



## Fast Facts

**Country:** Senegal

**Duration:** January 2009 to September 2013

**Implementing UN Agencies:** ILO; UNICEF

**Other Implementing Partners:** National Ministries; local authorities; civil society organisations; NGOs; community-based organisations

**Budget:** \$2,589,763

**Key Words:** Access to education; children; poverty reduction; child labour; empowerment

## BACKGROUND

Rapid population growth and extreme poverty exposed vulnerable children in Senegal to a heightened risk of forced labour, sexual exploitation and involvement in drug production and trafficking. This was further exacerbated by a low rate of birth registration, with 40 percent of children below age of five not registered at birth and excluded from accessing basic social services such as health care and education. Subsequently, child labour contributed to a growing cycle of poverty and deprivation among poor

communities in Senegal. Children who were forced to engage in hazardous work were deprived of educational opportunities, which in turn limited their prospects for formal employment and productive lives as adults. Therefore, a comprehensive and context-specific solution that not only engaged children but also their families and communities was needed in order to tackle the human security challenges faced by Senegal's most vulnerable and exploited child labourers.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The project aimed to protect and empower children at high risk of and those already suffering from the worst forms of child labour. To this end, the project worked to: (i) provide education, vocational training, health care and shelter to children at risk; (ii) improve the

livelihoods of families of children at risk; and (iii) raise the awareness of local authorities, officials, religious leaders and community members to the spread of child labour, and strengthen their capacities in its prevention.

### BENEFICIARIES

The project benefitted approximately 4,000 children between ages of 5 to 18 who were at high risk of the worst forms of child labour, 200 parents of these

children, national and local authorities, as well as community leaders in the participating communities.



## NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

(i) A series of intensive advocacy campaigns were conducted across the targeted communities with 207 outreach events, 24 radio programmes and 17 forums on child labour and its consequences. The campaigns helped parents to make informed decisions on their children's school enrolment and the importance of their birth registration. In parallel, through advocacy initiatives targeting elected officials, village chiefs and religious leaders, as well as training for national and local authorities on children's rights, the project successfully contributed to enhance awareness on the spread and consequences of child labour and to improve the capacities of community leaders in the protection of children at risk. This successfully reduced the incidents of child labour and improved the care afforded to victims of child labour in the participating communities.

(ii) To protect children from the scourge of child labour, UNICEF established a pilot community-based

child labour monitoring system. The system was designed and prepared with the full engagement of Ministry of Labour's Child Labour Unit, local authorities, community members and civil society organisations in order to ensure that it met the needs of the affected communities and could be sustained beyond the duration of the project. At the same time, the project improved the living conditions of more than 1,000 children by distributing hygiene equipment and providing free medical care.

(iii) Through the combined impact of the public outreach campaigns, the child labour monitoring system, and improvements in health and hygiene, the project led to an increase in school attendance among children of schooling age (6-14 years) and skills training for out-of-school youth (15-17 years) in the targeted communities.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The project demonstrated how the human security approach can promote collaboration among a broad spectrum of actors and can facilitate the development of an integrated response to the multifaceted challenges faced by the participating communities. First, it enabled UNICEF and ILO to plan and work jointly, which represented an excellent example of the UN Delivering as One and paved the way for further collaboration between UN agencies in Senegal. Second, the project brought together local communities, civil society organisations, local authorities, national ministries and UN agencies towards the common goal of protecting and

empowering children at risk. The active participation of such a wide range of actors enhanced the project's relevance as all stakeholders were able to participate in the decision-making process. It also fostered a sense of ownership among local actors as they played key roles in designing and monitoring the activities of the project as well as ensuring its sustainability. Accordingly, the project not only improved the lives of children who were at risk of child labour but also empowered their families and built the capacities of government officials to address the complex and interrelated causes of child labour and its consequences in Senegal.