



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention

Consolidated third to fifth periodic reports of States parties

Senegal*

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Introduction

1. The Republic of Senegal acceded without reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, and ratified it on 31 July 1990.
2. In November 1995, Senegal submitted its initial report. Its second periodic report (CRC/C/SEN/2) was considered by the Committee on the Rights of the Child on 29 September 2006.
3. The Committee welcomed the submission of the State party's second periodic report and its replies (CRC/C/SEN/Q/2/Add.1), which gave it a better understanding of the country's implementation of the Convention.
4. After considering the second periodic report, the Committee invited the State party exceptionally to submit consolidated third, fourth and fifth periodic reports, which were not to exceed 120 pages altogether in length. The Committee expects the State party to report every five years thereafter, as stipulated by the Convention.
5. In accordance with the guidelines for the preparation and follow-up of periodic reports to the Committee, the present consolidated report gives an overview of the progress made since the second report. It contains updates of data previously submitted to the Committee, as well as information on the follow-up to the concluding observations issued by the Committee after its consideration of the second periodic report (CRC/C/SEN/CO/2).
6. This report combines contributions from the ministries concerned with the implementation of the Convention. The State has also taken into account the observations of the associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) members of the National Committee for Children.
7. The methodology employed for the preparation of the report is based on the following principles: a participative approach and consensus between the Government and civil society regarding the outcomes and constraints noted with respect to the implementation of the Convention from 2004 to 2011.
8. The reporting process was conducted by the Ministry for Infants and Children, which in April 2012 became the Ministry for Women, Children and Female Entrepreneurship. This Ministry held a series of national consultations with representatives of various public institutions, civil society organizations and development partners involved in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
9. These national consultations included an information-sharing workshop held in June 2012, which focused on the preparation of monitoring reports on the implementation of international child protection commitments and endorsement sessions coordinated by the National Committee for Children.
10. The report has also made use of reports and analyses concerning the situation of children between 2005 and 2011, evaluations of public policies and the Government's programmes of cooperation with development partners, and national statistical survey data.

Part I

General information

11. Since the publication in 2005 of the last periodic report on the rights of the child in Senegal, the enjoyment by children of their rights has improved overall thanks to a more

favourable political, social and economic environment, despite a difficult international context and repeated humanitarian crises.

12. Over the past five years, although undergoing profound economic and social changes, the country has maintained a rate of economic growth averaging around 4 per cent per annum. After reaching 4.7 per cent in 2007, growth slowed to 2.5 per cent in 2008 and to 1.25 per cent in 2009. This allowed a gradual but steady increase in the share of the national budget devoted to social services for children. Between 2007 and 2011, the total budget earmarked for this purpose increased from 1,575.7 to 1,642.1 billion CFA francs.

13. This relatively positive situation, however, was affected by an unfavourable international context, whose main impact as far as Senegal was concerned was to reduce the State's room for budgetary manoeuvre and create a sharp liquidity shortage. With the rise in food and energy costs and their social effects, the above conditions made life more difficult for the population, including children. Poverty has increased as a result, with an average of 6 out of every 10 persons estimated to be living below the poverty line,¹ the majority in rural areas (54 per cent).

14. Over the course of the past five years, the country has experienced a high population growth rate of 2.5 per cent, rising from 9.9 million to 12.3 million. This population is particularly young, with children under 15 years in 2008 accounting for 42 per cent of the total and children under 18 years 51.6 per cent.

15. The majority (85.9 per cent) of children live in households of seven or more persons. The total fertility rate is estimated at 5.0 children per woman² (compared with 5.3 in 2005). This rate is higher in rural areas (6.0 children per woman compared with 3.9 in urban areas). Early fertility is also common, with 19 per cent of girls under 20 either giving birth or undergoing pregnancy. The prevalence of contraception is low and stood at 13 per cent in 2011 (12.1 per cent in 2005).³

16. The majority of juveniles belong to families living in poverty. Over 42 per cent of children are deprived of decent accommodation, 24 per cent of sanitation and 11 per cent of drinking water.⁴

Part II

Replies to the concerns and recommendations of the Committee

17. Following its consideration of the second periodic report of Senegal and the replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/SEN/Q/2), the Committee had noted with satisfaction that Senegal had made efforts to improve the implementation of the national plan for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

18. While welcoming the progress made, in 2006 the Committee had expressed concerns and recommendations focusing on the sector of the protection of the rights of child victims, the availability of resources, children affected by armed conflict, the dissemination and implementation of the Convention, birth registration, health and education, with more specific recommendations regarding the problem of *talibé* children,

¹ Study on chronic poverty in Senegal, Laboratoire de Recherche sur les Transformations Economiques et Sociales (Research Laboratory on Economic and Social Transformations) (LARTES), 2011.

² Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (EDS-MICS), National Statistics and Demography Agency (ANSD), 2012.

³ EDS-MICS, ANSD, 2012.

⁴ Overseas Development Institute (ODI), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2009.

the persistence of the practice of female genital mutilation, the absence of legislation to fully implement the Convention, the lack of a Children's Code or independent national institution on children's rights, inequalities between rural and urban areas in terms of the coverage of social programmes and the proportion of the State budget set aside for the sector.

19. The Government has taken the opportunity offered by the submission of the combined third to fifth periodic reports to inform the Committee of the various measures it has taken to address the specific concerns and recommendations made following the Committee's forty-third session and its consideration of the second periodic report of Senegal, which are summarized in paragraph 21 of this report.

A. Protection of the rights of child victims and strengthening of the protection of children's rights

20. Between 2005 and 2011, Senegal made great efforts to improve the protection of children, including through the launch of a large-scale project aimed at restructuring and transforming the current protection provisions into a modern child protection system suited to the local socio-cultural and demographic context and capable of protecting all children without discrimination, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

21. Since the beginning of 2009, the Government, with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and working in association with the Ministries of the Family, Justice and Social Action and with the cooperation of Save the Children, Sweden, and Plan International Senegal, has mapped and analysed national protection systems in order to better identify requirements in terms of the protection of children and of existing services.

22. The Government also commissioned an organizational review of the Ministry of the Family, Children and Female Entrepreneurship in order to determine to what extent this ministry currently meets the needs of children, and as a result has been able to define national protection mechanisms that comply with international standards, to establish a system of reference and cross-reference services and to develop a national child protection strategy.

23. This progress has been achieved with the participation of the ministries responsible for child protection and the representatives of the communities and civil society organizations. The strategy has been technically validated by the various stakeholders and is awaiting political approval. At any event, field workers, decentralized State services and NGOs are already referring to the technically validated strategy document as a reference in all matters concerning the design and implementation of child protection measures.

24. The Ministry of the Family, with the support of UNICEF, has also started to prepare a medium-term spending framework by defining separate budgetary classifications and by offering training to all persons involved in planning and budgeting work.

25. The validation of the strategy, which is expected in the second half of 2012, will be completed by a national action plan for 2012–2016 and the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. In the longer term, these components will be combined into an integrated national protection system designed to respond harmoniously and comprehensively to child protection requirements.

26. Senegal has continued to build on these efforts by strengthening the legal and regulatory frameworks and by becoming party to several international instruments, including the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

During the reporting period, the National Assembly authorized the President of the Republic to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and adopted the Social Policy Orientation Act on the rights of persons with disabilities. The relevant government departments also prepared a preliminary bill on the establishment of an independent Ombudsman for Children. These laws together with other older legislation have been disseminated in the form of a compendium of laws on children's rights in Senegal, which is intended to serve as a reference for stakeholders involved in child protection work, and an aid for all parties involved in the effort of supporting the State's policy of making the promotion and safeguarding of children's rights a national priority. The compendium has been made available in Jurisclasseur and interactive CD-ROM format and has been widely disseminated.

27. In regard to the governance of the child protection system, Senegal has strengthened coordination efforts and has established several independent self-regulatory mechanisms. In 2008, in response to instructions by the President of the Republic, the Child Protection Support Unit (CAPE) was founded with the aim of: developing a favourable environment for the realization of children's rights; incorporating those rights in policies, programmes, laws and budgets; and establishing a strategic partnership for the mobilization of resources for children. CAPE has also been assigned the specific task of helping to speed up the rescue and rehabilitation of street children, in cooperation with PARRER (Partnership for the Rescue and Rehabilitation of Street Children). Thus, since 2009, CAPE has been financing the rescue component of PARRER's programme for street children involved in begging.

28. In response to the Committee's specific recommendation to further strengthen the Directorate for the Rights of the Child and Child Protection (DDPE), the Government carried out a series of restructuring measures in 2009, namely by supplementing the Directorate's workforce with specialized personnel (such as lawyers, social workers, sociologists and information and communication specialists) and increasing its operational capacities, and by deciding to place it in charge of practically all vulnerable child protection projects. The Directorate's general mandate has also been strengthened through the addition of the new tasks of monitoring the implementation of conventions and protocols relating to children's rights and coordinating the commitments and activities of the Ministry of the Family concerning children.

B. Establishment of an independent children's rights institution or Children's Ombudsman

29. With regard to the recommendation concerning the establishment of an independent national child rights institution, Senegal, with the support of UNICEF and the International Organisation of La Francophonie (IOF), set up an independent child advocacy organization in September 2007.

30. A working group, coordinated by the Child Protection Support Unit and comprised of representatives from the Ministries of the Family and Justice, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Senate and the National Assembly, the International Organisation of La Francophonie, the Coalition nationale des associations et ONG en faveur de l'enfant (CONAFE) and UNICEF, defined the profile of the Children's Ombudsman, established its institutional position, determined its mandate and identified potential sources of funding.

31. This led to the submission to the Head of State in 2011 of a preliminary bill establishing the Children's Ombudsman. Children's views were sought and taken into account during the process. The adoption of the preliminary bill is currently underway.

C. Protection of children from corporal punishment

32. The Government, with the support of civil society, mobilized significant resources to promote the National Plan to eradicate the ill-treatment of children in general. In 2010 and 2011, intensive communication campaigns involving the media and national and local opinion leaders, including religious leaders, were conducted to approach parents and health workers, the police, the judiciary and teachers, in order to raise their awareness of the roles and responsibilities they have in preventing violence against children and ensuring the effective protection of child victims.

33. In order to combat violence in schools, the Government and civil society, with the support of the NGO Plan International, launched the “Learning without fear” awareness-raising campaign in 2008.

34. The campaign made use of information and communication technologies to protect children by publicizing a helpline (116) based at the Reception and Assistance Centre for Street Children (GINDDI) of the Ministry for the Family and Child Protection. This distant communication mechanism is designed to facilitate reporting and guidance in cases of abuse and trafficking, amongst others. A collection of teaching materials about the children’s helpline was also developed for elementary and kindergarten pupils.

35. In partnership with Save the Children and Plan International, Senegal, the Ministry of the Family launched a legal reform campaign in December 2001 in order to combat degrading treatment, including corporal punishment, more effectively.

36. All these measures led to the development by Senegal of a national legal reform action plan with the aim of incriminating corporal punishment and all forms of violence against children. All institutional and social stakeholders actively participated in the process. When implemented, the plan will allow for continued advocacy, will amend all laws to ensure that corporal punishment is prohibited in Senegal in all circumstances, and will ensure the effective implementation of the amended legislation.

37. In Senegal, corporal punishment is formally prohibited in conventional and non-conventional school establishments by Decree No. 79-1165 of 20 December 1979. The contents of this regulatory act clearly demonstrate the legislator’s desire to cast a wide net and to prohibit this form of ill-treatment in Koranic schools, collectively known as *daara*.

38. The Government, through the Ministry of National Education’s circular No. 00 4379 of 11 October 2007, also repealed the law on the exclusion from school of pregnant students and enacted legislation prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools.

D. Protection of the rights of children with disabilities

39. The Government has implemented several initiatives to address the Committee’s concerns regarding the inadequacy of services available to children with disabilities and the adoption of a comprehensive legal framework to meet their specific requirements.

40. As a first step, Senegal ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in May 2010 passed a social policy orientation act for persons with disabilities. These legal frameworks enshrine and protect the rights of persons with disabilities, including the right to social participation, which is underpinned by a policy of including the question of disability in all comprehensive development strategies. At an institutional level, the willingness of the Government to strengthen the protection of this group is reflected in the establishment of the National Directorate for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities attached to the Ministry of Health and Social Action.

41. Secondly, the Government identified the needs of this vulnerable group and included them in two key national development documents. Thus the Poverty Reduction Strategy 2006–2010 and the social and economic development document for 2011–2016 clearly identify persons with disabilities among the most vulnerable categories that should benefit from priority budget allocations and actions.

42. The Government has increased the amount of funding allocated to the Special Social Work Training College and the Health and Social Work Training College, so that specialist training can be provided to officials working for public and private bodies that deal with children with disabilities.

43. The Government also supports public bodies and charities that provide assistance to children with disabilities, such as the Centre l'Abri, which is responsible for supervising young children with disabilities, and the Centre Estelle, which specializes in looking after children with mental disabilities. The Government is willing to recognize, however, that there are not enough such specialized public and private institutions. Moreover, they are unevenly spread across the country and most are located in Dakar. The establishment of a rehabilitation centre for persons with disabilities in Bambey and a centre for persons with mental disabilities in Kaolack represents an initial attempt to rectify this shortage and to promote decentralization.

44. The Ministry of the Family has also established coordination and planning mechanisms in 14 of the 45 departments of Senegal with the aim of improving the availability and networking of services offered by NGOs and associations. This initiative has been accompanied by a new approach introduced by the national education sector involving the implementation of the “child-friendly schools” pilot scheme, one of the main aims of which is the broader enrolment of children in school.

45. Senegal also recognizes that the availability of reliable data on the status of these children remains a challenge, despite the completion of a few surveys and studies, primarily conducted by civil society organizations. A decisive step will be achieved in 2013 with the holding of a general population census, the results of which will be used to update existing data concerning the different types of disability encountered and their prevalence according to department, sex and family socioeconomic background.

E. Protection of talibé begging children

46. During its consideration of the report of Senegal, the Committee had recommended that the State party undertake an assessment of the situation of the *talibés* and develop a comprehensive policy that should address the root causes of the practice, in order to discourage, prevent and reduce child begging. The policy should provide begging and street children with the necessary protection, adequate health-care services, education and other social reintegration services.

47. Senegal has been faced with the phenomenon of begging *talibés* for decades. It is an ancient practice related to the approaches to child-rearing that once prevailed and still do prevail in the rural communities that have Koranic schools. Despite the complexity of this phenomenon, so deeply rooted in Senegalese society, the Government has undertaken practical steps to abandon the practice, in the first place by commissioning a number of studies, designed to achieve a better understanding of the causes of the phenomenon, to fine-tune strategies and to introduce services better suited to the Senegalese sociocultural context.

48. The study supported by Understanding Children's Work in 2007⁵ assessed the extent of the phenomenon in Dakar and identified the areas where begging children came from. In 2010, a study of the mobility of children in the Kolda Region, carried out by the World Bank and the National School of Applied Economics of Dakar, identified three main determining factors of the phenomenon, namely family poverty, the lack of public school facilities and parental preference for religious education.

49. Other studies conducted in 2010, such as that of the NGO Human Rights Watch, estimated that there were 70,000 child migrants living with Koranic teachers and shed light on social practices, in particular with regard to charity and the general attitude of adults to child begging.

50. The results of these studies have also made it possible to develop a communication and social mobilization strategy to combat child abuse in Senegal.

51. In October 2006, in order to attract public attention to the phenomenon, the President of the Republic organized a Presidential Council devoted to street children, which rallied decision makers and technical partners around a road map aimed at putting an end to the exploitation of the begging of young *talibés*. The subregional aspect of the issue was also addressed at this Council meeting, which brought together many members of the Government and 200 participants, including the World Bank country director, the UNICEF representative, technical and financial partners, the private sector, NGOs and the ambassadors of neighbouring countries that send child beggars to Senegal.

52. These efforts led to the creation of the first formal strategic framework to combat the phenomenon of children living in the street. This involved making several projects part of the country's priority development plans (including the Poverty Reduction Strategy 2006–2010, the National Social Protection Strategy and the Economic and Social Policy Paper 2011–2016) and mobilizing domestic resources and development partners (World Bank, Japan, UNICEF, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Islamic Development Bank). It facilitated the establishment of a coordinating mechanism (in the form of the Partnership for the Rescue and Rehabilitation of Street Children, or PARRER) to pool resources and experiences. It also led to the mapping of the primary source areas and villages and to develop a preventive communication strategy, including a set of Muslim religious arguments concerning child begging.

53. In 2010, in order to encourage intellectual circles to contribute towards the build-up of a knowledge base on Koranic schools and the begging of young *talibés*, the Child Protection Support Unit, in cooperation with Action for Islamic Solidarity, organized an international conference on the problem of *daaras*. The conference was part of the implementation of the action plan adopted in the wake of the First International Conference of Islamic Humanitarian NGOs of the States Members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, held in Senegal in March 2008. The aim was to generate ideas about ways of reorganizing Koranic schools in the light of the shortcomings noted in the way they operate and the alarming increase in the numbers of children in the streets. As a result of this conference, the Government and the stakeholders involved in combating the exploitation of young *talibé* beggars were provided with high-quality documentation produced by academics and experts in Islamic studies.

54. The Government also set up several projects to improve contact with and the lives of children attending the Koranic schools known as *daaras*. At the Ministry of Education, the main initiatives include the establishment of a *daara* inspectorate, the construction of

⁵ Enfants mendiants dans la région de Dakar (Child beggars in Dakar Region), Understanding Children's Work, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Bank, International Labour Organization, 2007.

modern *daaras* and the appointment of *daara* teachers. The goal of the *daara* modernization project is to ensure that young *talibés* receive a high-quality religious education and acquire the basic skills taught in primary and middle school in the formal education system run by the Ministry of Education. The project, which complements the formal sector by diversifying educational programmes, should also help to achieve the goal of universal school attendance by 2015.

55. Other initiatives have been taken by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Family, the Ministry of Health and their partners (USAID/Basic Education Programme, the NGO ENDA GRAF and UNICEF). A framework agreement was signed by the Ministry of Education and the Associations of Koranic Schools of Senegal to govern the partnership between the formal education sector and the *daaras* as well as to refurbish and equip 90 *daaras*, to provide 18 *daaras* with computers and Internet connections, to improve the learning environment and instruction in 20 *daaras* through a project introducing trilingualism and to develop a harmonized curriculum including religious education and the basic skills covered in primary and middle school.

56. The Ministry of the Family's project Education for Family Life in *Daaras* contributes to the improvement of living and learning conditions in the *daaras*. As part of the project, tools have been developed in English and Arabic, such as the curriculum for family-life education, a teacher's guide and a set of religious arguments. Through this project, programmes were set up to train Koranic teachers in harmonized family-life education and children's rights. In 2011, more than 100 Koranic teachers received training. Plans have been made to expand this training to build a critical mass of Koranic teachers aware of children's rights and in a position to make a decisive contribution to the shift away from exploiting children by forcing them to beg.

57. The next steps will include conducting a national *daara* census, setting up a website and building 2,300 modern *daaras*. Part of this project, supported by UNICEF and Terre des Hommes, together with the Ministry of the Family, deals with the return of *daaras* to their villages of origin. PARRER helped the Daara Inspectorate to test the harmonized curriculum approved by the relevant units of the Ministry of Education, the Koranic teachers and Islamic education specialists. The harmonized curriculum is a reference tool for regulating the Koranic education sector and for managing the opening and running of Koranic schools. It helps maintain and create enough supply to meet the high demand for education, on the basis of full respect for children's rights.

58. The State entities directly or indirectly dealing with children's issues have increased the number and frequency of communication initiatives aimed at influencing the attitudes of leaders and communities to the situation of street children and child beggars.

59. A set of religious arguments has been developed and the main religious leaders have made frequent statements condemning the forced begging of children, while a number of local campaigns targeting parents have been implemented.

60. At the initiative of PARRER, the domestic media relayed information campaigns on the effective implementation of article 3 of Act No. 06-2005, which prohibits the exploitation of begging by others, subject to the enforcement of sentences in the case of offences committed against a minor. This campaign involved the display of 100 posters of 12 square metres each along the main thoroughfares of Dakar, the production of field reports and the publication of special press articles.

61. In the broader context of efforts to prevent begging, with PARRER support, surveys were undertaken in nearly 200 villages in the four areas supplying most child beggars. This was followed by the provision of support for exposed families and the implementation of a communication plan to discourage the separation of children from their families and their

handover to travelling Koranic teachers. As a result, 184 village committees on child protection were set up in 151 villages in these source regions.

F. Protection of children from exploitation

62. Thanks to a better understanding of the problem and its causes and the development of new services, the Government has been able to intensify its fight against child labour and the exploitation of children. In 2010, with the support of the Understanding Children's Work Project (UNICEF, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization), the Government carried out a study aimed at shedding light on the work of children and young people in Senegal. The study shows that child trafficking victims are moved from one place to another to exploit their labour, particularly in domestic service, on farms, in unregulated industrial activities, in the building industry and in the sex business. Trafficking affects both boys and girls. The study also reveals that children from the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Guinea are victims of trafficking to Senegal, where most of them are forced into begging. Senegalese children on the other hand are trafficked to Mali, Guinea and other West African countries, where they are used as forced labour in gold mines.

63. At the national level, the Government led an extensive campaign against child abuse. For 14 months, the campaign mobilized public and private media in the country, as well as community leaders, in order to inform the public at large of the different aspects of exploitation and abuse and the services available for victim care, as well as to make parents and communities aware of their obligations to protect children. These official campaigns were followed up by those of PARRER on enforcement of the Act prohibiting the exploitation of begging by others, and CAPE on the dangers of begging.

64. The Ginddi Centre's transition to the 116 helpline, with a short, standardized number, easy to remember and accessible even to non-literate children, is another step forward in the process of advancing the rights of the child. Most calls tend to concentrate on requests for psychosocial counselling, reports of abused children or early marriages.

65. In 2011, the Ginddi Centre took in 596 children in situations of vulnerability, including 187 *talibé* children from the subregion.

66. The other key actions taken by the Government include scaling up operations through decentralization and, with the support of the Programme to Combat Trafficking and the Worst Forms of Child Labour, intensifying efforts at department and community level. The aim of these activities is to strengthen institutional and social responses at the national, department and community levels for the benefit of children exposed to begging, early domestic service (for young girls) or sexual abuse and exploitation.

67. These new services were also developed in a participatory manner and are being tested in two pilot prefectures before being expanded. Since the previous periodic report, the Programme to Combat Trafficking and the Worst Forms of Child Labour has been extended from 9 departments to 12. In each department, the programme sets up a policy and technical coordination unit, referred to as a Technical Monitoring Committee, under the authority of the department Prefect. The committees bring together State and non-State actors with the aim of increasing the number and quality of services, which are available only through public funding. Once the system is well established, the Government plans to extend it to 33 departments for a period of three or four years. This system is complementary to the strategy of expanding operations in the most severely affected departments.

68. The programme's direct results have included: the provision of assistance to 2,000 families with vulnerable children, in the form of income-generating microprojects or cash transfers; removing 2,293 children from begging activities through community sponsorship

in urban areas; withdrawing 101 young *talibés* from begging and their return to their home villages; and helping or providing care for 10,000 children who were vulnerable or had been victims of abuse, ill treatment or exploitation.

69. Thanks to the advocacy work by State actors and civil society, a segment of the public is beginning to respond positively to the enforcement of the laws protecting children from being exploited for begging and is now supporting the efforts made to help these children reintegrate into society.

70. In order to combat child labour more effectively, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of the Family have received support from UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO) within the framework of an inter-agency project run in the Thiès region and the project run by the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and the Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency in Saint-Louis, Tambacounda and Kédougou, which are areas where child workers (boys and girls) are concentrated.

71. In terms of the results achieved with the rehabilitation of working children, IPEC, through a time-bound programme on the worst forms of child labour that ended in December 2007, saved 12,000 children from being employed prematurely and made it possible for nearly 3,400 children to be removed from the worst forms of child labour in the regions of Fatick, Saint-Louis, Thiès, Diourbel, Kaolack and Dakar.

72. Despite these efforts, the State recognizes that efforts to combat child labour are not yet sufficient to contain the phenomenon of the exploitation of children. This is clear from the latest Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, which showed that approximately 72 per cent of children aged 5 to 17 were regularly employed, of whom 47 per cent worked more than four hours a day. Work affects young girls (78 per cent) more than boys (66 per cent), older children more than younger children (83 per cent of children aged 15 to 17, compared with 61 per cent aged 5 to 9), children living in rural areas more than those living in urban areas (76 per cent compared with 66 per cent), and especially children from disadvantaged households (77 per cent compared with 59 per cent from wealthier households). The new development strategy (2011–2016) includes areas of action specific to this issue.

G. Combating child trafficking

73. The Government has also made significant efforts in the area of combating child trafficking by strengthening its response at national and regional level. Political commitment has been renewed on several occasions and at the highest level, and has led to the country's regular and active participation in conferences or regional and subregional events, such as the July adoption in Abuja of the multilateral agreement on combating child trafficking (2006) and the development of the Economic Community of West African States/Economic Community of Central African States joint action plan 2006–2009 to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, in West and Central Africa. In 2008, this greater effort also produced a review of the situation and the national action plan on combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children, thereby reconciling the national response and the objectives pursued by Act No. 2005-02 of 29 April 2005 on combating trafficking in persons and related practices and on the protection of victims.

74. These documents were produced according to a participatory process that allowed access by national stakeholders. In August 2010, the Prime Minister chaired an interministerial council on combating human trafficking attended by all the ministries and civil society organizations involved in the protection of the rights of the child. Three key

policies were initiated in the wake of that meeting: the establishment of a national task force to combat human trafficking chaired by a public prosecutor and composed of the ministries concerned, non-State actors and representatives of religious leaders and the media; the immediate enforcement of the law against begging; and the setting up of border units to monitor movements on the border. As a result of these political commitments, the Government has made the fight against child trafficking an integral part of its development plans (including the Poverty Reduction Strategy 2006–2010 and the Economic and Social Policy Paper 2011–2016).

75. Another of the main measures taken involves the establishment of a mechanism for coordination between the law enforcement agencies (the police, gendarmerie and customs) and those directly involved in the field (social workers and community associations), in order to improve the monitoring of the movements of children in border areas (with Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Mali in particular) and along highways. Thanks to all these actions and commitments, public agencies have been able to launch a number of initiatives, including the prosecution of Koranic teachers who were sending young *talibés* out to beg, and improved monitoring by law enforcement authorities of children's movements within the country. The Government believes that anti-trafficking measures still need to be improved in order to successfully stem the constant flow of trafficking and street children, which are undoubtedly facilitated by poor controls of the free movement of persons and goods in the subregion.

H. Protection of children from drug addiction

76. In Senegal, drug controls have always been a priority of the policy of protecting children and young people. Since the 1960s, the country has had a narcotics squad made up of police officers and representatives of associations working to combat drug abuse. This squad is still operational and reports regularly on the results of its work.

77. In 1997, the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code were reinforced by Act No. 97-18 of 1 December, which lists the different types of drugs as well as the legal and administrative procedures involved. The Act severely penalizes drug traffickers and all members of drug dealing networks, by inflicting very harsh penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment and fines of up to CFAF 10 million.

78. The Act also punishes users, with prison terms of between 2 and 5 years and fines of up to CFAF 2 million. At the administrative level, the Public Prosecutor's Office can use very rapid referral procedures, and there are no extenuating circumstances for drug traffickers.

79. Minors may be placed in a non-custodial or semi-open environment, with the possibility of prompt release if they reform quickly. Throughout their placement, they receive their upkeep, with supervision, counselling and training.

80. In 1997, Senegal, it may be remembered, established an interministerial committee on action against drugs (established by decree No. 97-1217 of 17 December 1997) to enhance the coordination of drug controls.

81. This committee is responsible for establishing national policy against drug abuse and trafficking in Senegal. It is chaired by the Ministry of the Interior and is composed of representatives of nearly all the government ministries, especially those involved in managing services involved in combating drug abuse and drug trafficking, and representatives of NGOs dealing with drug control.

82. The committee has a permanent secretariat headed by a national coordinator, appointed by decree on a proposal by the Minister of the Interior. The mission of the

permanent secretariat is to facilitate, coordinate and follow up the committee's actions to combat drugs. In addition, it represents Senegal either on its own or in conjunction with other ministries (such as Justice and Foreign Affairs) in the negotiation of international treaties and conventions under the auspices of such United Nations organs as the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

83. In 2007, in order to offer the population better protection, the Government strengthened its drug laws with the adoption of Act No. 2007-31 of 27 December 2007 (known as the Abdou Latif Guèye Act), which criminalized drug-related offences.

84. Every year, awareness-raising campaigns are organized as part of the war on drugs, with the primary aim of protecting children and young people. During these awareness-raising campaigns, the Government proceeds to incinerate large quantities of seized drugs in public.

85. Despite this response, however, drug addiction seems to be increasing among children and young people as a result of youth unemployment, the resigned attitude of families, the failures of the school system, the insufficiency of government resources made available for prevention and the lack of public social workers, who are too few to meet all requirements or to cover the entire country. One of the measures considered by the Government is the opening of a rehabilitation centre for drug users.

I. Protection of girls from female genital mutilation/cutting

86. Since the previous report was submitted in 2006, the effort to eradicate female genital mutilation has accelerated as a result of improved administration of the national programme and broad social mobilization.

87. In the first place, the family affairs department of the Ministry of the Family reactivated the national committee to combat the practice and restructured its action plan by focusing on removing the bottlenecks highlighted by several evaluations of the programme. The evaluations had shown that the major obstacles lay partly in poor enforcement of the law and partly in the persistence of the practice in communities where very conservative religious leaders and certain groups of emigrants work to preserve long-standing social and cultural traditions.

88. The second step was to incorporate anti-excision efforts in the 2006–2010 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper so as to make them a national priority and facilitate the mobilization of domestic resources and the support of partners.

89. At the same time, the Ministry of Justice increased the power of judges to apply Act No. 99-05 of 29 January 1999 (which led to the conviction of the parents of some young girls in the Matam Region), while the Ministry of the Family strengthened partnerships and coordination with civil society stakeholders by offering them new training and communication modules based on social standards.

90. This improved coordination of NGOs and associations, such as the Senegalese Committee against Traditional Practices, the Network of Parliamentarians for Population and Development, Enda Action in Casamance, the Network of Journalists for Population and Development, the Network of Traditional Communicators or the Senegalese Association for Family Welfare, has achieved better synchronization of local initiatives and a more wide-ranging impact on public behaviour.

91. Other measures included strengthening the capacity of staff in primary and secondary schools and taking excision into account in the protocols for reproductive health services.

92. In 2010, the Government undertook a review of the work completed during the decade and prepared a new plan for the period 2010–2015, which is designed to coordinate the efforts of participants within the overall strategy, with the aim of changing social standards in order to raise additional funding. This revitalization of the campaign led to new activities, so that by 2011 more than 5,000 communities had joined the struggle against excision.

93. These efforts have clearly had an effect on the practice. The 2010 Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey showed that Senegalese women's awareness of the issue had improved considerably, with nearly all women (91 per cent) saying that they were aware of excision, while 79 per cent thought that the practice should be abandoned.

94. In the same survey, 26 per cent of women aged 15 to 49 reported that they had undergone excision, compared with 28 per cent in 2005. The survey also showed that the prevalence of excision among women had fallen from 28 per cent in 2005 to 26 per cent in 2010.

95. These changes suggest that the practice is no longer current among very young girls, even if the decline is slower in the regions of Matam, Sédhiou and Tambacounda and among such ethnic groups as the Mandinka, the Fula and the Soninke, where the practice was originally widespread.

96. The future challenges to be met by the Government will involve stepping up action in areas of resistance and convincing neighbouring countries, on the grounds that only tackling the problem of a subregional scale will make it possible to combat excision.

J. Addressing age inequalities between girls and boys

97. Senegal has launched several initiatives to combat early marriage. Several studies have shed light on trends in early marriage and on its main causes, and, in combination with a strong commitment on the part of civil society associations and organizations, have also made it possible to organize extensive social mobilization campaigns to combat the practice.

98. While these actions have improved the situation, progress, as reflected in the 2010 survey, is still slow and inadequate, particularly where young girls are concerned. At the time of the survey (2010), about 38 per cent of women aged 20 to 49 were already married by the age of 18, and nearly 50 per cent had entered a first marriage by the time they reached 19.6 years of age (in 2005, the figures were 46 per cent 18.5 years of age respectively).

99. Men tend to contract their first union at a much later age (the median age at first marriage for men aged 30 to 59 was 29.2 years).

100. In addition to the deprivation and social problems they cause, girls' early marriages, associated with the practice of excision, make them highly vulnerable to obstetrical problems during childbirth and thus to excessive maternal mortality.

101. An indirect estimate of the maternal mortality ratio, based on the Demographic and Health Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey for the period 2000–2011, indicates that there were 392 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (compared with 434 such deaths for the period 1994–2005).

102. In the light of this situation, Senegal has drawn up a road map designed to strengthen action by intensifying efforts to change behaviour patterns, by reorganizing the reproductive health services to focus on advice and less frequent child births, and by speeding up efforts to combat female genital mutilation.

K. Measures to protect children and minors in conflict with the law

103. In response to the Committee's concerns regarding juvenile justice, the Government reports that in Senegal, juvenile justice is considered a specialized field using specific procedures intended to prioritize the interests of the child.

104. Juvenile justice in Senegal is based on three fundamental principles: the primacy of educational measures over criminal sanctions, considering court-ordered placement in foster care as the exception, and preferential jurisdiction.

105. These principles are regulated by articles 565 to 608 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which provide that "juveniles under 18 years of age charged with an infraction classified as a crime or offence shall not be brought before criminal courts of general jurisdiction and shall be tried only by juvenile courts". When only a minor's year of birth is known, he or she is presumed to have been born on 31 December of that year (article 566 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).

106. In Senegal, minors enjoy special treatment regarding sentencing, which is the sole prerogative of juvenile courts, and a sentence given to a minor may be reviewed at any time by the presiding judge of the court that handed it down, since its effect is long lasting (article 591 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).

107. According to article 565, a measure may be applied to at-risk juvenile delinquents only if it is among those provided for by articles 52 and 53 (mitigation on grounds of minority if a minor aged between 13 and 18 receives a criminal conviction), articles 565 to 607 (establishing a procedure for juvenile delinquents and at-risk minors), and article 293 of the Family Code, establishing educational assistance. This assistance is regulated by articles 593 to 607 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

108. In order to make all of these provisions effective for all minors, the State has launched an extensive plan to modernize the legal system and services, including those for children. This policy took the form in June 2004 of the adoption of the 2004–2013 Justice Sector Programme (PSJ) and its inclusion in the 2006–2010 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the national programme for good governance.

109. The PSJ contains specific provisions for juvenile justice, such as the creation of juvenile courts in new regions. The Government has also substantially increased the budget allocated to the justice sector, whose share of the national budget rose from 0.56 per cent in 1999 to 22.84 per cent in 2009.

110. Over the past five years, this reform, launched in 2004 as part of the PSJ and its 10-year plan for 2004–2013, has been continued with the three-year action plans for 2007–2009 and 2010–2012.

111. Within the Ministry of Justice, initiatives benefiting children are supervised by the Department of Correctional Education and Social Protection (DESPPS). The organization and functioning of external DESPPS services are set out in Decree No. 81-1047 of 29 October 1981. DESPPS was restructured in 2007 in article 16 of Decree No. 2007-554 on the organization of the Ministry of Justice, which made it responsible for providing legal protection of an educational and social nature and for all matters relating to the protection, re-education and rehabilitation of children and young people under 21 who are at-risk or in conflict with the law. The role of DESPPS is to consider and propose draft legislation in the areas of the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency and social protection.

112. DESPPS also monitors the activities of private associations in areas under its jurisdiction. The external services linked to it are responsible for conducting prevention and social and family rehabilitation activities aimed at children, young people, families and their communities.

113. The so-called social rehabilitation centres are boarding schools that house minors placed there by a court decision in order to re-educate them following a stay in prison or in a shelter, a multi-purpose centre or a non-institutional educational action facility (AEMO).

114. Shelters house minors as part of general prevention measures or in accordance with a court decision relating to a minor in conflict with the law or at moral risk. They care for children on a semi-boarding basis.

115. AEMO services are located near each regional court and some departmental courts and provide reception, non-institutional observation and re-education, mediation and prevention services for young people under 18 and young adults aged between 18 and 21. Multi-purpose centres are a combination of social rehabilitation centres, shelters and AEMO services.

116. Children deprived of their liberty are housed in the detention and correctional facility known as Fort B in Hann, Dakar, which has the capacity to house 50 children, and in the detention and correctional facilities located in the country's different regions. Between 2008 and 2011, 3,156 children in conflict with the law (2,928 boys and 228 girls) and 20,030 at-risk children (including 10,712 boys and 9,318 girls) received assistance in the form of guidance and support.

117. The Ministry of the Interior also plays an important role through its police stations, which represent the first step in dealing with children in conflict with the law.

118. The level of service has been improved generally thanks to the introduction of the Justice Sector's Programme, which has led to the refurbishment of existing structures and the construction of legal advice centres in some locations. Currently, Senegal has 2 social rehabilitation centres, 4 shelters, 26 AEMO services and 4 multi-purpose centres.

119. Efforts have also been made to recruit additional staff and train existing staff responsible for juvenile justice. Thanks to the *Renforcement de la Protection Juridique des Mineurs* (Strengthening the Legal Protection of Minors) project managed by the Judicial Training Centre, several initiatives have been concerned with strengthening the capacities of officials and judges responsible for juvenile justice. The majority of this training was organized in partnership with the Judges Training College, the Special Social Workers Training College, the Police College, the Gendarmerie College in Ouakam, the Health and Social Work Training College and the Fann University Hospital Child Psychiatry Unit (Ker Xaleyi).

120. The judges, police officers, gendarmes, prison officers and social workers dealing with minors receive training based on juvenile justice and the rights of the child. Such training emphasizes the legal aspect (including international and domestic legislation), as well as psychosocial aspects (including child psychology, child abuse, child counselling and adolescents' problems). It also advocates communication and better cooperation between the different categories of professionals involved in juvenile justice proceedings, allowing them to better understand each other's work. This innovative training programme serves as a model across the region and it receives joint support from the Francophone Community of Belgium (for initial training) and UNICEF (for decentralized continuous training).

121. With a view to improving the administration of juvenile justice, in December 2010 the Ministry of Justice, through DESPS, launched the implementation of 10 regional facilities for coordinating and monitoring juvenile justice procedures so as to render such justice more reparative and restorative for all children in contact with the law. To that effect, three initial reception centres have been set up in three regions in order to avoid detaining children in prison.

122. With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Justice, through the Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons, launched a review of the juvenile justice provisions of the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure in order to bring them more into line with international conventions in the sense of taking full account of the best interests of the child.

123. In an effort to bring the justice system closer to people and make it more accessible and transparent, the Government has also established three types of facilities across the country, namely justice centres, legal advice centres and information and guidance centres for persons awaiting trial. These facilities, which are intended to receive, inform and guide the public, as well as deal with conflicts and disputes, receive both children and parents. The proposed services are entirely free of charge for users.⁶

124. Despite the efforts made, the expansion of the justice programme has remained slow because of the insufficient resources allocated to the sector.

L. Measures to improve the provision of resources for children

125. Aware of the importance of ensuring the best for children and in order to provide for their future, the Government has increased the financial and budgetary resources allocated to children in the two public development policy strategy papers produced since 2005 and in annual finance legislation.

126. The Government has taken care not only to include specific projections for traditional sectors in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2006–2010, such as access to health and education services, but also to add a strategic focus on the social protection of vulnerable groups, most of whose expected results are intended for children. These priorities have been repeated in the document on economic and social policy for 2011–2016.

127. In order to convert these political commitments into effective, operational programmes, the main social ministries have been equipped with multi-year programming procedures (with medium-term budgeting) and results-based management tools (including performance guidelines for the education and health sectors). These measures, alongside the organization of public spending reviews and the preparation of costed feasibility plans (social cash transfers for children), have provided a sound basis for increasing budgetary allocations to the social sectors.

128. The last public spending review⁷ showed that non-debt government spending increased considerably over the past decade, from US\$ 700 million in 2000 to more than US\$ 3.5 billion in 2010. The budget distribution among sectors shows that, despite some recent negative events, the major expenditure has been devoted to the priority sectors of education, health, infrastructure, agriculture and energy (which between them account for 50 per cent of the national budget).

129. The State continues to give high priority to the right to education. In this sector, 95 per cent of spending is funded by the State's internal resources. Education alone accounts for almost a quarter of the overall non-debt budget (current expenditure and investment) and non-budget spending on resources. Between 2005 and 2008, the proportion of current education expenditure funded by the State's domestic resources rose from 22 per cent to 26 per cent, well above the 20 per cent recommended by the United Nations Education for All initiative. This ratio places Senegal ahead of the West African Economic and Monetary

⁶ www.justicedeproximite.sn/Les-structures-de-proximite.html?lang=fr.

⁷ Report No. 59695-SN, Senegal, Developing tools for State institutions for more efficient management of public spending in Senegal, Public Finance Review, June 2012, World Bank.

Union countries, whose average for this indicator is 21 per cent. During the same period, real current expenditure relating to the population aged between 7 and 19 rose by 23 per cent, while the education sector's share of the State's recurrent expenditure fell from 33.5 per cent to 32 per cent. Total spending on the sector expressed as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) is among the highest in Africa, at 5.25 per cent.

130. The health sector is a major priority for the State, which allocates it a substantial share of national resources. Expressed as a percentage of GDP, public health spending rose from 2.13 per cent in 2003 to 3.21 per cent in 2008. Latest estimates place it at 4 per cent for 2010.

131. The funding of health spending is largely covered by the State, although its share of total primary health-care spending fell from 66 per cent in 2003 to 46 per cent in 2008 (while the contribution of users and local communities to health-care funding rose from 22 per cent to 31 per cent between 2003 and 2008). The Government is fully aware that the current level of public spending on health remains low in relation to the estimated health requirements of the Millennium Development Goals and that some effort must be made to increase the share of public health spending devoted to primary health-care services, which fell from 16 per cent in 2003 to 9 per cent in 2008, in view of the fact that the primary health-care sector represents the population's first means of access to health care.

132. The recommendations of the public spending review, which the Government has undertaken to follow, provide for increased investment in infant and maternal health, particularly through the ring-fencing of the vaccinations budget, which currently accounts for less than 1 per cent of the health budget, and of the improved nutrition programme budget.

133. The review also recommended increased funding for the strategy to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality and making better use of spending by channelling funds away from the hospital system towards primary health-care programmes.

134. The Government also opted for a more equitable distribution of available resources among the regions and therefore made several adjustments to the budget allocation mechanism. The current division of the budget has been reviewed in order to introduce sectoral and geographical coefficients, and the latest spending review showed that this adjustment was successful in channelling funds to the health and education sectors (52 per cent and 49 per cent respectively), but recommended further changes, insofar as public spending remains concentrated on the region of Dakar, which receives 56 per cent of non-debt public spending and capital expenditure.

135. The worst served regions are Louga, Fatick, Matam and Tambacounda, which are also among the poorest in Senegal. The Government has endeavoured to reduce these inequalities progressively by improving the quality of public spending through better programming, the more widespread adoption and use of medium-term spending frameworks, the progressive rebalancing of allocations in favour of the poorer regions and by channelling external aid to rural areas and social projects.

136. Several tools have been developed for this purpose, such as the health-care map, district plans and the human resources development plan aimed at recruiting and retaining staff in rural areas. The same approach is applied in the education sector.

M. Measures adopted to protect children in Casamance

137. The Government has already launched a series of measures for this purpose. The National Agency to Revive Economic and Social Activity in Casamance (ANRAC) has

been established with annual national funding of around 99 million, plus funding from development partners.

138. The aim of ANRAC is to rehabilitate and rebuild social infrastructure, including roads, schools and health services, and to develop conflict warning and prevention activities, as well as to address the social and environmental impact of conflicts. These activities complement those relating to disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration, demining and support for displaced persons and refugees returning to their places of origin.

139. Alongside ANRAC, other activities have been launched for the protection of children as part of the partnership with UNICEF and various NGOs, aimed at improving the prevention of accidents due to land mines by providing training to 2,000 volunteers, establishing 15 community networks and displaying warning signs throughout Casamance drawing attention to the dangers of mines. In 120 villages, more than 40,000 children and their families were made aware of the dangers of mines. Teachers were trained in stress management and dealing with the dangers of mines, while child mine victims received psychosocial and material assistance through a partnership with Handicap International. Additionally, in 2007 the Government established a humanitarian demining programme through the National Anti-Mine Centre of Senegal. Demining operations began progressively in 2008 and 16 villages have been cleared, allowing their inhabitants to return. By mid-June 2012, 6 other villages were declared demined and ready to be repopulated.

N. Measures adopted to disseminate the Convention on the Rights of the Child

140. The State has adopted several measures to improve the dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The *Agence Nationale de la Petite Enfance et de la Case des Tout Petits* (National Agency for Early Childhood) has added a module on the rights of the child to the initial training given to its organizers, and the Ministry of the Family has trained journalists, Koranic teachers and regional and community radio presenters in ways of publicizing the rights of the child. Training colleges, including the Special Social Work Training College and those for the Police and the Gendarmerie, have included the Convention in their modules on the rights of the child.

141. Thanks to the support of some development partners (including UNICEF, the World Bank, Save The Children Sweden, Plan International, Fondation Paul Gérin-Lajoie, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)), coalitions working for children have been established, made up of civil society organizations such as the National Coalition of Children's Associations and NGOs (CONAFE). These organizations, collectively and individually, have organized workshops, sports tournaments (including football, basketball and tennis) and outdoor activities in all regions of the country, where the content of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Committee's recommendations were disseminated.

142. These organizations, taking advantage of the Day of the African Child celebrated on 16 June, have also led campaigns to raise awareness of, popularize and promote the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, as well as less well-known aspects of the progress achieved, such as the enrolment and retention of girls in schools and the rights of children with disabilities.

143. As part of celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the country, with the support of UNICEF, prepared and widely disseminated a new scheme entitled *Approche culturelle pour la promotion des droits de l'enfant* (Cultural Approach to Promoting the Rights of the Child), based on

positive local cultural practices in favour of the rights of the child. This new approach, which was developed on the basis of a survey of how groups, particularly young persons and children (boys and girls), experienced traditional themes, such as excision and begging, as well as emerging ones, such as sexual abuse and cybercrime, was disseminated broadly through stories, legends, proverbs and various traditional oral media. The accompanying handbook is supplied in a box, which also contains publications on the rights of the child in relation to the Bible and Islam.

144. With the support of CONAFE, Save the Children and Plan International, and for the first time in the history of the rights of the child movement in Senegal, a survey on awareness of the rights of the child was carried out between December and May 2010 by children under the guidance of experts.

145. Altogether 1,000 persons were interviewed, half of whom were children. The opinions of school children were gathered, as well as those of *talibé* children and child workers. This survey is very informative regarding the relatively low level of public awareness of the rights of the child.

146. In the light of the survey, the Government chose five priority steps on which to base public policy as recommended by the children, namely: training and assisting children in the promotion of their rights; advocating for grants for children's associations; awareness-raising among parents, religious leaders, teachers, Koranic teachers, police officers and gendarmes concerning the rights of the child; setting up a system of psychological and legal assistance for children who are victims of sexual abuse; ensuring the effective enforcement of the law and decentralizing activities throughout the regions.

147. In March 2010, with the support of the Judicial Training Centre, the Wallonia-Brussels Delegation in Dakar, the Senegalese Ministry of Culture, the *Groupe des Amis de la Francophonie* (Friends of Francophonie Group), UNICEF and the International Organisation of La Francophonie (IOF), Senegal organized an international symposium on the rights of the child as part of the Francophonie fortnight and of the capacity-building effort for members of the public and civil society involved in the protection of the rights of the child.

148. This symposium attracted the participation of around one hundred national and international experts, coming in particular from West and Central African countries that are members of the *Groupe des Amis de la Francophonie*. It covered educational and sociological matters related to the protection of the rights of the child, good practices and regional priorities for strengthening that protection.

O. Measures adopted to increase birth registration (arts. 7 and 8)

149. In response to the Committee's recommendation that efforts regarding the systematic registering of children born in Senegal should be continued, particularly in rural and remote areas of the country, Senegal confirms its commitment to the principle that birth registration through the registry office constitutes a fundamental means of protecting the rights of the child enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

150. In Senegal, birth registration is governed by the Family Code, which states that it is obligatory (art. 51), universal (art. 30), permanent (all facts relating to an individual's life are recorded as and when they occur), comprehensive (the system deals with declarations and updates), and free of charge (registering a child's birth costs nothing). There is a charge, however, for the issue of copies or actual birth certificates.

151. Since 2006, the Government has done its utmost to increase the number of registry offices, improve their operations and provide birth certificates to children who have already

been born. To that end, the Government, also by assisting civil society organizations, has regularly organized awareness-raising campaigns and has facilitated the registration procedure by setting up units in the field and appropriate gatherings in rural and remote areas. Prior to the start of the school year, special campaigns are held in areas with low registration levels so as to inform parents and issue birth certificates to school-age children so that they may enrol in school.

152. Registration rates have risen as a result of these measures. Today, more than 75 per cent of girls and boys in Senegal are officially registered.⁸ All the same, it has to be admitted that the disparities observed in the past have not been completely overcome and that not everyone has benefited from the improvements. Rates of birth registration with registry offices have risen more slowly in rural areas (with a rate of 50 per cent in 2010 compared with 44 per cent in 2005) than in urban areas (78 per cent in 2010 against 75 per cent in 2005) and vary from one region to another. Children are least frequently registered at registry offices in Tambacounda (55 per cent in 2010 against 40 per cent in 2005), Kolda (57 per cent against 40 per cent in 2005) and Sédhiou (57 per cent), while, at the other extreme, more than 90 per cent of children in Dakar (78 per cent in 2005) and more than 80 per cent in Thiès (87 per cent in 2010 compared with 70 per cent in 2005) and Ziguinchor (82 per cent) have been registered and hold a birth certificate.

153. In order to increase the general registration rate, reduce disparities and ensure that all children enjoy the right to be registered at birth, the Government intends to continue its campaigns to encourage birth registration, train local participants, carry out institutional reforms and allocate additional funding to registry offices. Thus in 2010 an inter-ministerial council was held to validate the strategy of the National Birth Registration Centre aimed at registering all children by 2015.

P. Improving children's health

154. In response to the Committee's recommendations regarding the country's duty to guarantee universal access to adequate health care and services for pregnant women and children, particularly in remote and rural areas, to review the practice of charging fees, to take the necessary steps to prevent malnutrition and malaria and to extend vaccination coverage to as many mothers and children as possible, Senegal is pleased to inform the Committee that certain steps have been taken, such as setting up a committee on providing free health care for children under 5, committing high-level authorities to universal coverage, investing substantially to improve geographical coverage by setting up new health centres, while improving the technical capacities of some existing health centres and units.

155. The Government has also maintained allocations to the health sector at a substantial level. In recent years, national health spending has accounted on average for between 3 and 3.5 per cent of GDP. The Government allocates 6 per cent of the national budget to the Ministry of Health, which falls short of the objective of 9 per cent set by the World Health Organization (WHO) and is even further from the 15 per cent recommended by the African heads of state at the Abuja Summit. However, it may be noted that health spending funded by the State expressed as a percentage of GDP is the highest in the sub-region. As a result of these efforts, the range and quality of health care have improved considerably, thanks in particular to the recruitment of qualified staff and the establishment of new medical infrastructures. As far as the three categories of qualified staff (doctors, nurses and midwives) are concerned, Senegal has made significant efforts, even though it is still far behind WHO ratios.

⁸ EDS-MICS, National Statistics and Demography Agency (ANSD), 2012.

156. A special effort has been made in the area of primary health care for children. Senegal has many health programmes for children, some of which are free of charge. Those programmes receive around 11 per cent of non-salary health spending. Children under 5 enjoy free antimalarial treatment and vaccinations. HIV treatment has also been offered free of charge since 2003, although efforts are still needed in order to deal with severe acute malnutrition free of charge across the country.

157. Free deliveries and Caesarean sections for women have been extended to all regions, with the exception of the department of Dakar. Although there have been some difficulties in practice, this policy has improved the population's access to health care considerably. The last Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (EDS-MICS) for 2010–2011 showed that most indicators had improved.

158. With regard to the recommendations relating to the improvement of universal access to care and to adequate health services for pregnant women and children, particularly in remote and rural areas, and to reviewing the practice of charging fees, Senegal is pleased to inform the Committee that significant steps have been taken and substantial investments made.

159. Although the 1989 National Health Policy is consistent with the primary health-care principles of the 1987 Bamako Initiative, the Abuja Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, the Government has adopted several measures to make primary health care accessible to all mothers and children, both geographically and economically.

160. The first National Health Development Plan, drawn up in 1998, was followed by a second plan for the 2009–2018 period and by the National Strategic Plan for Child Survival covering the 2007–2015 period. The latter is based on the Accelerated Strategy for Child Survival and Development as recommended by the “Countdown to 2015” initiative, to which Senegal has been committed since its creation in 2005.

161. The Government has also increased the pace of activity of the child survival programmes since 2010 by drawing up and implementing a plan to move towards high-impact interventions, thereby making the National Strategic Plan for Child Survival operational. A map of the plan's implementation shows that the average availability of high-impact interventions rose from 58 per cent in 2010 to 65 per cent in 2011.

162. In order to reduce the risk of child malnutrition, taking into account the country's Sahelian setting and its recurrent humanitarian and economic crises, the State has made huge efforts to prevent malnutrition and reduce its effects on children's development and has joined the SUN (Scaling Up Nutrition) Movement.

163. Thanks to increased funding for the improved nutrition programme and the Ministry of Health, the coverage of community-based prevention services has been extended to 85 per cent of health districts, assisting 50 per cent of children aged between 6 and 59 months with a package of preventive activities. However, although malnutrition levels decreased slightly at the national level between 2005 and 2010, disparities still exist between regions and departments. According to the most recent national SMART nutritional assessment carried out by the Government of Senegal in 2012, 14.5 per cent of children are underweight, 15.5 per cent suffer from chronic malnutrition and 8.8 per cent from acute malnutrition. The same assessment also revealed that 16 of the 45 surveyed departments in Senegal are affected by acute malnutrition rates, ranging from alarming to critical.

164. Much effort has been made to encourage breastfeeding (98 per cent of children under 6 months are breastfed, while 99 per cent of children aged between 9 and 11 months are still being breastfed), but an effort is still required in order to improve the rate of exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of a child's life, which is still low (at 39 per cent).

165. Micronutrient deficiencies, particularly iodine and iron, have been considerably reduced thanks to biannual campaigns run by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Action. On average, 78 per cent of children receive vitamin A supplements, 13 per cent iron supplements and 55 per cent deworming treatment. These results, however, while encouraging, need improving, as the 2010 EDS-MICS survey found that 76 per cent of children aged between 6 and 59 months suffered from anaemia (compared with 83 per cent in 2005).

166. Despite having benefited from the constant attention of political authorities and a protected budget for the purchase of vaccinations, the Expanded Vaccination Programme has not run very smoothly. In terms of results, its performance has stagnated, leading to the resurgence of measles in 2009 and poliomyelitis in 2010. According to the 2010 EDS-MICS survey, 95 per cent of children aged between 12 and 23 months had received the BCG vaccination, 83 per cent all three doses of the pentavalent vaccination, 73 per cent the doses of the poliomyelitis vaccination, while 82 per cent were vaccinated against measles before the age of 12 months. Only 3 per cent of children aged between 12 and 23 months had received no vaccination at all.

167. In view of the situation, the Government undertook an assessment of the effectiveness of the vaccination programme in 2009 and commissioned an external review of the Expanded Vaccination Programme in 2010. The resulting diagnosis led to drawing up a plan to improve logistical aspects, including the cold chain and rolling stock, and to revive the programme. These plans are currently being implemented with the support of UNICEF and WHO in the 23 districts identified as being low performance. In 2010 and 2011, extra vaccination campaigns were launched against measles and poliomyelitis.

168. The national anti-malaria programme has been restarted, with greater resources thanks to efforts by the Government and its partners, including the Global Fund, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), WHO and UNICEF. As a result, it has been possible to increase the availability and use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets. According to the 2010 EDS-MICS survey, 63 per cent of households possess at least one net (compared with 20 per cent in 2005 according to EDS IV), with a clear improvement in rural areas (72 per cent), compared with towns (52 per cent) and among the poorest households. This improvement has particularly benefited children under the age of 5 (35 per cent of whom slept under an insecticide-treated mosquito net the night preceding the survey compared with 7 per cent in 2005) and pregnant women (36 per cent compared with 9 per cent in 2005). The prevalence rate of malaria parasitaemia among children aged between 6 and 59 months decreased from 5.7 per cent in 2008 to 2.9 per cent in 2010.

169. Although the health and nutritional status of children depends on multi-sectoral factors, the Government is convinced that the efforts made in the health sector have contributed to the reduction of morbidity and mortality rates among children and women.

170. The 2010 EDS-MICS survey found that infant mortality had decreased from 61 per thousand in 2005 to 47 per thousand in 2010, and infant and child mortality from 121 per thousand to 72 per thousand over the same period. It may be noted, however, that the disparities could not be reduced between urban and rural areas and between the regions. Infant mortality rates remain much higher in rural areas (59 per thousand) than in urban areas (44 per thousand). The same is true for infant and child mortality, with rates of 102 per thousand and 62 per thousand respectively. There are also significant disparities between regions. The Government therefore intends to maintain the priority given to investment in primary health care, and particularly the building of health infrastructures in rural areas. It also plans to extend medical insurance mechanisms in order as to render them more accessible to vulnerable, disadvantaged and poorer people, so as to alleviate the financial obstacles the latter tend to face.

Q. Measures taken to ensure children's right to education

171. At its forty-third session, the Committee recommended that Senegal should ensure that boys and girls in urban, rural and less developed areas should all have access to education opportunities on an equal footing. In response to this recommendation, but also in recognition of the importance of good quality education for future generations, the Government has taken various measures in the field of education.

172. In Senegal, article 3 bis of Act No. 2004-37 of 15 December 2004 stipulates that schooling is compulsory for both girls and boys between 6 and 16 years of age. Compulsory education is provided free of charge in public schools. Parents of children who have reached 6 years of age must enrol their children in either a public or a private school. However, there are still some schools without complete programmes, especially in rural areas (62.5 per cent 2011), which poses a serious obstacle to the pursuit of normal schooling for many children.

173. In order to achieve these goals, over the past decade the Government has devoted 33 per cent of its current expenditure and 25 per cent of total public spending to education, leaving only a marginal portion of education funding to be covered by foreign aid. Expenditures on social programmes such as scholarships and education allowances for needy children accounted for 14 per cent of the funds allocated. With 48 per cent of recurring expenditure allocated to primary education, Senegal has nearly reached the target of 50 per cent recommended by the Education for All movement and is situated above average among African countries. Senegal rose from 21st to 5th place among African countries in terms of budgetary allocations for children during the period 2006–2008.⁹

174. At an organizational level, the Government has initiated several reform and restructuring processes to improve performance in the education sector. The most significant of these include the review and implementation of the Ten-year Education and Training Programme and of the National Programme for Local Development. The Ten-year Education and Training Programme, which was drafted in 2000 following the Dakar Forum on Education for All, set out the objective of achieving education for all by 2010, including through the use of alternative models, since the formal education system was unable to meet the demand unassisted. The National Programme for Local Development, launched in 2005, was intended to reduce poverty by providing better-quality socioeconomic services to the public through the promotion and implementation of a strategy to decentralize sectoral activities, placing them in the hands of local governments, and to fully empower local governments and grass-roots community organizations.

175. Both programmes were subject to regular, participatory reviews, and the resulting recommendations were then used to draw up annual sectoral action plans. Other important steps have also been taken, such as: the creation and dissemination of the elementary school curriculum; the drafting of a policy on informal education; the launch of the Education for All – Fast Track Initiative, later known as the Global Partnership for Education; the introduction of the “child-friendly school” approach in 200 schools; the launch of the “Improving Internal Performance” Project; the introduction of the integrated services package approach to 1,000 schools; the launch of a project to improve the school environment; and the introduction of preschool classes in 400 elementary schools.

176. The Government has also taken measures to prohibit the use of corporal punishment in schools, to repeal the decree prohibiting pregnant girls from pursuing their education,

⁹ The African Report on Child Well-Being 2011: Budgeting for Children, published by the African Child Policy Forum, 2006–2008.

and to do away eventually with the sixth grade entrance examination, thereby increasing the number of students who make the transition from elementary to middle school. Further discussions, most of which involve teachers and parents, are currently under way concerning: the removal of barriers hindering access to education, the incorporation of national languages into the curriculum, the role of parents in their children's academic achievement, the fight against violence in schools, the role of teachers and the possibility of having a unified, coordinated curriculum for preschool through to middle school.

177. Major efforts have been made to respond to parents' requests for improved education services. With regard to early childhood, the number of children in preschool rose from 25,392 in 2000 to 146,832 in 2010 thanks to efforts to expand supply, particularly through the community-based preschools introduced in 2008. As for elementary education, the number of elementary schools increased from 5,405 in 2002 to 8,196 in 2010, with a sharp increase seen in public schools (estimated at 88.7 per cent in 2010) and in rural areas. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of schools in rural areas increased from 3,654 to 6,255. The Government has also held various awareness-raising campaigns, both nationally and in the various regions, departments, rural communities and villages of the country, to encourage parents to send their children (especially girls) to school.

178. All these efforts have made it possible to significantly increase access to education, reduce disparities and make progress towards the goal of universal education and greater equality. The overall preschool enrolment rate increased from 2.3 per cent in 2000 to 9.8 per cent in 2010. During the same period, the enrolment rate for girls increased from 2.4 per cent to 10 per cent. The gross school enrolment rate increased from 67.2 per cent to 94.4 per cent, while the rate for girls rose more sharply than that for boys (increasing from 62.3 per cent to 98.7 per cent compared with an increase from 71.9 per cent to 90.3 per cent for boys). In 2010, the gross enrolment rate for girls overtook the rate for boys (in 2009 the gender equality index reached 1.1 in primary schools, 0.87 in middle schools and 0.73 in secondary schools). The highest rates for girls were found in the regions of Dakar (128.8 per cent), Kaolack and Sédhiou (112.9 per cent) and Ziguinchor (110.6 per cent), while the regions of Diourbel (63.9 per cent) and Kaffrine (53.0 per cent) reported the lowest rates. There are currently more girls than boys in both preschool and elementary education.

179. The Government acknowledges the fact that these disparities result from uneven investments in rural and urban areas, the poor quality of education in rural areas, differences in income levels, differences in parents' educational standards, as well as the social norms and practices in some regions (Diourbel, Louga and Matam). With this in mind, the Government plans to speed up educational reforms and improve governance in the sector by holding inclusive education conferences that are open to all interested parties.

Part III

Other measures taken to support the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Senegal – Children's expression and participation (arts. 12–15)

180. The Government is pleased to inform the Committee that it recognizes and guarantees the right of children, like everyone else, to express their views freely on all matters affecting them. To this end, the Government has taken steps to ensure that children have access to adequate information on subjects that interest and concern them and that they receive such information from a variety of sources.

181. The Ministry of the Family, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education have held training sessions for children and trainers on the notions of rights. The Ministry

of the Family, through its Directorate for the Rights and Protection of Children, has provided technical and logistical support to the children's parliaments established at the national level and in all 34 departments in the country. The Government encourages children to participate in discussions and make their voices heard on major issues related to children or development. Children helped to prepare the report submitted by Senegal as its contribution to the United Nations study on violence against children, and they also participated in the 2010 and 2011 annual reviews of the poverty reduction strategy.

182. In 2006, the mandate of the Children's Parliament was renewed for a three-year period with support from UNICEF and Save the Children. Due to certain constraints, however, it was not renewed again in 2009. The Government is committed to reviving it in 2013.

183. Other bodies, such as the "Life Lessons Clubs" established for children aged 7 to 18 years in the 11 regions of the country, are involved in awareness-raising, informational and peer education campaigns on HIV/AIDS prevention in schools, Koranic schools (*daaras*) and workshops on learning and inter-generational dialogue to combat female genital mutilation and early marriage.

184. The Government has also amended school regulations to facilitate the establishment of parliaments and governments within all schools in Senegal. An extensive awareness-raising campaign was conducted in December 2010 in all schools throughout the country to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Convention. In response to the interest shown by children, a game specially designed to teach children about human rights was developed and tested in 400 schools.

185. For children in the 14 to 18 age range, the various ministries have also organized many participatory activities. The Citizenship Education Programme for Young People, which relies solely on public funding and is intended to promote and strengthen citizenship skills, civic-mindedness and youth engagement in the nation's development, mobilizes about 5,000 youth groups throughout the country every year during school holidays. The activities promoted are focused on mutual assistance for population groups affected by disasters (such as the reconstruction of villages in Casamance, the development of national heritage sites, and community outreach and awareness-raising about diseases and epidemics).

186. The National Civic Service Programme, which is also funded through public resources and aims to promote volunteerism, civic-mindedness and citizenship skills among young people, mobilizes thousands of young people every year to work on projects of national interest.

187. The National Youth Employment Agency provides young people with opportunities ranging from the creation to the management of projects to combat youth unemployment. Its achievements include: the establishment of educational training enterprises for young graduates; the holding of workshops to train and find employment for 300 young people in the St. Louis region; the establishment of computer training centres to allow young people access to information and communication technologies; and the launching of a project to prevent the irregular migration of unaccompanied children under 18 years of age.

188. Other activities have been carried out by the National Youth Development Fund empowering young people to take preventive measures (such as "Life Lessons" on HIV/AIDS for children). Pilot projects have been launched to improve children's access to the Internet, such as a project to set up computer centres in middle and secondary schools in Senegal on a trial basis. This project was carried out by the Groupe pour l'Etude et l'Enseignement de la Population (GEEP) and the "Connecting Classrooms" programme launched by UNICEF. The above-mentioned activities were in many cases supported and promoted by civil society organizations working in conjunction with government entities.

189. This year, with the support of the NGO Plan Senegal, children's parliaments were set up in the four arrondissements of Dakar to promote greater participation among children in local governance. Some 173 children, including 88 girls, who had been trained in the role and duties of children's municipal councils and children's parliaments, were elected and introduced to the democratic process.

190. In collaboration with local government entities, Plan has also worked to further promote children's participation, including through a radio programme on the rights of the child organized by Plan Louga in partnership with the regional radio station Walfadjri. In Kaolack, 40 children's clubs were revitalized and 25 new ones established. A total of 1,250 children (50 per cent of whom are girls) belong to these clubs, which carry out activities to promote children's rights and build children's ability to participate effectively in all processes concerning them. In this context, and as an example of pilot projects and good practices to be promoted at the national level, in St. Louis 89 children aged 11 to 14 were trained in negotiation, advocacy and leadership techniques. Another good example of promoting children's participation is the celebration of the Day of the African Child in Ross Béthio (in the St. Louis region) by an association of early childhood entities in the department of Dagana.

191. Despite these achievements, the Government is of the view that further improvements are still needed. The projects currently under discussion include: strengthening the legislative framework for children's participation in Senegal; developing a policy on children's participation; and giving effect to the political commitments undertaken to provide more funding for projects to increase children's participation.

A. Access to the press (art. 17)

192. The Government ensures that children have access to information and material aimed at the promotion of their well-being, including information provided by the national media. The National Audio-visual Regulation Council closely monitors what children listen to and watch, as studies have shown that children aged 4 to 10 spend about 15 hours per week watching television, mainly programmes intended for the general public.

193. In order to lessen the potentially adverse impact of these programmes, the Council has instructed public and private media outlets to introduce a signage system that would distinguish between television programmes that are appropriate for children and those that are not.

194. In its efforts to increase the number of educational programmes in the media, the Government is working chiefly through the national media, namely the public television channels and radio stations and the official daily newspaper "le Soleil". These regularly produce and broadcast programmes that are adapted to children's needs and abilities, with additional offerings provided at the time of the International Children's Day of Broadcasting.

195. Special programmes for children are also broadcast by private media, such as the "Bébé Walf" show on Walf FM and Walf TV and the "Guné-Yi" project created by Plan Senegal and broadcast on national public radio and several community radio stations.

196. The Government acknowledges, however, that while there are many radio stations and newspapers available, most of these are for adults, and those that are intended for children are focused more on entertainment than on children's participation. Likewise, it should be emphasized that children's access to the Internet is neither adequate nor equitably distributed.

B. The family environment and alternative care, alternative care and adoption (arts. 19–21)

197. On 1 December 2011, Senegal ratified the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption of 29 May 1993. Adoption is governed by Act No. 99-82 of 3 September 1999 amending Act No. 72-61 of 12 June 1972 (the Family Code). Article 223 of the Family Code defines adoption as a procedure that establishes a legal filiation tie that is independent of the child's origin. Adoption is granted by means of a court order, on condition that the child is a minor who has not been declared of full age and capacity and has been declared abandoned, or subject to the consent of the child's parents, or family council if the child is under guardianship.

198. Articles 230 and 239 set out the adoption procedure, which must be based on the consent of the parents or guardian, and of the child if the latter is over 15 years of age. Whether full or partial, the adoption may take place only if the best interests of the adopted child are guaranteed under judicial supervision.

199. Articles 224 and 229 of the Family Code set out the conditions required of adoptive parents, who must be at least 15 years older than the adopted child. The conditions for adoption stipulate, *inter alia*, that there must not be any other child in the household, except under special dispensation from the President of the Republic, and that only one child may be adopted. All consents must be given before a notary or judicial, diplomatic or consular authority. Completion of a trial period, referred to as the placement of the child with the adoptive family, must be confirmed in a detailed report drawn up by a social worker attached to the court concerned on the basis of a reasoned decision taken by the competent court.

200. A number of specific precautions must be observed to avoid any abuse of the procedure that would not be in the best interests of the child. These precautions are set out in a report drawn up by the government agency responsible for approving adoptions in the host country. This report includes a description of the situation of the adoptive parent or parents, their marital status, their professional activities, their income and their parenting skills, as well as a detailed opinion from the government agency. Intercountry adoptions may not take place without this detailed report.

C. Social protection and a decent standard of living (arts. 26 and 27)

201. Since the early 2000s, the Government has been making efforts to distribute the gains of economic growth among vulnerable groups, particularly children. These efforts were intensified during the period 2006–2011, as the annual reviews of poverty reduction strategies showed that previous efforts had been insufficient and that the benefits of economic growth had not been equitably distributed among the different regions of the country or among the different population groups, leading to a worsening of existing inequalities.

202. In 2005, the Government adopted a national social protection strategy for the period 2005–2015. This was subsequently incorporated into the Poverty Reduction Strategy for the Period 2006–2010 as one of its four priority areas (priority area 3, social protection, prevention and management of risks and disasters). Area 3 was then split into four operational components, namely: reform and strengthening of formal social security systems; the expansion of social protection; disaster and major risk management; and the improvement of the capacity of vulnerable groups to respond to shocks and risks. The Poverty Reduction Strategy sets out the Government's commitment to devoting special

attention to improving the lives of the poor and vulnerable, especially children, by expanding social protection mechanisms.

203. During the period 2006–2011, the Government strengthened the existing formal social security systems, namely the National Retirement Fund (which provides contribution and State-funded social insurance benefits to civil servants), the Provident Fund (which provides social insurance benefits to private sector employees through a general insurance system accompanied by supplementary insurance funded through employer and employee contributions), the Social Security Fund (which provides family benefits and health-care benefits to private sector employees), and sickness insurance institutes (institutions specific to a company or group of companies).

204. Between 2007 and 2009, these systems were assessed in order to identify limitations and the degree of financial leeway available. Accordingly, various ministries became involved in speeding up access to social security, with a view to expanding health insurance coverage from 20 per cent to 50 per cent of the population in the medium term.

205. Three large-scale projects were launched with assistance from partners (namely United Nations agencies, the World Bank and the African Development Bank): a project to strengthen mutual health insurance funds through civil society efforts with indirect government support or through State-funded systems to provide health-care coverage for workers in the informal sector; a project to extend social protection to farmers and their families, which began in late 2008 as a pilot project covering a few areas only; and a project currently in the feasibility study phase that is based on small-scale mechanisms to facilitate access to health care for poor people who are not in a position to make any contributions. In addition to these projects, there are others developed by microfinance institutions and small banks, mainly those located in rural areas, that aim to offer health insurance to their clients through monthly contributions.

206. The Government has also strengthened its efforts to expand its social protection services (including school canteens, cash transfers, income-generating activities, free access to basic social services) and extend them to vulnerable groups. Each year, the Social Development Fund established to finance small-scale projects allocates about 10 per cent of its resources to projects targeting poor and vulnerable groups, mainly young people, women and older persons. The nutrition enhancement programme has gradually expanded its scope and now covers about 65 per cent of the country. Since 2010, it has included a cash transfer component that has benefited 50,000 families. The assessment of the project concluded that the project improved children's diets by adding more variety and helped to reduce morbidity.

207. In 2010, the Government, with assistance from UNICEF, also carried out two large-scale feasibility studies, conducted simulations of cash transfers specifically targeting children and launched several pilot projects, including those conducted by the Partnership for the Rescue and Rehabilitation of Street Children and a project to combat trafficking and the worst forms of child labour in Senegal. A specific cash transfer project is currently being tested in the Kolda region. It is also worth mentioning that associations and NGOs are establishing cash transfer mechanisms in vulnerable areas.

208. The progress achieved in this regard, though bringing about some positive changes, still needs to be expanded and maintained, as recommended in the latest annual reviews of the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Directorate of Correctional Education and Social Protection. In the light of children's vulnerability and the difficulties they face in accessing basic social services, and of budget simulations showing that a cash transfer programme for children would be feasible, the Government plans to speed up the establishment of social insurance schemes and to expand cash transfer programmes.

D. Monitoring of the situation of the rights of the child

209. More specifically, responsibility for monitoring government action to implement the Convention rests with the Ministry for Infants and Children. This department includes two offices that monitor implementation of the Convention, namely the Directorate for the Rights and Protection of Children and the National Committee for Children. The National Committee, established in the 1990s, is an inclusive body comprising representatives of public institutions and civil society organizations that deal with children. The Government also has other mechanisms to monitor the progress achieved with regard to children.

210. As part of the follow-up to the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Government has established a national committee and regional committees, placed under the supervision of the Unit for the Coordination and Monitoring of Economic policy, that annually inspect a shortlist of 34 indicators, of which more than a quarter directly concern women and children. The annual progress report is widely circulated and discussed with civil society organizations and representatives of technical and financial development partners. The coordination, follow-up and assessment of the Poverty Reduction Strategy are ensured by the Poverty Reduction Programme Follow-up Unit established within the Ministry of the Economy and Finance.

211. The plans specific to the health sector (the National Health Development Plan) and the education sector (the Ten-year Education and Training Programme) are also regularly evaluated through annual periodic reviews carried out by the Government, that culminate in an annual national review. These reviews provide an opportunity to strengthen partnerships and monitor progress in these sectors. In addition, standard data systems, in particular in the areas of education, health and HIV/AIDS, provide regular, reliable information on indicators relating to children and women.

212. A national monitoring and evaluation network (consisting of the United Nations system and the Government) has been established with the aim of, inter alia, strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacities at the national level. In this respect, in 2006 Senegal conducted a study on evaluation capacity, which should lead to the creation of a programme to build capacity in the areas of monitoring and evaluation.

213. This mechanism and the monitoring work carried out by the various ministries that deal with children receive surveys and studies on the situation regarding the rights of the child, identifying good practices and providing documentation that can serve as a basis for policy dialogue and resource allocation.

214. Since 2007, all studies have been carried out using the equality-and-rights-based approaches recommended by the United Nations. Major studies include the Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (EDS-MICS) for 2010–2011, a study on child poverty and disparities, a study on the dynamics of chronic poverty and social transformation, a study on consideration of children's interests in poverty reduction strategies, studies on social protection and on the feasibility of social cash transfer programmes for children, a mapping of child protection systems, surveys on family practices and attitudes that are vital to child survival, rapid nutrition surveys and studies on child labour, street children and violence against children.

215. These studies, most of which were conducted by national entities such as the universities of Dakar, St. Louis and Ziguinchor, produced data concerning the disparities that exist between regions, genders and age groups. The results of the studies have been widely disseminated, both electronically and through exchange workshops, among directors and staff members of ministries, staff members of the National Agency for Statistics and Demography, donors, associations and NGOs, the media, members of the National Assembly and members of the Economic and Social Council. The final results were used to

bring together national expertise in social policies, to provide input for the periodic review exercises (in relation to poverty reduction, education and health), to revise national development strategies (Economic and Social Policy Document 2011–2016 and Education Policy 2012–2025) and to guide the allocation of government resources and official development assistance.

216. The studies also provided input to the National Committee to Monitor Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, established in 2002. Every two years, this Committee coordinates the publication of national monitoring reports. Committees to monitor implementation of the Millennium Development Goals have also been set up in 11 of the 13 regions in the country, and the studies have been used to develop an investment plan to speed up achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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