that will deliver scientific breakthroughs, and research to promote adoption of the best science through links with private-sector research partners and international agencies.” [Read the full press release.](#)



[Click here](#) to check out the latest edition of *FrontLines*, USAID’s bi-monthly news publication. The November/ December issue focuses on food security and Feed the Future.

At APLU Annual Meeting, Spotlight on Universities’ Role in Food Security

On Tuesday, November 15, USDA Under Secretary Catherine Woteki and USAID Administrator Shah participated in the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Under Secretary Woteki spoke about the importance of supporting agricultural research – particularly in challenging times of smaller budgets – and focused on the importance of continuing to fund research so that the United States can help to meet the food, fuel, and fiber needs of an increasing global population. In his remarks, Administrator Shah talked about the role of U.S. universities as key implementing partners for Feed the Future. [Read Administrator Shah’s remarks](#), visit [Dr. Julie Howard’s blog](#) on USAID Impact, or check out the new [USAID University Hub](#).



Logo credit: APLU

USAID Supports New CGIAR Research Programs in Sustainable Intensification

Staff from USAID’s Bureau for Food Security recently met with agricultural research experts from international and national research institutes on sustainable intensification, an area of immediate impact in the [Feed the Future Research Strategy](#). USAID’s approach to sustainable intensification focuses on the agricultural systems that support the value chains central to Feed the Future objectives in regions where agricultural development can have a substantial impact on poverty and undernutrition. These new research programs will be led by centers of the [Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research](#) and, building on previous work in South Asian cereal systems, will aim to develop tools to increase productivity on existing cultivated areas while enhancing environmental and social impacts.

In Mali, researchers discussed how to best increase productivity of sorghum-based systems in Mali and maize/soya- and rice-based systems in northern Ghana through integration of legumes, trees, vegetables, and livestock. In Ethiopia, the focus turned to integrating legumes, trees, and livestock into the wheat-based systems of the Ethiopian highlands. A second meeting in Ethiopia covered East and Southern Africa, emphasizing livestock and legume integration in maize and rice systems of Tanzania and the maize system of Malawi. In January and February 2012, Feed the Future implementing partners will develop detailed work plans with broad participation from national, regional, and international research bodies, diverse development stakeholders, and the private sector. The sustainable intensification research is expected to help deliver on key productivity and nutrition goals in several key agro-ecological zones where the poor and hungry are concentrated.

FROM THE FIELD

Scaling Up Nutrition Movement to be Launched in Ghana

In December 2011, the [Scaling Up Nutrition](#) (SUN) movement will be launched in Ghana and used as a platform to strengthen coordination between Ghana's Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. This coordination will advance the Feed the Future objective to ensure cohesive action between nutrition efforts and food and agriculture efforts. Feed the Future supports SUN's focus on the critical 1,000 days from pregnancy to a child's second birthday, and the 1,000 Days partnership increases advocacy and programming within this window of opportunity.



Photo credit: Tricia Rasmussen

In a recent analysis of nutrition data, the Nutrition Unit of Ghana's Ministry of Health quantified the consequences of malnutrition and demonstrated the "business case" for nutrition investments. The analysis reinforced the need for coordination between Ministries, and Feed the Future is supporting the Government of Ghana's efforts to implement a broad, cross-sectoral advocacy campaign based on its findings.

Ensuring that Non-State Actors Play a Key Role in Food Security



Small group in Zambia working on their action plan
Photo credit: DAI

institutions. In eleven African countries, Feed the Future is facilitating and funding three-day workshops that support the development of NSA networks at the national level that can actively participate in and contribute to the

Sustained, multi-stakeholder partnerships are critical to Feed the Future's success, and non-state actors (NSAs) are some of the most important partners in food security. In Africa, Feed the Future is working with a continent-wide NSA Task Force to promote collaboration among a diverse group of NSAs—nonprofit and community-based organizations, private sector businesses, and universities and research

[Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme](#) (CAADP) agenda by providing an open forum for discussion, collaboration, and action planning.

As of mid-November, NSA Platform Dialogue workshops have been held in the focus countries of Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia, with more upcoming in Liberia, Mali, and Tanzania. Participating organizations have included Oxfam, Action Aid, Heifer International, Catholic Relief Services, CARE, and many others. “The workshop opened our eyes to a process that will help not only the various projects we are working on, but also link the work of community service organizations in this area to efforts of the government,” said Zambian participant Sharon Chileshe, of the Zambia Land Alliance.

USAID Celebrates 50 Years of Partnership with Tanzania, Awards \$1 Million to Sokoine University of Agriculture under Feed the Future

On October 27, at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) in Morogoro, USAID celebrated its half century as a U.S. Government agency and 50 years of partnership with Tanzania. SUA was chosen as the ideal venue to commemorate this occasion because USAID’s first program in Tanzania in the 1960s helped build the Morogoro Agricultural College – later to become the Sokoine University of Agriculture.

The event was attended by Government of Tanzania officials, foreign ambassadors, representatives of donor and private sector groups, as well as nongovernmental organizations that partner with USAID on projects in Tanzania. The Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Mizengo Pinda was the invited guest of honor, noting in his speech that the U.S. has always been a “true partner” even when, as a young country, Tanzania adopted economic policies different from those of the U.S.



USAID Mission Director Robert Cunnane presents check for \$1 million to SUA Council Chair Ambassador Nicholas Kuhanga. Photo credit: Rogers Cidosa, U.S. Embassy Tanzania

The Vice Chancellor of SUA Dr. Gerald Monela officially welcomed the speakers and distinguished guests to the SUA campus and opened the ceremony. In his presentation, Mr. Robert Scott, the U.S. Embassy Charge D’Affairs, emphasized the longstanding and strong relationship between Tanzania and the United States dating back to the 1960s, and the early friendship between the first president of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, and U.S. President John F. Kennedy.

The highlight of the event came when USAID Mission Director Robert Cunnane presented SUA with a check for \$1 Million under Feed the Future. This represents the first direct grant to be awarded under [USAID Forward](#).

Certified Organic Coffee Producers Earn Higher Incomes in Uganda

In the Ankole region of southwestern Uganda, Feed the Future has enabled 6,640 small-scale farmers to fetch a significant premium on the price received for their Robusta coffee in the international market after they became certified Organic and Fair Trade producers last month. Coffee is Uganda's most important export crop, earning \$450 million in 2010-2011 and directly benefitting 1.32 million households. With the increasing demand for specialty Robusta coffee, Feed the Future trained 13 groups of farmers from the Ankole Coffee Producer Cooperative Union to improve their knowledge of organic practices needed to grow the crop successfully. Trainees received access to extension services and equipment, including coffee roaster and cupping spoons, and drying technology to improve post-harvest handling.



Photo credit: USAID's LEAD Project

As a result of the training and certification, the cooperative sold coffee at \$400 per ton to the international market, with individual farmers earning 35 cents per pound above the market price, and 70 percent of the final value of the exported coffee. The price of organic Robusta coffee from Uganda on the international market stood at \$5.64 per pound in September, compared with the average price per pound for Robusta,

which was \$4.45. Through assistance to the cooperative, Feed the Future is improving coffee quality, accessing higher value specialty markets, enhancing productivity, and increasing profits for smallholder farmers.

HEARD ON THE HILL

Members of Congress Film Public Service Announcements on FWD Campaign

In advance of USAID's [FWD Day](#) on November 9, the Bureau of Legislative and Public Affairs hosted a Hill Day for Members of Congress to film public service announcements (PSAs) related to the [FWD Campaign](#). FWD, which stands for Famine, War, and Drought, uses social media channels to enable the public, Members of Congress, and NGO partners to "forward the facts" regarding the 13.3 million people affected by the crisis in the Horn of Africa. Senators Coons (D-DE) and Bingaman (D-NM) and Representatives Lowey (D-NY), Emerson (R-MO), McGovern (D-MA), and Carnahan (D-MO) all taped PSAs. [Visit the FWD Campaign website to see all videos and learn more.](#)

DOING BUSINESS DIFFERENTLY

Feed the Future Trains Tanzanians in Procurement Best Practices

In Tanzania, Feed the Future's [Africa Lead](#) project held an innovative training in support of [USAID Forward](#) from October 24-28. This was the second capacity building training with the [Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme](#) (CAADP) Champions for Change course, and it included 37 participants from 16 organizations. The purpose of this training was to build institutional capacity for working with USAID to enhance food security and fight global hunger. The program created a five-day intensive

course on best practices in financial management, transparent procurement, project design, and monitoring and evaluation to support Feed the Future's goal of aligning resources with country-owned processes and procurement reform.

A highlight of the training was education on the Tanzania Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plan as part of the CAADP process. The plan seeks to achieve an annual 6 percent agricultural GDP growth and results in the Government of Tanzania allocating a minimum of 10 percent of its budget to the agriculture sector. In mid-November, United Republic of Tanzania President Jakaya Kikwete lauded the Investment Plan when it was formally announced in Dar es Salaam.



"Filling the African food security pot." Photo credit: Winrock International

Individuals who attended the training were previously unaware of this important process to invest in food security. Larent Shirima, who works for the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority of Tanzania, said, "I never thought I had anything to do with food security since I do procurement regulations in government. Now I know that I am a Champion in food security and I am going to make sure that agriculture procurements are in line with the Investment Plan."

The participants formed teams that created plans to implement the new knowledge in their workplaces and utilize their new skills to work directly with the U.S. Government's Feed the Future team, led by USAID, to implement the Investment Plan and [Feed the Future strategy](#) in country. "Food security must be a concern to all of us...We must all coordinate to ensure that small farmers, particularly women reap the benefits," said Dr. Fatma Abdallah, who works with the Tanzanian Food and Nutrition Centre.

Hot Topics (Continued from page 1)

A Peace Corps Volunteer in Ghana Talks Nutrition and Yams on Impact



Photo credit:
Tricia Rasmussen

Tricia Rasmussen is serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ghana, where she is implementing a basic nutrition program for mothers and children. In Ghana, Feed the Future is directly supporting volunteers' innovative work in nutrition and food security.

In the very north of the Volta region of Ghana, in the Nkwanta South District, you can find the village of Jumbo #1. Almost without exception, every person in Jumbo is a farmer. Along with rearing free-range animals, they farm cassava, maize, soya beans, tomatoes, okra, peanuts, and yams – lots and lots of yams.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer, I arrived in Jumbo in August 2010. One of my first observations was that the children were very small. I recognized that they were stricken with varying degrees of malnutrition. [Read more.](#)

Peace Corps Joins FAO, WFP in Announcing Plans to Increase Food Security-Related Activities

[USUN Rome](#) - On October 20, the Peace Corps joined the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), and pledged to support and expand food security-related activities that will combat hunger in Peace Corps countries worldwide. Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams, FAO Deputy Director-General for Operations Manoj Juneja (representing Director-General Jacques Diouf), WFP Deputy Executive Director of External Relations and Chief Operating Officer Amir Abdulla (representing Executive Director Josette Sheeran), and Ertharin Cousin, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, signed a joint letter of agreement at the 37th Committee on World Food Security at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy.

“In response to increased food security challenges throughout the world, the Peace Corps is committed to doing its part to help address this critical issue at the grassroots level,” said Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams. “Through the important partnerships with FAO and WFP, Peace Corps volunteers will have access to more tools and technical expertise to help improve food security in the communities they serve.” Peace Corps volunteers have worked with FAO and WFP in nearly 40 countries, sharing techniques and practices identified to promote food security through broad-based citizen participation, education, and capacity building.



(Left to right) Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams, U.S. Ambassador Ertharin Cousin, WFP Deputy Executive-Director of External Relations and Chief Operations Officer Amir Abdulla, and FAO Deputy Director-General Munoj Juneja. Photo credit: Alessia Pierdomenico / FAO

“The launch of the renewed and expanded partnerships between the Peace Corps, FAO and WFP provides continued collaboration in the area of food security,” said U.S. Ambassador Cousin. “The [U.S. Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome](#) is committed to supporting these partnerships by serving as the link between the Rome-based UN agencies and the United States Government.”

Since 1961, Peace Corps volunteers have addressed the adverse impact of food shortages in the countries they have served. Projects have ranged from fish farming and the introduction of small-scale irrigation systems to improved food processing and marketing of food. Volunteers have also helped address food availability and nutrition through a variety of projects, including building school gardens, developing agricultural microenterprises, and educating others about good nutrition. [Read the full press release.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **November 28-December 1 (Brussels)**
[World Agricultural Forum](#)
- **November 28-December 9 (Durban)**
[COP 17 – UN Climate Change Conference 2011](#)
- **November 29 – December 1 (Busan)**
[4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness](#)

NEWS & MEDIA

News

[Cargill donates shipload of rice to fight hunger in the Horn of Africa](#)

November 29, 2011, (Cargill)

[USAID Fights Poverty, Hunger](#)

November 23, 2011, Daily Guide (Modern Ghana)

[America's Role in Food Security and the Horn of Africa Crisis](#)

November 17, 2011, Rajiv Shah (Chicago Council)

[Uganda: New Strategy to End Malnutrition](#)

November 07, 2011, Mike Ssegawa (allAfrica)

Op-Eds

[The Famine Next Time](#)

November 26, 2011, Samuel Loewenberg (New York Times)

[Ending global aid in a generation](#)

November 25, 2011, Tony Blair (Washington Post)

[Women on the Frontlines of Hunger](#)

November 24, 2011, Denise Brown (New York Times)

['Agricultural diplomacy' worth cultivating](#)

November 21, 2011, George McGovern & Marshall Matz (Chicago Tribune)

Blogs

[Hunger at Thanksgiving](#)

November 24, 2011, Ertharin Cousin & Tony Hall (Huffington Post)

[Secretary's Column: Happy Thanksgiving](#)

November 22, 2011, Tom Vilsack (USDA Blog)

[What Capacity Building Means to Me](#)

November 16, 2011, Anabela Manhica (USAID Impact)

[Food Safety in a Global World](#)

November 15, 2011, Robert D. Hormats (DipNote)

[From Seed to Harvest: Supporting the Next Generation of Leaders to Reduce Global Hunger](#)

November 15, 2011, Grace Otitodun (USDA Blog)

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

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