

## **Senegal Workshop, 7-12 May 2007**

In partnership with the Ministry of Women, Family and Social Development, the Division for Social Policy and Development organized a five-day workshop in Saly, Senegal with 29 participants from 10 District offices of the Ministry, several from the central Ministry in Dakar and 10 representatives of an umbrella NGO organization for older persons – FARPAS.

We had several objectives when we designed the agenda, including:

1. Introducing the Madrid Plan of Action and its approach
2. Discussing the methodology and implementation of mainstreaming ageing
3. Reviewing the 8 projects on ageing contained under the Ministry's Ten-Year Plan for Family and Social Development\*
4. Producing a draft National Plan of Action on Ageing

It proved to be a unique opportunity for District level Government officials to work together in a participatory way with their colleagues from Central Government as well as representatives of older persons from civil society. Working sessions led to lively debates among participants from varied backgrounds and locations which made everyone re-think their assumptions about the situation, contributions and needs of older persons in Senegal.

In practice, during a series of exercises in working groups, participants studied the Madrid Plan of Action and chose and ranked themes within the Priority Directions, taking into account the situation in Senegal – and both urban and rural differences. They then discussed and agreed upon the objectives and activities which should be included in a new Plan of Action. The next stage in this process calls for the draft Plan of Action to be discussed at the local level by all stakeholders during a series of workshops within each District, facilitated by the District officials who took part in this workshop.

- Since 2004, the Division for Social Policy and Development has worked with the Ministry of Women, Family and Social Development in the formulation of the Ten-Year Plan, which calls for integration of vulnerable groups in Senegal. Older Persons are one of these target vulnerable groups and as a result, a number of projects for donor funding are included in this Plan.