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# Education and Research for Agriculture

## USAID/ERA project in Senegal

**Providing technical assistance and support for nine  
institutions of higher education in agriculture.**

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# The ERA/Senegal Approach to AET

The Education and Research for Agriculture in Senegal works with 9 institutions of higher education using a multi-pronged approach focusing on:

- 1. Institutional self-assessments**
- 2. Student-Centered Learning**
  - a. Syllabus development and use**
  - b. Tracking graduates**
- 3. Web-based instructional technologies**
- 4. Multi-institutional curriculum development**

Stressing private sector engagement.

# Institutional Self-Assessments

The task of these assessments is to initiate a continuous process of **self-reflection and improvement**

among faculty and administrators at the university or other AET institutions in a **structured way**

This process is designed to improve the overall **quality** of agricultural professionals and their institutions by:

- 1) demonstrating **accountability**;
- 2) encouraging an environment of **scrutiny**; and
- 3) planning for change and **improvement**.

# Institutional Self-Assessments

The criteria for professional agricultural education assessment are based on **six global Standards** under these headings:

- 1. the mission, goals, and objectives of the program**
- 2. the curriculum**
- 3. program organization and administration**
- 4. faculty**
- 5. students**
- 6. parent institution support**

# Syllabus Development and Use

Why are syllabi important:

1. **Examine** the principles behind learning and teaching
2. **Enhance** the overall quality of student learning
3. **Compare** teacher-centered versus student-centered teaching/instruction
4. **Implementing** student-centered learning

# Syllabus Development and Use

The process:

1. **Review** and discussion of curriculum (course listings and descriptions)
2. **Engage** a few key faculty in drafting syllabi for their courses (individual mentoring)
3. **Expand** interactions to include the majority of faculty (interactive design workshops)
4. **Introduction** of syllabi to students and using them in courses
5. **Measure** impact at the student level

# Multi-institutional Curriculum Development

A key priority of Senegal's economic growth strategy involves increasing the availability of quality seed.

However, the required knowledge and skills were missing in the workforce:

- seed breeders and their technicians,
- qualified extension agents and field technicians,
- farmers trained in seed multiplication, as well as
- seed warehousing and distributors.

These actors must be educated and trained in uniform seed quality control standards and practices.

The development challenge was that Senegal had no curriculum in Seed Science and Technologies

# Multi-institutional Curriculum Development

USAID/ERA mobilized the only seed specialists in the country (from the research institute, universities, ministries and NGOs, seed producers and organizations, development projects, and international organizations) to collaborate in developing a nationally recognized curriculum and set of seed standards and practices.

The curriculum was designed for two audiences:

- A certificate program designed for field technicians and seed producers
- A diploma program designed for undergraduate and graduate students



## Université Alassane Seck de Ziguinchor (UASZ)

- Formerly and **commonly** known as University of Ziguinchor
- Founded in 2007 to expand Senegalese university
- Decongest the existing public universities (UCAD in particular), and to become a Regional University Center (a la US land grant)

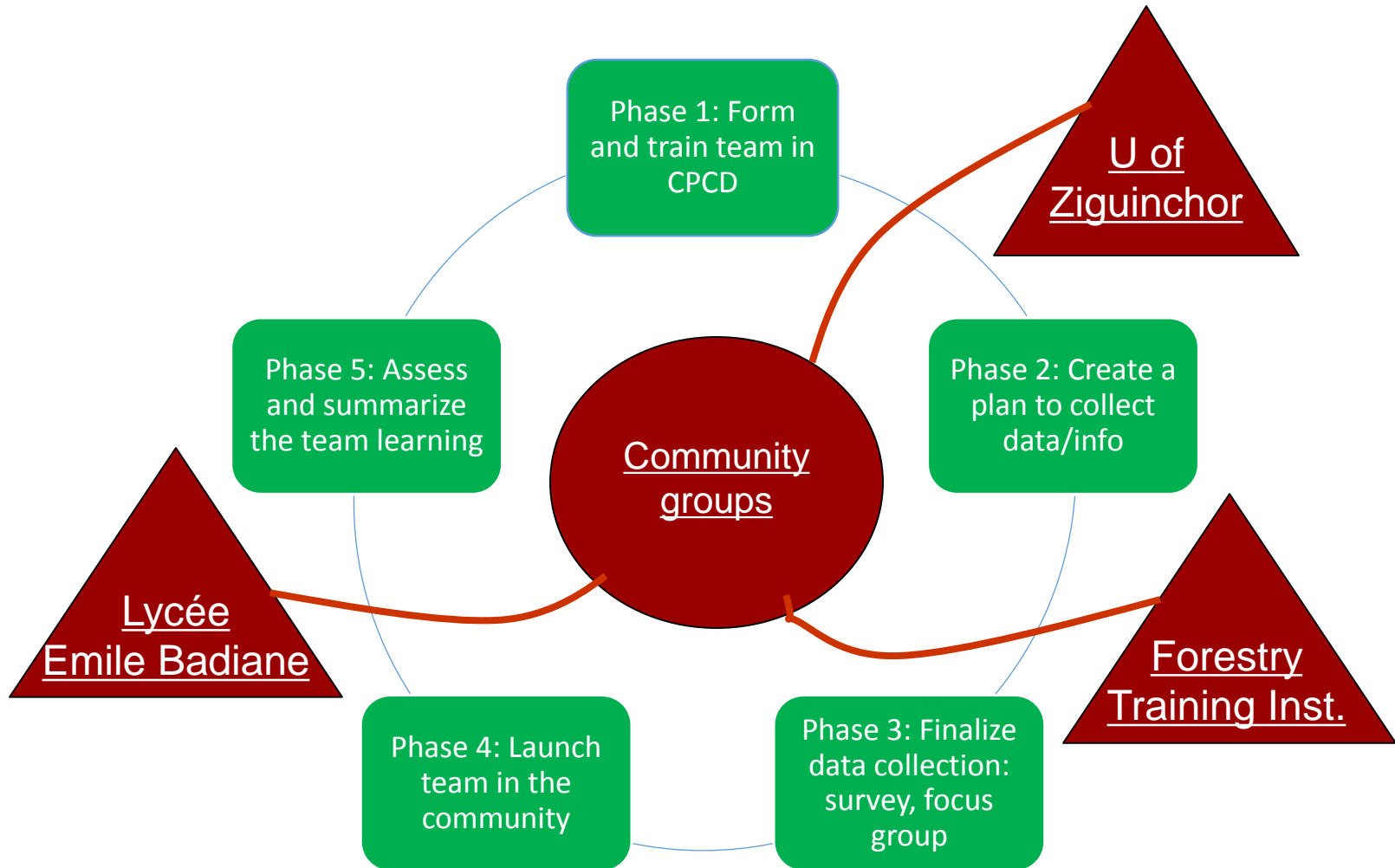
## UASZ: Quick Observations

- Rapid increase in student population from 3,358 to 4,858 and 5,970 in 2012, 2013 and 2014; leading to sure overcrowding
- Lack of equivalent increase in teaching faculty, in particular in Agroforestry
- Difficulties to manage “vacataires” or visiting teachers (although a sought after assignment)
- Obvious lack of classrooms, labs and experimental space
- Quickness of students to use strikes

## UASZ: Quick Observations/CPCD (Cont.)

- Pilot CPCD exercise introduced to 3 AETs in Ziguinchor Region
- 5 of 7 key steps (see next slide) provided access to dialogue for marginalized stakeholders
- Stakeholders: AET teachers and students, limited resource farmers, producers in Groupes d'Interet Economique (GIE), other non-profits
- Principles during exercise: partnership, self-help, fairness, self-reliance, and self help
- Results: a relational process and initial CPCD Plans

# UASZ: Quick Observations/CPCD (Cont.)



# AET impact

The Senegalese Minister of Higher Education gave credit to the USAID/ERA project for **fostering a spirit of innovation** leading to a new law governing universities.

The ideas cited were:

- “**service to the community**” as a mission of all of Senegal’s universities.
- introducing the **private sector** into the new administrative governance of universities, and
- creating a **sense of responsibility** regarding student placement.

Thank you for your attention.

Comments/questions  
welcomed