



***BUILDING PEACE
AND PROSPERITY IN THE CASAMANCE***

FINAL REPORT

Presented to USAID

By World Education

FINANCED BY USAID N° 685-A-00-01-00137-00

WORLD EDUCATION
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD

1. INTRODUCTION

2. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROGRAM

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

A. Program Goals

B. Program Objectives

4. INTERVENTION ZONES AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS ON THE PROGRAM

5. LENGTH OF THE PROGRAM AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS ON THE ACTIVITIES

6. EXECUTION OF THE PROGRAM BUDGET

7. MATERIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES USED TO MANAGE THE PROGRAM

8. INTERMEDIARY AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS WHO BENEFITED FROM THE PROGRAM

9. STRATEGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION OF THE PROGRAM

a) Capacity building of community based organizations

b) Micro- projects

c) Cultural Weekends

d) Interaction with the MFDC to help facilitate a reconciliation between the warring factions

e) The voice of opinion leaders

10. WORLD EDUCATION SENEGAL'S PARTNERS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM

- a) *ACA (Association Conseil pour l'Action)*
- b) *TOSTAN*
- c) *APRAN (Association pour la Promotion Durable de l'Arrondissement de Nyassia)*
- d) *AAA (Afrique Aide Afrique)*
- e) *Le Collectif des Cadres de la Casamance (Collective of High Ranking Professionals from the Casamance)*

11. SYNERGY WITH OTHER ACTORS

12. RESULTS AND IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM

1. RESULTS AND IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM IN TERMS OF MECHANISMS, STRUCTURES AND ENVIRONMENT FOR THE RESOLUTION AND PREVENTION OF CONFLICTS

1.1) Cultural Weekends

1.1.1 Relevance of the Cultural Weekends

1.1.2 Definition of the Cultural Weekends

1.1.3 What is a Cultural Weekend?

1.1.4 What happens during a Cultural Weekend?

1.1.5 Expected results of the Cultural Weekends

1.1.6 Preparation and execution of the Cultural Weekends

1.1.7 Community Participation

1.1.8 Participation of opinion leaders

1.1.9 Participation of the MFDC

1.1.10 Participation of administrative authorities

1.1.11 Participation of NGOs and technical services

1.1.12 Participation of central authorities

- 1.1.13 *Participation of the press*
- 1.1.14 *Results and impacts noted during the cultural weekends*
- 1.1.15 *Sector-based conclusions*

1.2) *Peace Building Micro-Projects*

- 1.2.1 *Results and impacts noted during the implementation of the peace building micro-projects*
- 1.2.2 *Sector-based conclusions*

2. PROGRAM RESULTS AND IMPACTS FROM THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING OF INTERMEDIARY AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

2.1) *Institutional capacity building of intermediary organizations : AJAEDO, AJAC, OFAD, KORASE*

- 2.1.1 *Strengthening of institutional capacities*
- 2.1.2 *Recorded results and impacts in the strengthening of intermediary organization's capacities*
- 2.1.3 *Strengthening of technical performance*
- 2.1.4 *Recorded results and impacts in the strengthening of technical capabilities*
- 2.1.5 *Sector-based conclusions*

2.2) *Institutional capacity building of community based organizations*

- 2.2.1 *The creation and strengthening of management committees' organizational and technical capabilities*
- 2.2.2 *Strengthening technical capacity by the training of millers, canoe drivers, shopkeepers, midwives and community health agents*
- 2.2.3 *Acquisition of knowledge in the areas of human rights, stress and trauma management and non-violent conflict resolution*

2.2.3.1 Human rights training

2.2.3.2 Stress management training

2.2.3.3 Training in the non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts

2.2.4 Recorded results and impacts in the institutional capacity building of community based organizations

2.2.5 Sector-based conclusions

3. PROGRAM RESULTS AND IMPACTS NOTED ON EFFORTS TO RE-EQUIP COMMUNITIES AND REHABILITATE SOCIAL AND-EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURES THROUGH INITIATIVES TO ENCOURAGE THE RESUMPTION OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

3.1) Results and impacts of the socio-economic micro-projects

3.2) Sector-based conclusions

4. PROGRAM RESULTS AND IMPACTS IN SUPPORT OF THE MFDC IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ACTORS WORKING TOWARDS THE RETURN OF PEACE IN THE REGION

4.1) Results and impacts recorded in support of the MFDC

4.2) Sector-based conclusions

13. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROGRAM

14. ANECDOTES

15. GENERAL CONCLUSION

16. ANNEX 1-8

**“BUILDING PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN THE CASAMANCE”
FINAL REPORT**

FORWARD

World Education was awarded a three-year program entitled, "Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance," which was financed under USAID's Casamance Special Objective. In this final report, we plan to examine World Education's contribution towards rebuilding peace in the Casamance.

The interesting results recorded during the implementation of this USAID-funded program are in large part due to the engagement of World Education's different partners, but more importantly, to the strong mobilization of community based organizations.

The program "*Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance*" also benefited from the continued support of administrative authorities such as the governors of Ziguinchor and Kolda and the different prefets. The military authorities, gendarmerie and police forces also offered their support whenever their services were requested.

However, we cannot overlook the support of the two Ministers of the Interior Mamadou Niang and Macky Sall who succeeded one another during the life of this project, as well as, the former Minister of the Armed Forces, Youba Sambou, his Excellence the Ambassador Latif Gueye, former Executive Secretary of L'Afrique Aide Afrique, Pierre Goudiaby ATEPA, Advisor to the President of the Republic, and George Lopez, Secretary General of high ranking professionals from the Casamance. The multifaceted support that these individuals contributed to the program is undeniable.

Unfortunately, it would be impossible for this report to offer an exhaustive description of all of the rich lessons we have learned from this program. It is for this reason that World Education Senegal has made available a library of information including reports and notes, photos, cassettes and videos, which offer in-depth explications and information on all of the program events that have taken place over the past three years.

Throughout the execution of the program, World Education placed special emphasis on the preparation and implementation of socio-economic and peace building activities. In particular, World Education put all the necessary mechanisms in place to assure the sustainability of their interventions.

It is for this reason that World Education insisted upon the capacity building of its beneficiary and partner organizations and communities in order to give them the qualifications necessary to continue their activities. The success of the program, *"Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance"*, can be credited to our insistence on capacity building along with the strong commitment and mobilization from our partners.

Finally, World Education would like to thank USAID whose funding made the implementation of this program possible. In particular, we would like to offer a special thanks to Donald Clark, former USAID Senegal Country Director and Leila Abu-Gheida, former Cognizant Technical Offer for the Casamance Special Objective, both of whom left the USAID Dakar mission for Nepal before the end of the program. Their knowledge of the Casamance conflict helped them to easily understand, approve and support our program strategies. They were replaced respectively by Olivier Carduner and Kathryn Lane whom we would also like to thank for effectively filling the shoes of their predecessors. A warm thank you also goes out to Bernadette Daluz, Agreement Officer, Lamine Coly, USAID's local Representative in the Casamance and Sounka NDiaye, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. USAID offered pertinent and regular feedback not only on the different reports produced by World Education, but also on their numerous trips to visit our field activities. Their support contributed greatly to the success of this unique program.

1. INTRODUCTION

The program, *"Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance,"* Cooperative Agreement" N° 685-A-00-01-00137-00, was executed by the NGO World Education for a period of three years from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2004.

The program *"Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance"* is part of USAID's Special Objective for the Casamance which was put into place to respond the region's specific needs created by a twenty year long armed conflict. It is important to note that through this funding mechanism, USAID has supported numerous national and international NGOs that are implementing projects in a variety of different domains.

The program *"Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance"*, contributes to the goal of the Casamance Special Objective which aims to improve the social and economic conditions of the southern region of the country. World Education created mechanisms in order to contribute to this goal including objectives to help restore peace, as well as, manage and prevent conflicts.

Due to the complexity of the task, World Education recognized the necessity to create strong relationships with a multitude of partners intervening at the field level. In addition, particular attention was paid to the beneficiary community based organizations who eventually obtained the skills necessary to become well-informed actors in their own development. By creating a synergy at the beginning of the project among the actors involved in the peace process, the communities, and World Education, we were able to fully understand the complexities of the conflict and achieve extremely significant results.

This final report is a narrative summary of the principal aspects covered during the execution of the program.

- ✓ The first area covered will be the context within which the program was implemented. This will be followed by the goals and objectives which will lead into the strategy that was developed to execute the program.
- ✓ The report will then cover the results and impacts from all of the program's activities. In an effort to be as clear as possible, the results and impacts will be measured successively against each of the different program objectives. After reviewing the results and impacts of each activity in reference to the program's objectives, we will then offer an estimation of the advances made by the program's activities in each of the targeted objectives.
- ✓ In addition, a program focusing on a subject as particular and pertinent as conflict should serve as a learning tool. Therefore, this report has devoted an entire chapter to the lessons learned during the implementation of this program's activities. We have also reserved an entire section for various quotations expressing the true feelings from both the actors and beneficiaries of the program's activities.
- ✓ Finally, a general conclusion will attempt to offer a global assessment of the program's impact on the Casamance peace process. We will also offer some perspectives on the current direction of this process.

This report is based upon the numerous final and mid-term evaluations that were conducted throughout the program. In addition, the different observations and appreciations from the program's actors and beneficiaries will be incorporated into the text. The report is evidently also based on the analysis of those who were responsible for the program's implementation. The combination of these diverse sources makes this report not only a simple presentation of the program, but a didactic restitution of the methodologies, activities, lessons learned and impacts.

2. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROGRAM

The program, “*Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance*” seems to have arrived at the most opportune moment. The Casamance region has been suffering the consequences of a long rebellion that has affected all aspects of the population’s lives. The social structures, socio-educational infrastructures, diverse investments and means of production have been completely halted and devastated in most areas of the region.

This social, cultural and economic disorganization has put enormous stress on the inhabitants of this southern zone. The consequences of these extremely difficult conditions have led to limited access to socio-educational services. There is also poor use of methods of production, such as the earth, which have become inaccessible due to landmines.

Facing the destruction of a once thriving Casamance, various actors have become engaged in the search for peace in this southern part of Senegal. World Education Senegal’s program, “*Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance*” which aims to contribute to the peace process through social and economic development falls within this framework.

Thanks to the efforts of the various actors intervening in the region, a lull in the fighting has begun. This positive evolution has given birth to renewed hope among the populations allowing for a slow resumption of economic and socio-educational activities that had come to a complete standstill during the zenith of the crisis. Despite the fact that the fighting has practically diminished, the consequences of the conflict prevent the motivated populations from completely relaunching their pre-war activities.

However, it has become absolutely necessary for all of the actors involved in the process to double their efforts in order to reinforce and sustain the peace which has begun to install. In fact, it is the return to a pre-war peaceful Casamance that is the sine qua non for a total resumption of activities at the community level. It is this conviction that initially pushed World Education into joining the other actors working towards the restoration of peace in the Casamance.

Faced with the important challenge of mitigating the conflict in the Casamance, World Education has become firmly engaged in the search for peace and the relaunching of development activities. All of these activities can undoubtedly be justified.

3. REVIEW OF THE PROGRAM'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Goal of the Program

The program "*Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance*" is part of USAID's special objective which focuses its interventions on the Casamance. Therefore, the goal of World Education's program "*Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance*" plans to contribute to the achievement of the Casamance Special Objective's goal which is :

The improvement of the economic and social conditions of the populations in the south of the country.

B. Objectives of the Program

In order to reach its goals of participating in the return of peace and the social and economic development of the populations of the Casamance, World Education has set a certain number of objectives:

- a) Promote the creation of mechanisms, structures and an environment to resolve and prevent conflicts ;
- b) Reinforce the institutional capacity of community and intermediary based organizations ;
- c) Support village organizations to re-equip and rehabilitate socio-educational infrastructures in order to renew their accessibility ;
- d) Support village level organizations that aim to support the resumption of economic activities ;
- e) Help coordinate the MFDC in its various relationships with the government and other actors working towards the return of peace.

4. INTERVENTION ZONES AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS ON THE PROGRAM

At the request of USAID, the program intervened in the regions of Ziguinchor and Kolda, more precisely the departments of Oussouye, Ziguinchor, Kolda and Sedhiou. The departments of Bignona and Velingara did not benefit from the program's interventions. While not intervening in Velingara did not cause many repercussions for the program, the same cannot be said of Bignona.

In fact, a huge rivalry exists between the department of Oussouye which is controlled by Abbe Augustin Diamacoune and the department of Bignona who faithfully follow the commands of Sidy Badji. During the implementation of our program, there were periods of extreme tension between these two different camps.

The struggle between these two zones for control over the entire rebel movement automatically deems those partisan to the faction in the area where they are working.

Despite the fact that we were not intervening in Bignona, World Education was able to circumvent the quarrels between the two camps and help them move towards a reconciliation. The fact that World Education remained completely transparent and neutral in their actions allowed them to avoid being considered partisan to Abbe Diamacoune by Sidy Badji's group.

5. LENGTH OF THE PROGRAM AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS ON THE ACTIVITIES

The cooperative agreement was signed for a period of three years from June 19, 2001 to June 30, 2004. It is important to point out that three years is a relatively short period of time designated to such a complex program. Certain actions, especially those directly linked to peace building, demand an enormous amount of time to make contacts, raise awareness, create allies, start negotiations, etc. In addition, certain events such as the various conferences and cultural weekends require enormous amounts of preparation time. There are numerous considerations that cannot be overlooked such as the security of the participants and suspicions around the true nature of the activity that often create slight glitches in the planning stages.

Word Education's team was constantly dealing with the issue of how to allocate enough time to properly complete sensitive activities while still respecting the timeline within which the program needed to be executed.

6. EXECUTION OF THE PROGRAM BUDGET

World Education Senegal completed the program within the designated time period. All of the activities outlined in the cooperative agreement were properly carried out and the amounts necessary for their implementation were put in place by USAID in a timely manner.

The funds were obligated to World Education as indicated below. The money was obligated in three installments after the approval of World Education's annual work plans and reports.

- 1) The first installment in the amount of \$ 658 674 was put in place after the approval of the annual work plan for year one ;
- 2) The second installment in the amount \$ 500 000 was put in place after the submission and approval of the annual report for year one and the Work Plan for the second year of activities ;

- 3) The third installment in the amount of \$ 529 495 was made available after the submission and approval of the annual report for year two and the work plan for the third year of activities. However, due to a cash flow problem at USAID, the third installment was obligated in two installments of \$99 678 and \$429 817.

It is also important to point out that the fall of the dollar during the first year of program activities greatly reduced our capacity to finance activities. During the life of our program, the dollar plummeted from 747 to 502 and the program did not receive any additional funding or modifications to account for the severe decline of the dollar.

The allocation of funds was correctly managed. Funds were always made available on a timely basis to World Education's line of credit. The CTO, Leila Abu-Gheida, and the Agreement Officer, Mrs. Bernadette Daluz, offered impeccable support to World Education Senegal's Director of Finance and Administration.

The program funds were managed by the Director of Finance and Administration, Mrs. Alyssa Karp, under the supervision of the Program Director. The Finance Director and her agents, who were all based in our headquarters office, followed very closely the execution of the program budget. All of these measures taken to manage the budget rigorously and efficiently complimented the expertise of our Finance Director allowing for a smooth execution of program expenses. The budget was also executed in accordance with USAID regulations. All of the financial reports were also submitted to USAID on a timely basis allowing them to closely monitor the evolution of expenses and their conformity with the designated program budget. An internal audit was conducted near the end of the program attesting to the quality and respect for USAID regulations in which World Education manages its finances.

At the end of the program, the finances and administration were closed out adhering to USAID's strict rules and regulations. The end of the program was closely monitored during the entire final year by a close-out plan that was created by World Education and submitted to USAID for review.

As a compliment to this final report, World Education's headquarters in Boston will submit a final financial report to USAID. This exhaustive financial report will cover the management of the entire program's finances.

7. MATERIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES USED TO MANAGE THE PROGRAM

World Education chose to base its headquarters in Ziguinchor in order to closely monitor the program operations and activities that were happening in the field. Our contacts and communications with different interlocutors in Dakar were managed through periodic trips, as well as, our logistical partner ACI (Africa Consultants International).

World Education Senegal made the choice to not be directly operational in the field, by placing the majority of the community based supervision in the hands of our partner organizations. The actual office of World Education in Ziguinchor is quite small and is comprised of the following positions :

- ❑ A Director in charge of the orientation and supervision of the program ;
- ❑ A Director of Finance and Administration in charge of the execution of the budget ;
- ❑ An Administrative Assistant in charge of secretarial tasks and assisting in administrative and financial operations ;
- ❑ A Program Coordinator in charge of training and program operations ;
- ❑ A Grants Manager in charge of studying and monitoring the micro-projects ;
- ❑ Two Drivers in charge of logistics and diverse equipment.

Apart from the first Program Coordinator who was released and replaced during the first year of the project for insufficient results, all of the team's members have performed with great satisfaction. The commitment and expertise of the staff also contributed greatly to the success of the program.

8. INTERMEDIARY AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS WHO BENEFITED FROM THE PROGRAM

The two major beneficiaries of the program were the *community based* and *intermediary* organizations.

For the *community based organizations*, the program targeted populations mobilized in village associations, rural communities, neighborhood associations, sports and leisure associations, as well as, federations groups in the zones of intervention. The choice of these beneficiaries was based upon a certain number of criteria.

We were able to reach men, women, and youth from all different backgrounds in an equitable manner while attaining the number of villages required by our agreement with USAID.

The aforementioned agreement required World Education to reach 150 villages throughout the life of the program. This objective was not only met, but we largely surpassed it by working directly in a total of 208 villages. By virtue of their configuration, the micro-projects that we financed in our program polarized a large number of villages gravitating towards the village that housed the project. Therefore, due to this polarization of certain villages around a central village housing a micro-project, we were actually able to reach 479 villages. Of these villages, an estimated 43 are located in the neighboring country of Guinea Bissau.

In terms of Intermediary Organizations, the program worked in collaboration with OFAD NAFOORE and KORASE in the region of Kolda. In the region of Ziguinchor, we collaborated with AJAC and AJAEDO. These intermediary organizations are local structures that had very weak levels of competencies at the beginning of our partnership. On the other hand, they had excellent knowledge of the local areas where the program was intervening. The program worked on reinforcing their capacities which they then used in order to effectively implement activities in the local communities found in their areas of intervention.

9. STRATEGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION OF THE PROGRAM

The program is not only complex due to the fact that was implemented in a conflict zone, but also because it has overly ambitious objectives of improving the socio-economic conditions of the populations and restoring peace in the region. All of these factors necessitate a diversified strategy identifying the various activities to be undertaken.

After many long debates within our team and home office we settled on the basic components of our program strategy. Our strategy is based on increasing the areas of expertise of the program's actors and recipients, reconciling the different rebel factions, and the creation of opportunities that offer sustainable solutions to priority needs of the local communities. The program was therefore executed using a strategy that focuses on the interaction of the following five aspects:

a) The capacity building of community based organizations.

Capacity building of community based organizations, so that they can be responsible for their own actions, is a fundamental part of World Education's intervention strategies. In fact, very early on in the program we communicated to the populations that our major preoccupation was to equip communities with the knowledge and capacities necessary to assure the sustainability of our activities. Convinced of the veracity of this idea, the populations became totally invested in the acquisition of knowledge.

The program has fully focused its attention on reinforcing the capacity of village associations so that they can properly manage projects that aim to revive economic activities, as well as, prevent and manage conflicts at the community level.

This emphasis on capacity building was the basis for numerous training workshops that took place during the program. The training topics focused on the various areas of capacity building for locally based organizations: needs identification, opportunities for activities, elaboration of projects and action plans, project management, monitoring and evaluation of projects, prevention and management of conflicts, stress and trauma management and human rights.

In order to make this strategy of capacity building operational, the program used a series of training modules that were available within World Education and its partner organizations. We were obliged to create training modules for the newer themes, such as the prevention and management of conflicts, where training modules didn't already exist.

It was on the basis of these modules, administered by qualified trainers, that we were able to begin strengthening the capacity of local communities.

b) Micro-Projects

By virtue of their situation, populations living in conflict zones are more prone to extreme conditions of poverty than those living in peaceful areas. For this reason, World Education believes that we cannot begin working on restoring peace to a region that still has very basic needs that must be addressed in order to better life conditions. Therefore, a major axis in our program strategy focuses on financing micro-projects that directly respond to the priority needs in communities.

In addition, these micro-projects offer practical field experience for the communities. It is through the implementation of these micro-projects that the populations are able to make use of the different trainings they have received throughout the program. Another important aspect of these micro-projects is the creation of opportunities to mobilize communities around peace building activities in order to overcome societal divisions created by the conflict.

In total, World Education executed 138 micro-projects including a few small complimentary projects financed by WFP (World Food Program) and L'Afrique Aide l'Afrique. These projects effectively satisfied the population's practical needs and incited a vast mobilization of the communities around collective activities that contributed to easing of tensions and disagreements.

c) Cultural Weekends

For a variety of reasons such as distrust, protection, and security, communities living in conflict situations often take refuge within. They disconnect themselves from the society and reduce all forms of communication to a strict minimum. The tissue of cultural and social relations disintegrates, cutting off the major channel of communication in these traditional societies. The populations live in an atmosphere full of tension and suspicion which only contributes to inter-group conflicts all of which fuel the rebellion.

World Education Senegal feels that all interventions taking place in this type of atmosphere should work to restore all social, cultural and economic activities that have been repressed. It is for this fundamental reason that World Education used the strategy of cultural weekends as an ice-breaking activity to start work in our different zones of intervention.

The cultural weekend is a large meeting that takes place during an entire weekend and assembles many villages living in the same rural community. Other people working in the same area are also invited to discuss how the conflict has affected their lives. The weekend serves as a collective reflection done by those who are directly affected by the conflict and those who want to help contribute to peace in the region. The result of these weekends is a list of recommended actions that will help restore peace and revive economic and socio-educational activities.

The strategy for cultural weekend is a dynamic process by which the populations of a given community are given the opportunity to speak openly about how the crisis has affected their lives. Moreover, the forum goes a step further in allowing the populations themselves to offer pertinent initiatives and solutions to come out of this crisis situation.

World Education worked very hard to prepare the cultural weekends so that they would be intense moments of sharing, reconnecting and exchange between people living in the same rural community, internally displaced people, opinion leaders, fighters, the MFDC and the government. The hope was that by bringing all of these different actors together, we could offer forgiveness and moved towards restoring peace.

The cultural weekends were based on local Diola traditions of fostering reconciliation through cultural avenues such as traditional song and dance, theatre and sport. Meticulous preparation and research into these traditional peace building methods all fed into this culturally adapted pedagogy which succeeded in marking the first step towards a renewed ambiance in these communities.

d) Interaction with the MFDC to help facilitate a reconciliation between the warring factions

Peace building activities can take on many different forms. While some actors may choose to work directly with the warring factions, others may choose to intervene in the communities at a much more global level. At the beginning of this program, World Education conducted an in-depth analysis of the conflict in the Casamance and decided that it could play in a significant role in helping the MFDC (rebel movement) organize their internal operations hopefully leading to more fruitful negotiations with government structures. This strategic choice was dictated by our analysis of the current management of the conflict which proved to be lacking effective channels of communication between the government and the MFDC.

This straightforward approach of putting the MFDC in direct contact with different government authorities has been by far the most difficult aspect of this strategy.

It is evident that this strategic approach is not without risk. World Education decided to take the chance of entering into an area of specialized interlocutors coming from the government and the leaders of the MFDC, which has been somewhat foreign to NGOs up until recently. However, conscious of the consequences this type of engagement could create for an NGO, the risk was carefully calculated by World Education who made concerted efforts to conduct these activities as transparently and neutrally as possible.

e) The voice of opinion leaders

The baseline studies that were conducted at the beginning of the project showed that opinion leaders can play a crucial role in the peace process. Despite the fact that the conflict has prevented many of these leaders from exercising their functions, they have still retained a great amount of respect from the communities. Even throughout war time, people remain very attached to the values that different opinion leaders represent. However, these same studies also showed that the rebellion gave birth to various intercommunity conflicts of great complexity. The nature, specificity and profoundness of these conflicts only seem solvable through intercommunity dialogue lead by this type of unmatched authority.

World Education Senegal opted for strategy that would reinforce the role and place of opinion leaders in the prevention and management of conflicts at the community level.

10. WORLD EDUCATION SENEGAL'S PARTNERS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM

For the execution of the program, World Education Senegal chose to collaborate with a certain number of local partners. These partners were chosen based on their expertise in the principal areas of the program's interventions. Therefore, organizations such as ACA, TOSTAN, APRAN, Afrique Aide Afrique, and the Collectif des Cadres de la Casamance were chosen to assist World Education in specific elements of the program's activities.

a) The NGO ACA (Association Conseil pour l'Action)

The NGO ACA (Association Conseil pour l'Action), has the experience of implementing numerous programs in Senegal and the sub-region. ACA was responsible for completing the organizational assessments of our intermediary organizations. The assessments were then followed by capacity building trainings focusing on the management of projects. ACA always responded to the needs of the program in a professional manner during their collaboration with World Education.

b) The NGO TOSTAN

The NGO TOSTAN is mostly known for its work in literacy and female genital cutting, but they have also developed a series of modules focusing on human rights. TOSTAN was invited to be a partner in our program administering their human rights training modules. During the first year of the program, TOSTAN completed human rights trainings in a certain number of associations in the departments of Kolda and Sedhiou.

At the end of the first year of the program, World Education and TOSTAN ended their collaboration due to poor communication and lack of reporting on the evolution of program activities. However, this did not have an adverse affect on the program because the human rights trainings were taken over by OFAD who had attained a sufficient amount of expertise in this area. OFAD effectively administered the human rights trainings during the rest of the program.

c) The Association APRAN

The Association APRAN (Association pour la Promotion Durable de l'Arrondissement de Nyassia), who had organized cultural weekends in the past, collaborated with World Education to share their past experiences and offer methodological support in the organization of our cultural weekends. As agreed upon, our collaboration was limited to the organization of the 4 cultural weekends in the department of Oussouye. During the months that APRAN intervened in the program, they collaborated well World Education.

d) AAA (Afrique Aide l'Afrique)

World Education believes that the resolution of a conflict of this nature, which is an armed rebellion against state controlled powers, cannot be limited to local actors or community based decision making centers. It is for this reason that we asked his Excellence, the Ambassador Latif Gueye, Executive Secretary of l'Afrique Aide l'Afrique (AAA), to offer support to World Education in its efforts to restore peace in the Casamance.

The Ambassador accepted World Education's request because one of AAA's missions is to work on the prevention and resolution of conflicts in all of Africa. In addition, World Education and AAA have similar approaches of putting the principal actors, such as the MFDC and the communities, at the centre of the process.

There is no question that the close ties between the Ambassador Latif Gueye and the President of Senegal served as an advantage for the situation in the Casamance. AAA contributed immensely to World Education's program and his Excellence was instrumental in the reconciliation between Abbe Diamacoune Senghor and Sidy Badji, as well as, the preparation of the Casamanco-Casamancais meetings.

The Ambassador Latif Gueye personally took part in the cultural weekend organized in the village of Mlomp. The Ambassador took advantage of this situation to reaffirm the government's commitment to bringing sustainable peace to the Casamance. Up until the time he was arrested, the Ambassador Latif Gueye remained very active in the Casamance peace process.

e) CCC (The Collective of High Ranking Professionals from the Casamance)

After having decided to adopt a strategy that works on reconciling the MFDC and Senegalese authorities, World Education Senegal considered it more judicious to involve other partners in this ambitious task. We decided to choose a partner whose approach seemed representative of the population of the Casamance, but also adhered to our values. Therefore, World Education decided to work with the Collectif des Cadres de la Casamance (CCC), a group of high ranking professionals from the Casamance.

Throughout the execution of the program, the CCC contributed greatly to the program through a completely transparent collaboration. Their status as a neutral association, composed of Casamance natives, places them in a powerful position to intervene in the conflict that cannot be claimed by other members of the civil society. Besides its status, the CCC is composed of very influential people who are very familiar with the Casamance conflict. In fact, many members are already very active in the peace process.

It is undeniable that the architect, Pierre Goudiaby ATEPA, President of the CCC and Technical Advisor to the President of Senegal, played an instrumental role in our program and the Casamance peace process. The same can be said for the Executive Secretary of the CCC and the right hand man of Pierre Goudiaby, George Lopez, as well as the other members such as Yaya Diatta, Saloum Kandé, Coumba Ndiaye, Viviane Badiane, etc. They all played crucial roles on multiple occasions. The partnership between World Education and the CCC allowed both organizations to complete tasks that would have been nearly impossible if they had not worked together.

However, we cannot talk about the partnership between World Education and the CCC without fondly remembering Ben Mady Cisse. Ben Mady Cisse was a former Minister and most senior member of the CCC. Even in his death bed at the Principal Hospital of Dakar, Ben Mady never stopped his involvement in the Casamance peace process. Despite his poor health which worsened on a daily basis, Ben Mady always profited on visits from Pierre Goudiaby, George Lopez and Abdou Sarr to give advice and directions on how to manage this process.

With tears in his eyes, Ben Mady witnessed the direct transmission on national television of the meeting between President Abdoulaye Wade and Abbe Augustin Diamacoune. Abbe Diamacoune was accompanied by a large delegation from the MFDC, Pierre Goudiaby and George Lopez from the CCC, and Abdou Sarr, Director of World Education Senegal.

Ben Mady contributed enormously to the preparation of this meeting which proved to be a turning factor in the peace process. Immediately following this monumental meeting, the delegation lead by Abbe Diamacoune went to the hospital to pay homage to Ben Mady. Touched by the positive direction of the peace process, Ben Mady emotionally confided to the group, «I can go now knowing that the road towards peace is presently on the right track». «Ben Mady Cisse passed away several days after this emotional visit.

11. SYNERGY WITH OTHER ACTORS

World Education Senegal carefully chose its principal partners in an effort to cover the largest amount of intervention axes. However, due to the complexity of the program, it would be difficult for them alone to cover all of the different program aspects. It is for this reason that World Education committed itself to working in close collaboration with certain local and international NGOs. These NGOs such as ASACASE, CONGAD, UNICEF and WFP are all doing work that contributes to the peace process in one way or another.

This synergy is not only limited to non-governmental and international organizations. World Education invested a lot of time in establishing relationships with local, departmental, and regional administrative authorities. We worked in close collaboration with governors, prefets and sous-prefets. These authorities gave us all the necessary support to conduct our program, and in return, we systematically gave them information concerning the execution of our activities. These authorities received all of our quarterly reports, greeted our distinguished visitors and were invited to preside over all of our important program activities.

World Education Senegal equally created partner relations with the heads of decentralized organizations. It is our belief that one way to guarantee the sustainability of a program is to involve decentralized authorities. It is for this reason that we worked in close collaboration with the presidents of rural communities. Not only did the presidents of the rural communities participate in our program activities, but they offered as much support as feasibly possible. In addition, World Education sent copies of all of their quarterly reports to the president of Ziguinchor's regional counsel to keep him informed of the evolution of the program. This was also done to assure that our activities were taken into account during the regional counsel's planning.

Finally, World Education Senegal systematically made use of the different governmental technical services. Not only did they provide expertise in a certain programmatic areas, but this also insured that our activities were taken into account during the government's planning, avoiding repetition of the same activities. The inclusion of governmental technical services was also a way to contribute to the sustainability of field based actions. The perfect collaboration that we created with head nurses can be cited as an example. The implication of the head nurses in the training and monitoring of our community health agents will insure the sustainability of our health huts.

These different types of synergy that we were able to create with a variety of different actors from the beginning of the program facilitated the implementation of numerous operations.

12. RESULTS AND IMPACTS OF THE PROGRAM

World Education Senegal completed program activities in the outlined time frame. All of the activities noted in the cooperative agreement were accomplished in good conditions. In addition, the allocated funds for the implementation of the program were effectively put into place and expended accordingly.

In the preceding chapters, we showed how and why World Education Senegal adopted a varied strategy to achieve the program's objectives. We also explained that the complexity of the program incited World Education to seek support from qualified partners. By surrounding themselves with this entourage of collaborators, World Education was capable of implementing the program's activities.

In this chapter, we will analyze the results of the program. Specifically, we will look at how the implementation of the program produced results and impacts in the building of peace and prosperity in the Casamance. We will scrutinize the results while referring to the objectives and progress indicators elaborated in the different work plans approved by USAID.

RESULTS AND IMPACTS OF THE PROGRAM IN TERMS OF MECHANISMS, STRUCTURES AND SPACES FOR THE RESOLUTION AND PREVENTION OF CONFLICTS

The creation of mechanisms, structures and spaces for the resolution and prevention of conflicts occupied a large space in the execution of the program. In order to achieve this objective, we organized cultural weekends involving opinion leaders in the call for peace and we financed specific peace building projects. All of these activities are part of a coherent dynamic involving the mobilization of communities to produce important results and indisputable impacts.

1.1. Cultural Weekends

World Education Senegal acknowledges the fact that it is only the communities who can truly bring peace to the region. Based upon this fact, we organized vast social mobilization activities aimed at engaging all members of the community's social strata in the search for peace. The cultural weekends are at the heart of this strategy. In collaboration with intermediary organizations such as AJAEDO, AJAC and OFAD, World Education organized a variety of cultural weekends. In the department of Oussouye, cultural weekends were held in the four rural communities of Mlomp, Santhiaba Manjacque, Cabrousse and Oukout.

In addition, cultural weekends were held in Ziguinchor's five rural communities of Enampor, Boutoupa Camaracounda, Adeane, Niassia, and Niaguis, and one day of reflection in the rural community of Niangha located in the department of Sedhiou.

This initial ice-breaking activity allowed populations to come together and share the consequences this conflict has had on their daily lives. These weekends have proved to be major moments of reconnection and intense emotion for the populations who have lived through the fear and sadness generated by the past twenty years of armed conflict.

The enormous success of the cultural weekends was reaffirmed by the numerous articles published by the local and national press. The weekends confirmed our conviction that the key to the resolution of the conflict in the Casamance lies in the hands of the affected populations.

The implication of the MFDC and the administration during these weekends gave the populations confidence to express themselves without fear of retaliation during the different forum.

The result of these cultural weekends, that had massive participation from the populations, was the open engagement for the very first time of various opinion leaders in the peace building activities. Opinion leaders, such as, the King of Oussouye, the Queen of Essaout, Imams, wrestling champions, Heads of the Sacred Forest and chiefs of villages confirmed their commitment to participate in restoring peace.

1.1.1. Relevance of the cultural weekends

The cultural weekends were held during a time of extreme tension at the community level. In effect, the Casamance conflict created a variety of difficulties for the populations from the different southern zones of Senegal. The insecurity created by the conflict had devastating consequences in all areas :

- ❑ Destruction of social, familial and cultural ties;
- ❑ Suspicion, distrust and denunciation creating severe inter-community conflicts;
- ❑ Destruction of numerous villages and socio-educational structures by army bombardments;
- ❑ Destruction of the conditions and methods of production in the agricultural sector, as well as, the tourism industry;
- ❑ Insecurity on the roads and in the villages because of attacks by the rebels and armed bandits, leading to death and hysteria within communities;
- ❑ Existance of landmines in the rivers, forests and orchards causing painful handicaps and occasionally death affecting the various groups of the population;
- ❑ The decrease or complete halt of production activities ;
- ❑ Worsening of poverty in the entire region of the Casamance.

In the face of this pain that the populations silently endure, it seemed important to create a neutral environment to exchange dialogue. These conversations would allow individuals to openly express the problems weighing down on their daily lives. The cultural weekends were organized in an effort to satisfy this desperately needed space for open expression.

It is also important to note that the cultural weekends were organized during a time when the government and MFDC agreed to enter into negotiations to put an end to this long armed struggle. The negotiations are currently underway and have already established a salutary cease fire between the Senegalese army and the constituents of the MFDC.

As is the case in all conflicts of this nature, the tensions, violence and retaliation constitute another war that does not end with a cease fire between the principal warring factions. In effect, there should be a special set of negotiations for this second war where it is the communities themselves that are the protagonists.

It is therefore necessary to create a process of negotiation in order to mend and reconstruct the social tissue in the communities. The cultural weekends aim to restore solidarity among populations through this peace building process of forgiveness.

1.1.2. Definition of a cultural weekend

It is a process in which populations from a given community, living in a conflict situation, are given the opportunity to freely express how they have survived the crisis. During the event, they propose and agree upon initiatives to put an end to the conflict.

1.1.3. What is a cultural weekend ?

It is an important time where inhabitants of villages within the same rural community come together to reconnect and exchange. Internally displaced people, opinion leaders, fighters, the MFDC and the government all come together to ask for forgiveness and call for peace in the region. In order to make this happen, the cultural weekend aims to recreate the positive aspects of village life through cultural activities, popular theatre, sport, traditional song and dance. According to Diola culture, it is these types of activities that strengthen ties between the different communities.

1.1.4. What happens during a cultural weekend ?

A cultural weekend takes place in two distinct steps :

The first day is marked by traditional dances and gatherings, theatre based on the reconstruction of the social tissue, soccer matches, traditional wrestling matches, the distribution of trophies, and dance parties. All of this is followed by messages of peace delivered by notable men and women, chiefs of village, the president of the rural community, NGOs, representatives from the MFDC and the Director of World Education.

The entire second day is consecrated towards a public forum. The forum which is facilitated by a panel, begins with a restitution presented by a committee that was placed in charge of identifying the priority needs of the villages within the rural community. This restitution is followed by debates on how the crisis has affected the populations. People are then encouraged to offer propositions on how to put an end to the conflict. The forum concludes with suggested activities that will reinforce the peace process and contribute to the social and economic development of the region.

1.1.5. Expected results of the cultural weekends

The following is a list of expected results from the cultural weekends:

- ❑ Inspire the populations to establish peace by recreating a climate of confidence in the villages;
- ❑ Identify the difficulties and suffering confronting the populations which could be the object of a project financed by World Education Senegal;
- ❑ Identify the best ideas proposed by the populations that could lead to ways of bringing communities out of crisis;
- ❑ Identify the obstacles towards restoring peace and work with the populations to find ways and means to overcome them.

1.1.6. Preparation and execution of the cultural weekends

To order to achieve the expected results, the cultural weekends were meticulously prepared. It was this careful preparation that allowed this activity to securely reach all the different members of the community.

Each rural community organized their cultural weekend in a designated village chosen by the organizational committee. This organizational committee democratically elected by the communities is presided over by the president of the rural community. In addition, they are supported by World Education and its partner associations. The different committees produced remarkable work which allowed the cultural weekends to take place in the best of conditions. In effect, all of the targeted participants actively participated in the cultural weekends.

1.1.7. Participation of the communities

All the villages in each of the rural communities participated in the cultural weekends. There was strong representation from all of the different social groups : men, women, youth, children and rebel fighters. Thousands of people took part in these cultural weekends.

1.1.8. Participation of opinion leaders

During the weekends we also noted the strong participation of opinion leaders. Kings, queens, village chiefs, heads of the sacred forest, young leaders and religious leaders all actively participated in the forum. Many leaders took the microphone to express their points of view and reaffirm their commitment to future activities contributing to the management of conflicts.

1.1.9. Participation of the MFDC

Each cultural weekend was marked by the presence of a strong delegation from the MFDC, lead by the former National Coordinator of the MFDC, Bertrand Diamacoune. During these weekends, Bertrand Diamacoune delivered powerful messages calling for peace. This direct contact between the MFDC and the communities greatly contributed to the peace process by assuring the populations that the MFDC had now taken on a pacifistic position.

1.1.10. Participation of administrative authorities

The different sous-prefets in the concerned subdivisions, at the request of their respective prefets, took an active role in the preparation and execution of all the cultural weekends. Their presence, along with the clarifications they gave on certain questions, helped assure the population that the administrative authorities were also willing to accompany the communities in the peace building process.

1.1.11. Participation of NGOs and technical services

The CONGAD, along with CRS, GRDR, UNICEF, WFP, and the community development services, participated in many cultural weekends and contributed to the debates during the forums. These different actors unanimously insisted on the utilization of traditional avenues to strengthen the peace process. They also lobbied with the administrative authorities to not persecute the young members of the MFDC that have decided to leave the underground.

1.1.12. Participation of central authorities

In an effort to bring the cultural weekends to a higher level, we always invited high ranking authorities to participate in the opening ceremonies. It is for this reason that the Ambassador from l'Afrique Aide l'Afrique presided over the opening of the cultural weekend in Mlomp. His presence further reassured the populations of the government's commitment to bring peace to the Casamance. In his opening speech, the Ambassador reiterated the President of Senegal's determination to restore peace in the Casamance through open dialogue.

The Ambassador insisted on the fact that the conflict is a national problem that is taking place in the Casamance. He also pointed out that it is through national solidarity that we can find a solution to the problem. As part of this dynamic, the Ambassador offered staple foods to certain communities and promised to play an active role in the building of peace. The Ambassador also widely acknowledged the pertinence of a community based approach in the management of the conflict in the Casamance.

1.1.13. Participation of the press

The press covered all of the events during the cultural weekends so that the different messages of peace could reach the largest amount of people possible. The participation of the press was quite impressive. In total, there were over six newspapers covering the events and radio reports were diffused over five different national and regional radio stations. Some of the speeches were played live on two of the radio stations, while other debates were diffused at a later moment in time. In addition, many interviews were conducted with the different participants.

1.1.14. Results and impacts noted during the cultural weekends

The cultural weekends produced remarkable results that were supported by the different evaluations. In particular, we noticed big changes in the attitude of the communities. This was visible not only by their engagement in activities leading towards peace, but also in their ability to forgive those who played an active role in the rebellion. This forgiveness was initiated by reconciliation meetings presided over by different leaders. The following is a list of observations and evaluations supporting the success of the cultural weekends:

- Through the voice of one of its highest ranking officials, the MFDC was able to publicly address the communities for the first time ever, and express their commitment towards peace.
- The formerly skeptical communities in the departments of Oussouye, Ziguinchor and Sedhiou were finally convinced of the MFDC's positive position for the return of peace.

- ❑ A total of ten (10) cultural weekends were organized reaching the regions of Kolda and Ziguinchor, and 8 rural communities in the three departments of Sedhiou, Ziguinchor and Oussouye.
- ❑ The five (5) cultural weekends organized in the department of Ziguinchor reached a total of 81 villages in the subdivisions of Nyassia and Niaguis.
- ❑ The cultural weekend organized in the rural community of Niagha, in the department of Sedhiou, united participants coming from over 55 different villages. Of these villages, a dozen or so came from the neighboring country of Guinea Bissau.
- ❑ The 4 cultural weekends organized in the department of Oussouye reached a total of 72 villages situated in the four rural communities of this department.
- ❑ A total of 15,000 people were reached throughout the implementation of the cultural weekends.
- ❑ Special attention was paid to insure that opinion leaders were consulted and implicated in the cultural weekends. Conscious of the role they can play in the peace process, they renewed their availability and willingness to participate in future peace building activities.
- ❑ Various administrative authorities took part in all of the activities during the cultural weekends. The participation in the cultural weekends made the contributed to the availability of the authorities in the execution of the activities evoked during the fora.
- ❑ A synergy among the actors such as World Education, the administration, the MFDC, notables, and the youth was created. Each actor seems to understand the necessary collaboration required of one another in order to bring peace to the Casamance.
- ❑ The implication of large organizations such as l’Afrique Aide l’Afrique to relay messages between those with decision making power at the central level and those who live in the communities.
- ❑ A strong determination from the communities to become involved in activities to mitigate inter-group conflicts. This became evident during the fora of the cultural weekends.
- ❑ The communities saw the large role that they can and should play in the management of the conflict. This perception became a conviction for them when they witnessed the MFDC and authorities, the principal actors in the conflict, clearly state that without the implication of the populations, it would be impossible to restore peace.

1.1.15. Sector-based conclusion

It is well known throughout the region that today’s relative calm in the departments of Ziguinchor and Oussouye is in large part due to the cultural weekends. These departments were formerly the areas plagued by the most amounts of violence and tension until the cultural weekends were executed in their respective rural communities.

In fact, these meetings were the first time in over twenty years of the conflict that the communities came together to participate in a public manifestation. During two days, the highest ranking members of the MFDC, administrative authorities, the army, civil society organizations, religious and cultural leaders, central authorities, and communities came together to take a giant step in the path towards peace. Public declarations were made by these figure heads stating the willingness of the warring factions, the MFDC and the government, to come together to try and find a definitive solution for peace in the Casamance. These speeches were widely diffused by the press creating a new atmosphere of confidence among the populations. In addition, the convictions that were made possible through the cultural weekends relieved the communities of twenty years of doubt and uncertainty that had been weighing them down.

The communities understood that they were now able to safely participate in the peace building process. Therefore, through the commitment of the people, we were able to bring peace to zones that had been plagued by years of suspicion and denunciation.

1.2. Peace building micro-projects

“As war takes birth in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that we must breed ideas of peace and justice.” It is through this conviction that World Education initiated peace building projects in collaboration with opinion leaders. We consecrated enormous amounts of time in order to create transparent relationships with these leaders. While extremely difficult to implement, after the cultural weekends, these projects proved to be the second pillar for restoring peace in the department of Oussouye. In effect, the opinion leaders were able to use their influence, pedagogy and diverse powers to cultivate an atmosphere of forgiveness among the populations.

The peace building dynamic that began with the cultural weekends continued its course through the activities of various opinion leaders. All of the opinion leaders that promised to help restore peace in the Casamance during the cultural weekends kept their promises by perpetuating popular interest in building peace actions within their respective communities. World Education financed many «Peace building projects» to accompany and support the involvement of opinion leaders in the peace process.

Peace building projects are structured around people who hold traditional power such as kings, queens, fetishers, heads of the sacred forests, and other traditional leaders. The idea behind this approach is to use traditional channels, being the various traditional leaders, as an endogenous framework to create dialogue on questions surrounding peace. This idea came out of recommendations from the cultural weekends. The fora adamantly reclaimed the use of traditional channels to bring definitive peace to the Casamance.

However, these peace building projects also mobilized other opinion leaders such as youth and women. The projects equally mobilized chiefs of villages and religious leaders such as Imams and Priests. All of the different leaders used their spheres of influence to spread messages of peace and forgiveness.

Evidently, these peace building projects could not neglect the decentralized organizations and their respective leaders. It is for this reason that the President of one rural counsel and all the members of each rural counsel benefited from a peace building micro-project. The fact that these presidents of rural counsels are elected by the populations to represent their interests, places them in a direct position to work on peace building activities. The President of the rural counsel and his advisors used the platform of rural counsel meetings to discuss ways in which they could bring peace to their rural communities. In addition to their regular meetings, the advisors also organized specific meetings to discuss issues around the peace process.

Finally, it is important to remember that the inclusion of administrative authorities was crucial to the success of the cultural weekends. During the fora, it was strongly recommend to include local public authorities in the pursuit of peace. In effect, it was also the implication of the administration in the cultural weekends that created a certain confidence among the populations that are normally distrustful of these local administrators. Therefore, the peace building projects also concerned the sous-prefets who held special meetings with local development committees (CLD) to discuss the question of peace in the Casamance. These special local development committee meetings (CLDs) allowed all of the members to better understand the ins and outs of the conflict. Moreover, it created yet another platform for people to openly take part in the rebuilding of peace.

1.2.1. Results and impacts noted during the implementation of the peace building micro-projects

- ❑ Twenty one (21) peace building projects were executed with various opinion leaders who used their influence to contribute to the peace process.
- ❑ Numerous traditional leaders including the celebrated king of Oussouye, queen of Essaout, and guards of the sacred forests, accepted to use their power to strengthen the peace process. They used traditional channels to speak with and convince the populations to forgive one another creating a climate favorable to the return of refugees and internally displaced people.
- ❑ Numerous religious leaders such as Imams and Priests, used their power to help strengthen the peace process. They used churches, mosques, and highly organized religious incantations, to hold conferences on the return of peace and preach for forgiveness and reconciliation among one another.

- ❑ Numerous opinion leaders such as women, youth and decentralized authorities, also used their power to convince populations to forgive and reconcile with each other.
- ❑ Different leaders, using their power, were able to establish a climate of peace, confidence and forgiveness in all of the program's intervention zones.
- ❑ No longer fearing retaliation, numerous internally displaced people, refugees, and rebel fighters, went back to their native villages. There have not been any recorded incidents of retaliation between those who stayed during the crisis and those who have recently returned to their villages.

1.2.2. Sector-based conclusion

Thanks to the transparency with which World Education executed its program, we were able to mobilize the maximum number of opinion leaders around the issue of peace. These same leaders who were hesitant to become involved at first, never imagined the enormous impact they could have on the peace process with the support offered by World Education Senegal. Therefore, aware of their influence over the communities, the opinion leaders began organizing activities that greatly contributed to the peace building process. The different messages that they spread through their own channels were effectively transmitted. The tensions that existed between the inhabitants of the same village, or between villages, slowly dissipated leaving space for a new atmosphere of reconciliation and forgiveness. All of this contributed to a new, more serene life in the villages. The confidence that communities place in their traditional leaders allowed them to rapidly believe the messages calling for peace that were fabricated with the help of our program. All in all, with the help of these opinion leaders, people started to accept the idea of forgiving one another.

The role of these leaders in the success of our program is incontestable. It would certainly have been impossible to implement conflict resolution activities without the implication of these opinion leaders. Not only do they have enormous influence over their respective communities, but their role as leaders pushes them to the forefront of peace building activities in their zones. We cannot overlook the important role that these opinion leaders played in our program that contributed to the management of the conflict in the Casamance.

2. PROGRAM RESULTS AND IMPACTS FROM THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING OF INTERMEDIARY AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

2.1. Institutional capacity building of intermediary organizations : AJAEDO, AJAC, OFAD, KORASE

The institutional capacity building of the program's intermediary organizations : *AJAEDO, AJAC, OFAD and KORASE* was implemented in two distinct parts.

The first part focused solely on the institutional performances of the organization's Executive Offices or Board of Directors. The second part focused on the strengthening of the technical capacities of the supervisors and trainers of these same organizations.

2.1.1. Institutional Capacity Building

The strengthening of institutional capacities was implemented in the same manner for all four of the organizations. The capacity building program began with institutional diagnostics focusing on the organization's strengths and weaknesses. The institutional diagnostic sessions were carried out for four days at the headquarters of each organization. The diagnostics systematically addressed the level of capacity in the following areas : organizational, management, technical and material, human resources and the mobilization of resources.

The institutional diagnostics of the organizations showed many weaknesses. The following are the major weaknesses noted: lack of a vision or mission, unawareness of the goals and objectives of the organization by a large number of members, absence of the separation of the powers of management and control, weak representation of women in the office, outdated and insufficient work tools, absence of a training plan, unsuitable or non-existent accounting systems, lack of knowledge of roles and job descriptions of current members, unexploited local and national funding possibilities.

These diagnostic sessions taught the members of the organizations to use introspection to analyze the situation of their organizations. They were then advised to use the results to create an action plan in order to make their organizations more respectable. It was the members that defined in a precise fashion the desired situation for their structures. With the improvement of their performances in sight, each organization completed the aforementioned action plan in order to close the gap between their present situations exposed in the institutional diagnostics and the desired situations expressed by the members of the organizations. (See the annex for the action plans of the four organizations).

In order to execute the action plans of each organization, a calendar to strengthen the institutional capacity was created and implemented. The calendars essentially consisted of a series of workshops for the members of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Board. The scheduled workshops in the different calendars were executed and conducted by World Education Senegal and ACA. The workshops generally covered the following points : Composition, Attributions and Modes of functioning of organizations and associations, Definitions of the roles and responsibilities of the members of the organs, Procedures and tools for financial and administrative management, Creation of administrative and financial systems, Monitoring of the application of financial and administrative systems, Production of an administrative and financial procedures manual. (See the annexes for the calendars for the capacity building of each organization).

2.1.2. Recorded results and impacts in the strengthening of intermediary organization's capacities

At the end of the program, the four organizations: *AJAEDO, AJAC, OFAD, and KORACE* recorded remarkable results. The periodic evaluations which followed the initial evaluation showed a progression in the improvement of the institutional performances of the organizations. In effect, the progress cited below has been pulled from the aforementioned evaluations :

- ❑ Regular meetings are held by the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Board. In addition, general assemblies are also held regularly ;
- ❑ General Assemblies to renew the board's constituents are held in a democratic manner in all of the organizations ;
- ❑ All of the general assemblies were prepared and executed respecting the normal procedures (Official Invitations, quorum, secret voting, etc.) ;
- ❑ The Board of Trustees which were elected during the General Assemblies saw an increase in the number of women being voted in. Half of KORACE's Board of Trustees are women ;
- ❑ The Board of Trustees meets regularly to discuss the big questions weighing down on the organizations. In an effort to have complete transparency, AJAC organized its Board meetings in a rotating manner between the different central villages that house members of their union
- ❑ The elected executive boards meet regularly to discuss practical questions that are of consequence to the organizations ;
- ❑ The General Assemblies approved the Vision and Mission statements of each of the organizations ;

- ❑ A redistribution of tasks and a decentralization of responsibilities was accomplished at AJAEDO and OFAD. These two organizations had been particularly centralized due to the strong personalities of their presidents ;
- ❑ OFAD recruited an accountant and a Program Coordinator in an effort to decentralize the organization's activities ;
- ❑ AJAEDO also hired an accountant and a project supervisor. These two organizations understood that the decentralization of tasks would give them a lot more power and credibility.

2.1.3. Strengthening of technical performance

The strengthening of technical performance targeted the supervisors and trainers that are members of our different partner organizations. This training of trainers aimed to offer a variety of technical expertises to the trainers of organizations. The hope is that they will then duplicate the training or use their acquired knowledge to implement activities at the community based level.

The program to strengthen the technical capacities of village level trainers was conducted through workshops lead by World Education, ACA, TOSTAN and other collaborators such as Dr. Preira from UNICEF. The following areas were covered in the workshops : human rights, project management, stress and trauma management, non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts, training of management committees, inventory techniques, group dynamics and facilitation techniques, monitoring and evaluation techniques, community mobilization techniques, project identification, elaboration of action plans, and techniques to mobilize resources.

These workshops were complimented by additional trainings in financial and administrative management techniques. In addition, there was instruction on how to use computer-based accounting software. These specific trainings were administered to accountants in our partner organizations, as well as, other staff members involved in the area of finance and administration. It is important to note that in addition to our program, USAID entrusted us with a concurrent year long program aimed at training AJAC APRAN in administrative and financial procedures.

The goal of this concurrent program was to provide APRAN with the necessary financial and administrative management tools to become a functional organization. In addition, the administrative and financial staff had to be trained in the use of these tools. At the end of this program, APRAN had acquired all of the necessary tools to properly manage their organization in compliance with USAID regulations. The staff was also capable of carrying out the necessary financial and administrative functions.

The evaluation results and audit reports confirm that World Education transferred the competencies to APRAN so that they could become an independent organization capable of managing funds from any type of donor organization.

2.1.4. Recorded results and impacts in the strengthening of technical capabilities

At the end of the program, our four intermediary organizations, *AJAEDO*, *AJAC*, *OFAD*, and *KORASE* had recorded excellent results. The evaluations showed an acquisition of organizational technical capabilities. The results of the evaluations listed below are proof of this increase in technical capacity :

- ❑ All forty three (43) field trainers and supervisors in the four organizations acquired extensive knowledge in the following domains : human rights, project management, stress and trauma management, non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts, training of management committees, inventory techniques, group dynamics and facilitation techniques, monitoring and evaluation techniques, community mobilization techniques to talk about peace, project identification, elaboration of action plans, and techniques to mobilize resources ;
- ❑ All of our field trainers have pedagogical abilities allowing them to transfer knowledge and offer adequate support to communities in all of the aforementioned domains ;
- ❑ The field trainers from our four intermediary organizations were placed in charge of training the management committees designated to manage the micro-projects financed under this program ;
- ❑ The agents in charge of the accounts for our intermediary organizations *OFAD* and *AJAEDO*, have mastered and use an off the shelf accounting software called *QUICKBOOKS PRO*. This software is quite efficient in managing the accounts of projects ;
- ❑ An administrative and accounting system has been elaborated and adopted within each organization greatly increasing their management capabilities.

2.1.5. Sector-based conclusion

World Education's strategy is really quite simple. By effectively training the intermediary organizations we assure the sustainability of our actions, and are also able to reach the community based organizations. It is for this reason that we put such a large amount of emphasis on capacity building. All of the initial and mid-term evaluations conducted by World Education in collaboration with

USAID's Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, show a constant evolution in the capacities of our intermediary organizations. In fact, the program was able to help reorganize the institutional structures of the four intermediary organizations. The end result was a reformulated vision, mission statement and objectives that were now applicable to the present day situation in the Casamance.

Finally, the program gave them the capacity to effectively manage development programs in their respective environments. While KORASE still has some progress to be made, AJAEDO, AJAC and OFAD have reached a good level of institutional development. These four organizations continue to monitor the micro-projects that were financed during the program, proving that the project's sustainability can be assured. The program achieved its objectives of reinforcing the capacities of these intermediary organizations.

In respect to the case of KORASE, it is important to point out that they are actually a small economic interest group (GIE) that was rapidly created by TOSTAN to serve as an interlocutor in the zone of Medina El Hadj. The educational level of its leaders is very low. In fact, the President of the association didn't even complete primary school. Nonetheless, World Education was able to create a functional headquarters with extremely simplified management tools. With the help of World Education, the GIE recruited two field trainers that have completed middle school. Despite these efforts, KORASE still cannot be compared with the level of OFAD, AJAEDO and AJAC.

2.2. Institutional capacity building of community based organizations

The capacity building of community based organizations was one of the most important aspects of the program. In effect, the sustainability of the activities executed by the communities depends on the institutional capacity of the community based organizations responsible for the management of the project. This capacity building was assured through numerous trainings that took place in the form of workshops.

To better define the aspects of capacity building for community based organizations, the program divided this domain into three parts :

- ❑ The acquisition of organizational capacities for management committees and the management and strengthening of the technical capabilities for the members of the management committees ;
- ❑ Trainings focused on building the technical capacity of millers, canoe drivers, shopkeepers, midwives and community health agents ;
- ❑ The acquisition of knowledge in human rights, stress and trauma management and the non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts.

While the first two parts focus specifically on the management committees and the people in charge of assuring the technical aspects of the projects, the third part reaches a large number of the members of community based organizations.

2.2.1. The creation and strengthening of management committees' organizational and technical capabilities

Particular care was taken in the training of the management committees as they are one of the key factors in the sustainability of our projects. The training of the management committees focused on general management issues, but particularly focused on the keeping of activity monitoring books and the recording of financial transactions. Our training approach for workshops is always characterized by small group discussions leading into large plenary sessions focusing on concrete examples of routine management operations. Skits and role play are systematically used as pedagogical support to help the participants understand the different training sessions. The following five themes were covered during the training sessions :

- ❑ The Journal : Explain how to record entries and make a list of all the operations associated with an entry. Proceed to recording entries in the journal and explain the importance of closely monitoring the journal entries.
- ❑ The Journal : Explain how to enter expenses and make a list of all the operations associated with an expense. Proceed to recording expenses in the journal and explain the importance of monitoring expenditures.
- ❑ The Monitoring of Stock : Define what a stock is. Proceed to entering the movement of stocks. Explain the advantages of monitoring stocks.
- ❑ Profit Projections Account : Definition of a profit. List all of the documents needed to make profit projections and explain their importance.
- ❑ The organization of the committee's work and the implication of all of the group's members : Description of tasks for each member of the management committee. Control techniques. Explication of the importance of good internal management procedures and good communication between the committee and the rest of the group.

At the end of the training sessions, suggestions are made to the participants on their methods of organization, control systems, the importance of good management, information to be collected, and the necessity to share all of this information with the communities on a regular basis. Finally, management tools are distributed to the Presidents of the management committees. These tools consist of stock journals, profit projection journals, a bank journal and a calculator.

2.2.2. Strengthening of technical capabilities through the training of millers, canoe drivers, shopkeepers, midwives and community health agents

While it is certain that projects have to be well managed in order to achieve their objectives, it is important to note that good management is not the only means to attain results. In effect, the running of projects requires particular qualifications tailored to each type of activity. These qualifications are targeted in trainings complimentary to those offered to the management committees.

The trainings offered to the millers and canoe drivers focus on the handling, maintenance and monitoring of the equipment. For the rice huskers, flour mills and canoes, the trainings offer a description and role of the motor and its casing. In addition, general security recommendations are given to the trainees such as what to do in case of an accident. The training sessions alternate between theoretical and practical phases facilitating the absorption of knowledge. On the other hand, the shopkeepers receive trainings that focus on inventory techniques, the storage of certain perishable goods, and the surveillance of expiration dates on their products. For the trainings given to the community health agents and midwives, we call upon members of the health districts to teach the competencies required to care for basic illnesses and have a functional health hut.

2.2.3. Acquisition of knowledge in the areas of human rights, stress and trauma management and non-violent conflict resolution

In addition to the trainings giving the beneficiaries the abilities to properly manage and assure the sustainability of their micro-projects, the program recognized the importance to focus on issues surrounding the conflict. Therefore, World Education focused on helping the village based communities survive the trauma caused by the conflict, as well as, strengthen the peace process and learn how to prevent additional conflicts. This support was offered through a series of trainings offered at the community level in the areas of human rights, stress and trauma management, and the non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts.

2.2.3.1. Human rights training

The training sessions focusing on human rights were targeted at all layers of the population in the villages where the program intervened. Sports and leisure associations, rural counsels, youth groups and women were all beneficiaries of the human rights trainings. The objective of the training was to make people aware of their rights as human beings inciting them to take action to assure access to citizenship, health and education for all.

The principal themes discussed were :

- ❑ The promotion and protection of human rights
- ❑ The diffusion of certain fundamental rights
- ❑ The rights of minorities, particularly vulnerable groups
- ❑ Tolerance
- ❑ The democratic management of structures and socio-political groups
- ❑ Citizenship (declaration of births) and development.

2.2.3.2. Stress management training

As with Human Rights, the trainings focusing on Stress Management and the Resolution of Conflicts also targeted all layers of the village populations where the program intervened. Sports and Leisure Associations, Rural Counsels, Youth and Women's groups all benefited from this training. The goal of these trainings was to give communities the skills necessary to manage stress in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The trainings on stress management covered the following points :

- ❑ The definition, causes, different phases, and signs of stress caused by a serious incident or trauma ;
- ❑ The reactions and problems related to post-traumatic stress syndrome ;
- ❑ Traumatism in children and adults ;
- ❑ Aptitudes necessary to have in order to establish a relationship of confidence with a traumatized person ;
- ❑ Debriefing of groups and individuals ;
- ❑ Education and funding for psychological patients.

2.2.3.3. Training in the non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts

The trainings in the non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts, like all of the other trainings, focused on all of the villages in the program. Youth groups, Women's groups, Sports and Leisure Associations and Rural Counsel members all participated in these trainings. The goal of these trainings was to give the communities the knowledge necessary to non-violently prevent and resolve conflict situations. The trainings covered the following points listed below :

- ❑ The differences in points of view,
- ❑ The Major/Minor model focusing on different points of view,
- ❑ The three mechanisms of violence : The escalation, the chain of violence, and the repression or internalization,
- ❑ The visible and invisible phases of each one of these mechanisms,
- ❑ The verbal and non-verbal part of each one of these mechanisms,
- ❑ The notion of positive, negative, and destructive ARGUMENTS used in the Major/Minor model,
- ❑ The EQUIVALENCE or foundation of reasons supporting one's point of view.

Each one of these aspects discussed during the different training sessions was also reinforced through practical simulation exercises. The non-violent resolution of various types of conflicts were reenacted through small skits. A resume of the process is outlined in the following steps :

- 1st Step : Locating the two fundamental parts of the conflict
- 2nd Step: Communication between the two parties
- 3rd Step : A break (give everyone the time to digest the other point of view)
- 4th Step : The solution (which should be responsive to everyone's issues).

2.2.4. Recorded results and impacts in the institutional capacity building of community based organizations

Through the trainings offered to the management committees, which are systematically offered before the implantation of the projects, the program was able to succeed in transferring to the beneficiary villages all of the necessary skills to succeed in managing their projects. Below is a list of the acquired skills :

- ❑ All of the management committees implementing a micro-project received practical management trainings ;
- ❑ All of the management committees received a training in internal governance ;
- ❑ In total, 93 management committees were trained. With 7 members per management committee, a total of 651 people participated in the trainings ;
- ❑ 98% of the management committees are satisfactorily running their projects by : assuring the daily functioning of their projects, recording all of the transactions in their management journals, sharing all of the necessary project information with the rest of the management committee and their respective communities ;
- ❑ All of the projects which required specialized trainings have received the necessary technical skills to assure the proper functioning of the material in question ;
- ❑ The specialized technical trainings were administered to 66 community health agents and midwives, 28 flour millers and rice huskers, 22 canoe drivers and 22 first aid specialists, for a total of 138 trained community technicians ;
- ❑ 98% of the people trained in specific technical areas correctly fulfill their functions of operating and maintaining the machinery or treating sick patients ;
- ❑ 100% of the projects function independently with their own income. Operational costs, community technicians' salaries, various maintenance costs are all covered by the projects ;
- ❑ 100% of the management committees have opened accounts at the local savings and loan banks. Regular deposits and withdrawals are made to these accounts ;
- ❑ The program has trained a total of 789 people directly implicated in the management of projects. Three quarters of the people trained have been women ;
- ❑ The 208 village communities benefiting from World Education's program have received trainings in Human Rights, Stress and Trauma Management, and the on-Violent Prevention and Management of Conflicts ;
- ❑ A total of 1,477 have participated in our training sessions ;
- ❑ In the region of Kolda, a total of 650 people were trained in Human Rights, of which 562 were women and 88 were men ;
- ❑ 515 people were trained in the non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts.

2.2.5. Sector-based conclusion

The different evaluations have shown that the men and women who have been well trained, organized, and mobilized within their various management committees, are implementing their activities with all of the required knowledge. The strategy responds to the challenge of building the capacity of communities so that they are able to implement sustainable activities by themselves. All of the fundamental practices that guarantee the sustainability of a project are being practiced on a regular basis by the management committees.

In effect, all of the management committees were able to transparently conduct their activities and assure the operation, maintenance and renewal required by each type of project. In addition, the committees continue to merit the confidence of the populations who are kept abreast of the evolution of their projects.

3. PROGRAM RESULTS AND IMPACTS NOTED IN AN EFFORT TO RE-EQUIP COMMUNITIES AND REHABILITATE SOCIAL AND-EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURES THROUGH ACTIONS THAT ENCOURAGE THE RESUMPTION OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The socio-economic micro-projects

World Education's peace building strategy does not stop with the activities that only focus on awareness raising, conscience building and community mobilization. While it is incontestable that these activities are necessary for the return of peace, we also believe that they are not sufficient to resolve an issue as delicate as conflict resolution. In fact, one cannot even begin to think about rebuilding peace in a demoralized environment devoid of material goods. Therefore, we deemed it necessary to provide solutions to practical problems facing the populations. It is for this reason that the program gave a large amount of support to communities in activities aimed to re-equip and rehabilitate various socio-educational structures.

In addition, support was given to community actions that aim to promote the resumption of their economic activities. It is for this reason that the micro-projects played an essential role in the program, «Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance» .

Another important aspect of the micro-projects, in addition to relieving the extreme poverty at the village level, was to provide an environment for the communities to come together and rebuild their social networks. In order to reach this double objective of reducing poverty and creating neutral spaces for dialogue, World Education was rigorous in the choice and execution of the micro-projects.

A series of discussions were systematically organized with the project beneficiaries to make sure that the choice of the micro-project would adequately respond to the priority needs of the populations. In addition, World Education work hard to assure that the projects would create real opportunities for dialogue and reconnection among the populations who had been divided by the conflict for over twenty years.

Once these preparatory activities were finished, World Education went ahead with the funding and implementation of the micro-projects. Without a doubt, emphasis was placed on the creation of the management committees, particularly their trainings, to make sure they had the proper technical skills to execute the program's activities. World Education and its partners also monitored the micro-projects very closely from the beginning of the project in order to place the management committees in a dynamic leading towards guaranteed project sustainability. A variety of different micro-projects were financed reflecting the diverse needs expressed by the beneficiary populations.

3.1 *Results and impacts of the socio-economic micro-projects*

A total of 104 socio-economic micro-projects, and 18 peace building projects, were financed and correctly executed in World Education's program with USAID. (See the annexes for a table summarizing the micro-projects financed by World Education Senegal).

□ Community Stores

10 community stores were created and continue to function well. The management committees have an excellent command on appropriate management techniques and apply them correctly to the management of the stores. The communities are extremely appreciative of the transparency in which their village stores are run.

Not only do the stores have reasonably priced merchandise, but they have made a large variety of basic necessities available to some of the most remote villages in the region.

The turnover rate of merchandise in the community stores continues to increase on a monthly basis, and they are constantly renewing their stocks. This type of performance will assure the sustainability of the stores.

□ Flour mills and rice huskers

14 flour mills and rice huskers have been put in place and function well. The management committees in charge of this equipment have a solid command of management techniques and apply them as necessary.

The flour mills and rice huskers, while benefiting the entire population, have particularly lightened the work load for women in many villages by milling or husking grains. The prices are reasonable, making this service available to everyone in the communities.

The huskers and mills have also become an area of dialogue helping to reduce tensions among villages. Each machine polarizes an average of six villages allowing different communities to share and manage the same tools.

The rice huskers and flour mills have also lightened the workload of women living in all of the polarized villages. The long and arduous work of manually pounding and husking grains is now done by machines.

The mills generate enough income to cover all of the operational costs and spare parts that need to be changed with time. The utility of these machines, as well as, the income that they generate, will insure their sustainability with time.

□ Health Huts

33 health huts were constructed in all of the zones where the program intervened. The community health agents and midwives working in the different health huts are able to correctly execute their tasks. They offer basic health care services to prevent and treatment illnesses (such as malaria) that are known to have devastating effects in the areas of Kolda and Sedhiou.

The management committees of the health huts have a good command of management techniques and they use them in operating the huts. The committees assure that they have an adequate supply of medicine, and that the community health agents and midwives are paid before depositing the rest of the income in their account at the Mutual Credit Union. The prices are fixed at a relatively low rate giving access to health care for all of the village's inhabitants, but still permitting enough income for the hut to cover its basic costs. In addition, the health huts are monitored by official national health services. Head nurses conduct periodic training sessions for the community health agents and midwives, and help organize vaccination days. All of this has helped assure that the health huts are properly integrated into the national health system.

The financial health of the huts which is due to good management, the performances of the community health agents and midwives, and the monitoring assured by the state's head nurses, all help to assure their sustainability.

The role of the health huts has become a central part of the lives of the populations where these projects have been implemented. The number of consultations per day, particularly during the winter, prove the importance of having these types of health structures in close proximity to the communities.

❑ Canoes to reconnect isolated communities

World Education financed 11 canoes to reconnect isolated communities during the program in the department of Oussouye and the Islands of Carone. The canoes offered a solution to the numerous problems plaguing these communities due to their complete isolation. The management tools put in place by World Education and their partner organizations have allowed the management committees of these micro-projects to properly manage the canoes.

Periodic meetings are held between the communities and the management committees to share information with the island inhabitants regarding the evolution and management of the canoes. The canoe drivers, who are well trained, assure the proper use and maintenance of the outboard motor. In addition, all of the canoe drivers have received training in first aid allowing them to properly evacuate the canoes and take care the evacuees according to medical regulations.

The income generated by the canoes during their trips, is sufficient to pay for the regular maintenance of the canoe, large repairs such as the annual carenage, and any other operational costs. While the income generated by the canoes varies from one island to the other, the most important thing to note is that all of the canoes are self-sustainable. However, the majority of the canoes have been able to make substantial profits : Carabane and Cachouane record average quarterly profits of 250 000 FCFA ; Wendaye, Pointe Saint Georges, Ourong, Effock and Djirack have average quarterly earnings of about 150 000 FCFA ; all of the other islands have average quarterly earnings of approximately 85 000 FCFA. This financial autonomy of the canoe projects will guarantee the continuation and regularity of a transport service highly solicited by the island populations.

The socio-economic utility of the canoes is without a question. Thanks to these small boats, island populations can easily travel from one island to the other. Medical evacuations (Especially women having difficulty giving birth) are done without difficulty, and have saved human lives in danger of dying. Commercial exchanges between the different islands and the mainland have intensified. The canoes have helped create a new socio-economic dynamic in these island communities that was extinguished with the sinking of the maritime boat, The Joola.

❑ Market gardening

23 market gardens were put in place with women being the direct beneficiaries. The different management committees, composed uniquely of women, were able to manage the gardens and benefit from its profits.

Almost all of the gardens were expanded over time, allowing more women to benefit from the individual plots of land given to the women to grow vegetables of their choice for their own families. It was these plots of land that were used to pay the women for their work in the community garden.

The gardens have given the women access to a variety of produce throughout the entire year that is essential for their cooking (Pepper, local eggplant, sorrel, okra). The women are thrilled to have local access to vegetables that in the past have come at inflated prices from larger cities outside the region. These market garden projects have immensely ameliorated the daily meals of families in the beneficiary communities, and have therefore become completely indispensable to the women who work on them with untried determination. The women have mastered the command of gardening techniques and have created highly organized routines to care for the gardens. All of the aforementioned information allows us to state without risk that these gardens will continue to function for many years to come.

The micro-projects could have achieved in even greater success if more money had initially been invested in the market gardens. This would have allowed us to mobilize more women and supply produce to many more communities. The women have attempted to expand the size of their gardens to reach the maximum number of women possible, but they still have not been able to respond to all of the demands in this domain. However, the gardens have served as a meeting place for the women to come together and talk about the different internal conflicts within their communities. Together they can thank the gardens for having created an unmatched solidarity in trying to find solutions to their own problems.

Therefore, the gardens turned more towards auto-consumption than commercialization. In fact, most of the gardens barely made up for the deficit in produce that was plaguing their villages. It was only the occasional rare surplus that ended up being commercialized.

□ Husbandry raising micro-project

Four husbandry raising projects were financed by the program. The difficulties encountered with the sheep at the beginning of the project were slowly resolved with the progressive knowledge accumulated by the beneficiary populations in husbandry raising. The subjects were purchased under the supervision of a veterinarian who also monitored the health of the animals. The commercialization of the fattened sheep was during periods when the market prices were at their highest. Therefore, the sheep were sold during weekly markets or around Muslim holidays.

The husbandry projects were well managed by the populations who quickly mastered the use of the management tools. The beneficiaries also rapidly had a solid command on husbandry raising techniques which include : their diet, proper medical care, and the confection and maintenance of their shelter. However, the beneficiaries were not able to gain a substantial amount of money from the activity due to the limited number of subjects per project.

However, these projects taught some lessons to the breeders who have been raising a variety of animals in this zone for years. Normally the breeders let their animals roam freely, and through this project, they realized that they are able to make a considerable profit off of a few fattened subjects. This beginning of a change in behavior towards a more intensive type of breeding has been the most important impact of the husbandry raising projects. This is quite a significant impact because the principal activity of the populations in these zones is animal husbandry, and normally become too attached to their animals to sell them. In addition, it is quite prestigious to have a large herd of animals. With the husbandry raising projects, the communities are starting to accept the idea of fattening up their subjects to sell them for substantial profits.

□ Temporary shelters for classrooms

Four (4) projects for constructing classrooms and temporary shelters for classrooms were completed. The program could not turn its back on one of the most critical needs created by the conflict. In response to the urgent demands from educational figureheads and the populations, World Education proceeded in the funding of classrooms and temporary school shelters. Particular attention was paid to the rapid implementation of these temporary school shelters which needed to be completed in time for the school year. The prompt mobilization of the beneficiaries facilitated the construction of 7 classrooms: one in Mpack, one in Boutapa, two at the CEM in Niaguis and three at the high school in Oussouye.

Despite their lack of material goods, the parents of the students demonstrated perfect mobilization in the construction of the classes. Their contribution in terms of manpower and modest material goods allowed for the construction permanent accredited classrooms instead of the foreseen temporary shelters. In fact, the communities completed the funding creating good classrooms in Mpack, Boutapa Camaracounda, Niaguis and Oussouye.

With the completion of the shelters, all of the students were able to begin classes on time and in comfortable settings. In Mpack, the classroom is used for 84 students entering first grade of which 50 are boys and 34 are girls. In Boutapa Camaracounda the classroom has an effective student body of 57 students of which 17 are girls and 40 are boys. In Niaguis and Oussouye the classrooms are used for high school students. Each of the five classrooms can hold a maximum of 60 students for a total of 300 students.

□ Transformation units

5 transformation units were put in place to help jump start economic activities in the communities. The different types of units allowed the communities to make use of previously unexploited water borne and tree growing products.

The program financed a unit to transform locust beans in Boutoupa Camaracounda, a palm oil press in Mawa and Diagon, a fish drying oven in Baghagha and a cashew nut transformation unit in Niabina. The cashew nut transformation unit was put in place with the help of Enterprise Works, an NGO with technical expertise in the transformation of cashew nuts. Enterprise Works is also financed by USAID and this collaboration contributed to the synergy among USAID partners.

These different types of transformation units helped the women to start up again with lucrative activities that are critical to their daily survival. This is the case in Baghagha, where the funding to refurbish a fish drying oven has helped the women reclaim an activity that has always been an integral part of their community activities. The completely ruined oven had not been cared for in years because of the conflict and the movement of the populations. During the time of the conflict, the women found themselves becoming poorer with nothing to do because fish drying had been their major commercialized activity.

The transformation units have revived economic activities creating a substantial amount of income for the women. The women have regained their independence and are able to pay for certain expenses such as the school fees of their children or health related costs.

The transformation units have also contributed to the recreation of social ties among the women. By working together towards common goals, they have been able to mend broken relationships created by the movement of people during the crisis. All of the evaluations show that the women who have benefited from these transformation unit projects accord equal importance to regaining group solidarity and having a source of income.

The well trained and motivated management committees facilitated the start-up and proper management of these unit activities. These projects which were completed near the end of our program will continue to be monitored by our partners. For all of these reasons, we can be assured of their sustainability.

3.2 Sector-based conclusion

It is without a doubt that the socio-economic micro-projects contributed to the priority needs for re-equipping and rehabilitating socio-educational infrastructures in the program's intervention zones. The projects marked an enormous improvement in the lives of the communities. To start with, the health huts drastically contributed to the improved health of the populations, the mills and huskers significantly decreased the women's workloads, and the canoes improved the quality of life for island inhabitants who had previously been completely cut off from the mainland. In addition, the market gardens made produce locally available ameliorating the quality of meals, and the community stores brought basic necessities to remote villages that are far away from larger urban centers.

Finally, the temporary school shelters notably increased access to education for young students in certain educational establishments that were lacking in infrastructures.

In addition, the socio-economic micro-projects positively impacted the financial situation of the beneficiary communities. The transformation units generated enough income that the women were even able to take care of certain family needs.

Moving beyond the satisfaction that the micro-projects provided in terms of responding to basic socio-educational infrastructure needs and providing the populations with production tools, these projects created the necessary space to rekindle ties of solidarity. It is through this new found solidarity that peace can truly begin. Therefore, not only did these projects reach their objectives of improving the life conditions in the communities, but they opened the door to sustained peace by responding to all of the population's practical needs.

4. PROGRAM RESULTS AND IMPACTS IN SUPPORT OF THE MFDC IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ACTORS WORKING TOWARDS THE RETURN OF PEACE IN THE REGION

The most delicate part of World Education's strategy was its interaction with the MFDC and offering them support in working towards reconciling with government structures. While this was done without any problems, it was still quite a risk for a development NGO, such as World Education, to put themselves in direct contact with the various leaders from the MFDC and high ranking government officials. However, it was the lack of any type of relationship between the MFDC and government that pushed World Education to become involved in this process. Little by little we confirmed that our support given to these institutions was necessary in order to have a significant impact on the Casamance peace process.

It is important to point out that World Education always held themselves to a position of strict neutrality and total transparency. This was done in order to minimize the risks that are inherent when one engages in direct relations between government authorities and leaders of a rebel movement such as the MFDC.

The decision to interact with the MFDC and the government allowed us to make significant advances in the Casamance peace process. While we recognize that it is certainly difficult for one actor to take credit for certain positive results in a process as complex as the conflict in the Casamance, the program implemented by World Education and financed by USAID can attest to being at the base of some of the most decisive activities that have happened in the peace process. The program can therefore claim to have largely contributed to the calm that presently reigns in Casamance.

4.1. *Results and impacts recorded in support of the MFDC*

- ❑ World Education Senegal offered continued support to the MFDC, who up until this moment in time, has made our organization their closest advisor and facilitator. The MFDC put World Education exclusively in charge of the necessary preparations and steps towards finding a compromise between the MFDC and the government.
- ❑ World Education Senegal invested an enormous amount of time trying to improve the relations between the different factions of the MFDC. They were at the base of the reconciliation between Abbot Augustin Diamacoune Senghor, President of the MFDC, and Sidy Badji, leader of the MFDC's fighting branch. The reconciliation visit that Abbot Diamacoune gave to Sidy Badji on September 13, 2002 and the return visit that Sidy Badji carried out on September 17, 2002, were inspired, prepared and lead by World Education in collaboration with the Ambassador Latif Gueye from l'Afrique Aide l'Afrique.
- ❑ By allowing the leaders of the MFDC to speak directly to the populations in the rural communities of Oussouye, Ziguinchor and Sedhiou during the cultural weekends, they were able to convince people of the MFDC's willingness to become engaged in the peace process. This conviction gave internally displaced people, refugees and certain fighters, the courage to return to their villages without fear of retaliation from the MFDC.
- ❑ World Education Senegal helped the MFDC methodically plan, prepare and carry out some of the most significative meetings held by the movement in the past four years. They are the Casamanco-Casamancais conference, the MFDC conference, the meetings with the Interior Ministers, and the meetings with the President of Senegal.
- ❑ The Casamanco-Casmancais conference was held thanks to our support along with funding that World Education was able to obtain from L'Afrique Aide l'Afrique. In addition, Abbot Abbé Diamacoune Senghor put World Education Senegal in charge of organizing all of the methodological and pedagogical material for this conference. We completed this mission by supporting the Professor Malamine Kourouma who had the initial idea of organizing this conference. However, had World Education not become involved in the planning of this conference, it is not sure that the meetings would have taken place, let alone have the enormous impact that they did on the peace process.
- ❑ The Casamanco-Casmancais meetings that were supported by our program, allowed all of the ethnic groups in the Casamance to publicly proclaim on the television and radio that they are in favor of peace. The meetings were an important turning point in the search for peace as they contributed to the easing of tensions created by the crisis. Calls for peace made from Ziguinchor's Bishop Mexan Coly, the Imam Ratib of Ziguinchor,

and representatives from all of the Casamance's ethnic groups were heard by the members of the macquis who had largely diminished their acts of violence.

- ❑ The MFDC meetings held from the 6th to the 8th of October, 2003 were extremely successful due to the fact that Abbot Diamacoune Senghor placed World Education in charge of the preparation, organization and presentation of conclusions. World Education Senegal correctly fulfilled its tasks. Letters of thanks were sent to World Education from the MFDC and the government. In addition, at the request of the government and the MFDC, World Education meticulously managed the funds put in place by the government to carry out the conference.
- ❑ World Education Senegal helped the MFDC follow the recommendations put in place during the October conference : inform the Minister of the Interior of the conclusions from the conference and propose an action plan with steps to follow until the final negotiations, inform the fighter rebels of the conference's conclusions and prepare a meeting between heads of the maquis in the northern front and Abbé Diamacoune, and make amends with Sidy Badji's group who although they boycotted the conference did not reject the conclusions of the meetings.
- ❑ During the October MFDC conference, Jean Marie Francois Biagui, the Secretary General of the MFDC, announced that the MFDC had renounced the use of arms in their continued struggle. He marked a huge turning point in the crisis when he stated, "The war in the Casamance is over." The government had placed so much hope in this particular conference that they didn't hesitate to evict RFI's journalist, Sophie Malibeu, from the country when she tried to qualify the conference as one big masquerade.
- ❑ The MFDC's October conference permitted the populations to speak to Abbe Diamacoune and the rest of the MFDC in person. They took advantage of the opportunity to tell them that they have had enough of the fighting and that the Casamance does not only belong to the MFDC. In conclusion, they encouraged the MFDC to negotiate for peace with the government while keeping in mind the various demands of the general population.
- ❑ World Education Senegal was able to easily negotiate with the MFDC to allow representatives from the different population groups to speak at the opening ceremony of their conference. Therefore, the thousands of people who participated in the opening ceremony heard speeches from the President of the Rural Counsel, the Mayor of Ziguinchor, A representative of the Imam, Abbe Alain, the representative of the Bishop Mexan Coly, a representative of the King of Oussouye, a representative of the Youth, a representative from the hotel industry, and a representative of the women.

- ❑ The MFDC conference was a critical turning point in the peace process. Following the enormous success of this meeting, the government of Senegal asked Jean Marie Francois Biagui to take a sabbatical from his work in France to stay in Senegal in order to complete the peace accords. The government even agreed to pay his living expenses for the year. After the MFDC's conference, World Education received congratulations from the MFDC and Senegalese authorities for the unrelenting support they offered to the MFDC in the preparation, execution, and follow-up of the conference.
- ❑ The program prepared, participated in, and facilitated numerous meetings between the different Ministers of the Interior : General Mamadou Niang, the current Ambassador to Senegal in Great Britain and Macky Sall the current Prime Minister. These various meetings that took place in the office of the Ministers or in the Governor of Ziguinchor's office allowed for certain decisions to be made on the organization of the MFDC's conference, steps towards the final negotiations, management of certain aspects of the MFDC's operations, clarification of certain positions in the government and MFDC, and obstacles in the peace process.
- ❑ The diverse meetings between the MFDC and high ranking officials in the government were extremely important because they assured the MFDC of the government's clear commitment to bring peace to the region without reprisals against the fighters or other members of the MFDC. The different Ministers gained the confidence of the MFDC through their openness and availability.
- ❑ All of the activities that were completed with the help of World Education's program gave a completely new image to the MFDC. They became seen as a rebel group that renounced the armed conflict and their fight for independence, but firmly held fast to their demands that were in the interest of the Casamance. Assuming their new role as a legitimate organization demanding respect, their leader was invited to Dakar to preside over the Independence Day festivities on April 4, 2004. Abbé Diamacoune was also invited to the Iba Mar Diop stadium in Dakar to preside over a prestigious traditional wrestling competition. In front of many government authorities, Abbe helped give away the prize trophy which was a peace bearing flag from the Casamance.
- ❑ The program invested a lot of time in the reconciliation between the different factions of the MFDC. In particular, attention was focused on reuniting Abbe Diamacoune's following with Sidy Badji's wing, even after the death of the latter. In addition, we have played a large role in maintaining the fragile stability in Abbe's camp which has been threatened by a disagreement between Jean Marie Francois Biagui, the Secretary General of the MFDC, and Bertrand Diamacoune, the National Representative.

- ❑ The program invested a lot of time facilitating long meetings between the different groups within the MFDC. These sessions helped the MFDC take important steps in projecting an exterior image of a strong and stable group even though there were serious divergences within the organization. These internal disagreements were exacerbated in the last few months of our program when Jean Marie Francois Biagui attempted to overthrow Bertrand Diamacoune Senghor and replace with his right hand man, Daniel Diatta. This move was an untimely blunder that propelled the MFDC into a deep crisis seriously handicapping the peace process which had taken off.
- ❑ Our support of the MFDC's relations with various authorities was not limited to the Ministers of the Interior. We deemed it necessary that the MFDC speak to the President of Senegal to share a certain number propositions leading towards restoring peace in the Casamance. With the support of World Education and the high ranking professionals from the Casamance, the MFDC met with the President on two separate occasions.
- ❑ A group of members from the MFDC led by their National Leader met with the President of the Republic in his Presidential palace on January 9, 2003. This meeting was suggested to the MFDC by World Education with the support of Ben Mady Cisse, the former leader of the high ranking professionals from the Casamance. At that moment in time, the MFDC had a bad reputation accentuated by many violent attacks all of which were assumed to have been perpetrated by members of the MFDC. The meeting took place in the presence of Pierre Goudiaby, President of the high ranking professionals from the Casamance, Ben Mady Cisse, the former leader of the Casamance professionals, and Abdou Sarr, the Director of World Education Senegal. The objective of this meeting was to share the MFDC's willingness to help bring peace to the Casamance with the President of Senegal. In addition, they were looking for support from the President to implement an action plan with specific steps to help bring this peace. The request of the MFDC was in the form of a written message from Abbe Augustin Diamacoune that Bertrand gave to the President at the beginning of the meeting. The reunion was a huge success and the President was visibly moved by this initial step from the MFDC. In fact, he immediately accepted their demands and profusely thanked Ben Mady, Pierre Goudiaby and World Education for the efficient and discreet support offered to the MFDC contributing to peace in Senegal. Immediately following the meeting, the President sent a congratulatory letter to the entire delegation and reaffirmed his agreement with all of the MFDC's points of discussion. (The letter from the President of Senegal and all of the correspondence related to this meeting can be found in the annexes).
- ❑ It is incontestable that the historical meeting on May 4, 2003 between the President of the Republic and Abbe Augustin Diamacoune was the most decisive turning point in the Casamance peace process. This meeting was the logical continuation from the first visit in January 2003. In effect, during the first meeting the MFDC agreed to put an end to the armed

conflict and accepted the request of the President to work towards negotiating peace. During the second visit, Abbe asked for a series of guarantees from the President of the Republic. It was important for Abbe to be in a position where he could guarantee that the government would take into account all of the Casamance's preoccupations and work on reconstructing the region before he could ask the MFDC to give up the violent acts and the search for independence.

- The President decided that he wanted to make this second historic meeting a national and international event. Therefore, he asked the delegation if they could turn this private meeting into a public event. The President confided in the group, "I want to share this historic visit from Diamacoune with all of the Senegalese people, and I want the people to be witness to what I am going to say to Diamacoune." The President asked that all of the Ministers concerned with this issue and his cabinet members to participate in this meeting. The speeches were telecast live on national television and on almost all of the public and private radio stations. The television chain TV5 and the radio broadcasters from RFI, BBC and Africa No 1 all relayed the ceremony during their different transmissions. The speech prepared by Abbe Diamacoune, full of pledges for peace, was followed by a speech from the President Abdoulaye Wade who accepted all of the guarantees proposed by Abbe Diamacoune. (See the annexes for the speeches given by Abbe and the President Abdoulaye Wade).
- A few weeks after this historic meeting, the President of the Republic sent the Minister of the Interior, General Mamadou Niang and the Minister of Communications, Abdou Fall, to Ziguinchor in order to deliver the official version of the President's guarantees to the President of the MFDC. The television and newspapers also closely covered this event.

4.2 Sector-based conclusion

The peace process has witnessed significant improvement in the past few years thanks to a certain number of compromises in the declarations, positions and attitudes of the MFDC. These largely mediatized historical events organized by the MFDC have greatly contributed to restoring hope among the Casamance's population. Declarations for peace coming from the MFDC's leaders have created calm in the communities and have decreased violent actions from armed bandits. It is undeniable that our program which systematically supported the MFDC in the achievement of its activities, largely contributed to the building of peace and prosperity in the Casamance.

The program offered impartial support to all of the MFDC's different factions who were interested in working towards peace in the Casamance. The transparency in which we dealt with the MFDC and all of the other actors involved in the resolution of the conflict permitted the program to make important steps in the peace process. Despite the complexity and delicacy of the crisis, the program did not encounter any major difficulties.

The pacified relations between the MFDC and the government authorities, as well as this long period of relative calm, have paved the way for future negotiations to bring definitive peace to the Casamance. Having instigated some of the most decisive turning points in the conflict, the program can be proud of the role it has played in advancing the peace process.

It is certain that this latest regression within the MFDC due to internal quarrels and the infiltration of new “actors” that inflame the internal crises will slow down the normal course of the process. However, the enormous gains such as the relative calm and the relations between the MFDC and the government are sufficiently solid to not be destroyed by this difficult period that the movement is currently traversing.

13. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROGRAM

The program, *"Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance"*, like all other conflict resolution programs is particular in the fact that it is carried out in a conflict zone. It is for this reason that the execution of such a program can be a great opportunity to study methods, attitudes and practices that can serve other organizations and individuals desiring to implement activities in similar conditions. Besides the particularity of the crisis context, this program had a uniquely original strategy that increased the opportunities for learning. The lessons listed below were learned throughout the implementation of the program.

1. A conflict resolution program has a lot to gain from a global approach that involves the warring factions and the maximum number of actors. This allows for a global definition of the difficulties and also helps reach a consensus through debates between the belligerents and the various people concerned.
2. Collaborating with the two warring factions (MFDC and government) is extremely difficult to succeed. In fact, it is not always easy for an organization to be accepted by the parties in conflict, particularly the rebel movement. This collaboration is not impossible, but it is difficult to establish. One must have a solid approach method based on patience, respect for the positions of one another and a certain neutrality that offers no room for suspicion.
3. The reconciliation of certain differences obtaining certain consensus are often attained through unconventional meetings uniting the two parties that normally do not frequent one another. For example, this is the case of the meetings organized between the rebels, the military, opinion leaders, youth, women, politicians and administrators.
4. These important meetings, where burning subjects are brought out into the open, are not easy to complete for a variety of different reasons. Issues around security, suspicion and hierarchy must be addressed in

advance. Long and fastidious preparations are also necessary in order to convince the different parties to participate in the activities.

5. The program addressed a number of problems whose solutions involve the implication of high ranking government officials. Therefore, from the very beginning of the program, it is important to involve these authorities as collaborators keeping them constantly abreast of the evolution of the program's activities. Based on this ideology, we developed close relationships with Youba Sambou, General Mamadou Niang, Macky Sall, Latif Gueye, and Pierre Goudiaby, who are respectively the Minister of the Armed Forces, Ministers of the Interior, Ambassador of L'Afrique Aide Afrique, and a Technical Advisor to the President of the Republic of Senegal.
6. These relationships with the government's centers for decision making seem quite contradictory to the nature of NGOs. Normally NGOs are quite skeptical towards creating relationships with governmental authorities. These relationships are possible and necessary in conflict situations, but are not easy to create or maintain.
7. The relationships necessary in a conflict program are not only limited to high ranking government authorities. Decision making centers are not only limited to government elected circles. The program must work to create relationships with all those who are capable of influencing popular opinion. World Education also formed relationships with Imams, bishops, priests, kings, queens, guards of the sacred forest. These people are the head decision makers for the Christian, Muslim and Animist communities. In addition, we worked closely with local elected officials, notably the President of the Rural Council and Rural Advisors who have decision making power at the local rural community level.
8. Due to their complex nature and numerous actors, conflict resolution programs force NGOs into working with unconventional partners. These NGOs must adopt the necessary methods, attitudes and approaches needed to work with individuals, organizations and authorities. Therefore, the area of intervention for NGOs in conflict resolution programs is not limited to their typical community based programs.
9. Conflict resolution programs are extremely complex in that different variables arise throughout the execution of the program. Therefore, it is fundamental to involve the funding agency from the beginning of the program's activities, as well as, the rolling out of the diverse phases. World Education greatly benefited from the support of USAID's personnel who gave pertinent advice to our NGO during critical moments. This partnership between the funder and the organization executing the program allows us to :

- ✓ Exchange and immediately decide upon changes in programming or orientation of activities due to imposing situations ;
- ✓ Benefit from the past performances of the two organizations to respond in the most adequate way possible to the difficult types of questions that arise in conflict programs ;
- ✓ Minimize the risk of making poor judgments in treating sensitive questions ;
- ✓ Share the responsibility of certain risks when they arise.

10. There are two options for a conflict resolution program. One can either implement their program activities on the periphery of the crisis or become completely engaged in all aspects of the conflict. The first option only addresses the consequences of the crisis, while the second option actually tries to resolve the conflict. It is evident that staying on the periphery of the crisis is simpler and doesn't put the organization at a lot of risk. The risks associated with this option are limited because the interlocutors are the communities who have practical needs and easily accept the projects of the program. However, the second option is a lot more political and strategic. This is a lot riskier because the warring factions all have their interests to defend. As soon as the program diverges from their position they consider that their logic has been neglected and they no longer follow the program's actions.

11. The two options have their place in the resolution of conflicts. However, the second option which is a lot less comfortable for NGOs who are used to working with communities can have a much larger impact in providing a solution to the crisis. Evidently, there are a lot more risks associated with this axis of intervention for NGOs, their staff members, and the funding agency.

12. When an NGO makes the option to become completely involved in the resolution of a conflict, it is necessary for the staff to develop a series of strategies in order to minimize the risks and consequences of this choice that puts them in a very delicate situation. The establishment of relationships with all of the parties, neutrality, transparency and other attitudes are necessary parts of this strategy.

13. We would like to reiterate that if an NGO chooses to become politically involved in conflict resolution activities, they cannot totally ignore the practical aspects of their programs. A peace building program should work towards the amalgamation of conflict resolution activities with the response to practical needs of the communities who have been affected by the crisis. Micro-projects that focus on health, lessening of women's workloads, agriculture, husbandry, and the reconnection of isolated communities are necessary in order to work towards resolving the conflict. A peace building program that does not respond to the practical

needs of the communities that have endured the consequences of the crisis risks to be seen as too theoretical. On the other hand, a program that only opts to focus on practical interventions is completely evading the political aspect of the conflict. NGOs often choose the practical side of interventions in order to avoid dealing with the complexities of the politics involved in resolving conflicts.

14. Peace building programs should span out over a long period of time. Most funding agencies only finance 2 to 3 year programs which are not sufficient for this specific type of activity. Once the program succeeds in becoming involved in the peace process, they become an integral part of the process and have roles and responsibilities to fulfill. They should not have to risk becoming disengaged at a moment in time when the peace process might suffer greatly from their departure. In addition, the credibility of the institutions involved may be questioned making it hard for future organizations to gain the confidence of the populations once again.
15. Unfortunately, conflict resolution has become a main focus for NGOs intervening in the African context. However, there are relatively few NGOs who have experience in this domain or who have created tools dealing with conflict resolution. NGOs wishing to conduct programs focusing on conflict resolution are forced to create and test their own tools and modules. Therefore, a lot of time must be invested in the conception, and adaptation of training modules, as well as, the creation of specific strategies and approaches.
16. Peace building programs must also use local NGOs as their support networks. Evidently, these NGOs often need training to reinforce their institutional capacity so that their knowledge of the region can be used in the most effective way possible. Certain contacts can only be made in the presence of these local organizations who offer a certain reassurance to those whose services are being solicited. For example, World Education used the support of AJAEDO in order to establish relationships with particular traditional leaders.
17. On the other hand, certain roles, activities, and contacts are easier to be made when the organization or person is not from the region. In situations that require total neutrality, it is actually an advantage to be a foreign organization. For many of the subjects discussed, certain interlocutors were more at ease with non-local organizations. This is the case for topics such as denunciation where the utmost confidentiality is required. Communities are often ill at ease discussing these subjects in front of local organizations.

18. The two previous examples highlight the importance of creating a synergy among the various organizations in order to utilize their various competencies in resolving conflicts. This complementarity will allow us to look at the conflict from many different angles giving a much broader understanding of the situation.
19. There are certain intervention methods that World Education has used in other ordinary development programs that are also applicable in conflict resolution programs. Most notable, the community based approach which places emphasis on increasing the capacities of community based organizations. This capacity building does not seek to place communities at the level of beneficiaries or clients, but aims to make them principal actor in their own development.
20. In a conflict resolution program, the consequences of the events on the communities are so profound that they must be the central actors in the peace building process. Therefore, certain community channels and local leaders can play a fundamental role in various program activities.
21. The populations must be fully involved in the choice and implementation of the peace building and socio-economic micro-projects in order for them to succeed. In fact, this is the *sine qua non* for their success and sustainability. In addition, the trainings on management and internal organization must be completed before the implementation of the projects. The support given to the beneficiaries during the execution helps reinforce the methods of management necessary to properly manage a project. By respecting all of these variables, we were able to succeed almost all of the program's micro-projects.

14. ANECDOTES

We have selected a series of different anecdotes that give voice to the diverse actors and beneficiaries involved in our program. Not only do these quotes eloquently express the perceptions of the interested parties, but they also contribute to the evaluation of the impact the program's events had on individuals.

- **The villagers of Sare Mody assure that the sustainability of their community store is a preoccupation of the entire village and particularly the chief of the village**

During the visit of USAID's local representative, Lamine Coly, to the village chief of Sare Mody that benefited from the financement of a community store, the chief responds to a question about the sustainability of the store :

"I have grown up and aged in the village of Sare Mody and I know how we have suffered even to buy some salt. This Community store that brings us all types of merchandise to the heart of our village represents a lot for Sare Mody and the surrounding villages. I have taken it upon myself to survey it like my own field so that my grandchildren can have an even better stocked store. All of the village will help manage this store that is an enormous service to all of us."

- **The women of Oukout attest to the fact that the program projects really do take into account the population's preoccupations**

Speaking in the name of the women of Oukout who have truly been relieved by the rice husker, Mariama Diédhiou witnesses :

"We, the Diola women of Oukout, have the obligation to assure the availability of rice destined to feed our families on a daily basis. For this reason, we would need two days in the week to husk the rice paddy. The husking of rice paddies is long and exhausting. In fact, you need survey it while it dries in the sun all day long, and then you have to start crushing it in the mortar and pestle. Before the rice becomes entirely white, you have to put it in the mortar and pestle at least three times. After each pounding in the mortar, you need to fan the rice to separate the grains from the casing which also takes half a day. Now thanks to our rice husker, all you need to do is send a child with the rice paddy to the machine which does all of this work in no time at all. We don't even know how to thank this program that has brought us this rice husker."

- **The women of Salikegne appreciate their flour mill which has changed their lifestyle.**

Aminata Mballo, a woman from Salikegne, forcefully expresses her appreciation for the village's flour mill:

“Before the flour mill came to our village, the women suffered enormously. We would have to wake up at five in the morning in order to pound the small millet in order to serve it for breakfast that morning. Each evening, we would have to leave our rice fields early in order to pound the millet for the evening's meal. With this flour mill, we wake up at seven in the morning like everyone else which gives us enough time to be well rested. In addition, we no longer have to leave our rice fields early worrying about having to do this difficult task after a long day of work. The mill has changed our lifestyle which has truly become a lot less difficult. World Education's program cannot even imagine the happiness they have brought to the women of this village.”

- **The Queen of Essaout, Hélène Diédhiou, appreciates her collaboration with World Education in the peace process**

Upon receiving a team of visitors who came to speak with the Queen about her partnership with World Education in the peace process, Hélène Diédhiou, the Queen of Essaout proudly affirms :

“For reasons related to the crisis, I could no longer carry out my functions as queen in my kingdom. I was momentarily forced to live in exile abandoning my people who were totally disoriented. World Education's program revitalized me by giving me the opportunity to once again play an important role in the peace process, particularly among women. Today, I have once again become what I always was. I can fulfill my mission of protecting and giving advice to my people. I have become, once again, the Queen of Essaout.”

- **The King of Oussouye, his Majesty Sibiloumbaye Diédhiou, is thankful for World Education's approach that places traditional values at the forefront of the peace process.**

His majesty Sibiloumbaye Diédhiou, King of Oussouye, is a partner of World Education's program. Responding to an evaluator's question, he affirms :

“World Education came into the department of Oussouye through the right door. The members of this organization have sincerely showed a tremendous amount of respect for our traditional values. Many people declare I speeches all of their respect for traditions, but rare are those who are willing to use traditions in order to try and resolve certain problems. World Education is part of these rare individuals that place confidence in the cultural traditions to find solutions to problems. Yet, it is only through traditional channels that we can resolve certain

differences in Diola culture. From now on, I will be the spokesperson for this organization that had confidence in the tradition by allowing me to mobilize my kingdom around ideas for peace. I am a King for peace and World Education helped restore my traditional functions.”

- **The heads of the MFDC approve of the program’s strategy that involves all of the implicated parties**

Bertrand Diamacoune, the National Representative of the MFDC, expressed his feelings on the program during a visit from Boston in these words:

“World Education’s program finally allowed the MFDC to directly address the people of the Casamance. The MFDC had wished for a long time to meet with the populations, but they were never given the opportunity. The cultural weekends where World Education had the courage to bring together all of the people including the military and administrative authorities, was an incredible initiative. What World Education has done is unique. Personally, I think this is the route we need to take in order to bring peace because these meetings allow everyone to speak openly in front of the populations and the press. The MFDC and the Casamance owe a lot to this program.”

- **Bertrand Diamacoune, the National Representative of the MFDC spoke to the press after the first cultural weekend in Cabrousse.**

Thrilled by the cultural weekend that allowed the populations of Cabrousse to talk about the consequences of the conflict in their daily lives, Bertrand Diamacoune, the National Representative said in front of the press :

“I feel that World Education’s program has untied our tongues so that we can finally address the internal conflicts and suspicions among the same inhabitants of a rural community. This is so important that this program doesn’t have to do anything else but that. We must use all of the program’s means in order to make people speak so that we can finally move towards forgiveness.”

- **Abbé Augustin Diamacoune, President of the MFDC thanks the program for having organized an historic meeting with the King of Oussouye.**

After having met with the King of Oussouye, his Majesty Sibiloumbaye Diédhiou, Abbé Diamacoune confides in Abdou Sarr, the Director of World Education, in the car that was bringing them back to Ziguinchor :

“I always prayed to God to grant my wish of someday setting foot back in the King of Oussouye’s court in my native village of Oussouye. Thanks to your program, this wish has been granted. I thank God ad I offer my benedictions to

World Education. You have allowed me to speak to my King and from this meeting I have gained the courage to continue my struggle for peace in the Casamance.”

- **The Executive Secretary of OFAD/Nafooré, Mr. Baba Koïta, appreciates the honest collaboration marked by mutual respect.**

The Executive Secretary of OFAD/Nafooré, Mr. Baba Koïta, appreciates the partnership with World Education. Speaking to a group of evaluators about his collaboration with World Education, Baba Koïta states :

“This is the first time that we have had a partner that treats us with as much respect and consideration. This is not all talk, but can be witnessed by their actions. All of the other partners with whom we have collaborated in the past do not leave us enough room to express our point of view. In addition, by building our capacity in various domains, World Education has helped OFAD become an emerging NGO. We are the only local NGO in the entire region of Kolda that has a computerized accounting system.”

- **A mark of affection from a woman who is completely overcome by her community store project that services an entire community**

The President of the management committee for Sare Mbandy manifest her joy to our Program Coordinator by telling him in the name of all of the women of Sare Mbandy :

“If World Education was a man, a lot of women from Sare Mbandy would want to marry him because he listens to them with attention. He knows how to ask them what they want and he responds to the needs expressed by women. All women dream about having this type of husband. In order to please World Education, we are going to closely monitor our community store like our own children. This way we will merit the confidence World Education has placed in us, the women of Sare Mbandy, and we will always have World Education with us.”

- **Good management of the community store in Saré Ilo**

While addressing the monitoring team on the transparent management of the community store, a village notable in Saré Ilo said :

“Even if it is only 5 fr that are missing from the cash box the entire village will know. In fact, our inventory is done each week in front of everyone because the community store belongs to everyone. The store has only been entrusted to the management committee who is responsible for accounting for how they have managed the village’s store during the past week. Therefore, everyone in the

village will know that the store is well managed and will continue to provide a variety of merchandise to the population.”

- **For Alimou Diallo, President of AJAEDO, the institutional capacity building is a strong atout for winning other battles**

Alimou Diallo, President of AJAEDO appreciates the partnership with World Education :

“Thanks to the institutional capacity building that we received from World Education, there are many other NGOs today who have confidence in and work with us. If the GTZ and AFRICARE chose to work with AJAEDO in the implementation of their project in the department of Oussouye it is because they noticed our good organization, the quality of our field trainers and our efficient accounting system. All of these capacities are owed to World Education’s peace building program financed by USAID. The program left us with reinforced capacities that serve as arms allowing us to win other battles.”

- **A notable guard of the sacred forest lectures the communities during the forum of the cultural weekend in Cabrousse. He was convincing the populations to use honest and direct intercommunity dialogues to resolve inter-villager conflicts.**

During the forum organized during the second day of the cultural weekend, the spokesperson for the notable guards of the sacred forest of Cabrousse forcefully stated :

“Do you really think that we can do something sustainable in our rural community without harmony between our villages? I don’t think so. But no one can make peace in our place. World Education’s program, in organizing this cultural weekend, brought all of the villages face to face with the leaders of the MFDC. Now, it is up to us, and us only to look at one another in the face and speak honestly about the problems that have divided us for over twenty years. It is time to finally forgive and restart lives of mutual respect where special consideration is given to our sacred forests and other venerable places.”

- **The fiery Martin Mane, who was killed in a car accident during a mission working on the conflict, was a well known actor in the peace process. He was the president of CONGAD's regional office and head of the NGO AGADA. Fiery Martin participated in all of our cultural weekends in the department of Oussouye.**

Fiery Martin was known for his honest speech, appreciated the cultural weekends and mentioned in his final report the following point of view :

“The cultural and sports activities are in accordance with Diola culture as a true way to bring about dialogue leading to forgiveness. These activities are filled with enthusiasm, mingling between one another, joy and happiness leading to sharing among the populations. All of this, in turn, can lead to a liberation of the distrust plaguing the populations because they are reassured by the remarkable presence of foreigners accompanied by high ranking officials from both sides of the conflict (Administration and MFDC).”

Fiery Martin Mané mentioned in this same report that was produced at the end of the four cultural weekends in the department of Oussouye:

“The fora held just after the day of recreational activities filled with the rhythms and colors of the Casamance were emotional moments for the populations to make statements on the Casamance crisis, the conditions in which they live, the consequences and propositions to pull themselves out of the crisis and the awareness around forgiveness and the reconciliation of hearts.”

15. CONCLUSION

The achievements of the program "*Building Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance*" are really quite remarkable. And while it is true that many of the results are visible and palpable there are also many other important events that are intangible and difficult to demonstrate.

Throughout this report we have tried to show that USAID's program implemented by World Education Senegal has reached its objectives. We were able to push communities towards courageously facing the problems generated by the conflict. The communities were able to use endogenous procedures to discuss and offer durable solutions to the problems caused by the conflict. The numerous projects financed by the program at the demand of the communities, also greatly contributed to the improvement in the quality of life at the village level.

The capacity building of these same communities greatly contributed to the sustainability of all these practical projects. In addition, the program allowed for the restructuring of many local NGOs. Through this reinforcement, the NGOs became viable actors who were capable of implementing development and peace building activities in their villages.

Finally, the program offered a large amount of support to the MFDC in their peace building activities at the community and governmental levels. All of the external and internal evaluations bear witness to the role that World Education played in the Casamance peace process. The program's beneficiaries and the other actors agree that USAID's program executed by World Education was a big success because they were able to become such important role players.

However, the premature end of the program at a moment when the peace process was most in need of support is certainly the biggest regret among the actors and observers of the peace process.

We can rejoice at the success of USAID's program which effectively contributed to the peace building process in the Casamance. This respite in fighting should, despite its positive magnitude, not be treated with a false sense of modesty. We must not forget that definitive peace has not yet been attained.

The soldiers are still in their barracks waiting for the renewed clashes with elements of the MFDC. On the other side of things, members of the rebellion are still in the underground camps deeply divided between the northern and southern fronts. While the will to negotiate is evident within the government whose positions have very little variation, it is difficult to affirm the same stance among the MFDC. In effect, the irredentist movement still has members at the heart of the organization who are deeply committed to the idea of complete independence. These ideological divergences not only ignite internal quarrels, but have also created dissension among different fighting and political wings situated within and outside of the country.

This problem of leadership within the MFDC which was mitigated for a brief moment with the support of our program in collaboration with other actors has unfortunately resurfaced during this last quarter. It is quite regrettable that in the face of the deterioration of the MFDC there is a large confusion about authority among those who are supposed to be managing the Casamance conflict. This misunderstanding is without a doubt the reason that has impeded the organization of important meetings. For example, meetings with members of the underground have been halted. These meetings are critical so that serious negotiations can take place leading to sustainable peace in the Casamance.

It is our important opinion that in this stage of the peace process that someone be mandated by the government to take hold of the reigns and steer this process in the right direction. If such a decision is not taken quickly, it is feared that this lull in fighting will give the radical members of the MFDC's different factions the time to reorganize themselves in order to push the moderate rebels to the fringes and plunge the conflict into a much more deadly phase.

The relative stability that was acquired through the combined actions of different actors, many of whom were financed by USAID, is at risk of deteriorating very rapidly. It is for this reason that we believe more than ever that USAID should intensify its interventions in the Casamance. Programs such as the one that was designed and implemented by World Education get to the heart of the events while taking all of the necessary precautions. It is these types of programs that are needed in order to facilitate the peace process which is currently at a stand still. In addition, USAID should equally pursue and emphasize programs that work at the periphery of the crisis in order to minimize the consequences of the crisis and contribute to the rebirth of community based economic and social activities.

16. ANNEXES

Annex 1 : Action plan for the institutional capacity building of organizations

Annex 2 : Calendar of the institutional capacity building of intermediary organizations : OFAD, AJAC, KORASE, AJAEDO

Annex 3 : Summary table of the micro-projects financed by World Education Senegal

Annex 4 : The MFDC's audience on January 9, 2003 with his Excellence Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal

- Notes from the Meeting
- Presentation of World Education Senegal
- Message from the President of the MFDC to his Excellence Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal
- Letter from the Minister of the Interior of Senegal to the Minister of Internal Administration of Guinea Bissau
- Thank you letter from the President of the MFDC to his Excellence, Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal
- Thank you letter from his Excellence, Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal to the President of the MFDC
- Letter from the President of the MFDC to the Minister of Internal Administration from the Republic of Guinea Bissau
- Letter of congratulations and thank you from the General Secretary of the MFDC to the Director of World Education Senegal

Annex 5 : The MFDC's audience on May 4, 2004 with his Excellence, Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal

- Request for the meeting from the President of the MFDC
- Note prepared by Ben Mady Cissé, the oldest member of the group of high ranking professionals from the Casamance on the process of resolving the Casamance crisis
- Composition of the MFDC's delegation
- Declaration from the President of the MFDC to his Excellence Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal
- Response from his Excellence Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal to the President of the MFDC
- Press release

Annex 6 : Letter from the President of the MFDC to the Director of the USAID

Annex 7 : Letter from the Director of USAID to the President of the MFDC

Annex 8 : Thank you letter from the Minister of the Interior to the President of the MFDC

ACRONYMS

AAA : Afrique Aide Afrique

ACA : Association Conseil pour l'Action

ACI : Africa Consultants International

AJAC : Association des Jeunes Agricultures de la Casamance

AJAEDO : Association des Jeunes Agricultures et Eleveurs du Département d'Oussouye

AGADA : Agir Autrement pour le Développement en Afrique

APRAN : Association pour la Promotion Durable de l'Arrondissement de Nyassia

ASACASE : Association Sénégalaise pour l'Appui à la Création d'Activités Socio Economiques

CCC : Collectif des Cadres de la Casamance

CLD : Comité Local de Développement

CRS : Catholic Relief Services

CONGAD : Conseil des Organisations Non Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement

GRDR : Groupe de recherches et de réalisations pour le développement rural dans le Tiers monde

ICP : Infirmier Chef de Poste

MFDC : Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance

NGO : Non-Governmental Organization

OFAD : Organisation de Formation et d'Appui au Développement / NAFOORE

PCP : Projet de Consolidation de la Paix

PCR : Président de Communauté Rurale

UNICEF : United Nations Children's Fund

USAID : United States Agency for International Development

TOSTAN : Wolof word meaning blossoming – local NGO

WFP : World Food Program