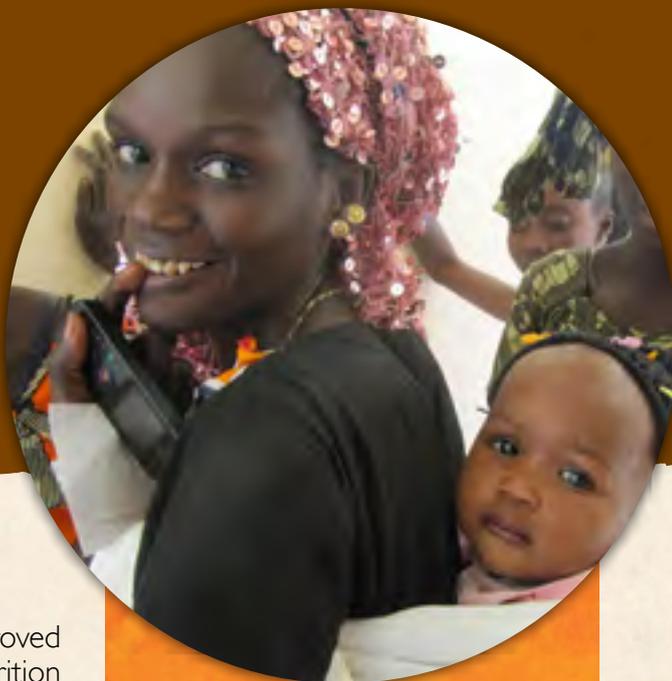


Country Profile

Senegal

Building capacities in SUN countries to promote nutrition through "Learning Routes": an innovative project in Senegal



Background

In the last few years, Senegal's food situation has improved significantly, and the country now has the lowest malnutrition rate in the West African sub region. In fact, according to data from the 2012 EDS (Demographic and Health Survey) stunting affected 19% of children under age five, versus 26% in 2010; Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) affected 8.8% of the same age group of children, versus 10% in 2010. Data on micronutrient deficiencies indicate that 72.1% of children under age five suffer from anaemia (EDS) versus 76.4% in 2010.

These results reflect the new direction of the fight against under-nutrition in Senegal which involves a departure from a project approach towards a programmatic approach that brings together all sectors to sustainably improve the country's nutrition situation.

Accordingly, to address the multi-factor causes of malnutrition, the President issued **Decree N° 2001-770 of 5 October 2001, the Fight against Malnutrition Unit (CLM)**.

Headed by the Prime Minister, the CLM includes representatives of the key technical ministers involved in nutrition, the mayors' association, presidents of the rural councils, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society.

In this context, Senegal joined the SUN Movement in 2011 with the National Coordinator of the CLM acting as SUN Government Focal Point, reporting directly to the Prime Minister's Cabinet Director.

To view an introduction on the CLM, please click on this link:





To set national policy and strategies on nutrition and implement the government's nutrition policy, the CLM has adopted a multi-sector approach to nutrition. To this end, it ensures that programs and projects are implemented through coordination with the National Executive Bureau (BEN), which works nationwide in partnership with various technical ministries and other stakeholders in this field as well as three Regional Executive Bureaus (BERs) to ensure coordination of activities by the Community Implementation Agencies (AECs) providing community nutrition services.

What can we learn from Senegal?

The actions and outcomes in Senegal offer much to learn about creating and implementing strategies and mechanisms to combat child malnutrition on the basis of a multi-sector approach and coordinating multi-stakeholder institutional interventions.

The Nutrition Reinforcement Program (PRN) is one of the CLM's flagship programs. Since 2002, with World Bank support, the PRN has pursued community nutrition activities to improve growth during a child's first five years of life in the poorest rural and urban zones. The PRN also contributes to reinforcing institutional and organizational capacities to evaluate nutrition interventions. During the first phase of implementation, focusing on growth promotion monitoring, the PRN reduced underweight in the program zones by 42 percentage points. In the course of the second phase, the program reinforced the multi-sector approach. The strategies developed by the PRN hinge upon two complementary thrusts:

- Promoting integration of nutritional objectives in planning by the technical ministries involved in order to improve nutrition in the fields for which they are responsible;
- Implementing interventions targeting expecting or nursing mothers and children under the age of five, through Community Implementation Agencies (e.g., NGOs and Grassroots Community Organizations).

What are the main areas of learning in Senegal's experience?



In particular, Senegal's experience enables us to learn about:

Effective mechanisms to prepare *planning and implementation of specific, sensitive nutritional interventions, institutionally and operationally.*

In addition to the PRN, the CLM implements major programs and projects to address the factors driving malnutrition and to eliminate micronutrient deficiencies. Its main programs include food fortification (Vitamin A and Iron); support for food security in vulnerable situations (PASAV), a social protection project, and acceleration of efforts for universal iodization of salt.

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2 Strategies to involve local collectives in planning, implementation and monitoring of nutrition projects and community nutrition interventions.

Local collectives are the entryway for all community nutrition interventions. To facilitate program implementation, the CLM has an implementation manual based on a process approach. This guide aims to develop self-reliance in everyone involved, through field activities, monitoring and evaluation, and facilitating communication.

The monitoring and evaluation is structured to directly gather data from the communities involved, local collectives, district officials, project directors, the CLM and the National Executive Bureau, thanks to mediation and support by community agents who liaise among the different levels.

Local level empowerment in monitoring and evaluation is a key condition for uptake of community nutrition activities and continually improving service and performance.

Accelerating Efforts for Universal Iodization of Salt

The project's goal to achieve universal salt iodization for human and animal consumption sits within a context in which Senegal is considered a major salt producing country, with nearly 500,000 tons produced each year. The project aims to cover over 90% of Senegal's needs for adequately iodized salt, with 100,000 more tons of iodized salt.

To meet these goals, the project has four major components:

- Reinforcing political engagement by coordinating interventions and advocating to strengthen local administrative authorities' and decision-makers' commitment.
- Training small salt producers to professionalize them and thereby increase the production of quality salt. This will require improving sources that sell potassium iodate and providing spare parts to improve operation of iodization units.
- Monitoring the quality of iodized salt, involving the Domestic Trade Department (DCI), especially regarding quality control of both production and distribution, adapting the laws and regulations to ensure quality iodization and establishing tools and procedures to better manage quality control processes.
- Promoting consumption of iodized salt by implementing a strategic communication plan targeting specific stakeholders. Accordingly, the CLM has recently organized advocacy with parliamentarians of the National Assembly.



3 Financial management system and effective fund-raising mechanisms

The strength of the CLM's financial management system lies in well-organized planning and monitoring as well as rigorous implementation of the different management cycles. In the planning stage, an in-depth analysis of the nutrition context is undertaken through close collaboration between the CLM's financial and technical teams. This yields a realistic action plan with activities clearly defined in terms of implementation, cost, and relevance to the achievement of agreed objectives.

This strong planning and rigorous implementation have enabled the CLM to reach the minimum absorption rate of 99% in all World Bank financing, and has positioned it among the best project management units in this field. This implementation is done with strict observance of the management principles and standards set forth in the procedural manual validated by the Senegalese Government. Further, special attention is given to compliance with contractual obligations in terms of production and dissemination of reporting by the agreed deadlines.

The project and program portfolio implemented by the CLM is financed by the Government of Senegal and its partners which include the World Bank, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, UNICEF, the World Food Program, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, the Micronutrient Initiative and others.

4 Effective, innovative communication strategies adapted to the local context, to sensitize about nutrition and change behaviour in the local population, especially the women

The CLM implements a dual-faceted communication strategy. The first facet involves optimal media utilization (radio, television, print media, posters) through advertisements, broadcasts, news segments, infomercials and posters to promote messages favouring good nutrition among the public at large. The second facet focuses on basic community communication through a range of activities such as public lectures, individual interviews, social mobilization and culinary demonstrations.

Innovative communication strategies and approaches

The Grandmother strategy

This communication approach is based on role that grandmothers play in setting social norms and aims to strengthen their capacities to learn new health and nutrition concepts as well as to adapt their advice and practices to promote certain key behaviours within the family unit.

The Dahira (religious organization) strategy

This approach is based on using community dynamics to favour adoption of behaviours conducive to good health / nutrition among population groups belonging to a given religious organization, grounded in the moral authority of a religious guide called "Ndiguel" and spreading the message through the religious grouping known as a Dahira.

Circle of solidarity among expecting mothers

This truly peer-based approach, the solidarity circle of expecting mothers, is essentially for sharing experiences among pregnant women. The principles of group dynamics or group psychotherapy enable women to express themselves about their pregnancy experiences with women from their same social setting, and share solutions and support they need, by giving each other advice.

Considering the disparities in socio-cultural contexts, Senegal has learned the importance of devising strategies that are adapted to the specificities of each community. This has led to the development of innovative strategies. These communication strategies were created by Community Implementation Agencies who are involved in the Nutrition Reinforcement Program and who have sound knowledge of the local context. The approaches they employ are built around social norms and based solely on the experiences of those in the community.

The communication strategies are implemented in response to the needs of the communities whom they are serving, drawing on their experiences, beliefs and attitudes. As such, these tailored approaches have helped to improve communities' knowledge in health and nutrition, strengthen the engagement of those intended to benefit from the program activities and helped to improve people's motivation to adopt positive behaviour.

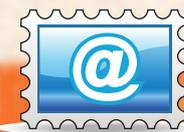


5 **Implementing a monitoring and evaluation system, with mechanisms to share outcomes, impact studies and surveys nationwide**

The National Executive Bureau has implemented an effective performance management and monitoring and evaluation system. Performance indicators are identified regarding the results-based planning and monitoring system. The monitoring system integrates activities at the community level (program intervention sites) nationwide through regular data collection.

This monitoring system provides the basis for supervision and also alerts program stakeholders when corrective measures are required. Supervision at different levels involves all stakeholders from the Community Implementation Agencies, local councils, decentralized services under governors, and the National Executive Bureau (BEN). The BEN has also set up a secure internal oversight environment.

Regular reviews by the internal overseer involve all the programmes' main activities. These reviews cover the most important cycle, determined by identifying and priority-ranking risks.



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