



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/open-data-opens-doors>

Open Data Opens Doors



Erin Aquino, Peace Corps

Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, has ambitious goals to reduce hunger, poverty and undernutrition. So does the [New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition](#), a global partnership that aims to lift 50 million people out of poverty in the next 10 years.

To meet these goals, we need to maximize and increase the use of innovative technologies. We do this by supporting research and redoubling our efforts to move proven agricultural technologies from labs to farmers.

Open data can help.

We are committed to making it possible for anyone to use the agricultural data and related analyses we fund. Releasing this data to the public is not only a [responsible](#), transparent thing to do, but also the smart thing to do. Sharing data can lead to new innovations and insights.

Addressing Common Challenges

Open data opens the door for new partnerships and collaborations that take data we've produced and turn it into solutions to common challenges farmers and researchers face.

At USAID's first [hackathon](#) last year, technologists, food security experts, and others came together to develop new applications that used data to address food security challenges. At a [White House Ideation Jam](#) earlier this year, entrepreneurs showed how they could tap open sources of data to develop useful applications including [tracking agriculture pest infestations in Uganda](#) in real time.

The New Alliance also seeks to use open data to help [take innovation to scale](#), in part by working with our country partners, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa to launch a technology platform that will make critical information about drought and disease resistant seeds, location-specific fertilizer and crop management recommendations, and other technologies easily accessible to farmers and

agribusinesses. The platform will also allow technology users to provide feedback on their experiences.

Collaborating to Scale Success

Open data offers an exciting opportunity for us to further scale the [success](#) we're already seeing under Feed the Future and the New Alliance. Over the past year, Feed the Future has doubled the number of hectares under improved cultivation and management practices and quadrupled the number of food producers reached with new technologies and practices.

Collaborations with an array of partners can help us spread improved technologies to more farmers and families. To help ensure that useful innovations are adopted by the people who could benefit most from them, Feed the Future is pooling the expertise of country partners, USAID Missions, scientists, nongovernmental organizations, and private businesses around the world to identify technologies that can help countries achieve goals they've set for improving their own food security and nutrition.

Releasing New Data

By opening access to agricultural data, we can bring in more partners to help speed the achievement of research and technology adoption goals.

At this week's [G8 International Conference on Open Data for Agriculture](#), scientists from Cornell University and the Gates Foundation talked about how open access to genomic data is dramatically speeding up and lowering the costs of identifying genes that control desirable traits in maize and cassava, such as pro-vitamin A content and disease resistance. We need more research breakthroughs, faster, to feed a growing world population that will require a 60 percent increase in agriculture production by 2050, using less land and water.

A new [virtual community on Data.gov](#), announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at the G8 conference this week, offers more than 300 agriculture-related data sets as well as applications, tools and statistical products. We were excited to publish major sets of [Feed the Future data](#) this week as well.

We are encouraging others to release data as well. Private and nonprofit organizations released their own data sets at the G8 conference this week, and partner governments like Ghana and Kenya have launched their own open data policies to make important data sets publicly available.

Working together, we can end hunger and extreme poverty. Open data can help us get there.

Are you using or planning to use the [data](#) released this week? We'd love to hear how. Share your thoughts on [Agrilinks](#) or let us know on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

Additional Resources

- [Feed the Future conference page with links to more](#)
- [Recorded webcasts of the conference](#)
- [Conference website](#)