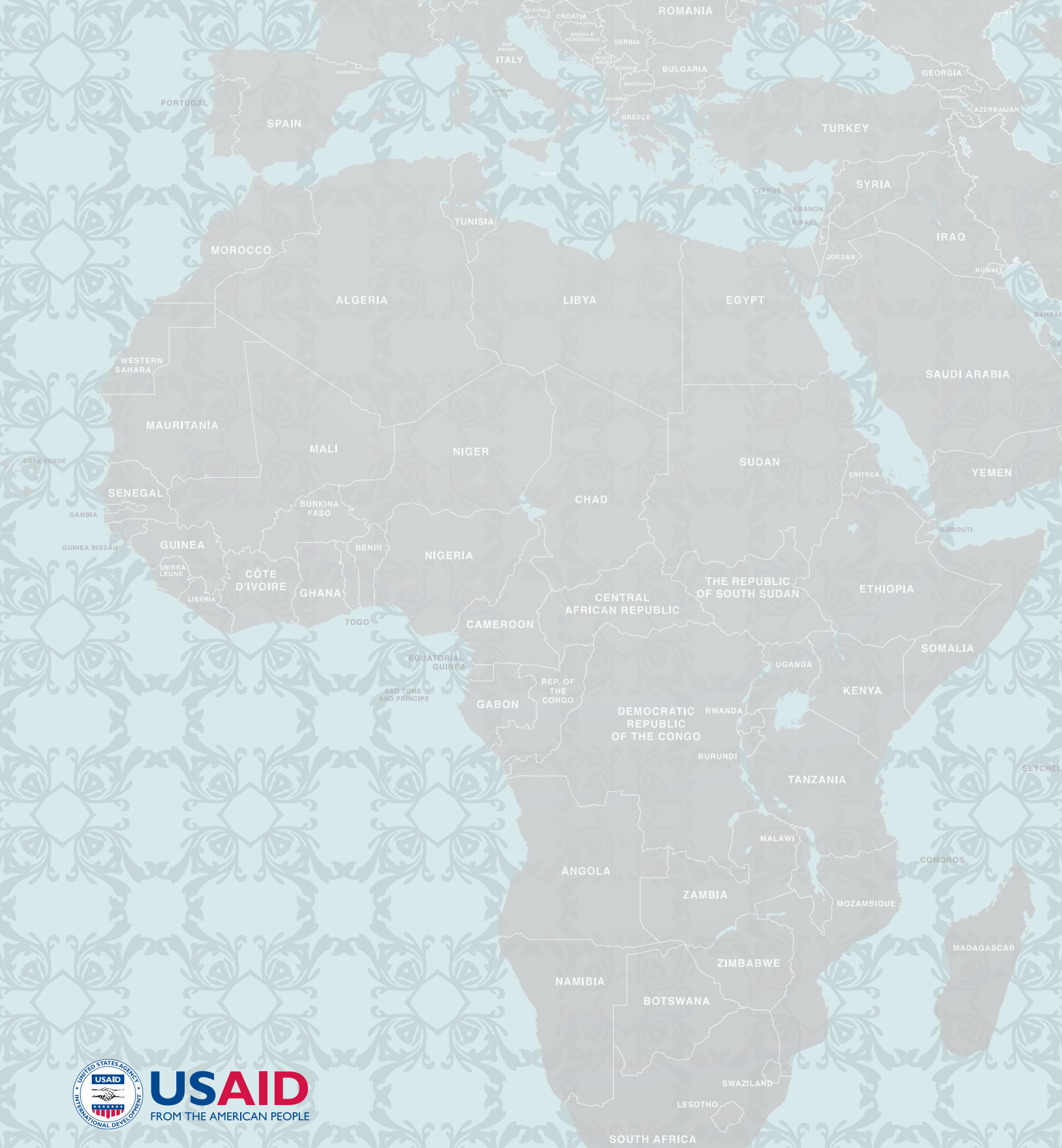




YOUTH ASSESSMENT: THE ROAD AHEAD

Executive Version



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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FOREWORD

It is vital that we engage today's youth in designing and implementing effective and sustainable programs, so that we can gain a deeper understanding of the conditions they are facing and ensure that the programs we develop are relevant to their needs. For the past twenty years, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) has pioneered an approach that not only identifies young people's needs and opportunities in a particular community, country, or region of the world, but also actively engages local youth in identifying those challenges and charting their own futures. *YouthMap* is a four-year USAID-supported initiative that offers IYF and our local partners the chance to apply that comprehensive approach in Sub-Saharan Africa.

With 60 to 70 percent of Africa's population under the age of 30, it is of critical importance that we learn how to tap into the vast resources that these young people can offer. Africa's youth have the ability and the capacity to drive positive social change and economic growth — when given the appropriate resources and opportunities. The magnitude of this younger generation and their nations' current challenges simply demand that youth themselves take a leading role in shaping their futures.

Through the *YouthMap* initiative, IYF goes directly to African youth and the organizations serving them to learn first-hand how young people in each of the target countries live, work, and learn. We ask youth to describe their daily lives, their challenges, and their aspirations and dreams for the future. We then place their answers in the context of data available from our many partners in the region, highlighting the gaps between young people's needs and available resources. In short, we help identify the terrain and erect signposts for the road ahead, with an emphasis on engaging youth in the process. Indeed, we see young people not just as a focus group, but as protagonists in their own development, as well as the development of their nations.

YouthMap Senegal: The Road Ahead maps existing youth-related conditions and opportunities across the country. This is the first of up to eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to be studied as part of this initiative. We believe this report, with vital input from Senegalese youth, lays a realistic foundation for building a more stable, prosperous, and hopeful future for Senegal and its young people

William S. Reese

President and CEO

International Youth Foundation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The full *YouthMap Senegal* assessment report, as well as this Executive Version, owes a deep debt of gratitude to the young people across Senegal who participated in focus group discussions and shared their time and perspectives with the assessment team. We are very grateful as well to the many representatives of government ministries and agencies, donor agencies, civil society organizations, and private sector firms who participated in interviews for this study and who assisted the assessment team in identifying and mobilizing youth participants for focus group discussions. Our understanding of the circumstances, assets, and challenges of Senegal's youth was greatly enhanced by their insights, which are presented throughout this report and featured prominently in our recommendations.

The assessment was enriched by youth who served as researchers on this project. Stanislas Beuleu, Aissata Dieye, Wilfried Engone, and Louma Sarr participated on the *YouthMap* assessment team, aiding the data collection and reporting process and keeping the work grounded in the realities of young people across the country. Their perspectives and commitment to youth development energized and inspired the team and strengthened the assessment as a whole.

The International Youth Foundation wishes to thank USAID/Washington and USAID/Senegal for their vision of empowering Senegal's youth and believing in the ability of young people to positively contribute to their communities and their country. Special thanks are due to AOTR Joe Kitts in Washington and to our main counterparts at USAID/Senegal, Melissa Knight and Sacha Fraiture. We are grateful to all of the USAID/Senegal colleagues who provided valuable information and guidance over the course of the assessment process, including Mission Director Kevin Mullally, Deputy Director Alfreda Brewer, Amanda Day, Mouhamed Gueye, Selam Kebrom, Dr. El Hadji Amadou Mbow-Baye, Ousmane Sane, Izetta Simmons, Pape Sow, Christophe Tocco, Peter Trenchard, and Nicole Tresch.

We would like to acknowledge the dedicated work of assessment team members who participated in the field work, data analysis, and report preparation. Dalberg Global Development Advisors in Dakar — Madji Sock, Ata Cissé, and Massamba Diop — provided a wealth of technical input based on their significant experience and knowledge of the various issues affecting youth in Senegal. We give special thanks to assessment team members Pierre de Galbert, Pascale Schnitzer, and Alice Morton for their contributions to the quality of information collected and analysis of the subsequent findings. We are also grateful to Aidan Connolly for his contribution to the literature review and to Ntal Alimasi, Edwige Ndetome, Lem-Marie Chizungu, Gervais Djedje, and Sehou Pierre Hedji for their support in the coding and analysis of assessment data.

The Executive Version of *YouthMap Senegal: The Road Ahead*, presented here, was written by Susan Glenn. We are grateful for her talents in developing this shorter and more accessible version of the full report, which will be used for wider circulation.

Finally, we express our deep appreciation to the dedicated IYF team that supported assessment design, research, analysis, and report preparation: Danielle Roziewski, Daniel Oliver, Bai Kamara, and Lin Lin Aung. We also thank Gillian McCallion and Kathryn Werthman for their contributions to the design of this report.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

About <i>YouthMap</i>	6
<i>YouthMap Senegal: The Road Ahead</i>	6
Overview	
Summary Conclusions	
Recurring Themes	
Preparing for the Future: Education and Learning	10
Progress and Challenges	
Values and Hopes: Youth and Stakeholder Perspectives	
Key Conclusions	
Aligning Skills with Demand: Youth Employment and Opportunities	14
Employment Outlook and Labor Market Demand	
Realities versus Ambitions: Youth and Stakeholder Perspectives	
Key Conclusions	
Protecting a Nation’s Assets: Youth, Health, and Family Formation	19
Resources versus Needs: Youth and Stakeholder Perspectives	
Key Conclusions	
Preparing to Lead: Citizenship and Engagement	22
Political and Civic Landscape	
Community and Country: Youth Perspectives	
Key Conclusions	
Reaching Senegal’s Most Vulnerable: Youth at Risk	25
Unheard and Under-Served: Youth and Stakeholders Perspectives	
Key Conclusions	
Summing Up: The Road Ahead	27

ABOUT YOUTHMAP

With 28 percent of its population ranging from 12 to 24 years old, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is the most youthful region in the world. The challenges and opportunities facing these young people vary widely by country, gender, age, educational level, ethnicity, and health status. Targeted, effective youth programming requires a nuanced understanding of how youth in each country live, work, and strive — an understanding informed by how youth themselves perceive their present conditions and future prospects.

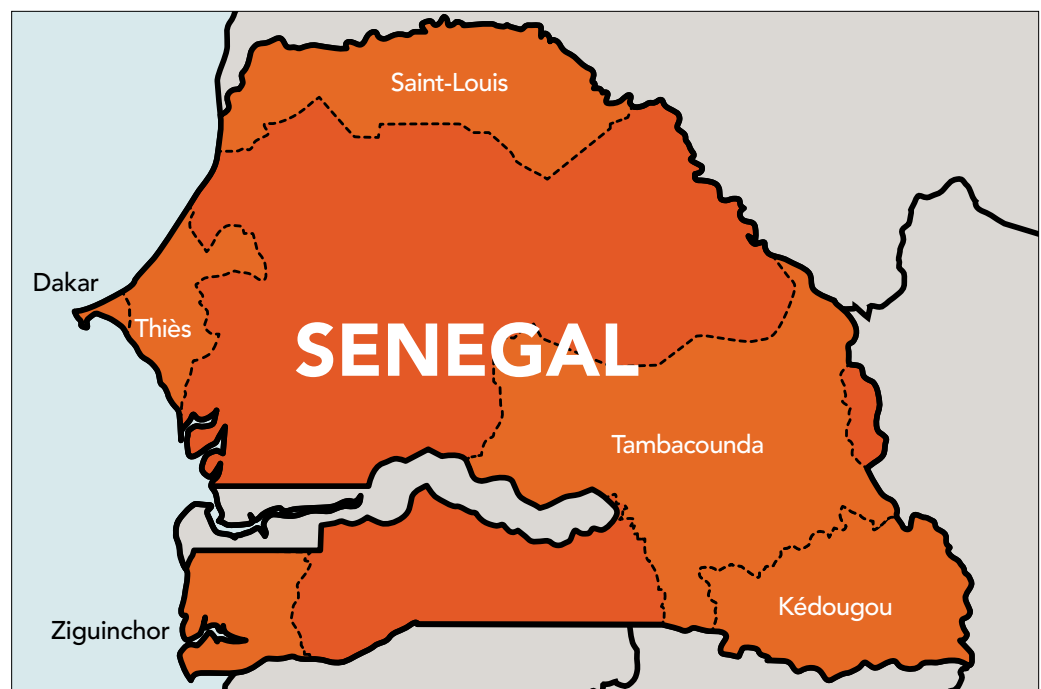
YouthMap, a program of the International Youth Foundation (IYF), is a USAID-supported, four-year initiative designed to assess youth circumstances and support promising youth development programs and practices in up to eight countries in SSA. Building on the **theoretical framework** introduced in the World Bank’s 2007 *World Development Report: Development and the Next Generation*, these holistic assessments focus on **transitions from adolescence to adulthood in the areas of education, work, health, family formation, and citizenship**. Each assessment includes research questions tailored to specific youth circumstances and concerns in each country as well as a set of common research questions to allow cross-country comparisons and learning.

Using an **assets-based approach**, *YouthMap* seeks out and incorporates the voices of each country’s youth. Addressing them as potential and actual “problem-solvers” rather than as “problems to be solved,” *YouthMap* engages youth in assessing their current circumstances and charting their future directions.

Synthesizing youth perspectives, stakeholders’ feedback, a review of recent literature and data, and extensive field research, *YouthMap* captures a multi-dimensional picture of youth in each country. Following each assessment, the *YouthMap* Innovation Fund will build on the findings to identify and support promising programs and approaches to help the region’s youth become healthy, productive, and engaged citizens.

YOUTHMAP SENEGAL: THE ROAD AHEAD

Figure 1: YouthMap Senegal — Study locations



With Senegal’s youth population projected to reach over 3.3 million by 2020, Senegal will be challenged to meet growing education, health, and employment needs.

Overview

In 2010, youth between the ages of 15 and 24 totaled approximately 2.7 million — 21 percent of Senegal’s total population. That number is expected to grow by 25 percent to over 3.3 million by 2020. Quite literally, the large youth population represents one of Senegal’s greatest national assets. At the same time, it poses significant challenges for a nation already facing widespread poverty, high unemployment, inadequate health and education infrastructure, and a regional conflict in the Casamance that disrupts livelihoods and lives.

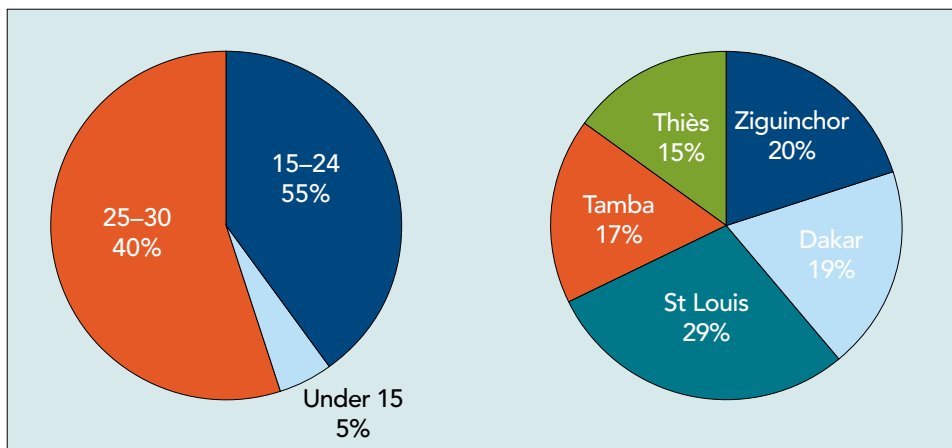
To assist the U.S. Government (USG) in directing youth-related program investments effectively in the face of these challenges, USAID and IYF launched *YouthMap Senegal* in January 2011. This holistic, cross-sectoral youth assessment covered five main regions: Dakar, Tambacounda, Thiès, Saint-Louis, and Ziguinchor. The assessment addressed **key questions** identified by USAID/Senegal:

- What are the opportunities, issues and challenges facing youth in Senegal as they cope with major life transitions?
- Who are the youth populations most at risk in Senegal, and what are their unique needs?
- How effective are existing programs in addressing youths’ current needs and maximizing their future potential?
- What priorities, approaches, and types of programs should be supported to benefit youth?

An IYF assessment team, composed of international and local researchers and Senegalese youth, answered these questions by:

- Conducting 62 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with a total of 568 young people;
- Interviewing 110 key stakeholders from public, private, civil society, and donor organizations;
- Reviewing descriptive and analytical literature and quantitative data on demographic, economic, and social issues affecting Senegalese youth, as well as documentation on Government of Senegal (GoS) and donor programs.

Figure 2: YouthMap Participants by Age and Region



A total of 568 young people ages 12-30 participated in YouthMap focus group discussions and completed a YouthMap survey. Youth participants were drawn from urban, peri-urban, and rural populations and chosen to represent the major characteristics of Senegalese youth, including cohorts of youth in-school, out-of-school, employed, unemployed, self-employed, and at risk.



Today many young people are lost because of poverty and the lack of structures to help them. The government must find out more about young people’s problems to help them better. There are some that I know who have studied, but it doesn’t stop them being without a job today. We need to communicate better with youth and listen to them.

— YouthMap participant,¹ Tambacounda

¹ “YouthMap participants” are those youth who participated in the 62 focus group discussions conducted as part of the YouthMap assessment. “Key stakeholders” refer to key informants interviewed from public, private, civil society, and donor organizations.

Summary Conclusions

In dozens of focus group discussions, Senegalese youth spoke repeatedly of “liggey.” Meaning “work” in Wolof, *liggey* is a celebrated, deeply-ingrained cultural value in Senegal, where the ability to work and provide for family defines one’s position and self-worth. Youth spoke often of their eagerness to work if given the proper training, tools, and opportunities. They expressed high regard for education, even as they described frustration at its inaccessibility and impracticality to workplace needs. They spoke knowledgeably of the problems in their communities, and many expressed the desire to address those problems as teachers, nurses, doctors, firemen, and entrepreneurs. They described their hopes for productive livelihoods and meaningful lives.

In the context of these hopes, this executive report presents the following conclusions and highlights significant recurring themes.

Education. While the GoS has made significant strides in education, especially in primary school access and completion rates, youth and key stakeholders noted remaining challenges, including: insufficient infrastructure, poor post-primary school completion rates, inconsistencies in instructional quality, and a curriculum largely regarded as too theoretical rather than practical. While 80 percent of *YouthMap* participants expressed the desire to learn a skill or trade, vocational and technical training resources and opportunities are limited (especially outside Dakar) and often misaligned with labor market needs. Although youth expressed a desire and respect for higher education, they are often constrained by geographic distance as well as overcrowding and weak capacity in public universities. Enrollment in tertiary institutions is very low, with only 10 percent of male youth and 6 percent of female youth enrolled.

Despite constraints in healthcare access, youth spoke highly of the *Centre de Conseil Adolescent* (“*Centre Ado*”), specifically citing the anonymity, availability of information, and openness of staff.

Employment. *YouthMap* participants find their skills poorly aligned with labor market needs. Jobs in the formal sector are extremely limited, and those available to youth are generally low-level, unskilled positions with little advancement potential. Employers interviewed for the assessment noted that youth lack practical and technical skills as well as life skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills. Though work opportunities are more widely available in the informal sector, youth themselves regard such opportunities as temporary. Lack of career guidance and entrepreneurial training and services limit young people’s vision of possible career choices. While agriculture is one of the most promising employ-

ment sectors, youth lack the training, skills, and resources needed to leverage entrepreneurial opportunities in the sector. Greatly compounding the challenges for young entrants to the labor force is a national unemployment rate of 49 percent.

Health and Family Formation. Constrained by a lack of resources as well as qualified personnel, Senegal’s health system struggles to meet the health needs of its youth and its general population. The supply of health facilities is limited, especially in rural areas. *YouthMap* participants expressed appreciation for youth-friendly services provided by the *Centre de Conseil Adolescent* (CCA or “*Centre Ado*”), CDEPS (cultural centers at the department level), and various other NGOs. Disabled youth noted a lack of physical access to services, and HIV-affected youth noted obstacles in obtaining HIV medications. Cost remains the prevailing deterrent in seeking health care.

Citizenship and Engagement. *YouthMap* participants made clear distinctions between community and country. Youth expressed deep commitment to their communities and regions and noted their involvement in community groups, religious groups, student and sports associations, and a range of other activities. Yet they expressed skepticism and disappointment in their national political processes and felt that the central government had not yet achieved its stated goals to promote democratic values. References to the Kédougou demonstrations in December 2008 and popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt in early 2011 raised concerns about potential future unrest in Senegal. Youth in the Casamance region

were especially disappointed in the peace process. Youth in regions far from Dakar felt generally disenfranchised from their nation. However, despite widespread skepticism, 85 percent of youth surveyed said they intend to register to vote.

Youth at Risk. Cohorts of youth especially at risk include disabled youth, victims of trafficking, youth affected by the conflict in the Casamance, substance abusers, teenage mothers, youth engaged in prostitution, and out-of-school youth including dropouts, street youth, and *talibés*.² Human trafficking, particularly of children and youth, has become a serious problem. UNICEF estimates that 100,000 children (most of whom are *talibés*) are forced to beg throughout the country, with an estimated 8,000 in Dakar alone. In addition to youth visibly at risk on the streets, *YouthMap* found less visible youth at risk at home including domestic workers, victims of domestic violence and forced early marriage, and school dropouts. Despite government and civil society programs targeting services to various at-risk groups, dangers persist and the supply of services falls well short of demand.

Recurring Themes

Throughout the *YouthMap* assessment, certain themes recurred across all studied issues.

Poverty. Poverty affects every facet of young people's daily lives, including school dropout rates, job-preparedness and livelihood options, negative health and social behaviors, perspectives on civic engagement, and early marriage and childbirth.

Gender-based Inequities. Though gender equity has been achieved in primary school access and completion, gender-based inequities persist in employment and training opportunities, post-primary education, and healthcare access. Early marriage and childbirth, birth spacing, and family or household pressures continue to impede females' progress in education and employment, further feeding the cycle of poverty.

Location-based Disparities. Throughout the assessment, youth and key stakeholders noted significant disparities between rural and urban youths' quality of life and access to employment and training, higher education, and health services. Keenly aware of these disparities, youth living outside Dakar repeatedly stated feeling disenfranchised and marginalized from the rest of the country. The latest available poverty survey, *L'Enquete de Suivi de la Pauvreté au Sénégal* (ESPS 2005-2006), confirms that rural youth experience higher levels of extreme poverty, illiteracy, and inactivity³ than urban youth.

Enduring Optimism. Despite daunting challenges in their daily lives, Senegalese youth participating in *YouthMap* expressed a persistent belief that, if included in charting their own road ahead, they could shape a better future for both themselves and their country. Though unquantifiable, their enduring optimism is perhaps one of the most striking of the *YouthMap* themes revealed.

This executive report summarizes *YouthMap Senegal's* findings on the topics and themes outlined above. Complete documentation of the assessment may be found in Volumes 1 and 2 (Main Report and Annexes) of *YouthMap Senegal: The Road Ahead* at www.iyfnet.org/document/1820.

² Derived from the Arabic word for "disciple or follower," a talib or talibé is a student who may study in a daara (Koranic school) or with a religious teacher (a marabout) for religious education. Some of these children and youth are forced to beg on the streets for long hours (a practice that meets the International Labour Organization's definition of a worst form of child labor) and are subjected to abuse.

³ Inactivity is defined as neither working, nor in school, nor seeking employment in the one month prior to the survey.

“

Young women have more problems than young men. We don't let girls study how they want. Ninety percent abandon school because of their parents. Those who come to school have problems to concentrate because they were busy at home before coming, so they are tired before classes even start.

— Young woman in Tambacounda

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE: EDUCATION AND LEARNING



In the lycée here, we don't have a computer lab. We have exercises that require computers, but we don't have the basic knowledge we need. I have been able to go to the cyber café only two or three times this year.

— High school student studying sciences in Ziguinchor

Progress and Challenges

As the International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted in 2010, Senegal has made good progress in improving its **formal educational system**. In recent years, the country has: expanded access and eliminated gender inequities in primary school education; dramatically increased the number of secondary schools; introduced peace-building lessons in Casamance middle schools; and created new institutions such as the University of Ziguinchor. The government also continues working to increase overall university capacity and modernize courses to include youth employability skills.

In the technical, vocational, and non-formal education sectors, the GoS has also: formalized training and apprenticeship programs; provided continuing education to approximately 18,000 professionals through the

Technical Education and Vocational Training Development Fund and the National Vocational Training Office; and developed an action plan to reduce adult illiteracy while reinforcing vocational skills.

Despite this progress, Senegal still faces challenges. *YouthMap* research indicated:

- Access to middle and senior secondary education is limited, with inequities related to gender, rural/urban location, and socio-economic class.
- The supply of vocational and technical training programs providing high school-equivalent diplomas is very limited. The number and quality of other technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs are low.
- Despite the economic importance of agriculture and rural youths' interest in the sector, there are too few agricultural colleges and training programs.
- Conditions and educational quality in *daaras*, attended by a large number of Senegalese children, vary tremendously. Although some *daaras* are integrating numeracy and literacy in French, many *daaras* focus solely on teaching the Koran.
- Public universities are financially and geographically inaccessible to academically-talented rural youth.

School enrollment data from the MOE's Census 2008 reflect both improvements in primary school access and continued challenges in post-primary education enrollment.

Nationwide Enrollment:

- Primary School: 1.6 million
- Middle School: 437,000
- High School: 120,000
- Tertiary: 90,000

Senegal's Educational Structure

Formal education in Senegal includes six years of elementary school, four years of middle school (*collège*), and three years of senior secondary school (*lycée*). The Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for overall governance of the education system, with specific responsibilities divided between five ministries:

- Pre-school, elementary, and middle schools (MOE)
- Secondary schools and universities (Ministry of Higher Education)
- Technical and professional training centers (Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training)
- Adult literacy and non-formal education (Ministry of Culture)
- School construction (Ministry of Public Works)

Education Partners

Various partners and programs are supporting GoS efforts to address Senegal's education needs, including:

- Public-private partnerships, such as those with mining companies and the World Bank, have funded improvements in relevant high school coursework and university management and capacity, respectively. An upcoming World Bank project in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education will give direct support to institutions to modernize courses, aiming to better prepare students to enter the market with skills in demand.
- USAID's *Education de Base (EDB)* program focuses on improving middle school education access and quality. Its *Education Priorité Qualité (EPQ)* program works to improve teacher training and school management, strengthen middle school students' basic skills, and enhance youth employability. Its Education and Research in Agriculture (ERA) program strengthens tertiary-level agricultural instruction.
- The French Development Agency (AFD) supports both basic education and vocational and professional training to improve quality. The basic education projects have supported schools in developing school improvement plans, including teacher training. In professional training, the projects have supported infrastructure developments and the evaluation and certification of artisans in the informal sector.
- UNICEF, USAID, and other agencies offer programs to help reintegrate former *daara* students into schools and jobs.

Values and Hopes: Youth and Stakeholder Perspectives

Throughout dozens of focus group discussions and stakeholder interviews, it was clear that Senegalese youth value education highly. With few exceptions, **youth in school** expressed a strong desire to attend university. **Out-of-school youth** wanted to learn the skills needed to earn a living, sustain their families, and contribute to their communities. However, youth across the country were keenly aware that formal schooling does not necessarily translate into a better job — or even **any** job.

In focus group discussions and interviews, youth and stakeholders expressed common concerns about the gaps between the education system and the realities of the marketplace and young people's daily lives.

- **The vast majority of *YouthMap* participants and stakeholders agreed that primary education access is no longer a problem due to the government's expansion of primary schools.** From 2000 to 2007 the number of primary schools increased by 58%, from 4,571 to 7,487. According to MOE 2010 data, this expansion has also **produced gender equity in primary school access and completion.**
- Despite improvements in primary school **access**, national primary school **completion rates** are still low with rates of 61 percent and 57 percent, respectively, for females and males. Primary school completion rates for *YouthMap*

Education Profile of YouthMap Participants

Of the 568 youth who participated in FGDs, 63% were enrolled in school or training programs and 37% were not enrolled.

Of those enrolled:

- 7% were in primary school
- 21% were in middle school
- 23% were in senior secondary school
- 38% were in vocational training
- 11% were in university

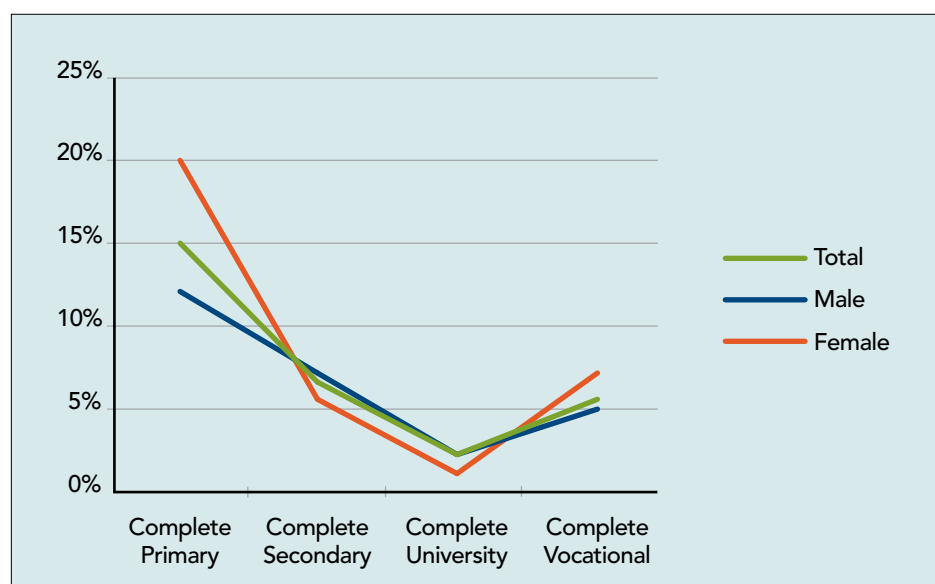
Of those not enrolled:

- 14% had never been to school
- 46% had attended primary school
- 23% had attended secondary school
- 10% had attended or completed vocational training
- 8% had enrolled in or completed university

participants were even lower, at 20 percent for females and approximately 12 percent for males. (As the majority of *YouthMap* participants were between 15 and 30 years of age, many of them had left school prior to the recent gains made in education completion rates.)

- **Explaining their high dropout rates**, youth cited **poverty** as the prevailing cause with costs related to school fees, transport, and academic materials creating significant barriers to attendance. Other reasons cited were:
 - Pregnancy, early marriage, and social or family pressures on girls
 - Failed exams
 - Conflict-related displacement in the Casamance region.

Figure 3: School completion rates for YouthMap participants



School completion rates for YouthMap participants drop steeply after primary school, reflecting both improved primary school access and remaining challenges to post-primary schooling.

- **Both youth and stakeholders interviewed cited infrastructure and teacher quality as significant problems.** *YouthMap* field research indicated teaching quality was perceived to have declined in recent years as contract teachers with lower levels of education and little or no pre-service training were deployed to fill the need for primary and middle school teachers. In all regions outside Dakar, participants reported temporary structures and a lack of libraries, science laboratories, teacher housing, and basic facilities such as latrines.
- **The majority of both youth and adult stakeholders described the educational curricula as too theoretical**, failing to incorporate much-needed and desired technical, practical, and life skills.
 - Stakeholders in rural areas strongly recommended **agriculture-related curricula** in primary schools.
 - Some respondents advocated including **technical and vocational skills in curricula or as a secondary school option**, noting that the majority of youth do not complete secondary school. Only a limited number of technical or vocational pilot projects are currently offered in middle schools.
 - Employers emphasized the need for **life skills** curricula, citing a lack of such skills as problem-solving, decision-making, communication, and effective work habits as common barriers to employment.

Nearly 80 percent of YouthMap participants expressed the desire to learn a skill or trade with the most commonly cited being computer/information technology (ICT) (14%), electrical and mechanical (12%), and agricultural (7%) trades. Relative to these training preferences, some private sector stakeholders stated that a **lack of career guidance** results in too many youth with the same limited skill sets since youth gravitate to familiar fields regardless of labor market needs.

- Noting insufficient access to technical and vocational training outside Dakar, the majority of *YouthMap* participants working in the informal sector reported learning their trades through **apprenticeships** long in duration and low in income.
- Youth currently or previously enrolled in TVET centers expressed concern about whether their certificates or diplomas would be recognized. The Ministry of Technical and Professional Training recently launched an effort to evaluate and recognize such credentials.
- Current and former university students expressed frustration at the quality of university education, noting overcrowded conditions and a lack of employment opportunities for university graduates.



Schools need to put in place guidance counseling for youth. There is a big phenomenon in education to teach youth to be generalists; due to this there are a small number of jobs available because all the profiles are the same.

— Private sector stakeholder

Key Conclusions

Education is a highly valued asset in Senegalese culture. However, *YouthMap* participants, stakeholders, and the data agree that greater resources and new approaches are needed to meet the education needs of the country and its youth.

- With the government’s expansion of **primary schools**, access and completion have improved significantly. However, youth and key stakeholders expressed strong concerns about declines in quality.
- **Post-primary school completion rates** remain a challenge with access limited by inequities based on gender, location, and socio-economic class.
- **Cost and transportation present significant barriers to access to post-primary education.**
- **Inadequate infrastructure** is a persistent problem across all school levels, with rural areas especially under-resourced.
- Youth and key stakeholders believe the **curriculum at all levels** needs to be more practical and better aligned to labor market needs and opportunities, as they noted the educational system “teaches [them] knowledge but not know-how...” More **career guidance, counseling services, and life skills training** are also needed to help youth pursue productive career paths.
- The majority of youth working in the informal sector report learning their trade not through TVET programs but through **apprenticeships** providing little income and requiring several years’ commitment.
- The demand for **TVET** programs exceeds the available supply.
- **Perceptions** on the value of education vary by urban and rural area. Urban and peri-urban youth perceive a university education and formal education as valuable. Rural youth express more interest in vocational and professional training.
- While **peace-building lessons** have been introduced in the middle school curriculum, the lasting effects of the Casamance conflict and violence in other parts of the country suggest the need for expanding peace-building and conflict resolution initiatives throughout and beyond the education system.
- The **relevance of schooling** in general was often questioned. Youth across the country often noted that formal schooling, though valued, rarely led to a better job for their friends and relatives. If this sentiment persists and the link between education and work is not strengthened, there is a risk of decreased interest and demand for schooling by tomorrow’s youth and their parents.

ALIGNING SKILLS WITH DEMAND: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES



“The first problem is the training of young people — they do not learn a skill which would allow them to be properly inserted in society. There is also a lack of financial means. For example, we see a young person working in a factory or shop that lacks material. There are also young people in agriculture, but they have no tools.”

— Private sector stakeholder, Ziguinchor

Employment Outlook and Labor Market Demand

In 2008, Senegal’s national unemployment rate was estimated to be 49 percent; of those unemployed, 60 percent were under 35 years of age. Of youth ages 15-24, five percent were considered underemployed, 10 percent of those seeking work were unable to find it, and 32 percent were considered inactive. Each year, an estimated 100,000 young graduates enter the job market, while in recent years fewer than 30,000 formal sector jobs have been created annually.

In the face of these employment challenges, key players are attempting to shape a more promising economic landscape. In its Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP I and II), the GoS prioritizes support to activities with the potential to create jobs such as crop farming, livestock breeding, fishing, and forestry. In its Accelerated Growth Strategy (AGS), the GoS targets five promising growth areas: agro- and agro-food industry; fishing industry; tourism and the arts and crafts industry; textiles and clothing sector; and ICT. USAID and other donors have invested significant resources in agriculture, Senegal’s largest employment sector (78%) as well.

Key GoS Youth Employment Programs

- The National Youth Promotion Fund (FNPJ) promotes credit access.
- The National Agency for Youth Employment (ANEJ) facilitates links between youth and potential employers.
- The National Action Plan for Youth Employment (PANEJ) mobilizes donors, local stakeholders, and government to provide youth with access to counseling, economic information, and technical, legal and financial support services.
- *Project de Renforcement des Capacités de Suivi et Evaluation des Programmes d’Emploi des Jeunes* is a project to create an electronic youth employment management system with data on job seekers and job offers, and established indicators for monitoring youth employment.
- *Agence d’Exécution des Travaux d’Intérêt Public (AGETIP)* trains and employs unemployed youth on a temporary basis to work on public infrastructure 11% were in university.

Beyond these stimulus efforts, there are a number of other emerging economic opportunities. According to the U.S. Embassy in Senegal, major infrastructure projects promising large potential sources of employment include construction of a new airport, modernization of the port, the US\$ 540 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact, and US\$ 3 billion in foreign investment projects.

The Oxford Business Group’s 2011 Report on Senegal cites Senegal’s emergence as a tourist destination and the development of the Dakar Integrated Special Economic Zone, a regional trade hub with the potential to create 130,000 local jobs.

Beyond these specific economic development efforts, it is also useful to look at employment data by broad sectors and at differences in growth and opportunities within the informal versus formal sectors. According to “Private Sector Demand for Youth Labor in Ghana and Senegal,” a study conducted by the Youth Employment Network (YEN) and IYF in 2009,

the informal⁴ sector represented 80-90 percent of total employment and is projected to have the greatest capacity for future job creation in the near-term. The number of job seekers in the informal sector is also expected to increase.

By comparison, the formal sector⁵ provided far fewer employment opportunities, and its demand for youth is not expected to grow significantly in the near term. Within the formal sector, agriculture, construction, education and security services have the greatest employment potential. Through 2013, the agriculture, forestry, and fishery sectors, followed by services/sales and professions, are expected to offer the greatest employment opportunities for skilled workers.

Other Key Youth Employment Initiatives

Promising programs to bolster employment in various sectors or youth cohorts include:

- Private sector organizations such as *Sope Serigne Fallou* (Thiès) and *Mina Production* (St.-Louis) provide out-of-school or unschooled youth the work experience needed to earn a living.
- UNIDO provides capacity building and induction programs for youth completing vocational programs.
- A variety of NGOs offer youth employment programs. Synapse Center offers employability and entrepreneurship training and support services with support from the GoS, Microsoft, the Finnish Children and Youth Foundation, and USAID; *Incubateur de Femmes* targets young female entrepreneurs.
- Microfinance institutions such as Planet Finance offer programs providing access to credit and technical assistance to young entrepreneurs.
- USAID's *Wula Naafa* program works with farmers on agricultural and business management techniques.

Realities versus Ambitions: Youth and Stakeholder Perspectives

With approximately 54 percent looking for work at the time of the assessment, *YouthMap* participants were well versed in the realities of Senegal's high unemployment rate, under-employment, and precarious or low-quality employment. (See tables on page 16.) Generally, youth reported the same obstacles to obtaining employment as those reflected in the ESPS 2005-2006 poverty survey, which cited lack of jobs and family obligations as the leading reasons for youth inactivity.

Throughout the focus group discussions, youth repeatedly raised the issue of location-based disparities in job and training opportunities. It should also be noted that many youth considered informal work as not working despite explanations of the various types of economic activity. Figure 4, reflects the self-reported data on the current employment status of *YouthMap* participants. In stakeholder interviews, private sector employers stated that a number of youth, particularly those from regions outside Dakar, have not been properly trained for private sector employment.

“

Those who learn on the job in garages and workshops — they are able to do what is asked of them but they are limited in starting their own shops due to lack of training and resources and are still apprentices.

— YouthMap participant, Tambacounda

⁴ The informal sector consists of small-scale economic activities including self-employment and dependent employment within semi-organized structures that operate outside of the formal sector regulated by the government.

⁵ The formal sector refers to economic activities conducted by firms of various sizes in the modern, formal economy in accordance with government regulations.

Working	Yes (%)	No (%)
Male	48	52
Female	32	68
Working	Yes (%)	No (%)
<15	14	86
15-17	23	77
18-20	23	77
21-24	36	65
25-30	68	32

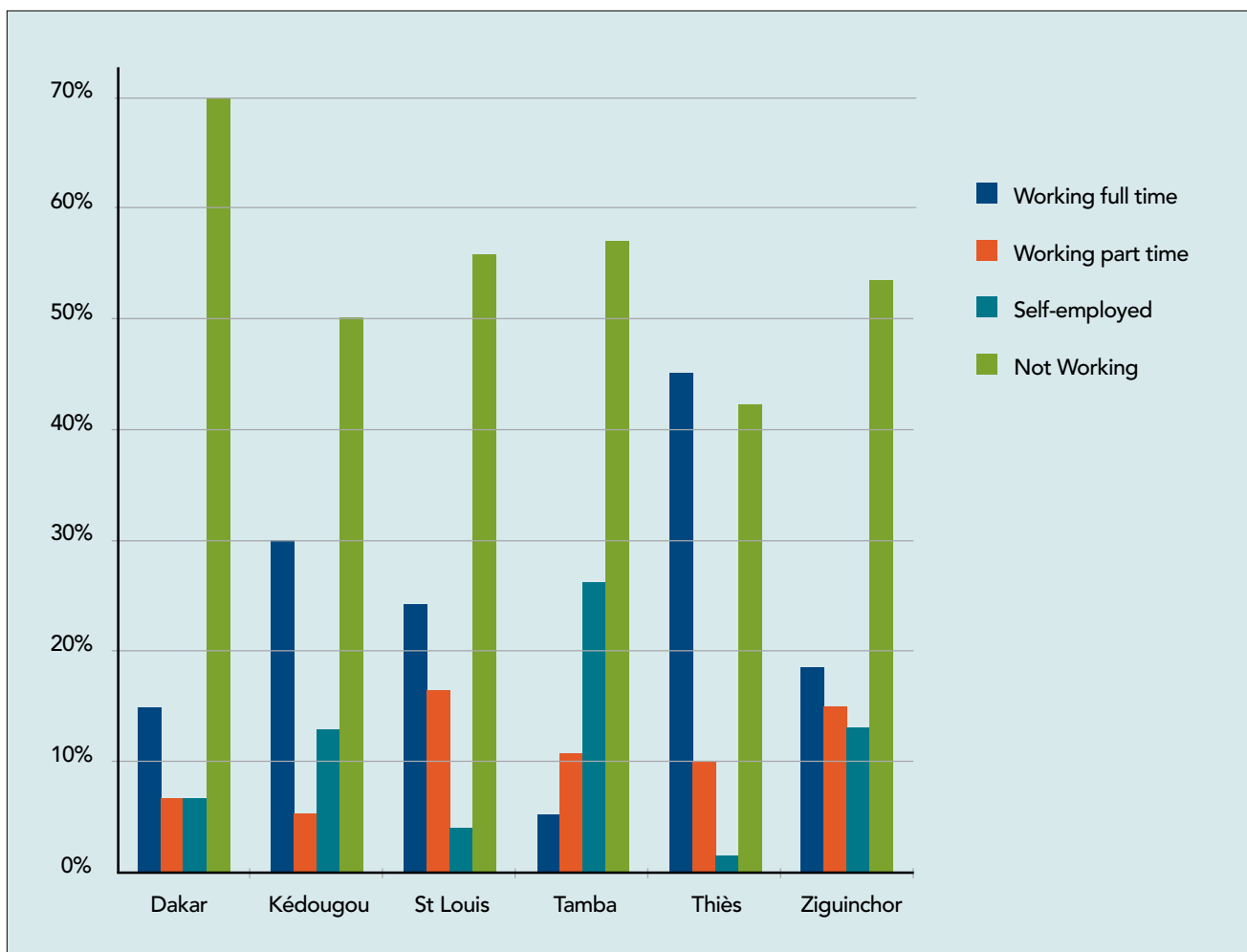
Looking for Work	Yes (%)	No (%)
Male	56	44
Female	52	49
Looking for Work	Yes (%)	No (%)
<15	24	76
15-17	21	79
18-20	43	57
21-24	68	32
25-30	69	31

Note: All percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

Type of Work	Formal	Informal	Seasonal
Male (%)	41	48	15
Female (%)	46	53	10
Total Sample (%)	42	49	14

Note: Some participants held multiple jobs in different sectors, resulting in totals that exceed 100 percent.

Figure 4: YouthMap Participants' Employment Status by Region



Stakeholders and employers interviewed stressed the mismatch between young people’s aspirations and labor market realities. The following chart captures their mutually-held perceptions as to some of the causes of youth unemployment and underemployment and potential solutions.

YouthMap participants, employers, and other stakeholders noted these challenges . . .	And suggested these solutions . . .
<p>Formal sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment opportunities and training and vocational facilities are limited, especially in rural areas. • Youth outside Dakar feel marginalized and disenfranchised by prospective employers who admittedly regard them as unskilled, inexperienced, or inappropriately trained. • Youth job opportunities are primarily for unskilled positions such as security guards, drivers, and wait staff. • The conflict in the Casamance and its resulting economic crisis has significantly decreased the supply of jobs in the region. • Inelastic labor laws constrain companies’ willingness to offer long-term contracts. • The education system’s emphasis on theoretical knowledge does not match the private sector’s need for practical know-how. • Many youth, particularly outside Dakar, lack the life skills needed for professional positions (e.g. communication, customer service, listening skills). • Youth lack the technical skills in advanced farming techniques required by agriculture firms and the heavy machinery skills required by construction firms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralize more training and employment opportunities to address geographic disparities. • Incorporate peace education and conflict resolution in the school curriculum, specifically in the Casamance region. • Integrate more practical life skills, conflict resolution lessons, and agricultural education into school curriculum at all levels. • Include technical and vocational skills — including in agriculture-related fields — in the curriculum or as a secondary school option.
<p>Informal sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of financing is a significant constraint to youth entrepreneurship. • Low-income apprenticeships often drag on for years due to business owners’ limitations or apprentices’ lack of financial resources or skills. • The agriculture sector especially needs more support, development, and financing to grow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide youth entrepreneurs with financing, coaching, business management training, and post-launch support and evaluation to boost success rates. • Provide financial and technical support for youth interested in the agricultural sector. • Provide more career guidance, encouraging youth to explore different training options.

With the informal sector and agriculture representing the greatest opportunities for youth employment, it is important to note the “missing intersections” identified in these comments. While *YouthMap* participants expressed an interest in entrepreneurship, for example, they felt constrained by a lack of training, financing, and follow-up support. According to stakeholders, they also lack many life skills critical both to entrepreneurship and formal employment. While the agricultural sector employs 78 percent of Senegal’s workforce, agricultural firms noted youth lack the skills in advanced farming techniques the sector needs. Stakeholders in rural areas argued for the inclusion of agriculture in primary school curricula. Youth themselves, particularly outside Dakar, said they were interested in agriculture but lacked the land, resources, financing, or material to be fully engaged in the sector.

Key Conclusions

Drawing on available data and youth and stakeholder perceptions, *YouthMap Senegal* concluded:

- Young people's greatest employment challenges are the **lack of formal sector jobs** and the **gap between youth skills and labor market needs**.
- With a national unemployment rate of 49 percent, job creation is an enormous challenge. However, youth and stakeholders believe **the gap between youth skills and labor needs can be bridged with greater collaboration between the government and the private and civil society sectors; increased career guidance and counseling; and more practical education curricula at all levels**.
- **Job opportunities in the formal sector are very limited and the opportunities accessible to youth are generally for low-level, unskilled jobs**. To improve opportunities in the formal sector, *YouthMap* participants suggested increasing the number and practicality of internships and establishing resource centers to connect job seekers and job recruiters.
- **Overall, job opportunities for youth are much more widely available in the informal sector**. To capitalize on existing opportunities and create new ones, stakeholders and youth advocated for providing more entrepreneurial training and support and expanding entrepreneurship education at the middle and high school levels.
- **The agricultural sector is Senegal's largest employer. Many youth expressed interest in farming and agriculture-related business** and suggested providing more financial support, technical training, and resources for this sector.
- **Disparities in job and training opportunities between urban and rural areas are significant**. In a recurring theme, *YouthMap* participants speaking across all issue areas advocated for more resources in rural and remote areas.

PROTECTING A NATION'S ASSETS: YOUTH, HEALTH, AND FAMILY FORMATION

The GoS has made significant progress in health care in recent years: increasing and improving treatment for AIDS patients and HIV-positive pregnant women; increasing the proportion of births occurring in health facilities; maintaining an HIV incidence rate of less than three percent; increasing young people's access to information; and creating highly-regarded adolescent counseling centers where 249,000 youth have received HIV/AIDS screening. As a pilot program, the GoS also incorporated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) rights into the education strategies of five high schools in three regions, into the pre-service training curriculum for schools, and into its Master's degree program in sports education.

However, as reported by the IMF (2008-2009), Senegal still faces uneven distribution of health services between rural and urban areas, inaccessibility to services due to lack of roads and population dispersion, and drugs and vaccines that are in short-supply and unaffordable to many Senegalese. To help address these gaps, USAID, IntraHealth, FHI360, Plan International and other key actors have developed several health programs, including maternal and child health and family planning (FP) with a training component to build the capacity of health technicians.



...At the regional hospital they demanded a boy pay 2,000 FRS, but he did not have the money and he did not receive treatment. He had a broken arm and his parents were not there so we left it like that until 22h. We need free care."

— YouthMap participant, Tambacounda

Drawing on the most recent available national-level data*, several key youth health issues emerge:

- **Access.** More than half (51%) of females age 15-19 lacked the financial resources to access health services. 36% surveyed were constrained by distance to a health facility and 30% by transportation.
- **Early childbirth.** By age 17, almost one in five females (19%) has already had a child. (Early pregnancy is recognized as a risk to both mothers and their children, magnifying the negative impact on youth health.) The majority of pregnant teens (83%) receive prenatal care from a nurse, midwife, or auxiliary worker. However, 7% receive no prenatal care.
- **Family Planning.** 4% of all females aged 15-19 reported using a contraceptive method in 2009 while 10% of married females reported using a contraceptive method.

* DHS (2005-2006); MIS (2008-2009); IMF (2010); see *YouthMap Senegal: The Road Ahead, Volume 1 (Section 4) and Volume 2 (Annex 7)*.

GoS Health Policies and Initiatives

- The National Strategy on Adolescent Health seeks to improve access to youth-focused health services.
- The Youth Promotion Project (PPJ) created adolescent counseling and screening centers, addressing STDs/AIDS and RH issues.
- The Ministries of Youth and Family developed an action plan to eliminate female genital cutting.
- The National Health Development Plan 2009-2018 makes strengthening the health system and funding mechanisms key priorities.

Resources versus Needs: Youth and Stakeholder Perspectives



It is because of a lack of resources. As a young adult, you cannot sit back and watch your mother go out, work hard and feed you. So these girls are prostitutes, they take the responsibility to help their families. Your parents should not take something from you that is acquired by evil means, but it is because of poverty so many girls go into prostitution.

— YouthMap participant, Ziguinchor

In focus group discussions, *YouthMap* participants applauded the youth-friendly services provided by the *Centre Ado*, CDEPS, and various NGOs but echoed many of the IMF's findings regarding access:

- Most of the **youth spoke very highly of youth-friendly services offered by the *Centre Ado***, especially its anonymity, availability of information on sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and RH, and the staff's openness in sharing information. Youth and stakeholders alike believe these centers need more resources.
 - Youth reported receiving **useful information from *Centre Ado*, CDEPS, peer educators, local NGO awareness campaigns, and local radio station infomercials**. However, they did not report receiving RH education or information at school.
 - **Again noting location-based disparities, youth commented that access to health centers varies across regions**. Youth living outside large cities and towns reported that access to health services is quite difficult. Participants said health centers need to be increased in rural areas.
 - Youth commented that the **quality of services is also a problem**, citing insufficient personnel, inadequate medical equipment, and lack of appropriate treatments and medication for common illnesses.
- Youth reported that the **main obstacle to accessing available services is cost**. Youth emphasized it is difficult to pay for health services when their parents are not even able to provide three meals per day.
 - With regard to smoking, consuming drugs or alcohol, crime, prostitution, and unprotected sex, youth strongly viewed such **negative behaviors as symptoms of poverty** with youth seeking to make money or escape their problems.
 - Noting gender-based issues, youth in each of the regions referred to **early marriage and early child bearing** as serious problems with consequences for maternal and child health, education, and economic status.

In addition to general discussions of health in all focus group discussions, *YouthMap* conducted targeted discussions with HIV-positive and disabled youth to assess their healthcare experiences and needs.

Disabled youth reported:

- Physical access to all services is one of their main constraints.
- All specialized health services for the handicapped are concentrated in Dakar and limited in other areas.

HIV-affected youth reported:

- Even in large cities, facilities sometimes do not have all necessary medications in stock.
- In small villages, local facilities do not carry HIV treatments unless ordered for patients. Since youth fear discrimination and stigma if they reveal their condition, they travel to the nearest cities for medication to avoid this stigma. When the medication is not available, it can create both health and financial consequences for youth seeking treatment.

Interviews with public sector and civil society stakeholders confirmed youth perceptions regarding the inadequacy of health services and attributed the gaps between needs and services primarily to budget cuts, lack of qualified personnel, and shortages of personnel. They also confirmed that health centers such as Centre Ado need more resources, especially outside of urban areas.

Key Conclusions

Previous research, youth perceptions, and stakeholder opinions confirm that **young people's healthcare needs far exceed Senegal's healthcare supply:**

- **Health services and facilities in regions outside Dakar are quite limited.** Richard-Toll, Kédougou, and Tambacounda and surrounding villages and towns lack equipment, medications, and qualified personnel.
- **Specialized services are concentrated in Dakar.**
- **Access is a concern** for all youth interviewed and major constraints for disabled or HIV-affected youth.
- **Cost is the primary barrier** for all youth accessing available health services.
- Budget cuts, personnel shortages, and lack of qualified personnel are the **main barriers to providing** services.
- Of the services available to youth, those of the **Centre Ado and CDEPS were the most valued** for their anonymity, access to information on STDs and RH, and openness of staff.
- Beyond a strict issue of health service supply and demand, **early marriage and early pregnancy** continue to be significant issues for youth across Senegal.
- While the GoS has tried to diminish negative behaviors by providing services and information, such **services need to be increased, further decentralized outside the capital, and expanded to address the connections between poverty, unhealthy behaviors, and lack of services and resources.**

PREPARING TO LEAD: CITIZENSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

“

I will vote to make my voice heard.

Either you participate in politics, or
you will endure politics.

— YouthMap participants

Political and Civic Landscape

In 1996, the GoS initiated a series of reforms designed to promote good governance. The 2006 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II further emphasized the promotion of government efficiency, transparency, and the rule of law in a democratic society as key to its pro-growth and poverty reduction efforts. The GoS has initiated a number of programs to support these goals, encourage young people's civic involvement, and instill democratic values in its youth. A number of GoS partners also seek to support civic engagement. UNICEF supports development of the Youth Parliament. The West African NGO, Tostan, seeks to encourage youth's role in decision-making. USAID's Decentralization, Governance and Transparency Program works to promote better governance through greater citizen control.

GoS Civic Engagement Programs

Policies and programs to support civic engagement include:

- The National Civic Service program provides youth volunteers with monthly stipends to work with GoS ministries, health centers, schools, and NGOs. Since 1998, it has supported 4,000 volunteers.
- *Vacances Citoyennes* provides youth with training and education in citizenship during school holidays.
- Support and funding for civil society organizations throughout the country allows youth to be involved in sports, cultural activities, holiday activities, and raising health awareness.
- In partnership with UNESCO and the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, the GoS is in the process of incorporating a Youth Parliament into the National Assembly to give youth a voice in public decision-making.

Despite these efforts, *YouthMap* participants describe a political and civic landscape that falls short of their ambitions for Senegal and their own futures, while expressing their own desires to participate in the political and civic life of their communities and country.

Community and Country: Youth Perspectives

As a general theme throughout the FGDs, youth expressed a strong commitment to their communities but also a deep skepticism about the national political process.

Regarding community involvement . . .

- Youth expressed a great sense of belonging to their communities.
- Youth expressed great interest in participating in community groups and most reported being involved in at least one group.

YouthMap Participants' Civic Engagement Profile

- 85% of youth over age 18 would like to register to vote
- 64% of young men participate in civic activities
- 43% of young women participate in civic activities

Of those who do not participate in civic activities:

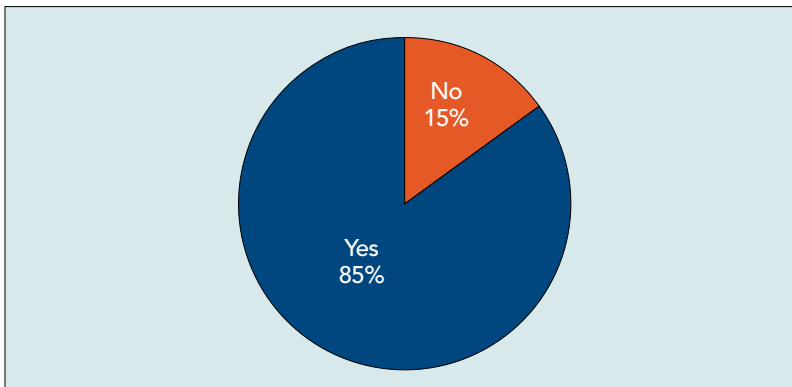
- 42% say it's because they don't have "enough time"
- 22% say they are not interested in participating
- 19% say there are "no opportunities" to participate

- As their main reason for joining community groups, youth cited having something to do other than being at home, school, work, or job hunting. They also tended to engage in activities in which their friends were involved.
- In urban areas, youth were often members of their local neighborhood associations as well as associations of citizens originating from their home districts.
- In rural and remote areas, youth were **committed to improving their regions and communities** but clearly **they did not feel a part of their country**. *YouthMap* participants not actively involved in their communities cited lack of time, services, and opportunities to do so.
- Male youth reported belonging to various religious brotherhoods or *dahiras* and deriving a sense of community, spiritual enlightenment, and satisfaction from those brotherhoods.

Regarding politics . . .

- Politics represented the only part of civil society youth rejected. Overwhelmingly, youth stated that politicians have made and broken too many promises to warrant their trust. Youth reported that they are often manipulated or used by political parties, especially during election campaigns.
- Overall, youth believed that only the politically-connected got ahead and found jobs.
- However, youth often felt **local authorities** helped in supporting their civic organizations.
- Regarding the conflict in the Casamance, youth and stakeholders felt peace negotiations were not progressing. **Youth often prioritized the need for peace over other issues**, strongly believing peace leads to better conditions overall.

Figure 5: Do you own a cell phone?



85% of YouthMap participants had cell phones but just 47% had access to the Internet at least once per week.

A recent voter registry audit estimated 1,130,000 new eligible voters for the upcoming election who have attained the age of 18. However, most of these potential new voters are unregistered to vote or without national ID. This key group represents 23% of the total potential eligible voters.

- Youth were well aware of their potential power in the upcoming election, noting they should not be forgotten due to their large numbers and intent to vote.
- Some participants in a FGD of inactive young men in Kédougou revealed involvement in the December 2008 riots. They attributed these riots to a lack of employment, the government's failure to address their needs, and a general feeling of disenfranchisement from the rest of the country. They also noted frustration with the GoS for permitting mining companies to hire employees from other regions rather than local youth.
- As FGDs took place during events unfolding in Tunisia and Egypt, participants made occasional references to possible future uprisings in Senegal.

- Despite their lack of trust in politicians, most *YouthMap* participants indicated the intent to vote. **Nearly 80 percent of those interviewed and 85 percent of those over age 18 intended to register to vote in upcoming elections.** However, it was not clear whether they were fully aware of the voter registration process.

Key Conclusions

Contrary to the popular belief that youth are not interested in civil society and community service, citizenship is very important to youth in Senegal. However, they are extremely skeptical of politicians and Senegal's political processes.

Other key findings on youth citizenship and engagement included the following:

- Despite distrust of politicians, **the majority of *YouthMap* participants planned to vote in the next elections.**
- Youth described the need to develop their towns and regions as more important to them than development at the national level. **Although many declared their pride in being Senegalese, most youth considered contributing to the development of their communities and regions most important.**
- **The majority of *YouthMap* participants were engaged in some form of civic engagement** including: community, sports, social, cultural and religious groups; volunteer work; and school clubs.
- Youth said that they join groups in order to have something to do. These activities provide an outlet through which youth can connect with their peers.

“

“We need peace to go about our business. Over here, our main activity is agriculture. There is certainly need for material support, but we need peace first and foremost.”

— *YouthMap participant, Ziguinchor*

- According to *YouthMap* participants, Senegal has yet to achieve its goals for a society based on democratic values. Youth commonly expressed the opinion that government is not making efforts to *engage* youth but instead discourages youth from participating in the political process.
- Youth's references to the Kédougou riots and recent events in Tunisia and Egypt suggested concerns about future unrest in Senegal.
- *YouthMap* participants and stakeholders alike were **frustrated at the slow progress of peace negotiations** in the Casamance region.

REACHING SENEGAL'S MOST VULNERABLE: YOUTH AT RISK

Cohorts of youth especially at risk include disabled youth; out-of-school youth (dropouts, street youth, and *talibés*); victims of trafficking; youth affected by the conflict in the Casamance; teenage mothers; youth engaged in prostitution; rape and domestic violence victims; and youth abusing drugs or alcohol. In addition to these recognized at-risk groups, key stakeholders interviewed expressed the view that most of Senegal's youth are at risk to some degree from deteriorating living conditions, regional conflicts, and eroding societal values.

A number of government agencies target services to the various at-risk groups (see below). However, *YouthMap* found government and NGO programs strained to address needs arising from:

- An estimated 100,000 children, most of whom are *talibés*, forced to beg throughout the country, with an estimated 8,000 in Dakar alone (UNICEF).
- An estimated 10,000-40,000 internally displaced persons from the Casamance conflict as of 2010.
- The heavy presence of youth among Senegal's prison population (PRSP II).
- Senegal's role as a source, transit site, and destination for sexually exploitative child trafficking.
- The role of widespread poverty in driving at-risk behaviors including drug and alcohol abuse, high dropout rates, and crime.

GoS Programs for Youth at Risk

- PARRER, a multi-sector partnership, works toward the withdrawal and reinsertion of street children, including *talibés*.
- A Ministry of Justice interagency group addresses child trafficking.
- The Family Ministry's Ginddi Center serves child trafficking victims' nutritional, medical, and other needs.
- AEMO, a court-based entity, provides re-education and reintegration of minors (<18) and youth (18-21).
- Centres for Adaptation (CAS) are reform schools that provide re-education of minors and/or placement in foster care.
- *Centre de Sauvegard* (protection) looks after minors in response to a court judgment or as part of wider preventative measures.
- *Centres Polyvalents*, multi-disciplinary centers, combine AEMO, *Centres de Sauvegard*, and CAS services.



“I think that where there is war, that forces young people to go and do things. Sometimes you see young people who commit crimes and you say that they are rebels. They have nothing to do, nothing to eat, so they take people's things. If you find a young person who sells drugs and you ask him the question he will tell you that he has no trade and that he's looking for money.”

— YouthMap participant, Ziguinchor

Unheard and Under-Served: Youth and Stakeholder Perspectives

To capture the daily lives of youth at risk, *YouthMap* conducted FGDs with youth from various at-risk cohorts (see box below) and also interviewed key stakeholders working with youth at risk.

Cohorts of Youth at Risk Interviewed

- Out-of-school youth and street children found in shelters and non-formal schools
- School dropouts
- *Talibés*
- Youth affected by conflict in the Casamance region
- Juvenile offenders
- Disabled youth
- Teenage mothers and youth engaged in prostitution
- Youth affected by HIV/AIDS

In evaluating these comments, it is important to note that youth at risk state they have little access to information about services available to them. With this lack of awareness, the impact of existing state and non-governmental initiatives may be limited or under-reported.

YouthMap participants and stakeholders reported that . . .	And asked for . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to work is extremely difficult due to negative employer perceptions and a lack of education, training, or basic literacy among youth at risk. • Poverty is the driving factor behind youth crime, drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution, and other destructive behaviors with desperate youth seeking escape from daily hardships. • Youth feel trapped, excluded from the community, and deprived of rights to basic healthcare, decent employment, education and training. • Youth believe they are left out, that their future and needs are not a government priority. They believe funders' money and support does not reach them as it should. • Youth increasingly find themselves without parental or societal support due to violence, armed conflict, growing urbanization, industrialization, and the breakdown of family structures. • One of the ambitions expressed by young people at risk is to have a worthwhile job that allows them to earn enough to live decently like other young people their age. 	<p>Awareness-raising programs for parents on the factors which put their children at risk.</p> <p>Psychosocial support for youth in conflict with the law or living in conflict zones.</p> <p>Training and work programs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School system reintegration • Educational grants for children of impoverished families • Apprenticeships • Literacy programs • Business skills training

While the above comments apply to all at-risk cohorts, youth affected by specific risk factors added other challenges:

Disabled youth said they need infrastructure that takes their disabilities into account, providing appropriate access. They believe the GoS should require that some jobs be reserved for the disabled.

Displaced youth pleaded for the peace, security, and the government resources needed to return to homes and reconstruct their lives. *YouthMap* participants in the Casamance noted that youth involved in aggression are most likely associated with rebels and had been forced into that association.

Talibés reported being forced into their situations by poverty and the need to provide for their families. Civil society stakeholders advocated for schooling and training in a trade for *talibés* and protection from unjust and degrading treatment.

Juvenile offenders stressed the need to be removed from their environments and assistance to deal with the effects of emotional neglect.

Young women stressed the importance of eradicating all forms of discrimination that deprive them of education and work and expose them to domestic violence, forced marriage, and early pregnancy. **A number of stakeholders stressed that girls are in fact one of the groups most at risk.**

Key Conclusions

Overall, youth at risk shared the same aspirations as other Senegalese youth: decent jobs, access to needed infrastructure and services, secure communities, and the support needed to escape poverty.

Yet *YouthMap Senegal's* field research, FGDs, and stakeholder interviews all pointed to the fact that **the needs of youth at risk far exceed the services available.** *YouthMap Senegal* also found:

- **While many young people are visibly at risk on the street, many are equally but less visibly at risk at home.** Young people on the street include talibés and street youth who survive through begging, precarious work, or illegal activities. Young people at home include domestic workers, school dropouts, the displaced and victims of the Casamance crisis. Both groups suffer the effects of violence, limited opportunities, and poverty; however, **different approaches and resources are required to reach them “where they live”.**
- Lacking stable environments and education, **youth at risk are especially frustrated they cannot access jobs** as they feel other Senegalese youth do.
- Senegal's youth at risk feel intensely marginalized. **Lacking access to information and largely unaware of the programs in place to help them,** they fear the GoS is indifferent to their future and as a result resources do not reach them as they should.
- Youth believe **peace in the Casamance is a priority** and a prerequisite to overall improved living conditions.
- Despite their many challenges, youth interviewed expressed **optimism that their conditions could be improved if they were consulted on their needs as policies and programs are developed and implemented.**

SUMMING UP: THE ROAD AHEAD

YouthMap Senegal was designed to answer several key questions about the country's youth: what are their needs and hopes; how well are those needs and hopes being addressed today; and how can public, private, civil society, and donor partners help youth more effectively in the future. By identifying specific gaps between young people's needs and the services and resources available, *YouthMap* provides critical information for targeting future youth programming and investments. By giving voice to the youth affected by those gaps, *YouthMap* captures the human potential that may inspire those investments.

YouthMap Senegal makes clear that the road ahead for Senegal's youth is marked by both obstacles and promise: from the challenges of widespread poverty and high unemployment to the potential of a young, growing population desiring better lives. By realistically addressing the challenges and engaging youth fully in the solutions, *YouthMap* attempts to chart a smoother road ahead, a better future forward for Senegal and its young people.



The International Youth Foundation (IYF) invests in the extraordinary potential of young people. Founded in 1990, IYF builds and maintains a worldwide community of businesses, governments, and civil-society organizations committed to empowering youth to be healthy, productive, and engaged citizens. IYF programs are catalysts of change that help young people obtain a quality education, gain employability skills, make healthy choices, and improve their communities.

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