


# SUCCESS STORY

## Improving the response of the most vulnerable communities to nutritional and food crises in the departments of Podor, Ranérou, Matam and Kanel



### EU Trust Fund for Africa - Sahel & Lake Chad



 **EUTF PARTNER:** Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)



**COUNTRY:** Senegal



**BUDGET:** EUR 8.0M



From **04/2016** to **01/2021**

### Objective of the project

To improve food security, nutrition, and access to basic services for vulnerable people in four departments of Senegal.

### Key successes

- > Trained 93,631 people in improved agriculture practices.
- > Sensitised 6,000 households on good nutritional and hygiene practices.
- > Built capacity of 182 local stakeholders in nutrition and planning, strengthening local governance.
- > Reduced the prevalence of food insecurity by more than 5 points in only 5 years.

The Yellitaare<sup>1</sup> (“Emergence” in Peul language) project was implemented between September 2016 and January 2021 in the departments of Matam, Podor, Ranérou and Kanel, in the northeast regions of Senegal. The project was implemented by the Cellule de lutte contre la malnutrition (CLM)<sup>2</sup> with financial support from the EUTF and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).<sup>3</sup>

The project sought to strengthen community resilience to nutritional crises and food insecurity by tackling the root causes of malnutrition, such as food availability, extreme poverty and limited access to basic services. To reach its objective, the project implemented three types of interventions to: 1) improve food security and nutrition; 2) facilitate access to basic services, including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); and 3) improve local governance. This design recognises that access to clean WASH is important to prevent illnesses that can negatively impact nutrition absorption. Yellitaare’s main activities included the development of WASH and agricultural infrastructure, livestock activities, trainings for farmers, nutrition education, and the construction of food processing units, stores, and pastoral units.

### How did EUTF help?

**The Yellitaare project achieved very positive outcomes on food security and WASH, helping to improve living conditions in targeted areas.** The project contributed to reduce the prevalence of food insecurity by 5% in the targeted areas in only five years.

Lack of access to water in the targeted region is one of the major factors exacerbating the prevalence of malnutrition and food insecurity as well as exposing populations to faecal and waterborne diseases. The project addressed these challenges, by promoting improved hygiene practices. The prevalence of diarrhoea decreased substantially from 25.9% to just 4.1%. The project also contributed to improve the availability of drinking water for more than 98.4% of households in the intervention area, up from 89.4% at baseline.

### These positive outcomes were achieved as a result of the following:

- Training was provided to 93,631 people on improved agricultural techniques, diversification, and soil management, improving food availability.
- The project conducted awareness-raising activities with 6,000 households and broadcast 4,144 radio spots through 10 community radios to improve WASH and nutrition practices. In addition, the project held an average of 1,331 awareness sessions and group discussions per month, focusing on nutrition, breastfeeding, and good hygiene practices.
- An increase in access to drinking water was achieved by building one mini borehole in each of 12 targeted localities with fewer than 500 inhabitants along the Senegal River.



- The project supported development of 25 communal development plans to better integrate concepts of nutrition, food security and resilience-building in local development strategies and policies, 17 of which were put into action during the project's implementation. For instance, the mayor of Matam successfully implemented a nutrition activity within the commune's kindergarten, as part of its decentralised cooperation programme with the commune of Firmin, France. This initiative aimed to provide nutrition activities for the students of the kindergarten, based on the commune's development plan.

## Keys to success

**Multisectoral approach:** Rather than focusing on a single sector, the project adopted a multisectoral framework that allowed for coordinated efforts across complementary areas, such as food security, nutrition, and water management. The project thus tackled several of the factors of malnutrition, namely food availability, hygiene practices, and access to clean water.

**Community and stakeholder implication:** Through extensive stakeholder participation, including agreements with the CLM, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Directorate of Agriculture, and the SAED<sup>4</sup>, the project ensured the genuine ownership and active involvement of local actors in project implementation. Communities also had opportunities to influence interventions, like the introduction of fodder crops which was requested by beneficiaries as these crops help support livestock and thus household livelihoods.

**Focus on capacity-building:** Building the skills and knowledge of farmers and their organisations was key to the project's achievements. Enhancing participants' understanding of modern practices and management empowered communities to independently operate and maintain infrastructure. The project also equipped farmers with expertise to sustainably intensify production for improved incomes and long-term food security. Strengthening local human resources in this manner was integral to ensure that the positive impacts of the interventions could continue well beyond the project's timeframe.

<sup>1</sup> *Amélioration de la réponse des communautés les plus vulnérables face aux crises nutritionnelles et alimentaires dans les départements de Podor, Ranérou, Matam et Kanél.*

<sup>2</sup> The *Cellule de Lutte contre la Malnutrition* (CLM) is an inter-ministerial committee established by the Senegalese government in 2001 to coordinate national nutrition policy.

<sup>3</sup> *Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo* (AECID). Under indirect management, AECID would sign a grant with CLM as lead partner, who would then sign agreements at national and local levels with institutions to deliver the programme.

<sup>4</sup> *Société d'Aménagement et d'Exploitation des Terres du Delta du Fleuve Sénégal.*

**Adaptive planning:** The project's flexibility in planning and execution were particularly important. For example, some activities were adapted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the project donated goods like washing basins, handwashing stations and buckets as well as hygiene products to the Matam Hygiene Brigade to support the government's effort to fight the pandemic.

## Building on success

**Yellitaare II received EUR 1M in funding from AECID starting in June 2021 to build on the achievements of Phase I.** It focused on further developing locally produced agricultural products from irrigated perimeters through improved cultivation techniques and support for marketing the outputs to boost incomes in targeted rural communities.

**The project also planned to deliver supplementary support packages to the remote rural units and facilities that were initially established under Phase I.** This included providing extra skills training for the local operators and maintenance staff on sustainably managing the irrigation infrastructure and equipment over the long run without direct project involvement. The goal was to promote sustainable and self-reliant rural development in these areas to gradually reduce dependence on external aid programs.



**EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa**

### Disclaimer

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