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Country case study

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Summary

In Senegal in 2005, the rate of admission into the first year of primary school (CI) was 91.5%, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) was 82.5%, the proportion of girls in education 48.6% and the completion rate 53.9%. While these figures are improving, they are rather disappointing in relation to the objectives of the current development plan, the Ten-Year Education and Training Programme (PDEF). Admitted to the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) in 2006, Senegal has made the achievement of universal provision of quality primary education by 2015 its key priority for the education sector.

Management and governance of the education system are central to the overall decentralization policy, under which local authorities, supported by budget transfer funds, are increasingly being called upon to fund a significant portion of public expenditure in respect of both investment and operational costs. In this changing context, PDEF, together with a general policy statement, is the reference instrument for the education sector for the 1999-2008 decade. PDEF-Phase I was implemented between 2000 and 2004, during which progress was made in access to primary education and in GER. In 2003-2004, a sector analysis was carried out which showed that significant progress had been made in access and equity, but that work remained to be done in the areas of gender equality, retention, mobilization of public resources and management of the system as a whole. The general education policy statement was then amended, and a three-year document, PDEF/EPT (PDEF/Education for All), covering phase II from 2005 to 2007, was drawn up. At the budgetary level, a medium-term sector expenditure framework was put in place, but unfortunately for a period (2006-2008) which does not fully coincide with PDEF-Phase II. Senegal's admission to the Fast Track Initiative in 2006 is a significant step for development of the sector, and it was an opportunity to reaffirm that EFA goals are the cornerstones of Senegal's sector strategy. In regard to the governance of the sector, the Ministry of Education and its partners decided on this same occasion to implement a common monitoring framework comprising a number of indicators, first and foremost the major EFA priorities.

The issue of **universal access** to primary education is currently being resolved in Senegal. Unfortunately, **retention** is not improving as quickly as access and, as a result, the completion rate remains low (51%) and is particularly disappointing in view of the country's substantial financial investment in education (around 4% of GDP). It is now apparent that the persistently high dropout level is linked more to demand than to supply. Parents' occasionally negative perception of school also gives cause for concern, as the various forms of education provided publicly sometimes fall short of meeting complex social demand. This is reflected in the spontaneous establishment by local groups of basic community schools (ECB), which the Ministry endeavours to include in its strategy plans.

In regard to **quality**, the country's needs in respect of the construction of schools, the renovation of "provisional shelters" and ensuring that many schools meet water and sanitation standards are great: an unprecedented amount of work must be carried out each year. After much procrastination, curriculum review is almost completed and is being enhanced with experiments regarding life skills. Lastly, owing to the excessively wide disparities in the schools' performance in terms of learning achievements, the Ministry of Education is taking strong measures to strengthen monitoring at the local level in order to guarantee minimum education standards throughout the country.

Like almost all the countries of sub-Saharan Africa that participated in the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, Senegal is committed to achieving EFA by 2015. The Ten-Year Education and Training Programme (PDEF), on which drafting began in 1996, is the main frame of reference for education and training for the period 2000-2015. This programme incorporates the previously established National Action Plan for Education for All (EFA/NAP). In spite of its weaknesses, there are some encouraging results in the areas of system governance, access, equity and quality.

1. MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Primary education in Senegal is essentially state-run. However, 11% of children attend private schools, and some communities (a statistical minority) have been establishing basic community schools on their own initiative.

According to the latest available figures (2005), the rate of admission into the first year of primary school (CI) has reached 91.5%, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) 82.5%, the proportion of girls in education 48.6% and the completion rate 53.9%. While these figures, compared with earlier data, show that progress has been made, they do not meet the objectives for the year in question. Senegal, admitted to the EFA Fast Track Initiative in 2006, has made the achievement of universal provision of quality primary education by 2015 its first strategic objective for the education sector.

1.1 Overall governance of the sector

Overall governance of the education system in Senegal, including pre-school education and literacy, is vested in the Ministry of Education. Three ministries were merged in 2002 to enable coherent governance of the system, although technical education and vocational training are still the responsibility of one specific ministry. The Ministry of Education produces the sector's strategic documents, including PDEF. However, the management of PDEF is being streamlined and decentralized.

Changes in the governance of the education system in Senegal since 2000 are consistent with a general political context of transforming state management methods. Under an overall decentralization policy, two instruments enabling budget transfer to local authorities, namely the Decentralization Allocation Fund (FDD), established to strengthen the authorities' operational expenditure allocations, and the Local Authority Assistance Fund (FCCL), established to build their investment capacity, were implemented in 1996. Allocations to these funds are now increasing and the education sector is gradually being decentralized as some funds are being delegated to the local implementing bodies.

The governance improvement policy has been formulated on the basis of management tools revised to ensure reliability, for example, through the creation of a single staff file (see below).

Lastly, PDEF is consistent with endeavours to use the considerable resources allocated to the Senegalese education system more rationally. The objectives of reducing the number of primary schools that offer an incomplete cycle only and of creating a specific model of local schools to avoid expensive management of teaching services¹ conduce to better governance.

1.1.1 Governance tools

Ten-Year Education and Training Programme (PDEF) and derived action plans

Senegal was one of the first countries to embark on the Education for All at the beginning of the decade, through strong political commitments and long-term planning that has led to a number of documents binding the authorities and all education stakeholders. The Ten-Year Education and Training Programme (PDEF) constitutes the framework for the implementation of the general education policy statement for the 1999-2008 decade, which the Government of Senegal adopted in February 2000. The PDEF-Phase I was implemented between 2000 and 2004, and progress in access to the primary education and in GER was made in that period.

¹ Experiment cited by Bernard, J.-M., and Robert, F., *Nouveaux enjeux pour l'école moyenne en Afrique* [New Issues for Middle Schools in Africa], De Boeck, 2005.

In 2003-2004, a sector analysis was carried out which showed that significant progress had been made in access and equity, but that work remained to be done in the areas of gender equality, retention, mobilization of public resources and overall system management. In the light of the sector analysis, the authorities amended the general education policy statement and drew up the three-year PDEF/EPT document, covering phase II from 2005 to 2007. This programming paper is consistent with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The current national action plan lists activities for each sub-sector after a related situation assessment, setting the objective, implementation methods and responsibilities for execution for each planned activity. PDEF-Phase II is therefore an operational document.

Framework and simulation model

A sector policy framework model was drawn up during the drafting of PDEF. It was updated over the base year 2004 for drafting the Phase II action plan. The planning period covered now extends to 2015, the MDG target year for EFA. This model framework points to the overall sustainability of the policy implemented to achieve universal primary education, subject to the closing of the residual gap and maintenance of the main intrasectoral options such as the rate of transition to secondary education or university, any decline in which could threaten development of primary education.

Medium-Term Sector Expenditure Framework

The Ministry of Education, along with other ministries that play a crucial role in social development (health and justice), was required in 2004 to draw up a Medium-Term Sector Expenditure Framework (CDSMT). This experimental framework document is not meant initially to be a reference in the current voting procedure used to authorize public expenditure. It is intended, however, to become operational, and even to have pride of place among the Ministry's main strategic reference documents. Unfortunately, at the Ministry of Education, which was already far advanced in drafting its action plan (Educational Planning and Reform Department – DPRE), this file was processed by the General Administration and Equipment Department (DAGE), which had not overseen the drawing up of previous documents. As a result, the time scale used for CDSMT (forecasts for 2006-2008) does not coincide with that of the action plan, leading to a number of complex discrepancies between PDEF and CDSMT. The Ministry is making adjustments that should ultimately enable CDSMT to become the operational reference document for implementing PDEF.

1.1.2 Slow decentralization and rationalized

Senegal's education system is being rationalized rather hesitantly and is not yet being decentralized even though the texts authorizing decentralization have been adopted. The PDEF is being updated annually in an increasingly participatory process. PDEF may thus be considered to be an aggregate of many local micro-plans. It is theoretically being implemented by decentralized bodies, regional and provincial committees to which coordination and monitoring roles in their respective areas have been assigned, Local Education and Training Councils (CLEF) and secondary school boards of management (CG). The actual involvement and participation of these authorities vary from place to place and are being strengthened gradually as PDEF is being implemented.

For the purposes of rationalization, the Ministry of Education has set up 11 School Inspection Offices (IA) at the regional level and 43 Provincial Education Inspection Offices (IDEN) at the provincial level. The central administration (DAGE) makes budgetary transfers to these deconcentrated bodies and theoretically to schools. These transfers do not affect non-way or non-

construction expenditure and therefore account for a small proportion of the resources allocated to education.

In regard to decentralization, a 1996 act transferred powers in around ten areas, including education, to regions, towns and villages, which have since been responsible for school management. Towns and villages manage primary schools and regional councils manage secondary schools, covering the costs of construction, bursaries and aid, facilities, upkeep, maintenance, ancillary staff (except in rural communities), textbooks and equipment. Under the act, the role of the State shall now cover staff costs only. However, in reality, operating costs are still administered by DAGE, IAs and IDENs as previously.

1.2 EFA objectives and sector plans

How are the EFA goals covered in education sector plans and in the regular monitoring of these plans?

The objectives of the Senegalese sector plan in connection with EFA are as follows:

%	2007	2010	2015
GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO	88.9	100	
Admission into first year of primary school (CI)	100	105	
Completion rate		85	100
Repetition rate		5	

Source: simulation model

Gender equality must be achieved in elementary education by 2010. The schedule for the Senegalese objectives is consistent with the MDG of “universal primary education” by 2015. EFA goals have therefore been included into the national strategy and incorporated into the strategy planning documents.

Moreover, the Senegalese strategy was validated in 2006 by the Ministry of Education’s technical and financial partners, who recommended it for the EFA Fast Track Initiative, after conducting a technical evaluation contained in a report containing comments on several matters such as:

- (a) the extent to which general policy and recourse allocation choices and goals in respect of primary education access and completion rate are consistent with the aims of the Initiative;
- (b) the sustainability of growth scenarios in relation to real capacities for school construction and teacher recruitment, on the one hand, and in relation to assumptions of a drastic fall in primary school repetition rates and a continued emphasis on elementary and intermediate education in the breakdown of resource allocation within the sector;
- (c) effectively building capacities to manage the system at the local level.²

² See Executive Summary of *Rapport sur l’évaluation technique de la candidature du Sénégal à l’initiative Fast-Track* [Report on the technical evaluation of Senegal’s application for the Fast Track Initiative], February 2001.

EFA goals are thus at the heart of the Senegalese sector strategy. Moreover, when the strategy was endorsed for the Fast Track Initiative, the Ministry of Education and its partners decided to implement a common monitoring framework (harmonized PDEF monitoring tool) comprising a number of indicators, first and foremost, the major EFA priorities (access, completion, service provision indicators relating to teaching time and textbooks and quality indicators in respect of examination performance).

1.3 Monitoring and evaluating PDEF implementation

PDEF has been designed for flexible programming and is being adjusted continuously in the light of regular evaluations. The current three-year action plan sets out success indicators for each action undertaken. In addition to this list of PDEF-specific indicators, the common matrix of sector indicators allows the Ministry of Education and its technical and financial partners to measure the progress made each year. This regular, twofold examination determines whether and to what extent (action plan indicators) the plan has been effectively implemented and whether the expected outcomes have been achieved (common matrix indicators). The national administration and its partners frequently encounter difficulty in producing and standardizing these indicators regularly.

The sector analysis of January 2004 therefore stressed that “the high number of national departments and services is a significant source of inefficiency in the education system”. The same conclusion was drawn in the assessment made when the national strategy was endorsed for the Fast Track Initiative concluded the same in terms of monitoring the system: owing to the high number of sources it was difficult to stabilize many values that are essential to monitoring the plan (as are many of the indicators used). The technical and financial partners have initiated administrative capacity-building programmes designed, in particular, to provide authorities with a series of reliable measures consistent with the indicators that they have chosen for successive evaluations of their plans.

1.4 Partnerships

PDEF is supported by many technical and financial partners, primarily the World Bank, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the French Development Agency (AFD). The European Union provides the education sector with budgetary support, which is also monitored by means of the main PDEF indicators.

The technical and financial partners and the Ministry of Education have agreed on a common matrix of monitoring indicators, enabling regular sector reviews to follow the development of policies adopted. This matrix, the first step towards harmonizing external support, represents significant progress for the partnerships established in the sector, insofar as the indicators are shared and few in number.

Today, civil society is also invited to participate in evaluation and development of PDEF by participating in the National Council of Education and Training (CONSEF). The Council has set the task of supervising the implementation of PDEF at the central level. At the local level, Local Education and Training Councils (CLEF) play a similar role in theory. Several “discussion meetings” are already more or less operational and comprise, in principle, Parents’ Associations (APE), trade unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local development bodies, and so on. However, the Provincial Education Inspection Office (IDEN) provides leadership in practically all cases. As a result, these organizations’ operations is largely dependent on the education authority’s concerns of the moment. In addition, the themes of dialogue and exchange are hardly discussed outside official meetings held to prepare for the beginning of the academic year or other landmark events in school calendar (for example “School Week”). Grassroots partners are not yet

really involved in planning, school management, and so on. It is clear that many locally available resources remain untapped. They are not yet mobilized sufficiently or efficiently to promote access, maintenance and performance in the education system. It is therefore still important to encourage more significant involvement among those partners (local organizations, local authorities, semi-public development bodies, etc.) that are willing to support education. In any event, practically all of these bodies have added value not only in terms of reducing poverty, which remains an obstacle to education, but also in terms of social mobilization.

The private sector practically does not participate in these discussion meetings. However, a substantial contribution has been made by Sonatel Foundation (a telephone company) to the development of the education sector.

2. Access, retention and completion: policies and results

2.1 Access and retention problems

Access and retention issues in Senegal are marked by major disparities. The sector analysis had noted that “a child living in a rural area can expect to have 3.5 years of primary education (including repeated years) while a child living in the city can expect 6 years. Living in an urban area almost doubles the length of schooling in comparison with living in a rural environment. At all levels of education, the proportion of girls who complete their studies is lower than that of boys”. It also notes: “When households are classified by income quintiles, two striking features emerge: firstly, the enrolment rate rises steadily between the first and last quintiles and, secondly, inequalities between girls and boys are more marked among the poorest households (quintiles 1 and 2) than among the richest households (quintile 5).”

The causes of these problems in respect of access and completion are not, however, easy to identify, since they are numerous and may be variously explained. The sector analysis published in 2004 and the Dakar Pole studies³ have examined exhaustively the issue of obstacles to access and completion.

The issue of universal access to primary education is currently being resolved in Senegal (the gross enrolment ratio was 97.1% in 2005, but is now expected, with the necessary adjustments, to be much more than 100% for several years).

Unfortunately, retention is not improving as quickly as access and, as a result, the completion rate remains low (51%) and is particularly disappointing in view of the country’s substantial financial investment in education (around 4% of GDP).

It is now apparent that the persistently high dropout level is linked more to demand than to supply factors. Supply factors, carefully examined and assessed in the sector analysis, include:

- the continuing presence of schools offering only incomplete cycles (36% of schools);
- the geographical distance to school is still too great in some rural areas where schools are dispersed.

Demand factors, however, seem to be both more significant and more difficult to comprehend. According to the abovementioned report by the Dakar Pole, the retention level in Senegalese

³ *Atteindre la scolarité primaire universelle au Sénégal : éléments d’analyse de la retention* [Achieving Universal Primary Education in Senegal: Retention Analysis Elements], 2003, Dakar Pole.

schools is low because the repetition rate is too high and education is held in low regard by parents and communities. The study also notes significant gender and regional disparities in this field.

Policies adopted by Senegal to increase access and to improve retention consist mainly of standard measures that are general in scope.

Access is to be increased primarily by expanding the provision of education, building classrooms or schools and recruiting teachers.

Retention is to be improved as a result of the policy of reducing the number of schools that offer only an incomplete cycle (currently 36% of schools, especially in rural areas) and an ambitious policy formulated to minimize repetition.

Regarding the number of girls in education, partner units for the enrolment of girls (SCOFI) have been established to take local action to promote girls' access to and retention in education.

A national policy has been adopted to deal with the issue of repetition. The division of primary education into sub-cycles within which repetition is, in theory, no longer possible is linked to the national objective of 10%. Unfortunately, it seems that the local management of current practices in schools is rather inefficient, with the result that the administration, which is generally not authoritarian in Senegal, is struggling to find effective methods of enforcing its policy throughout the system.

Parents' occasionally negative perception of education also gives cause for concern. Local groups have spontaneously established basic community schools (ECB), which the Ministry endeavours to include in its strategy plans. To say the least, their action is indicative of an unmet social demand for education, and their expectations may be difficult first to clarify and then to satisfy. The quality of the education provided and of the teachers, as perceived by families, could be one of the main factors influencing retention and indeed an obstacle to universal completion.

The issues of opportunity costs and of adapting education to meet the requirements of agricultural or domestic economics are still outstanding. School attendance can become difficult for families because of the importance of the labour provided by children. Senegal, a rural and agricultural country, produces a variety of crop by region and therefore has several crop seasons, while there is only one national academic year. This point may constitute an obstacle to school retention in rural areas.

2.2 Alternative models

As a strategy, delegation (*faire-faire*) has enabled Senegal to make significant progress in the area of literacy, by involving and mobilizing organizations such as the Senegal National Coordination of Literacy Operators (CNOAS) and semi-public or private companies (SODEFITEX, Senegal's National Association for Development of Textiles).

Alternative models, including basic community schools (ECB), functional literacy centres (CAF) and other literacy classes, have for several years been a significant addition to the system insofar as they give a second chance to disadvantaged groups by extending the provision of education to young people and women who have had no access to the conventional formal system. ECBs constitute gateway of sorts for young people who, mainly because of their age, have had no access to elementary education.⁴ Not only are they literate at the end of their studies, but some are able to go up to the next level of formal education. In CAFs, women and young people also achieve

⁴ Strictly speaking, ECBs are not bilingual schools, which is the case in Burkina Faso.

literacy that is based on the development of life skills and thus permits socio-economic integration. In 2003, the total number of people attending alternative model courses was 1,501,881 and 1,097,845 of them were women. However, “the number of people enrolled fell quite significantly in 2005 compared to the yearly average of people enrolled, which was roughly 177,000. This situation has arisen largely because many classes were closed after funding, in particular for programmes supported by the IDA 3333 budget, was suspended” (MINEDU/PDEF, 2005: 70).

The Senegalese Association for the Development of Literacy (ASPA) was established in March 2006, bringing together private companies, civil society and State organizations, in order to build on the achievements of the resources centre for literacy policies. It is an extension of the delegation strategy and has a fund-generating (raising) function.

2.3 Policies adopted to encourage access and retention

A policy has been introduced to create many classrooms and to recruit many new teachers. It is the first response to the challenge of access and retention.

In the coming years, an unprecedented effort is anticipated by the national authorities and supported by technical and financial partners: more than 2,500 new classrooms are to be built each year during PDEF- Phase II and over 3,000 new teachers recruited for elementary education alone.

This rate is higher than during the first few years of PDEF, but it seems to be achievable. Financially, it naturally creates a gap in both running costs and capital, which was nonetheless considered sustainable in the evaluation conducted for the purpose of recommending the strategy to the Fast Track Initiative.

In regard to recruitment, the policy is supported by efforts to use teachers more effectively: currently only 47% of teachers are actually teaching in the classroom.

2.4 Early childhood

Early childhood development is included in the national education strategy as described by PDEF.

The strategy is multifaceted and aims to benefit both public bodies (including those of local authorities) and community-run or private bodies.

The objective is to achieve attendance rates of around 10% in early childhood care organizations.

The State authorities have begun a national programme of Early Childhood Reception Centres (CTP), and in April 2004 the National Agency for Early Childhood Reception Centres was established to manage the programme.

Moreover, a pre-school education curriculum (three to six years old) is being developed under the action plan (see section 3.2 below).

3. Quality education: policies and results

3.1 Quality and infrastructure

One of the objectives of the PDEF-Phase II action plan (mentioned above) is the provision of sufficient classrooms to ensure quality education (and to decrease, for example, recourse to double-shift classes. Unfortunately, achievements in recent years (2004 and 2005) have fallen somewhat short. According to the document *Situation of system global indicators* (Ministry of Education, May

2006), 1,036 classrooms were built in 2004 and 862 in 2005, instead of the planned 2,000 and 2,700 respectively. The value of the indicator is both insufficient and decreasing. This disappointing performance is probably due to the Technical and Financial Partners' (PTF) own agenda (many support programmes were being renewed or investigated during the period) and long lead times in the contracts awards mechanisms. Renewal of partners' support in accordance with their own schedules and pursuant to Senegal's admission to the Fast Track Initiative could reverse this trend; otherwise the value of this indicator would be cause for concern, possibly meaning that the limits of the physical national capacity for construction had been reached.

The overall quality of schools should be improved by providing related facilities (cafeterias, water taps, latrines with separate cubicles for girls, and so on) and by replacing the provisional shelters where many classes are held, at such a pace as to reduce the shortfall by 10% each year, in accordance with PDEF forecasts.

3.2 School textbooks and curricula

The predominant role of school textbooks in assuring quality is now well-established. PDEF has set an objective of three textbooks per pupil in elementary education. Unfortunately, recently available statistics (*Situation of system global indicators*, Ministry of Education, May 2006) show not only that this indicator falls short of the objective, but that, like construction, it has actually decreased: 1.9 textbook per pupil in 2005 compared with 2 in 2004 (elementary education).

Apart from the official elementary education curriculum in force since 1979 (see Decree No. 19-1165 of 20 December 1979), several other cross-cutting curricula have been introduced or are being tested in primary schools. The aim is for them to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups and issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention.

Thanks to the support of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a Family Life Education/Population Education curriculum (EVF/EMP) was introduced in all primary schools in the period 2002-2006 (see www.unfpa.sn/projects.htm). At the end of their course, all trainee inspectors attend an EVP/EMP training seminar lasting several days. The same is true for trainee teachers at Primary Teacher Training Colleges (EFI). An Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and AIDS component is also included in elementary education (see www.unfpa.sn/sida.htm).

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is supporting a cross-cutting programme focusing on life skills, education and citizenship. It is planned that an essential package of services, such as water sanitation, hygiene, life skills including concerning HIV/AIDS, school health, school meals, teaching, management and community participation (UNICEF-Senegal, 2006) will be introduced in all primary schools.

The Ministry of Education, through DPRE, is progressively implementing a new basic education curriculum. The approach of the new skills-focused curriculum is to maximize the integrative teaching method that enables pupils to increase knowledge in order to deal with everyday situations. The designers of this curriculum have noted the need to cover the themes developed by the specific programmes mentioned above.

Between 1996 and 2001, a Timetable Booklet (LHP) was devised and tested (for three months) after the adoption of an integrative framework during a national meeting covering specific local factors. Since the tools were not ready and given some financial difficulties, it was necessary to take a "strategic break" as from 2001 before adopting the recovery plan, which has now been initiated.

The curriculum is now managed by the National Curriculum Steering Committee (CNPC) and coordinated by DPRE (which is also responsible for coordination of PDEF). This illustrates a desire to make actions more coherent. A team of 40 persons is in charge of drafting programmes, on the basis of conclusions and recommendations made by a support group and think-tank composed of resource persons.

After “active construction” between 2003 and 2005 (with the sector groups for mathematics, languages and communication, environmental studies, pre-school education, both non-formal and action-research with teachers in the classroom), a timetable was agreed for the period 2005-2010 to test, roll out and introduce it throughout the system (see Annex 1), and several tools, including skills booklets, the teachers’ guides, teaching materials, the trainers’ guide and the inspectors’ training/information plan, were issued (MINEDU/DPRE, 2006a).

3.3 Teaching time

The average annual teaching time now stands at around 690 hours, according to the sector analysis and the technical evaluation report for the Fast Track Initiative. As the shortage of classrooms leads to a significant number of double-shift classes, it is known that many children receive fewer hours of teaching each year. The Senegalese education system has significant scope for progress in that area, as identified very clearly by the analytical documents.

The Ministry of Education published a circular, Teaching Time, indicating its aim to raise the average annual teaching time to 900 hours (the international standard) in 2006-2007. The 900 hours consist of 30 weeks of 30 hours. In the circular, the task of achieving this goal is devolved to the regional level. However, the means by which it can be achieved cannot be identified easily as the school year has not generally been reformed. PDEF provides for the reform of the academic year⁵ in order to reconcile the teaching time requirement (including with double-shift classes) with family expectations and constraints.

3.4 Class sizes

In order to improve quality, the Action Plan had provided for more efficient use of existing infrastructure, in order to minimize underuse of some classrooms and schools in rural areas and to reduce overcrowding of those in urban areas. Unfortunately, 27% of classes still have over 50 pupils (*Situation of system global indicators*, Ministry of Education, May 2006). Not only have class sizes not decreased as planned, but there has actually been an increase in overcrowded classes between 2004 and 2005.

3.5 Policies and evaluation practices

Senegal implemented the National Academic Results Evaluation System (SNERS) over a decade beginning in 1992, on the basis of standardized texts. This system is used in parallel with the country’s occasional participation in tests under the Conference of Ministers of Education (CONFEMEN) Programme Analysis of Educational Systems (PASEC). PASEC tests are currently being carried out, but the results are not yet known. The SNERS results for 2002 show poor learning achievement (50% success), with pupils answering only half of the questions correctly. The primary system is elitist in character, with pupil’s average level in French decreasing as they progress through the system. There was a strong rise in the number of pupils dropping out of school between 1996 and 2002.

⁵ The document “*Gestion de la qualité de l’éducation et de la formation dans la phase 2 du PDEF*” [Education and Training Quality Management in PDEF Phase-II] suggests measures regarding the academic year for each school (p. 45); these measures will need to be connected nationally.

These indicators serve as warnings about the disturbing level of knowledge at primary-school pupils, and therefore about the quality of education. These inadequacies were addressed in great detail in the sector analysis carried out in 2003 by the Applied Economics Research Centre (CREA). The analysis highlighted the total lack of linearity between resources available in each school and the school's internal performance. The mass of marks obtained in this way cannot be subject to any significant linear regression.⁶

In the light of these facts, the poor quality of education in Senegal is not due primarily to the lack of input, or to inefficiency and inequality in the distribution of resources, but to the existence of great weaknesses in the system and of schools from which children have very little to gain. Moreover, the above-mentioned analysis by CREA has shown that “the quality of educational and administrative management” is the main factor responsible for schools' performance.⁷

The Ministry of Education therefore published a document in 2005 entitled *Quality Assurance of Education and Training in PDEF Phase II*. This document shows that the Ministry is adopting the sector analysis's findings and states that its principle would in future be “to give priority to quality in the places where it is produced (in schools and classrooms)” (p. 43), given the need to “ensure effective monitoring of quality in local operational structures”.

3.6 Quality and local monitoring

It is indeed apparent that weaknesses in the daily monitoring of schools at the local level is the main quality concern in Senegal. Weaknesses in monitoring, linked to shortcomings in allocation of resources, lead to a poor average level in Senegalese schools and to great disparities in performance. Owing to these extremely great disparities in Senegal, some of the schools that are well supplied in terms of input (teachers, premises, textbooks, etc.), produce good results and others produce disastrous results, and that the same is true for poorly supplied schools. This wide range suggests that there are “rogue schools” in which the curriculum is not followed closely, attendance is poor and respect for standards rather lax. The 2004 sector analysis showed that “a major cause of the poor quality of primary education is inadequate management of schools and classes. The lack of official instructions, guidelines and specifications in over 90% of the schools surveyed, as well as the small number of headteachers who visit classes regularly (30%), reflect the inadequate monitoring by inspectors or the community of the way in which schools function, which now depends on the goodwill of each headteacher”.

The poor average level and disparate performance, which are system management issues, are central to policy concerns for PDEF-Phase II. Improvement in quality depends directly on the system's capacity to keep children in primary education.

3.7 Teachers and quality

3.7.1 Recruitment and management

The overall number of teachers is to be increased, through net recruitments of 3,000 primary school teachers per year by 2010. This is a high rate, but it exceeds the rates of previous years by only 20% and it should be sustainable.

However, management of this resource is still problematic. Only 47 Senegalese teachers in 100 are actually teaching in the classroom, while 53 are assigned to administration or are involved in management. Measures have been taken by the Ministry of Education to streamline and to

⁶ Education Sector Analysis, January 2004, UCAD/CREA, p. 154.

⁷ Education Sector Analysis, January 2004, UCAD/CREA, p. 163.

rationalize teacher management, beginning in 2006 with the establishment of the Single Staff File (FUP), provided for in the action plan. It is monitored by the Ministry’s information technology unit and should result in the reconciliation of previously dispersed and highly divergent data series in the Human Resources Department (DRH), the Civil Service Department and the Pay Roll, and in a sharp reduction in cases of inappropriate appointments or complacency. In order to compile the single file, in March 2006, the Ministry carried out a salary domiciliation operation for staff whose posting was not sufficiently clear to the central administration. This action, which has put an end to the abuses that were all too common, is politically brave and shows that there is a real desire to streamline management.

Action is also being taken to reform procedures for the appointment and transfer of teachers in order to increase transparency and to reduce leadtimes. According to the sector analysis, these reforms should “put an end to teacher flight from the classroom”. Regional authorities are in charge of teacher appointment in the region and of distributing these resources coherently.

The new approach to teacher management is all the more difficult since it is being introduced in a context of reduction of salaries. For a long time, teachers’ salaries have been decreasing considerably in relative value and now stand at 4.7% of GDP per capita – the profession may thus be considered to be the primary contributor to the education for all policy. This decrease has been achieved by changing the composition of the teaching corps to increase the number of less well-paid categories.

One problem has not yet been resolved in this area. Contract teacher categories are managed by School Inspections Offices (IA) at the provincial level and the corresponding budgets are intended for equipment expenditure. The salaries are paid in cash, requiring the teachers concerned to desert the classroom each month for several days in order to go to the provincial administrative centre to collect the sum owed to them. This system is inefficient and leads to frequent strike action; it generally reduces the time available for teaching and the quality of the education provided. The Ministry of Education is in part dependent on the decisions of the Ministry of Economy and Finance to find new procedures to replace the current system, with which nobody is satisfied.

3.7.2 Supervision and in-service teacher training

The table below on the profile of elementary school teachers shows a relative decrease in the number of teachers who hold the academic and professional qualifications required for their duties. This means that many teachers do not have sufficient knowledge about the educational needs of children and/or their families, or of the content, methods, values and aims of the education provided. This situation can only have a negative impact on the quality of the education provided, as noted in the Dakar Pole analysis (Dakar Pole, 2003).

Trends in qualifications held by elementary school teachers (public and private)

	Percentage of teachers with the required academic qualifications (at least BFEM – Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	Percentage of teachers with the required teaching qualification (at least CEAP – Elementary Teaching Certificate)
1990/91	99.3 %	92.0%
1998/99	99.0 %	76.4%
2005	92.0 %	46.0 %

Sources: MINEDU, 2000a, and MINEDU, 2006

However, it should be possible to remedy the lack of local supervision of teachers, noted in a 2003 survey,⁸ if the various bodies established to provide in-service teacher training become more operational and effective owing to the guidelines adopted in the 2004 PDEF review.⁹ With the advent of School Headteachers' Associations (373 in 2003), almost all of the IDENs have devised instruments so that they may monitor and supervise teachers. They have established Activity Units and introduced monitoring and evaluation forms, which should contribute to greater decentralization of in-service training and of oversight of teaching behaviour at the local level (see example in Annex 1). Coordinated progress and standardized assessment of learning achievements have enabled teachers in several school districts to cope quite easily with the problems of curriculum implementation, on the one hand, and to plan teaching over three-monthly periods (MINEDU/CREA, 2004).

The authorities' efforts, which are still to be completed and consolidated, will therefore address all aspects of human resource management simultaneously.

4. Conclusion

PDEF has been central to the concerns and governance of the education system for seven years, and education is among the Senegalese State's top budgetary priorities. Although significant progress has been made, in regard to access in particular, there are still serious concerns about retention and quality and so Senegal is unlikely to attain the Millennium Development Goals in education.

The difficulties in the sector relate primarily to questions of **efficiency**. Social demand for education is high, educational provision is growing steadily, State resources have been mobilized and outside partners are supporting PDEF: the key question now is how to transform all of this energy into everyday life for the benefit of quality primary education for all Senegalese children.

⁸ Less than one third of headteachers of state-run schools supervise their deputies, while 66% of headteachers of Catholic private schools keep a guidance book compared with 33% of non-religious private schools (see MINEDU/CREA, 2004).

⁹ In the 2005-2010 phase of the Programme, particular emphasis is placed on decentralization of management, which aims to promote quality through: (i) school projects; (ii) multigrade class management; (iii) a more flexible assessment system in order to reduce repetition; and (iv) standardized assessment of learning achievements (see MINEDU, 2005).

Annex 1

Time Chart of implementation of the new basic education curriculum

A. Pre-school

Period	Class	Stage	Body involved
2006/2007	Lower Section	Extension	IDEN IA
	Middle Section	Testing	
2007/2008	Lower Section	Introduction	IDEN
	Middle Section	Extension	
	Senior Section	Testing	IA-IDEN
2008/2009	Middle Section	Introduction	
	Senior Section	Extension	
2009/2010	Senior Section	Introduction	IDEN

B. Elementary

Period	Class	Stage	Body involved
2006/2007	CI	Extension	IDEN
	CP	Testing	
	CE1	Testing	
2007/2008	CI	Introduction	
	CP	Extension	
	CE1	Extension	
	CE2	Testing	
	CM1	Testing	
2008/2009	CE2	Introduction	
	CP	Introduction	
	CE1	Introduction	
	CM1	Introduction	
	CM2	Testing	
2009/2010	CM2	Introduction	

C. Functional Literacy Centres (CAF)

Period	Class	Stage	Body involved
2006/2007	CAF	Extension	IDEN
2007/2008	CAF	Extension	
2008/2009	CAF	Introduction	

D. Basic Community Schools (ECB)

Period	Class	Stage	Body involved
2006/2007	ECB1	Testing	IDEN
2007/2008	ECB1	Introduction	
	ECB2	Testing	
	ECB3	Testing	
2008/2009	ECB2	Introduction	
	ECB3	Introduction	
2009/2010	ECB4	Introduction	

Sources: MINEDU/DPRE (2006a) and MINEDU/DPRE (2006b)

Annex 2

Example of a school inspection report form

Inspectorate of Kolda Education Authority
Regional Inspectorate of the Kolda Education Authority

UNIT VISIT REPORT

I. AREA INSPECTED

District Town Village

Unit inspected: Date:
Number of targeted schools: Number of absent schools:
Total present: Total absent: Attendance rate:
Teacher: Lesson:

II. ACTIVITIES OBSERVED

Theme (in brief):.....
Subject covered:.....
Title of lesson:

III. PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

Description	Solutions	Observations
1		
2		
3		
4		

IV. POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT

1.
2.
3.
4.

V. PROPOSALS FOR REMEDY

- EPD field visit
- CP/EPD study day
- Training session
- PR Intervention

Signature of CAPC Head
Read and copy taken

Signature of Educational Adviser

CC:
IDEN /KD
A&A
CAPC Head

Annex 3: Summary table

No.	Dakar Declaration	Senegal, 2000	Senegal, 2005
1	Expanding early childhood education	Outside sector strategy	National programme of Early Childhood Reception Centres (2004) and development of a curriculum for three- to six-year-olds
2	Universal education by 2015	Completion rate 2002: 50.45%	Completion rate 2005: 53.9%
3	Appropriate learning and life skills programmes	Initial experimental attempts to renew curricula	Development and introduction of programmes organized under a skills-based approach + UNICEF cross-cutting life skills programme
4	Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women	Difficult to assess	138,066 students: 87% women
5	Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005	Proportion of girls in education: 46%	Proportion of girls in education: 48.3%
6	Improving all aspects of the quality of education	National assessment: children know only approximately half of the curricular content	Specific strategic documents on quality management drawn up in 2005
6.1	Teacher training	Shortage of academic and vocational training courses for teachers	Emergence of a training and supervision policy at the local level (coordinated progress, continuing training)
6.2	Teacher-pupil ratio	Approximately 50.8 pupils per teacher, 53% of primary school teachers not working as teachers	Rationalization of management of teacher appointment, single staff file
6.3	Repetition and dropout rates	Repetition rate: 13.9%	Repetition rate: 12.4%; slight progress Slight progress achieved in the rate of completion of primary education.

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