

**INTEGRATING GENDER INTO WORLD BANK
FINANCED TRANSPORT PROGRAMS**

CASE STUDY

SENEGAL

**THE NATIONAL RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT
(NRIP)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Rural Infrastructure Project (NRIP) is one component of the rural poverty alleviation strategies implemented by the Senegalese government since the 1990s. In order to put an end to the isolation of rural areas, rural transport has become a priority defined in the rural decentralized development. NRIP is funded by the World Bank, IFAD, the Senegalese State and the beneficiaries. The total amount of the funding is USD 238,900,000 with 63% (USD 151,700,000) brought by the Bank. Its long-term objectives are to reduce poverty in rural areas, improve living conditions of rural populations, promote decentralized rural development and promote good management of local issues. The program concentrates its efforts on building the capacities of collectivities to provide populations with services they themselves have identified. Another goal of the Program is to enable the collectivity in planning and managing their own development programs, collecting funds and generating benefits. As a poverty reduction strategy, the National Rural Infrastructure Programme includes in its first phase a component on rural community roads.

NRIP is a twelve-year program from 1998 and to 2011. However, although the implementing phase was scheduled to begin in 2001, the pilot phase is not yet complete due to delays in finance processing in the World Bank as well as the Ministry of Finance in Senegal.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN THE PROJECT'S OUTCOMES

In rural areas mobility is an important issue for women. In the absence of technology to alleviate their burden and credit to purchase IMT, they end up using their own body as a working tool. In urban as well as in rural areas, women walk for their domestic and economic chores and carry heavy loads on their heads, often with a baby tied on the back. In Senegal there is a commitment from the State to mainstream gender.

The NRIP's documents include some gender sensitive language and a commitment to improve women's living conditions, but analysis of actions that are implemented so far indicates greater similarity to an "integration of women into development" vision rather than a gender approach aiming at enabling women to control resources and impact on decisions made within their families and communities. As the project has just started, it is not yet possible to identify and analyze its impacts on men and women. Nevertheless the analysis of intended impacts of the project on male and female beneficiaries can be carried out from the project documents and answers by respondents to focus groups discussions and interviews. Because the project is not yet implemented, it is too early to gain insights about how the project affects women's daily life. But as analysis of secondary and primary data reveal, it does not seem to be able to transform the power relations within the family and the community, what gender is about. The reasons are as follows:

a) Inadequate representation of women :

- At the institutional level: The Ministry of Family, Social Affairs and National Solidarity which, within the government is responsible for the promotion of women is not present among the ministries involved in the NRIP. In NRIP itself, the Cellule Nationale de Coordination (CNC) which, at the national level manages, coordinates and implements the project comprises no women in its direction.
- At the regional level only 2 out of 9 Regional Coordinators hired by NRIP to coordinate the project are women.
- At the community level, a weak presence of women in power decision making structures is noted. Women are mostly nominated in committees dealing with issues in relation to their social role in particular the committees on income generating activities or micro projects, and not in those dealing with issues considered as more suitable to men such as tendering. This means that their needs might not been properly addressed in the other committees, or that they will not be in position to pushing women's enterprises in tendering procedures.
- Limited knowledge of the gender approach by the NRIP's management, hence gender as an approach to analyse, understand and transform power relations within the society is not yet understood. Because of gender biases most policies and projects consider that women's needs are mainly those related to their domestic and reproductive roles. Examination of women's needs that will be met by NRIP follow the same trend, as it is proved by already implemented infrastructures such as rehabilitation of the health units, establishment of maternity wards, small local markets and public taps. It is true that in establishing these infrastructures, as well as other scheduled in the NRIP, women's domestic burden will be alleviated, and they will access to some resources. However, in order to balance the gender

inequality within the communities, NRIP should take other actions to empower women for more control over resources.

b) Gender insensitive trainings.

To enable NRIP to enable the leaders of the communities to correctly carry on expected tasks, NRIP provides them with training opportunities. A closer look at the profile of female trainees and to content reveal that, as far as women are concerned, several gender issues that have not been addressed might impair the expected benefits they might obtain from the training sessions. They are the following:

- The type of trainings women are encouraged to attend to:
*Women groups are rarely encouraged to attend trainings on technical issues such as tendering, project planning and management. They are more likely to receive trainings in conformity with their traditional role such as gardening or tie and dye. Such trainings cannot provide women with empowering capacities to gain knowledge that enable them to meet their strategic needs and be more present in decision making structures.
- The profile of female trainees:
Because women's groups' boards members are usually selected to attend trainings, the large majority of women are likely not to be trained.
- The use of training material written in French, whereas the majority of women are illiterate.

c) Less opportunities offered to women to access to labour

NRIP's documents about the rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructures are almost mute about whether and how women will be involved and if so whether they will receive additional training to improve their skills, in particular technical skills, and on the other hand whether they will be allocated equipments needed to carry on the tasks, or credit to purchase them.

d) Non gendered budgets

Available budgets (World Bank's, NRIP's documents and Local Development Plans and Annual Investments Plans) are not disaggregated. Therefore it is not possible to foresee how much money will be invested in realisations aimed at women. In addition there is no special budget to update women or a vulnerable group by training or a special activity, neither special credit made available.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CNC	Cellule Nationale de Coordination
CNDCL	Conseil National pour le Developement des Collectives Locales
DCL	Direction des Collectives Locales
EDS	Enquête Démographique et de Santé au Sénégal
GNP	Gross National Product
GPF	Fédération des Groupements Féminins
HDS	Health and Demographic Survey
HIMO	Haute Intensité de Main d'oeuvre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMT	Intermediate Means of Transport
LIF	Local Investment Fund
NR	National Roads
NRIP	National Program for Rural Infrastructures
NSRT	National Strategy for Rural Transport
OSDIL	Organization for the Development of Local Initiatives
PAST	Programme d'Adjustment Sectoriel du Transport
PNIR	Projet National d'Infrastructures Rurales
PTMR	Rural Travel and Transport Program
RC	Rural Community
RD	Departmental Roads
RR	Regional Roads
SNRT	Strategie Nationale de Transport en Milieu Rural
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Senegal is located in the western part of Africa. Rural populations still play an important demographic and economic role : 59% of the population lives in rural areas; the agriculture sector generates 23% of GNP and 60% of employment. Despite this weight, rural areas receive only 8% of the national budget (World Bank, 1999)¹. The weakness of state investments in rural areas explains the very limited number of education, health, water, and sanitation services and transport infrastructure available to the population.

With GNP of USD 514 per person, Senegal is among the poorest countries in the world and 48% of Senegalese live below the poverty line. Poverty is mainly a rural phenomenon, with 75% of poor households being in rural areas (UNICEF, 2000)². This study indicates women's family responsibilities, economic roles, inaccessibility to the factors of production and male migration lead to their being the majority of the poor.

The Senegalese State is implementing several strategies to reduce poverty, many targeting rural areas. Among them is the National Program for Rural Infrastructures (NRIP), which is a component of the National Program on Decentralized Rural Development. Senegal has also implemented a policy of decentralizing responsibilities and resources to communities at urban and rural levels.

This general framework informs the NRIP that is investigated within the study on "Integrating Gender into World Bank Financed Transport Programs". Its general objectives are to address rural transport policies in Senegal and analyze gender issues and their effect on the life of Senegalese women. A second objective is to document lessons learned in respect of gender inclusion

A 12-year project, NRIP is not yet fully implemented. Although the first phase of the implementation was scheduled in 2001, the project Manual of Procedures for Rural Communities was drafted only in February 2003 and the local development plans of selected rural communities completed in April 2003. Additional delays came from the World Bank and the Ministry of Finance in the procedures of transferring the funds. As a result none of the community roads scheduled for construction in this first phase has started. At this point, research questions regarding the project's implementation, its impacts on men and women and its contribution to improving or impairing gender dimensions cannot be analyzed. Nevertheless, examination of secondary and primary data gives insights into how gender issues are handled in the project and overall rural transport policies in Senegal and reveal a gap between donors' and government officials' political will and practices at the institutional and community level.

This paper has five chapters: First, the background environment and macro context are presented. Institutional analysis follows in Chapter 2. The third chapter describes rural transport policies. The fourth chapter examines project design and implementation. In the last chapter gender differences

¹ World Bank: Document d'Evaluation concernant un crédit d'un montant équivalent à 28,5 millions de dollars à la République du Sénégal pour un Projet National d'Infrastructures Rurales à l'Appui de la Première Phase du Programme National d'Infrastructures Rurales. 20 Décembre 1999

² UNICEF, Analyse de la Situation de l'Enfant et de la Femme au Sénégal, 2000

and outcomes and lessons learned are analyzed with regard to what has been implemented so far; delay in the project implementation limits the extent of the analysis.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

1.2.1 Data Collection

The study first examined the available literature from the Ministry of Equipment and Transport, from the NRIP, from World Bank/Senegal and from NGOs involved in the project³.

One of several studies carried out during the preparation of the project, about the “Gender Component” for the National Strategy of Transport for Rural Areas, was undertaken in 1999⁴. Many other studies on gender issues in Senegal provided insight for this research.

Two sets of primary data collections were conducted. The first targeted the institutions: the Cellule Nationale de Coordination of the NRIP at national and regional levels, the administrators of national transport programs, programs officers of the World Bank and Senegal in charge of the project and representatives of local NGOs hired by NRIP to assist the communities. A second set of collection targeted the communities, where leaders, women’s groups and associations, youth associations, health care providers, traders and teachers responded to in-depth interviews or participated in focus group discussions. They were carried out in the five pilot rural communities where studies and implementation of the project are the most advanced and used the methods of conducted focus groups discussions.

1.2.2 The Study Areas

The NRIP has implemented pilots in five rural communities that were selected as sites of the study: Kounkane, region of Kolda (South of the country) Paoskoto and Dealy (both in the center of the country), Thilmakha (West) and Mbane (North). (a map to be scanned and attached). The areas are described in Table 1.

³ Local Plans of Development and Annual Investment Plans by the pilot rural communities

⁴ Sarr Fatou, Genre et Transport Rural, PAST 2, 1999

Table 1: Characteristics of the Study Areas

	Kounkane	Paoskoto	Dealy	Thilmakha	Mbane
Area (km ²)	453	478	1,219	172	1,906
Number of villages and hamlets	86	132	56	66	90
Population	21,691	38,565	10,542	13,138	22,355
Men (% of total)	50.1	51.8	n.a.	46	52
Women (% of total)	49.9	48.3	n.a.	54	48
Number of women in the rural council	1/32	3/32	1/32	0/32	1/32

Source: Local plans of development, 2002

In addition to NRIP, international donors, rural banks, women's grassroots associations, economic interest groups and youth associations are present in rural areas. They implement projects such as revolving credit, micro-credit, hydraulic equipment, village woods, literacy classes, health, community hygiene and rehabilitation of health units.

The Rural Community of Kounkané

This community, located in the Department of Velingara in the administrative region of Kolda in the South and established in 1996, is the rural capital⁵. The population consists of a wide range of ethnic groups, but the largest is the Pël (Fulani) which makes up 90% of the population; second is the Mandingo and third the Soninke.

Dominant economic regional activities are cattle breeding and groundnut and cotton production. Kolda is the poorest region of Senegal with 62.1% of households of the Department of Velingara living below the poverty line (UNICEF, 2000). There is an important international market⁶ where agricultural products, cattle and imported goods are available.

The community roads are in a very poor condition and means of transportation limited.

The main ways of transport in the area are the Anambe river and the national road linking the country's capital to the southern areas and to Guinea Conakry and Guinea Bissau. There is a dense network of tracks for production mostly used for transporting cotton. Most important villages and hamlets are located along the national road.

Education facilities include 28 elementary schools, a kindergarten and a secondary school. The school buildings are poor or unfinished, many being merely thatch-roofed shelters.

⁵ See p.5 organization of rural areas into rural communities

⁶ Serving Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau and Gambia

The rate of literacy is very low and in many areas as many as 80% of the population is illiterate. Only 42% of the population is educated and women are among the less educated because of the gender division of labor and early marriage.

There are three poorly-equipped health units and ten village health units. A nurse, a community health care provider and one traditional birth attendant comprise the health personnel. Awareness raising talks on family planning, maternal and child health, malaria and diarrhea are provided by community based animators.

Access to the health facilities is difficult for populations who live in remote areas. The people face particularly difficulties when serious health problems arise, such as obstructed labor for delivering women.

There are several productive projects in the area. These are state-owned cotton and rice farms producing cotton and rice, with help from international and national NGOs.

The Rural Community of Paoskoto

The rural community (RC) of Paoskoto is in the department of Nioro du Rip, in Kaolack region. The Wolof is the most important (77%) of the several ethnic groups in the RC. Paoskoto town is the RC's capital. The RC is crossed by the "Transgambian" – the national road that goes from Dakar, the national capital, to the south of the country and to the Gambia, a country locked within Senegal.

The most important economic activity is agriculture, mostly groundnut, millet, water melon and cattle breeding. About 44% of households live below the poverty line.

The RC of Paoskoto is among those which, since the colonial period, have been opposed to secular and modern education based on French. Although the RC has 24 primary schools and one secondary school, most parents prefer to send their children to Qura'nic schools. As a result, less than 40% of children are educated.

Of the 19 health units are built in the RC, only four are efficient. There are rural maternity wards exist in six villages.

Villages are linked by tracks. Carts, bicycles and cars are the main means of transport.

From 1999 to 2001, NRIP and the Rural Travel and Transport Program (PTMR) introduced a project on "Promotion of Intermediate Means of Transport" through a South-South Cooperation Project whose goal was to improve access to basic social services and markets in the rural areas by improving access to bicycles. Women, because of their domestic, social and economic roles that require many trips and their burden in head loading and school girls constituted the project's main target.

The project was supported by the Gender and Rural Transport Initiative at the World Bank. A local NGO, the Organization for the Development of Local Initiatives (OSDIL), based in Paoskoto, was identified for the project implementation.

Bicycles were priced at USD 65, about half the market rate. The bikes were supplied as in-kind loans with a deposit of only CFA 20 (CFA 740 = USD 1.0) requested. Repayments were to go into

a revolving fund for micro credit. The about 100 people who bought bicycles, particularly women, confirmed their usefulness.

Several problems that arose during planning and implementing phase of the project can explain its lack of success.

First, although the people find bicycles useful, they reveal that carts are still their preferred IMT. The reason might be that the project came from an external initiative (of the South African NGO Afribike) and took a top-down approach.

A second reason of the project's small success is the lack of community mobilization experience by NRIP and PTMR, which relied completely on the local NGO.

The people were not consulted in identifying criteria for the distribution of the bicycles and the process lacked transparency. Although vulnerable households were initially targeted, OSDIL faced strong pressures from local religious and administrative leaders and civil servants and felt obliged to provide them with bikes.

Very few loans were repaid. Many people who received bicycles were told that there was no need to repay them because it was a "grant" from the World Bank. Hence the revolving fund could not be started. OSDIL took the matter to the Court.

The Rural Community of Dealy

Dealy is located in the Region of Louga, in the department of Sagatta-Djoloff. Of the several ethnic groups in the RC the Pël (Fulani) is the most important (63%). Dealy is located in the area Touba, a religious city where the Mouride Brotherhood, one of the most important Senegalese Muslim brotherhoods, is situated.

Breeding cattle is the most important economic activity in the region. Farmers, who are a minority, grow groundnut, millet, beans and maize. About 61% of households live below the poverty line. Dealy has an important weekly market, with much of its trade in cattle.

There is only one departmental road connecting the religious city of Touba and Dahra. Except from this road, villages are connected only by tracks. IMT and a few rural taxis are used for transport of people.

There is little community infrastructure. The following facilities are there: one nonfunctional community house; 13 primary schools, most of which have only two classes; seven health units, of which only two are working. The health personnel consist of two midwives and two lower level staff. Access to health care is a problem due to a lack of facilities and of human resources. Because of the scarcity of infrastructure, most children do not go to school and most inhabitants do not have access to health care.

The Rural Community of Thilmakha

This RC is in the department of Niakhene, region of Thies, in the west of the country. Although the region is among the country's most industrialized (mineral industry), the number of poor is still quite high; about 21% of households live below the poverty line. (UNICEF, 2000)

The Wolof forms the majority (80% of inhabitants) although there are several ethnic groups in the RC. One characteristic of the region is heavy male emigration to Spain and Italy, which explains the low male-female ratio.

The main economic activities are agriculture (millet, groundnut and beans), cattle breeding and trade.

There are only three primary schools, one of which is closed because of parents' reluctance to send their children to the francophone schools, long distances and dilapidated infrastructure. The rate of school attendance is low.

There are ten health facilities for the whole RC, of which eight are not functional. There is no maternity ward and women deliver their babies at home.

There is only one road linking Mekhe to Darou Mousty, a religious city. Villages are quite isolated because of a very sandy soil, the main obstacle to mobility.

Despite the RC's isolation, the population considers that access to water is the most important priority. This is why the establishment of a tube-well is the first action to be implemented with the support of NRIP.

The Rural Community of Mbane

This RC is located in the north of the country in the department of Dagana, region of Saint Louis. Mbane was established as a rural community in 1996 and is presently the capital of the RC.

The Pël constitute the majority of the population. The region is characterized by important agro-industry based on irrigated sugar cane, rice and vegetables. Other agricultural activities are cattle breeding, cultivation of millet, groundnut and vegetables and fishing. Only 17% of households live below the poverty line.

The main road is the national road that leads to Richard Toll where the headquarters of the agro-industrial farms are located and to Mauritania.

Women's groups are involved in activities related to fishing, as traders and processors of fish and other sea products. Another feature of the region is high male emigration and the highest number of female headed households in the country.

There are 37 elementary schools whose equipment is very poor and five health units of which four are nonfunctional

2. THE CONTEXT

2.1 THE MACRO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Since the 1980s, Senegal has been confronted by deep economic crises that led the government to implement a mid- and then a long-term structural adjustment program to restore macro-economic balance. In 1994, the bad performances of economies of the francophone African countries led them to devalue their common currency (the CFA Franc) by about 50% in a search for greater competitiveness. Structural adjustment policies, devaluation and later, the globalization policies, worsened the living conditions of the population. Most of the decreasing resources of the State are used to service the national debt and the government cannot meet the social demand for food, schools, health facilities and roads and access to employment, clean water and sanitation.

As formal employment opportunities are limited, the informal sector is quite active and according to UNICEF, represents 54% of GNP.

Senegal is faced with a fast growth of population, the result of which is 49% of Senegalese being under 17. Poverty is a reality with almost half of the population living below the poverty line (UNICEF, 2000)

Poverty in Senegal, as in many third world countries, is mostly a structural and rural phenomenon, with 75% of the poor living in rural areas. The poorest regions are Kolda, where the rural community of Koukane is located; Kaolack where the rural community of Paoskoto is located; and Louga where the rural community of Dealy is located.

Among the causes of rural poverty are the low productivity of agriculture, the weakness of resources for basic social services, communities' isolation and migration to the cities and abroad.

2.2 ENABLING CONDITIONS

From 1976, the government undertook several institutional and economic reforms, many supported by the World Bank, one of its most important partners. The most important institutional reform is the decentralization of responsibilities and resources to urban and rural communities and the implementation of poverty reduction policies. NRIP plays an important role in the reforms targeting rural areas.

2.2.1 The Strategy of Decentralization

The strategy started in rural areas in 1972, with the grouping in the same community of several neighboring villages which share common interests and have the capacity for collective management. Each cluster of villages became a rural community (RC). The process was completed in 1996, with now a total of 320 RCs.

The objective of the strategy is to allow decentralized urban and rural bodies to manage directly their population's concerns and to exert direct control. The main aspect of this reform are transfer to the RCs of certain responsibilities such as environment, natural resource management, health and social action, youth and sport, urbanism and habitat and management of land. Community roads are built and managed by the RCs.

Each RC is directed by a Rural Council, which is a deliberating and organizing body led by a President and by Councilors. In principle, these leaders are elected by universal direct voting from lists presented by political parties. Members of the RC are neither paid nor compensated; this hampers the exercise of their activity. RCs have little money to maintain services or to pay personnel. Although RC nominally have financial autonomy, they are not provided by the State with resources to meet social demands for infrastructure such as schools, health facilities, water, roads and electricity and hence to support the conditions of local growth. A second constraint that impedes RC's development is weakness of skills for planning, implementing and following up actions the State initiates on their behalf. Under the policy of decentralization, local authorities are expected to raise their own funds for development programs such as health, education community roads and water supplies.

According to the national requirements, at least 25% of all decision making positions should be reserved for women but, in reality, only two of the 320 RCs have elected a woman for President and of the 9,600 Councilors (30 for each RC), only 9% are women⁷. The figures drawn from the Local Development plans of the pilot sites is evidence of the weak presence of women in the rural councils: 3 in Paoskoto, 1 in Dealy, Mbane and Kounkané and none in Thilmakka.

A female councilor at the Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux remarked that 'in villages, people are not used to seeing a woman in a decision making position. Political parties' practices increase women's marginalization. When there are local elections, the names of female candidates are always placed at the bottom of the lists presented, whereas only those who are on top of the list are likely to be elected. Worst, a woman can be elected then demanded to resign on behalf of a man, should a problem arise".

According to the same female councilor, "many elected woman are mere 'token' - they never dare to speak up to defend women's interests".

2.2.2 Poverty Alleviation Policies

The main rural poverty alleviation strategies are defined in the "Letter for the Policy of Rural Decentralized Development initiated by the Government from 1999⁸.

Rural transport is defined as a priority defined in the rural decentralized development. A Letter of Policy of Rural Transport within which a Rural Transport Program⁹ will contribute to putting an end to the isolation of rural areas.

As a poverty reduction strategy, the National Rural Infrastructure Programme includes in its first phase a component on rural community roads.

2.2.3 Local NGOs and International Cooperation

Traditional organizations on the basis of age groups, religion and ethnicity are an important feature of Senegalese society. These associations are modernized and have the support of many rural NGOs

⁷ UNDP: Les Sénégalaises en chiffres. Analyse des Données Socio-Démographiques, économiques et politiques relatives aux femmes, 1999

⁸ Gouvernement du Sénégal: Lettre de Politique de Développement Rural Décentralisé, Octobre 1999

⁹ Programme d'Ajustement Sectoriel du Transport 1991-1999 (PAST)

and women's groups. They are efficient role players in the implementation of development policies and play an active role in the local affairs.

International cooperation (bi- and multilateral) provides the State with funding for development projects, many of which aim at rural populations.

2.2.4 Gender Awareness

General Gender Issues in Senegal

Women represent 52% of the population (HDS, 1997)¹⁰. Their status is low, even though there are considerable differences in the positions of individual women depending on age, marital status, social class, residence and political involvement. Men, as a group, control the means of production such as land in rural areas and decision-making power in households and in any institutional structure. Because of entrenched gender discrimination, the majority of women do not have access to education, to credit, to the formal wage economy and to political decision making spheres.

Women's low status is legitimized by cultural norms and by conservative interpretation of Islamic texts, although Senegal has signed and ratified almost all of women's human-rights international instruments and affirms in its Constitution, equality of all citizens regardless of sex. Neither the legislation nor the newly-decentralized decision-making spheres have tackled the basic inequalities. As a result, women are hardly represented in decision making levels. Only 13.5% of national parliamentarians are women. In rural areas, women make up only 9% of 9,600 councilors (UNDP, 1999).

Women and girls are responsible for all domestic chores in the household, which in rural areas might include more than 10 members (HDS, 1997). They are involved in agricultural tasks (food and market production). They are responsible for two thirds of informal trade and for 60% of food production although they do not own land. They earn only 35% of the labor force income, while men earn 65% (UNICEF, 2000).

About 67% of women (86% in rural areas) are illiterate in French, the administrative language. This is a formidable barrier to sustainable development and to women's economic promotion. Only 21% of women have received primary education (UNDP, 1999). They are disfavored as far as access to health is concerned. Each year 510 women die of pregnancy-related illnesses for every 100,000 live births (HDS, 1997). Other important obstacles to women's promotion are low access to credit, land and equipment.

Mobility is an important issue for women in rural areas. In the absence of technology to alleviate their burden and of credit to purchase IMT, they end up using their own bodies as working tools. In urban as well as in rural areas, women walk for their domestic and economic chores and carry heavy loads on their heads, often with a baby tied on the back.

Many actions by national and international NGO's, by international partners to development and by government, aiming to alleviate women's burden and improve their access to income have been

¹⁰ République du Sénégal. Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et du Plan. Direction de la Prévision et de la Statistique. Division des Statistiques Démographiques: Enquête Démographique et de Santé au Sénégal (EDS-III), 1997

implemented, most in the rural areas. The main objectives of these actions were to meet women's practical needs, but they did very little in transforming power relations between men and women in the families and communities.

Gender Awareness at Official Levels

Since 1978, the Senegalese government has included a department in charge for women's affairs. A small department in the 1980s, it is today the full Ministry for Family, Social Action and National Solidarity. With support of the international community, the Ministry drafted a national plan of action aiming to strengthen women's leadership skills, develop their economic activities and improve their access to land, credit and technical training. Most interventions aiming at alleviating women's work load have been rurally-oriented. The strategies in the plan of action are consistent with the decentralization policy. To mainstream gender within the government's activity, all ministries have gender focal points. Concerning transport, the document on the National Strategy on Rural Transport (SNTR)¹¹ says the strategy will be "implemented following a global, integrated and participative process, that takes gender issues, local contexts, capacities of groups and individuals into consideration".

The Ministry of Family, Social Action and National Solidarity, as well as the National Federation of Women's Association will be represented in the different bodies in charge for planning and implementation. Women and vulnerable groups will be part of the task forces set up by the Government for coordination.

NRIP's documents include some gender-sensitive language and a commitment to improve women's living conditions, but analysis of actions implemented so far indicate greater similarity to an "integration of women into development" vision, rather than a gender approach aiming to enable women to control resources and affect decisions made in their families and communities.

The Federation of Women's Groups

Women have been invited to form groups and associations at grass roots level to improve financial and technical assistance and access training opportunities. Started in the 1980s in rural areas this movement, which has reached cities, gathers about 500,000 women organized into a national federation¹². In each village, women are organized in associations affiliated or not to the federation of women's associations. Such associations are able to mobilize 100-200 women for economic activities at local, regional and national levels. Members of the federation are involved in agriculture, vegetables growing, cattle breeding, trade, transformation and trade of sea products.

The federation is the obliged partners of the government, NGOs and the international community undertaking action on behalf of women. Many of the federation's projects have had positive impact on women. Its efforts have led to several women's group earning skills in various areas (technical, health care, literacy management). Despite the discrimination women face, a small rural female elite is now appearing in villages which, if supported, can play an important role in transforming gender relations in rural families and communities.

¹¹ Ministry of Equipment and Transport. (Stratégie Nationale de Transport en Milieu Rural, 2002)

¹² Fédération des Groupements Féminins (GPF)

The federation has a formidable capacity to mobilize women, but faces challenges such as participation in the decision making processes and access to land, credit and equipment. Unfortunately, the national context of decentralization and economic liberalism which forbids the State to support local economic initiatives and promotes the free market system is a brake to their efforts to develop women's entrepreneurship. The economic initiatives of the federation are still too small and too fragile to survive in the free market system even at the local level, let alone in national and international markets.

3. INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

3.1 DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT SECTOR POLICY

Responsibility for Senegal's transport sector is under the Ministry of Equipment and Transport. It comprises a Direction for Public Works and is assisted by the Autonomous Agency for Road Transport.

The national network consists of 14,575 kilometers of road, of which 10,311 are unpaved - that is 60% of the network (SNTR, 2002). The network is subdivided into:

- National roads (NR) that are long-distance and link either several administrative regions or the country to neighboring States (Gambia, Guinea Bissau, the Republic of Guinea, Mauritania);
- Regional roads (RR) linking the regional capitals to the departments inside the region;
- Departmental roads (RD) linking the district capitals in the same department;
- Classified feeder roads linking departmental roads to agricultural productive areas; and
- Urban roads linking urban areas.

Construction of rural transport infrastructure is expensive because of, according to the local development plans, the country's earth surface made of sandy soils, rocks and small hills; hence, they lack in rural areas, where tracks and paths are the main ways. Only 29% of the transport network is made of feeder roads (SNTR, 2002); thus the majority of districts and villages are isolated. The district capital is often away from the national road and sometimes villages are away from the RC's capital where major schools and health facilities are usually located. This situation is so worrying that in many departments, whole villages migrate to cities.

Rural transport has always been neglected, with a constant deficit in transport services and degradation of existing infrastructure. Since the 1970s, the rural network without bitumen has seriously deteriorated because of lack of financial resources and hence, of maintenance. Despite their importance for circulation of people and goods, rural and feeder roads and tracks are not regularly maintained. Many comprise cuts in which grass grows. As a result, the needs of the rural populations for transport are not met and most of the population is not integrated into the mainstream of economic and social development.

3.2 THE NATIONAL STRATEGY OF TRANSPORT FOR RURAL AREAS

Several transport policies have been implemented¹³, none including strategies for rural areas¹⁴. In 1999, the orientations for the National Strategy for Rural Transport (NSRT) was defined in the Letter of Policy on Rural Decentralized Development¹⁵.

The strategy is a component of the Sectoral Transport Project 2 (1999-2004) and its objectives are to: (i) improve mobility and access in rural areas; (ii) improve planning, funding and maintenance

¹³ Strategie Nationale de Transport en Milieu Rural (SNTR)

¹⁴ PAST 1991, Programme Sectoriel des Transport2 1999

¹⁵ Gouvernement du Senegal, Strategie Nationale de Transport en Milieu Rural, Juin 2002

of transport infrastructure in rural areas; (iii) promote transport services for people and goods; (iv) promote techniques of low-cost construction and maintenance using small businesses and local resources; and (v) promote IMT (motorized and non motorized). The World Bank is the main partner with a funding of USD 5.0 million (CFA 3,000 million).

The strategy was endorsed by the Ministry of Equipment and Transport and the Ministry of Finance in September 2002, but is not yet implemented. At this point, diagnostic studies on inventory of the network and on mobility in rural areas are still going on.

The NSRT will include transport services, IMT and infrastructure (community roads) in rural areas. It will construct a network of 640 km of community roads. A national Committee for Rural Transport has been established to manage the program.

According to the NSRT, the State is responsible for the development and management of the transport network until rural communities can raise enough funds to take over. A specific construction program will be implemented to realize NRIP's aspirations. Isolated RCs and those cut off from the rest of the country have priority.

Criteria for a RC to be part of the network are: agricultural production, importance of the existing transport network, number of concerned population, density of traffic and how maintenance will be dealt with.

The communities are charged with construction of community roads within the territory of the RC including the roads and tracks for production that do not have a private character. The RC plans, implements and maintains the infrastructures.

Rural roads serving the activities of agricultural development societies involved with groundnut, cotton, rice, sugar cane and those used by producers and transporters are maintained and rehabilitated at the expense of these societies

The gender dimension in rural transport seems to have been taken into account. Research (Sarr, 1999) on gender and transport was carried out on behalf of the rural transport department to learn more about how gender discriminations can affect women's benefits. The findings of the research are integrated into the Sectoral Transport Project 2 documents.

The NSRT considers gender to be an important issue. The document reads: "The National Strategy for Rural Transport will be implemented following a global, integrated and participative process that cares about gender issues, local contexts, capacities of groups and individuals".

Moreover, the document affirms that "efforts will be made to promote transport services targeting women, at individual level and at the level of their organizations. Hence, representatives from the Ministry of Family and National Solidarity, and from the Federation of Women's will be present in different commissions in charge for planning, reflexion and implementation. Women and vulnerable groups will be part of. Task forces are set up by the Government for coordination".

However, an important policy issue may indicate that although the NSRT is gender sensitive, the distribution of the responsibilities among the institutions (State/Rural communities), which will provide funding for the establishment of the different roads may negatively impact in the meeting of women's needs for infrastructure. In the NSRT, the State will not allocate money for the funding of

community roads, which in practice, are more used by women than by men. The funding of the community roads is left to the RCs, whose budget clearly cannot afford it. Hence, no matter how gender sensitive the document can be, unawareness of the difference between women's and men's needs due to their different social and economic roles, women's access to better roads might be jeopardized.

The NSRT will seek to promote IMT (bicycles, carts and paddles) and adequate transport services. To achieve this end, customs taxes on imported IMT will be decreased and/or access to credit will be provided to users and makers. This objective, that is not included in NRIP, is important for the general population, but will have a positive impact on women who, as indicated in the next section, lack access to IMTs.

Management and implementation skills for the target groups will be reinforced. The labor force will come from the communities and small businesses will take up maintenance of the tracks.

3.3 PERCEIVED GENDER AND TRANSPORT PROBLEMS

Women face serious difficulties managing their domestic chores because of the long distance to tube wells, health care facilities, markets and fuel wood. They walk long distances, lack access to means of transport, pay high fares and are poor. This condition puts women's health and life at risk. The women's main cause of death is childbirth.

In Senegal, as everywhere in rural Third World areas, differences in men's and women's mobility are revealed by unequal opportunities to own means of transport and to pay fares, or by social prejudice. Men's higher purchasing power enables them to control carts, donkeys or horses and they refuse to put them at women's disposal, except if they can pay. Their economic power has enabled men to reduce their burden with the introduction of new transport technologies.

Women without means of transport commonly cannot afford fares because the isolation of villages that sometimes obliges the traveler to take several IMTs before reaching his/her destination. These obstacles hamper women's mobility more than men's.

Social prejudice prevents women from riding donkeys that are traditionally used for transport of goods and for children. None of the interviewed people were able to give a satisfactory explanation about why women are forbidden to use these animals known for their docility and endurance. It is not rare to see women transporting heavy loads alongside donkeys carrying a man or goods.

Access to Health Care Facilities

Health care facilities are identified as a women's need because of their reproductive role. All respondents complained about their unavailability because of distance.

I am 57. I was married when I reached 15 and had 12 children. My husband and two of my daughters passed last year. My husband died from malaria and one of my daughters from a pregnancy-related illness. She was 21 and was pregnant with her third child. She cannot attend the pregnancy monitoring visits because the health care centre is far and her husband forbade her to go to the health center on the ground that he cannot afford the bus fares and that the nurse is a man who, for religious reason should not look at her genitalia. I could not do anything because as mother I do not have any more rights on her. After her delivery she became very pale and could hardly stay erect. We put her on a cart to take her to the health centre of Kolda distant from around 13 kilometre. But she died before we reached the town.

Her younger sister was married at 12 and got pregnant. Although I made sure that she had the pregnancy monitored at the health care centre, she became sick at the 9th month and could not deliver the baby. We consulted a witch doctor who declared that she was bewitched. Later, as things worsened we took her to the health centre where we were told that she has to undergo a caesarean section and has to be taken to a hospital, but there is no ambulance.

We waited for hours before a driver who was passing took us to the hospital. When we arrived in the morning, the doctor was performing a surgery on another patient. My daughter died before he was finished”

Source: A female respondent from Kounkane

Though this statement is made by a woman of Kounkane the gender issues it emphasizes are relevant for any village in the country. It also helps understand why female respondents to focus groups discussions usually focus on the need for health care facilities. Table 2 shows the average distance women walk to access facilities they need mostly because of the gendered division of labor.

Table 2: Walking Distances to Selected Facilities

	< 5 km	< 5-14 km	15 km and plus
	Per cent of total		
Primary school	85	10	5
Village market	49	27	22
Weekly market	31	30	33
Shops	79	11	9
Maternal and Child Health Facility	53	35	12
Family Planning Facility	41	32	27

Source: ISIS, 1999¹⁶

¹⁶ Ministère de l’Economie, des Finances et du Plan. Direction de la Prévision et de la Statistique, Division des Statistiques Démographiques: Enquêtes Sénégalaises sur les Indicateurs de Santé, (ISIS), 1999

Access to Water

Senegal is in the Sahelian region where rainfalls are insufficient and cycles of drought frequent. Water is scarce. Urban areas suffer from lack of water, although the situation is worse in rural areas. In the 1980s and 1990s, tube wells were supplied in several villages, in the framework of integrating women into development programs, or for political reasons (eve of elections). Lack of maintenance and follow-up has left most of them out of order. In consequence, wells are still the main water source in rural areas, supplying 65% of households. Only 7% of households have a tap in the house and 17% collect water from a public tap. Many villages are 5-10 km from a tube well (UNICEF, 2000).

Lack of water has compelled the population of whole villages to migrate to nearest cities. A male respondent in Thilmakha said that the scarcity of water is threatening the very institution of marriage as more and more girls refuse to marry a man who lives in a landlocked village because access to water and to health care service would make their life a hell.

Such behavior in a society within which a woman earns a social position through marriage and motherhood reveals the seriousness of the issue and the ordeal women go through in meeting the family needs for water.

Fetching water is women's duty. Several hours a day, they head load containers of water, even when they are pregnant. Except when there is drought or the water source is very distant, men do not carry out this task and when they do, they use donkeys or wheelbarrows. Water is needed by women for their productive tasks: farming (individual or collective) and cattle breeding.

Access to Energy such as Fire Wood

This natural resource is declining because of drought, population pressure on natural woods and inefficient environmental policies. Wood collection for cooking is a women's responsibility which she also performs by walking long distances and head loading.

Access to credit and to IMT

Some women groups in urban areas have purchased a lorry as a productive investment. Many women's groups in rural areas mention their wish to invest in IMTs such as pirogues, carts and lorries. Animal carts, the most used mode of transport, have high purchase prices - about CFA 250 000 CFA (USD 400) - and considerable operating and maintenance costs. The majority of individual women and women's groups in rural areas cannot afford IMTs because access to formal and informal credit is still difficult, as they lack the required guarantees. Women's groups have some rotating credit systems, but the amounts are too small to cover the price of an IMT.

Trade

Trade plays a crucial role in rural women's strategies to earn cash. Many studies and in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in this research confirm the importance of trade in rural areas. Women face difficulties in carrying their production to markets. If means of transport are unavailable or delayed, their produce might be rotten. In some RCs such as Mbane where a lorry might be available, they are too big for the women's groups' production. Women's production is too small to fill a lorry but usually, no matter the weight that is loaded, the group must pay the same

price as for a full lorry. As a result, women end up renting carts and making several trips from the village to the nearest market where prices are lower.

Carts are the most available mode for transporting women's goods to markets. The fare is high compared to the level of women's income.

In Thilmakha a female trader who buys goods from Thies (the regional capital, less than 100 km away) complains that only two buses make daily round trips to Thies. Missing one of them compels the traveler to split the trip into several small trips which take longer, are more expensive and are exhausting because goods must be moved from one car to another.

In all sites women complained about the time lost in transport. For example, women in Mbane complain that they spend two hours in the bus to go to the nearest market, only 30 km away.

Security

In all sites, women raised the issue of security, mostly when they ride carts. Carts are overloaded with people and goods and the drivers are often unaware of road regulations. On sandy tracks, they easily lose balance and fall, causing injuries. The accidents are not reported because police stations are in district areas and carts owners are not insured. Travelers often ignore insurance. Night trips and those to take a sick person or a woman who is in labor to a health facility are the most dreaded, because of frequent accidents due to the darkness, the bad state of carts and the holes and pits.

4. THE RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

A 12-year program, NRIP¹⁷ is divided into 3 phases which started in 2000 and end in 2011 and is a component of the National Program on Decentralized Rural Development. It is funded by the World Bank, IFAD, the Senegalese State and the beneficiaries. It is among the Senegal Government/ World Bank program to reduce poverty¹⁸ and is *more a poverty alleviation program targeting rural areas than a transport one*. Its long term objectives are to contribute to reduction of poverty in rural areas, to improve living conditions of rural populations, to promote decentralized rural development and to promote good management of local issues. The program concentrates on building the capacities of collectivities to provide populations with services they themselves have identified. Another goal of the program is to assist the collectivity in planning and managing their own development programs, collecting funds and generating benefits.

NRIP started in 1998 with a preliminary 18-month phase in which five pilot villages¹⁹ were selected for studies and to test experiences from which learnt lessons will be used to draft and improve the manual of procedures. Although the implementing phase was scheduled to begin from 2001, the pilot phase is not yet completed due to delays in processing funds in the World Bank and the Ministry of Finance. The local development plans the manual of procedures are just completed and most RCs have not yet succeeded in mobilizing their financial contribution.

4.1 FUNDING

The project cost is met from loans from the World Bank and IFAD²⁰ and contributions of the Government of Senegal and beneficiaries. Total cost is USD 238.9 million, of which USD 151.7 million (63%) is met by the World Bank loan. Except for the Bank, funding from each party is available only for the first phase. The World Bank provides 63% of total funds - 66% for the first phase, 60% for the second and 65% for the third (Table 3).

¹⁷ Projet National d'Infrastructures Rurales (PNIR)

¹⁸ It is one among the poverty reduction and improvement of living conditions of the World Bank

¹⁹ Paoskoto, Mbane, Thilmakha, Kounkane, Dealy

²⁰ IFAD has no representation in Senegal. When it supports a project, it usually leaves the supervision component either to the State through the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry or as with NRIP, to the World Bank

Table 3: NRIP Funding

Source	2001-2004	2005-2009	2008-2012
	USD million		
World Bank	28.5	49.8	73.4
FIDA	7.5		
State	4.3		
Beneficiaries	2.6		
Total	42.9	83.0	238.9

Source: World Bank, 1999

Supervision and orientation of the NRIP is the responsibility of a Comité de Pilotage that is under the tutelage of the Prime Minister and comprises representatives from the public administration and civil society.

An autonomous CNC in the Ministry of Agriculture acts as the technical secretariat. CNC is in charge of management, coordination and implementation of the different components of the Project. Among its other duties, the CNC consolidates the work plans and annual budgets, sets up an independent system of follow up and evaluation and manages all financial and administrative issues.

Ministries involved in NRIP are the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry that is responsible for the community roads component and the Ministry of Home Affairs which, through the Direction des Collectivités Locales, directs activities in decentralized rural development.

CNC has regional coordination offices, with a regional coordinator whose role is to coordinate the activities within the region, assist the RCs and emplace a program of regular follow up and evaluation.

The RCs are in charge for proposing and implementing infrastructure projects with funding by the local investment fund (LIF)²¹ and community roads.

The Rural Council establishes a Management and Concertation Committee (MCC)²² which plays an important role in drafting the local development plan and the annual plan of investment and in assisting the RC with implementation of community infrastructure. All community organizations, the RC's members, NGOs in the RC and public services are members of the MCC.

²¹ Objective is to stimulate local growth through direct transfers of funds for the implementation of the RC's local development plans and annual program of investments. (see following page)

²² Comité de Concertation et de Gestion

4.2 COMPONENTS OF THE FIRST PHASE OF THE PROJECT

The first phase of the Project comprises four components: (i) support for decentralized rural development; (ii) creation of LIFs to fund community infrastructures; (iii) community roads program; and (iv) coordination, follow-up and evaluation. In the first phase, 90 targeted rural communities will have their capacities strengthened and basic infrastructure and community roads improved.

Support for Decentralized Rural Development

This component aims to support and strengthen the institutional, financial and human capacities of the targeted rural communities, through three sets of activities:

- **Development of the capacities of rural communities** to plan, implement, manage and maintain rural infrastructure, **strengthen the local capacities** in supporting management and planning of activities related to local development. NRIP will hire field operators (from NGOs or private business) whose task will be, through a participatory process, to train and assist RCs in drafting technical documents such as local development plans and annual investments plans and in defining a strategy for maintenance and management of infrastructure. NRIP provides the RCs with basic materials such as motorbikes, offices and means of communication.
- **Decentralization of the fiscal and financial management** to RCs and improvement of the flow of local resources.
- **Strengthening national capacities** such as the Conseil National pour le Development des Collectivites Locales (CNDCL) and the Association of the Presidents of Rural Communities and la Direction des Collectivites Locales (DCL) and provide them with support for conducting rural decentralization

Local Investment Fund

The second component of the first phase is the establishment of an LIF whose objective is to stimulate local growth through direct transfers of funds for implementation of the RCs' local development plans and annual program of investments. During the first phase of NRIP, LIF will fund basic and common infrastructures identified by the communities: e.g., health care units, delivery wards, schools, tube wells, hygiene.

LIF comprises two parts: a rural investment fund and a fund to support innovations, with 80% of the available funds for the former for basic infrastructures and 20% for the latter. Costs are shared between the LIF, the RCs and the beneficiaries. An RC applying for funding from the LIF must contribute 5% of the project cost from its own budget while the beneficiaries contribute 15% (either with labor or materials). Total amount of available funds in the LIF is USD 13.3 million.

Each community will receive around USD 70,000, according to its population and level of poverty. In the first phase, 60 RCs will be funded. The RC is responsible for hiring local enterprises to build infrastructure and for its management and maintenance. The RC establishes a Management and Maintenance Committee for the infrastructure.

The criteria for a project to receive funding from LIF are its:

- being identified as priority by the population;
- being recognized as a priority by the RC and being registered in the local development plan and approved by the Rural Council and built by the population;
- having the population's financial contribution already secured by the Rural Council;
- being of the type of infrastructure to be built in the framework of the NRIP ;
- being different to other infrastructure existing in the community; and
- having no negative impact on the environment.

Rural Community Roads Program

The third (rural community roads program) component aims at to open 60 isolated RCs targeted by the NRIP. This component is consistent with the National Strategy for Rural Transport that supports the construction of community roads linking villages within an RC to its capital.

The funding of the community roads obeys the criteria set to get funding from the LIF. Hence, the RCs must identify their needs, either normal or productive roads, according to their priorities. For an RC to receive funds for feeder roads, such activity must be among the priorities defined in the local development plan and the community must contribute 5% of the cost in cash or kind.

Construction of feeder roads will be funded by the State or by external resources. The State and RCs will be responsible for maintaining the feeder roads. Hence the Sectoral Transport Project, whose objective is to improve the network of community and feeder roads linking capital of rural communities, will be closely associated to this component. NRIP's annual work plans relative for this component will be forwarded to the Department for Rural Transport in the Ministry of Transport and will be used in the overall planning of the transport project.

Each RC will receive annual funding of USD 55,000. Any further allocation of funds is conditional on the quality of maintenance of the roads and tracks. The RC will benefit from a training session on investments costs and maintenance.

An official of NRIP, who questioned the criteria set to determine the allocation to the RCs, described this amount is "ridiculously" low to establish and maintain roads and do it every year. Because this third component is likely not to be achieved with such little funding, the World Bank is promoting a strategy called "critical points" that aims to remove obstacles or repair sections that prevent people going from point A to point B.

There is a hot debate about this strategy, including in the media. Many in sites visited said they do not agree with the "critical points" strategy. They say it is roads they want, period. According to the Bank's officer in charge for NRIP, the populations have adopted this "new" position since NRIP has been broadcasting advertisements on television to promote the program. The advertisements show only tarred and large roads: exactly what the populations now dream to obtain from the project.

The NRIP will build community roads, but does not mention anything about providing the communities with transport services or other opportunities. Available, affordable and safe transport services were recurrent needs expressed by women who took part in the in-depth interviews and focus groups discussions.

The private sector will be favored in implementation of the project. HIMO (Haute Intensité de Main d'oeuvre) strategy will be used for standard maintenance. Local associations and economic interest groups will be called on.

Coordination, Follow up and Evaluation

The fourth component will create mechanisms for the coordination, follow up and evaluation of the project.

4.3 NEXT PHASES

Phase II (2005-2009): Expansion Phase

In this phase, the NRIP will give institutional support to 70% of RCs. The remaining 30% will be funded by other donors. In this phase, no more community roads will be built, all funding going to rural infrastructure.

Phase III (2008-2012) Consolidation Phase

Institutional reforms aiming to strengthen the capacities of RC will be consolidated.

4.4 LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NRIP

After several years of planning and two years of implementation, NRIP's level of realization is still quite low. Activities that have so far been implemented are the following:

Training

The presidents and two other local stakeholders in 54 out of 90 targeted RCs have been trained in issues such as tendering and tube well maintenance. Local operators whose role is to assist the population also provide sensitization talks about planning and other "relevant" issues.

Infrastructure

Generally speaking, 13 RCs received funding from the LIF to build or rehabilitate social infrastructure. In sites where this study was conducted, public water taps and a place to park animals (Mbane), rehabilitation of two health units and a cereal storage (Paoskoto), a health unit and a market (Dealy) and a class for pupils and a well cattle (Kounkane) were established.

5. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN OUTCOMES

As the project has just started, it is not yet possible to identify and analyze its impacts on men and women. Nevertheless the analysis of intended impacts of the project on male and female beneficiaries can be carried out from the project documents and answers by respondents to focus group discussions and interviews. Analyses of secondary and primary data suggest that the project seems unable to transform the power relations within the family and within the community. This will be illuminated by a gendered analysis of NRIP as an institution and of its participatory approach.

5.1 THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Lack of Representation of Women: At National Level

The Ministry of Family, Social Affairs and National Solidarity which is responsible for the promotion of women is not represented among the ministries involved in the NRIP. It should be noted that the situation might be the same for the National Strategy on Transport in Rural Areas Program whose documents mention that the Ministry of Family, Social Affairs and National Solidarity and the Federation of Women's Groups will sit in the project's Management Committee. Asked about this, a high ranking officer confessed that the Ministry has never been contacted in this regard.

In NRIP itself, CNC which, at national level manages, coordinates and implements the project, comprises no women in its direction. At region level only 2 out of 9 Regional Coordinators hired by NRIP to coordinate the project are women.

Knowledge of gender approaches is weak. In 2000, a training course on gender and transport and participatory approaches was held on behalf of NRIP's management. Several NRIP managers and regional coordinators opined that "the consultants who provided the training were not competent" and agree that gender as an approach to analyze, understand and transform power relations within the society is not yet understood.

The gender approach that is advised in all documents²³ used to identify the needs, plan the activities and propose a budget is merely "integrating women into development", because the focus is on only women's practical needs such as tube wells, health units or income generating activities. As shown in the following section, the low number of women in decision making structures (Rural Council and NRIP's committees) constitutes an obstacle to control over available resources.

Lack of Representation of Women: At Community Level

At the community level, none of the operators whose role is to assist the RC is a woman. The operator in Paoskoto said that, although attention to gender issues was among the terms of reference for selected NGOs hired to assist the RCs in drafting their local development and annual investments plans and to act as operators, knowledge of gender as an approach was not required.

²³ World Bank's Document d'Evaluation concernant un Credit de 28, 5 millions de dollars pour le PNIR, the Local Plans of Development, Annual Investment Plans, and PNIR's Manual of Procedures

The same person said that operators were not interviewed before being hired; their files only were examined and emphasis put on their capacities to deal with rural issues.

5.2 THE PROJECT'S PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

Among good practices in the NRIP, the participatory approach is worth being cited, although there is a need to challenge it through gender lenses.

Documents drafted by the World Bank and NRIP²⁴ are aware that the community is not a homogenous entity. Women, marginalized and vulnerable groups are mentioned as participants and beneficiaries of the project. Women “are encouraged to participate to the project so as it positively impacts their income, improve their access to markets, to health and education services. Better quality infrastructures and good governance will promote women’s and youth’s participation to the meetings in the villages and in the communities. Thanks to their representation to Coordination Committees, these two groups will be able to express their opinion and needs to be catered for within the priority investments to be funded by LIF, and also participate to the management and maintenance of the infrastructure” (World Bank, 1999).

All groups are supposed to participate in project planning and implementation through several committees set up in the framework of the NRIP: the Committee for Tendering, the Committee for the LIF/Micro Projects, Income Generating Project Committee, The Community Roads Committee, and Information, Training and Sensitization Committee. Additional committees (such as for managing health units or tube wells) can be created, should the RC feel the need for it. The women and men who answered in-depth interviews and took part in focus groups discussions said that all groups in the community participated in social audits aiming to identify the needs and priorities to be met by the NRIP.

Women recognized that they attended various meetings during the preparatory phase and have selected among them representatives to the different committees in charge for the implementation, in particular the Coordination and Management Committee which is to draft the Local Plan of Development and the Annual Plan of Investment.

5.3 PARTICIPATION VS GENDER, CLASS, AGE AND CAST INEQUALITIES

In this paper, participation is conceptualized as an approach that focuses on endogenous definition of priorities, on reliance on local resources and on education that promotes structural transformations of relations between a periphery and a center (such as the cities and rural areas, or rich and poor nations) or between genders. Another important element in participation is a sense of ownership of the outcomes by target groups.

In NRIP’s vision, the most important indicator of women’s participation is their presence; therefore, efforts were made to ensure they attended meetings, that some were nominated in committees and attended a few training sessions. But the meetings did not address pre-existing inequalities that

²⁴ World Bank: Document d’Evaluation concernant un crédit d’un montant équivalent à 28,5 millions de dollars à la République du Sénégal pour un Projet National d’Infrastructures Rurales à l’Appui de la Première Phase du Programme National d’Infrastructures Rurales. 20 Décembre 1999
République du Sénégal. Ministère de l’Agriculture, Projet d’Infrastructures Rurales du Senegal : Manuel De Procedures. Fevrier 2003

might undermine the impact of the project on women such as power decision-making cast²⁵, class and age; nor were enabling conditions provided for women (and men) to overcome them.

Weak Presence of Women in Power Decision-Making Structures

In NRIP as well as in other decision making structures, the number of women is still low. One reason why it is so is that there is a tacit but gendered traditional rule in power decision-making spheres where all groups except for men are represented by only one individual who is considered as the “voice” of the group” no matter its weight (how many members or how many organizations it represents). NRIP made no effort to break this rule and in its structures within which decisions interesting the local development of the community are debated, the whole female community is represented by only one individual. Hence women are still marginalized even if a “participatory approach” is promoted. The situation may be worse when the woman who represents the group is not enough strong and articulate to voice up women’s interests.

Another problem is that there are too many committees, and the participation in them takes a lot of time. Women may not participate because it might worsen their workload or create conflicts with their husbands or in-laws.

Types of Positions for Women in NRIP’s Committees

Women are mostly nominated in committees dealing with issues in relation to their social role, in particular the committees on income generating activities or micro projects and not in those dealing with issues considered as more suitable to men such as tendering. This means that their needs might not be properly addressed in other committees, or that they will not be in position to push women’s enterprises in tendering procedures.

Vertical Top/down Structure of Women’s Groups and Power Relations

There are inequalities in women’s groups, as in any social structures in a unequal society. Many women who responded to in-depth interviews or focus group discussions said that it is the Board members who represent groups who usually attend meetings or training sessions and get information in relation to the project. Most fail to share this information with the members. Many factors, including lack of time, explain this situation. As a result, all women do not have the same amount of information about the project and expected benefits. Young women and women from low casts are the most marginalized.

Participatory Approach in Definition of Needs and Priorities

LIF procedures require the communities to define themselves the priorities to be funded by NRIP. Here also, the participatory approach can be challenged, when one looks at the small number of

²⁵ The Senegalese society is hierarchically organized in inferior and superior casts. In the past, the cast to which an individual belonged used to determine his/her social rank and functions. Inferior casts used to be specialized in occupations related to the transformation of leather, metal, weaving, hairdressing, pottery, music, dance and conservation of oral history. Nobles and freemen and freewomen belonged to superior casts. Cast inferiority or superiority is hereditary, and within the system, endogamy is the rule. Today, although the labor specialization is slowly disappearing, the prejudice against casts that are considered as inferior and endogamy still persist.. Cast and class may not match. A poor person may belong to the noble cast, while a wealthy one may belong to an inferior cast superior

women in committees, the rule of one voice for all women and the type of committees they are in. The criteria set by NRIP for a project to be funded may also be questioned, because what women consider as a priority may not be considered so by men and even within the group of women, priorities may differ according to class and age.

As said earlier, because of gender biases, most policies and projects consider that women's needs are mainly those related to their domestic and reproductive roles. Examination of women's needs that will be met by NRIP follow the same trend, as is proved by already implemented infrastructure such as rehabilitation of health units and establishment of maternity wards, small local markets and public taps. It is true that in establishing this infrastructure, as well as other scheduled in the NRIP, women's domestic burden will be alleviated and they will gain access to some resources. To balance the gender inequalities within the communities, NRIP should take other actions aiming at empowering women for more control over resources.

5.4 GENDER AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Although unavailability of training opportunities and illiteracy are general and important issues in rural communities, women are the most concerned as revealed by data provided in the section on gender issues in Senegal.

NRIP is aware of these insufficiencies and aims at providing the RCs with enabling conditions. With the participative approach, rural councils and members of the Concertation and Management Committee will receive some training to allow them to correctly carry on tasks expected from them. As far as women are concerned, several remaining gender issues might impair the benefits they expect to obtain from the training sessions.

The profile of trainees. As only women's groups' board members are selected to attend training, the large majority of women are likely not to be trained. As board members do not share the outputs, women's benefits from the training are likely to be small.

The venue. Training is usually organized at regional level or in the capital of the district and women might not have time to attend or could be prevented by husbands or in-laws.

The language. An important obstacle for women to benefit fully from the training sessions is the use of training material written in French, whereas the majority of women are illiterate. One NRIP's Regional Coordinator said that, at the end of the training day, efforts are made by the trainer to explain to female participants sections they did not understand. Women are unlikely to derive the same benefit as men from the training.

The mixed participation: Because of the way women are socialized, they might feel uncomfortable when attending mixed sessions. Hence, they might not fully participate.

The type of training women are encouraged to attend. Women's groups are rarely encouraged to attend training on technical issues such as tendering, project planning and management. They are more likely to receive training in conformity with their traditional roles such as gardening or tie and dye. Such training cannot provide women with empowering capacities to gain knowledge that enables them to meet their strategic needs and be more present in decision-making structures.

No gender training scheduled. According to interviews of NRIP officers and secondary sources, training will focus on tendering procedures, financial management and accounting. No gender training for operators or for members of Committees is scheduled.

5.5 MAINTENANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Documents mention that, to ensure sustainability for rehabilitation and maintenance of rural infrastructure, villages committees comprising the beneficiaries will be established to construct and maintain community roads. The committees will be responsible for tax collection and mobilization of labor-oriented contributions. How women will be involved is not clear. The documents (World Bank 1999, NRIP, 2003) and interviews indicate that the infrastructure will be implemented by “local stakeholders”, but there is no indication on how women will be involved and if so, whether they will receive additional training to improve their skills, in particular technical skills and whether they will be allocated equipment needed to carry out the tasks, or credit to purchase it.

Available budgets (World Bank, NRIP documents and Local Development Plans and Annual Investments Plans) are not disaggregated. Budgets are set as if all groups will benefit the same way. Therefore it is not possible to foresee what amount of money will be invested in activities aimed at women. There is no special budget to update women or a vulnerable group by training or special activity, neither is special credit made available.

5.6 EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP

The NRIP’s CNC includes an evaluation expert whose role is to introduce a data collection system aiming to define achievement indicators for each project component. But, as he recognized, his training in gender is insufficient to allow him to propose gendered indicators. World Bank documents (World Bank 1999) show that evaluations will be performed every two years to assess the impact of the activities on beneficiaries’ daily lives, in particular on vulnerable groups. Gender indicators are not mentioned and neither is a gender audit.

6. CONCLUSIONS

NRIP takes place in a national context of marginalization of women from power spheres and processes in decision-making and in an international context of globalization and poverty. Women have little access to transport and other services that have direct impact on their livelihoods, particularly when they are poor, as it is the case in the communities targeted by NRIP. Such a context affects women's possibility to benefit from the project the same way as men. In addition, insufficiency in gender commitment from the project and donors may result in only women's practical needs being met, whereas it has been revealed in an evaluation of women's integration into development projects made before the mainstreaming of the gender approach that it cannot make a difference in their lives.

In NRIP, even if women are more visible and their needs more catered for, their marginalization in decision-making structures and training opportunities impair the benefits from the project they deserve. The following actions should be taken to support women's promotion within the NRIP program:

- **Strengthening of gender mainstreaming at institutional level**, in involving the Ministry of Family and National Solidarity and women's groups and associations.
- **Gender training** for NRIP's management at all levels and for the operators and for all members of committees at the community level.
- **End the rule of "one voice" to represent all women** living in a community, by implementing a parity system in all committees, with the same number of men and women. Because women are not favored in electoral processes, members of the committees should be nominated.
- **Special training for women** to prepare them to face successfully new responsibilities:
 - To empower rural women to challenge the rule set by political parties of having men on top of lists in the election of Rural Council Members, organize training on **political issues** such as the decentralization policies and education to citizenship with the support of women's associations specializing in leadership training. In addition, information on national policies about poverty alleviation and rural transport programs should be provided and updated when needed.
 - **Technical training** on issues such as tendering, project management and management of infrastructure.
- Because of power relations within the communities, **women should be trained separately from men**.
- **Improve women's access to credit** to improve their access to IMT to ameliorate their mobility, or as economic investments.

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