

***Making financial services and
business skills development
available to African children and
youth: a pilot***

Rabi Seck Microfinance Advisor & Awa Niang MAEJT

On behalf of Sven Coppens – Plan WARO RPSM

Plan WARO Youth Microfinance Program

Washington DC September 2007



Plan
Be a part of it.

Background - *World's Youth 2006 Data Sheet*

In 2005 50% of girls and 59% of boys between 15 and 19 years old were economically active in Sub-Saharan Africa

Background - *World's Youth 2006 Data Sheet*

- **Senegal:** In 2005 54% of girls and 59% of boys between the age of 15 and 19 could be considered as economically active;
- **Niger:** 62% of girls and 82% of boys between the age of 15 and 19 could be considered as economically active;
- **Sierra Leone:** 31% of girls and 50% of boys between the age of 15 and 19 could be considered as economically active.

Why a youth-led project?

Young people's right to participation in their own development is central mechanism in this project, from inception to replication. The project is an opportunity for the youth to become full actors of their survival, development and protection, thereby contributing to active citizenship and vibrant civil society building.

Project philosophy

- Enhancing young people's right-claiming power through enabling them to make informed choices (access to information) about their own development opportunities
- Financial services, business and life-skills development as triggers

Participatory project development

- Project idea over 3 years old coming from African working children and youth
- Concept paper developed
- Three-day youth-led consultation with children and youth, Plan staff, Plan Microfinance Partner organizations and technical experts in the areas of microfinance, micro enterprise development, business skills training and participatory market research
- First draft version of the project document drafted before the consultation as base for the youth-led consultation

Participatory project development (continued)

The facilitators brought the groups through “des sessions RAP – Recherche Action Participative”, a methodology that goes into

- (1) problem identification and analysis (including determining project objectives and strategies),
- (2) determination of appropriate project activities and
- (3) time framing the project activities.

Participatory project development (continued)

Outcomes of the youth-led consultation:

- An amended and validated project document ready for submission to potentially interested funding agencies, including:
 - A detailed implementation plan covering the entire 3-year pilot project period;
 - A drafted logical framework and budget overview for the project;
- A strategy to involve children and youth, youth organizations and Microfinance partners to collaborate with Plan WARO in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Targeting criteria

- 15-24 years old
- Out-of-school children and youth – existing natural groups (MAEJT – AMWCY; other youth organizations)
- Working/economically active children and youth
- Senegal, Niger and Sierra Leone, based on Plan's comparative advantages and CO buy-in
- Urban and Peri-urban areas with minimal economical activities

Participatory cause-effect analysis

- **Appropriateness of, availability of and access to financial services**
- **Lack of expertise in business planning & management**
- **Lack of financial education**
- **Social assumptions and expectations around young women and money**
- **Family and community concerns about young people and money**

Participatory cause-effect analysis (continued)

- **Motivation of young people**
- **Hesitation/fear and lack of entrepreneurial initiative**
- **Illiteracy**
- **Difficulty in accessing business development services**
- **Negative influences by influencing agents in the lives of children and youth**
- **Insufficient culture of savings amongst children and youth**

Logical Framework: Overall Objective

To provide opportunities to and support 15-24 year old out-of-school children and youth to have access to financial services, business development technical support and life-skills development

Logical Framework: Specific Objective (project purpose)

To identify effective approaches and methodologies that result in sustainable and replicable program models to provide access to appropriate financial services, business skills development and essential life-skills training to 3000 out-of-school 15-24 year old working children and youth in Senegal, Sierra Leone and Niger

Logical Framework: Results

Result 1:

By the end of 2009, 3000 out-of-school 15-24 year old working children and youth from Senegal, Sierra Leone and Niger are using appropriate and accessible financial services through a local institution.

Logical Framework: Results

Result 2:

By the end of 2010, 3000 out-of-school 15-24 year old working children and youth from Senegal, Sierra Leone and Niger have participated in tailor-made business, entrepreneurial and life-skills training programs.

Logical Framework: Results

Result 3:

By the end of 2010, 3000 out-of-school 15-24 year old working children and youth from Senegal, Sierra Leone and Niger have access to support structures for and are using the acquired business, entrepreneurial and life-skills in managing viable small economic activities.

Logical Framework: Results

Result 4:

By the end of 2010, replicable models for out-of-school working children and youth support are created, monitored, evaluated and shared.

Project strategies

- Children and youth participation and consultation
- Partnerships and linkages
- Peer education
- Piloting through action research and learning

Some project components

- **participatory market research** to identify the specific financial services needs of children and youth and identify, develop and test appropriate approaches, methodologies and products to meet these needs
- promote **community-managed microfinance models** among groups of children and youth
- assist microfinance institutions develop **financial services products** specifically suited to the needs of children and youth

Some project components (continued)

- provide guidance and training to children and youth to enable them to identify promising economic opportunities to decide what type of business they wish to start or develop further
- to enhance the ability of children and youth to **independently do market research** in order to allow them to identify real business and marketing opportunities
- design **business skills courses** tailored specifically for the needs of children and youth who have had insufficient formal education

Some project components (continued)

- Development of **supporting training modules** that aim at consolidating and sustaining the business skills modules and based upon the needs of the children and youth, as identified by themselves
- Design and organization of the training curricula done jointly between children and youth and specialized organizations in a participatory manner
- Youth advisory boards with representative decision making power in project management and M&E