



## Keep Calm and Keep Gardening

Our gardens continue to produce vegetables, fruit, and herbs in large quantities. The garden collectives are continuing to improve their skills and knowledge of horticulture and are gaining notoriety in the region.

In February, our staff and a couple of the garden collective presidents represented Andando with an informational booth at the Kaolack International Fika (Fair). The booth raised awareness of the Andando community garden program and (more importantly) forged new connections between potential produce buyers and the women who manage the gardens. The garden presidents were a great asset as they spoke directly to the benefit of Andando



Andando staff and Garden Collective President at Kaolack International Fair.



Local health worker instructing proper hand washing technique in the gardens.

gardens in their community and also the food outputs of their respective gardens. Several orders of produce were made, and our staff facilitated the transport of the vegetables from the remote villages to the fair in Kaolack (15+ miles away, or approximately 3 hours by donkey cart).

*"This is a great opportunity for Andando because we have made a lot of customers for our gardens thanks to the fair"*

-Camara, Andando Program Manager

Much has changed since February. In an effort to minimize the spread of coronavirus, Senegal has closed schools, banned religious and social gatherings, issued curfews, and limited transportation both at the border and in-country. In response, our staff collaborated with local health workers to

provide hand washing stations in all gardens. They are also closely monitoring the recommendations from the government and making sure those in rural communities have access to the information and resources needed to stay safe and healthy.

In the northern region of Podor, village chiefs and mayors have expressed their gratitude for the Andando gardens, which are now the sole source of produce for many communities.

We will continue to keep you updated both on the situation as it unfolds in Senegal, and with bright and inspiring stories of families and children who you have touched with your support!

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Mandaw, Lead Garden Manager, testing out the prototype hand washing station.

## From the Director

In the face of a worldwide issue, it is still inspiring to see how our global community is coming together to support each other. The health and safety of our staff and program participants is foremost, but beyond that, it is encouraging to see the ways people have responded to the situation and have risen up to meet needs. Even with schools closed in Senegal and most activities shut down, people still must go about their daily lives and feed their families.

One phenomenal example of this is in our gardens, where work continues to take place while implementing government guidelines to keep people safe. **Food security is always an issue in Senegal, but it's made even worse in these uncertain times. The women are responding and recently had their largest harvest on record – over 40,000 pounds of produce in just one month!!**

This shows not only what they are capable of when given the right tools to thrive, but also is a testament to their resiliency and determination to keep going. When life does finally get back to normal, we know that these communities will continue to be transformed. We thank you for being a part of it.

“Jéréjéf!” – Thank You!



Lewis Kiker, Executive Director



*On a visit to Andando partner schools (before the coronavirus closures) students wrote “thank you” on their chalkboards and paper as a way to express their deep gratitude.*



*Weighing the harvest at Dioundou Garden in Podor. Collectively the gardens recently had their largest harvest on record - over 40,000 pounds of produce in just one month!!*

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## Senegal Celebrates 60 Years of Independence



*Andando staff with members of the women's garden collective preparing for last year's region parade. The sign reads “The women of the commune of Keur Soce thank Andando.”*

Sixty years ago, Senegal peacefully gained its independence from France. Festive and colorful events and parades are normally held on April 4th, however, this year all celebrations have been postponed due to coronavirus. Families instead will still be celebrating in their homes with loved ones.

Last year the whole Andando team participated in the local parade along with our partners in the community gardens.

To our friends in Senegal, we are celebrating along with you. Happy Independence Day!

VISIT [ANDANDO.ORG](http://ANDANDO.ORG) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SENEGAL'S INDEPENDENCE AND SEE PICTURES AND VIDEO FROM LAST YEAR'S CELEBRATION

# Meet Andando's Country Director, Boubou!

We are very fortunate to have a dedicated and passionate team on the ground in Senegal, working every day to build resilient, thriving communities. We think this team is pretty amazing and are sure you will agree. This is the first in a series introducing the people that make it all possible. It's fitting to start with our very first staff member, Boubou Sy, who has a long history with Andando (even before we were officially formed)!

Born and raised in Senegal's capital city of Dakar, Boubou was a bright young boy who excelled in school and continued on to university to become a teacher.

Andando's founders, Kevin and Fiona Kiker, first met Boubou while he was a university student volunteering at a center for refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia. That was 20 years ago!

Boubou's passion for helping others made them fast friends. They stayed in touch over the years, and the Kikers made a point



*Boubou has been working with Andando in some capacity for over 15 years.*

to visit Boubou each time they returned to Senegal.

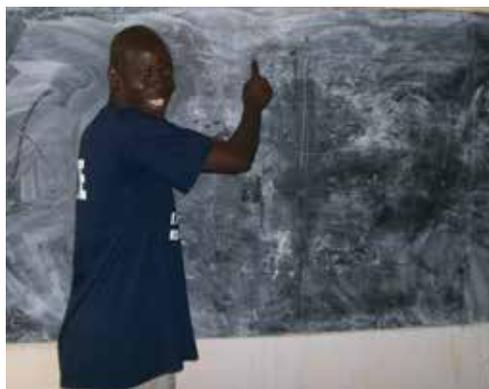
After graduating Boubou found a position in Keur Soce (some 130 miles away from Dakar). When he wasn't busy teaching or grading papers, Boubou would spend time with local business owners and leaders. These relationships provided the initial foundation on which Andando was formed. Boubou volunteered part-time with Andando by coordinating our first microloan program. He was a one-man-show: interviewing potential recipients, vetting their business plan, distributing funds,

making routine checkups, and collecting the loan payments for redistribution. Slowly these projects grew. As more donations came in, water pipes were laid, wells were dug, and over time Boubou, and Andando, became known and trusted in the community. In 2007, Boubou was hired as Andando's Country Director.

While in Keur Soce Boubou met his future wife, Amy Marone, and when his teaching term concluded they moved back to Dakar and started a family. They have four children (names and pictures below), who are fortunate to have both parents as teachers: Boubou high school, and Amy junior high.

Your support enables our staff to help their fellow citizens. We are excited and honored to introduce you to more of our team and share their hope for the future with you. Thank you for your support!

VISIT [ANDANDO.ORG](http://ANDANDO.ORG) TO SEE MORE OF BOUBOU AND HIS FAMILY



*Boubou in his first classroom at the school in Keur Soce. He is now a teacher at the Ousmane Sembene High School in Dakar.*



*Boubou and Amy at their wedding in 2009, (Pictured left to right: Fiona Kiker, Crystal Kelley, Amy Marone, Boubou Sy, Scott Kelley, and Carrie Hazelton.)*



*Boubou and Amy with their four children: their son, Ibrahima, and daughters Youmaissy, and twins Hawa Elisabeth Steady, and Aissatou Fiona Kiker.*



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Details at:

[Andando.org/events](https://andando.org/events)