



## PHOTO & CAPTION

### Trading Up for Better Opportunities



Photo: Counterpart Int'l

***Alassane Diop (left) learns how to trim and fit a pipe as part of his vocational training program financed by USAID.***

In Senegal, it's one accomplishment to get an education and another -- amid the national unemployment rate of 48% -- to get a job. USAID is working to help young people become members of society who are both educated and skilled.

Alassane Diop has been a student at a small community-based school in the village of Doumga Lao in northern Senegal. Originally from the small fishing village of Waande on the banks of the Senegal River, Alassane and his family rely on fishing, herding and farming to survive.

In 2006, Alassane's school was one of eight chosen to participate in the USAID-funded vulnerable school program. In addition to his homework assignments, Alassane is learning

valuable vocational skills to help him become a plumber.

"With this training, we now have the opportunity to learn how to become plumbers. This will help us later in life as we will have a trade skill we can use to support ourselves and our families," Alassane said. "We already know how to install faucets and, with the help of our instructor, we have installed three new waterline branches in the village, one to the primary school and two for houses. Now, the people who live here do not have to travel far and search for plumbers."

USAID's implementing partner here began this apprentice program for participating schools and their students that includes the training equipment, which are necessary to properly support vocational training in sewing, plumbing, and carpentry. More than 50 students have already benefited from this training.