

Sustainably improving the living conditions of disadvantaged groups

Right to land and food



Context

Politically, Senegal is a stable country with relatively well-functioning state institutions. It has so far remained untouched by regional security crises, but is grappling with serious economic problems that are threatening internal social peace. The health crisis and the deteriorating security situation in neighbouring countries has hit the Senegalese economy hard, and further compounded domestic problems such as joblessness and poverty.

Climate change, appreciable demographic growth and the annual influx of 300,000 young people, whom the Senegalese job market cannot absorb, are exacerbating not just social tensions but also the pressure on natural resources. Those being disproportionately affected by their depletion are rural dwellers, especially women.

HEKS/EPER's engagement in Senegal is aimed at improving the living conditions of disadvantaged rural dwellers and people living close to cities, at the same time ensuring the sustainability of natural resources, on which 60 per cent of Senegalese depend directly. In this phase of the country programme, HEKS/EPER is therefore also focusing on rural, agricultural and livestock-rearing communities and assisting them in sustainably enhancing and preserving their livelihoods.

Objectives, priorities, activities

In Senegal, the 2022-2026 country programme aims to improve the living conditions of socially disadvantaged segments of the population. HEKS/EPER is of the view that this can be achieved not only by boosting their incomes, but also through a holistic support strategy under which the communities are involved in

Senegal

HEKS/EPER main focus:
Development Cooperation



Population (2021)

17,2 Mio.

Area km²

196 722



decision-making processes. To that end, HEKS/EPER and its partners support grassroots entities in organizing themselves, and enables them to participate in the decision-making bodies of their communes. With the setting up of village committees or the launch of agreements on the management of natural resources, HEKS/EPER is helping to ensure that these resources are used more fairly. Steps to preserve and regenerate them are combined with measures to encourage sustainable forms of use and marketing approaches by participating producer groups and associations.

Furthermore, support is being given to the creation of a citizens' watch, which can prevent and report violations of the law, such as the frequent land grabs. At the national level, HEKS/EPER supports its civil society partners in monitoring and participating in crucial political reform processes such as the revision of the land law or the law governing herders.

Target groups

For the 2022-2026 period, some 30,000 people will receive direct assistance under the programme. Another 150,000 people will benefit indirectly from the measures.

Partnerships, networks, alliances, memberships

The Coordination Office (CO) strives to build both strategic and functional partnerships with various interest groups (international and national NGOs, research facilities, universities, private sector players, state and national job creation initiatives, and local and traditional authorities). For example, the team at the Thiès Coordination Office forms part of several coordination networks such as CONGAD (Conseil des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement) or PFONGUE (Plateforme des ONG européennes au Sénégal) – both development NGOs – or thematically important working groups such as CRAFS (Cadre de Réflexion et d'Action sur le Foncier au Sénégal) – in the realm of land access – or DyTAES (Dynamique pour une Transition Agro-Ecologique au Sénégal) – in agro-ecology.

HEKS/EPER on the ground

The Thiès Coordination Office comprises a small team of three operational staff members of both genders, assisted by a further five staff members (drivers, security personnel, secretaries). Projects are implemented through five partner organizations in different operational areas.

Topics and working approach

The Senegal country programme is guided by the following programmatic goals:

- Respect for the fundamental HEKS/EPER principles;
- Promoting the transfer of skills;
- The pursuit of an integrated development strategy.

In addition, all HEKS/EPER activities in Senegal are based on a human rights-driven approach, which project participants place at the centre of decision-making from the very start. By being more involved in the process of administrating the region, local communities are expected to gain greater autonomy. In this connection, HEKS/EPER also works closely with government authorities in order to support them in fulfilling their obligations towards local communities.

Country:

Senegal

HEKS/EPER No.: 376.400

Responsibility:

Kaspar Akermann

Contact:

Swiss Church Aid (HEKS/EPER)
Communication
Seminarstrasse 28
CH-8042 Zurich
Switzerland
Phone: +41 44 360 88 00
E-mail: projektdienst@heks.ch
www.heks.ch/english