

Senegal Fresh from the Field

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God we praise you for David & Jessica! #Pray for their work in adolescent health #PrayMonday
bit.ly/1USSpyV



21 Jun

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#Pray that Sarata can become a nurses aide, like she dreams
bit.ly/21cD2Eb #ChangingtheStory
#PrayMonday

Greetings from Senegal!

This week our partner CECS holds its second training of peer-educators. Their sixteen Adolescent Health groups are halfway through the program. These groups are located in various towns and villages in Senegal, all with beautiful names like Thiadiaye, Ngoyene, and Saint Louis.

A few weeks ago our program assistant, Gedeon Weber, visited several CECS groups to interview participants and parents. We wanted to know what parents and participants thought of the program, its topics and approach, and whether they had seen changes as a result of their participation. Here are some reactions:

Awa Guaye, Thiadiaye

I love this program because I have learned things I did not know before. I was not a very good student in school and abandoned it early on, when my mother fell ill. My grandmother used to say that if she would let us go outside, we would run wild, so we had to stay inside. But when peer-educator Ndéye Khady explained the program to her, she allowed me and my sister to participate.

Abdou Seye, Makatoubé

I had asked the peer-educator to talk to my parents about the goals of the Adolescent Health Program because I would need their permission to participate. He did so, and my parents think it is a good program. There are three guys in our group who used to tease people who were ill, but their attitude changed, thanks to the sessions on stigmatization and discrimination.

Bouso Barry, Makatoubé

What I learned about early pregnancy and STI's gave me more knowledge about how to deal with boys; I now avoid them. I ex-



Peer-educators of Dakar are thanked for their hard work.

plained methods of family planning to a number of adult women in the village, in the way it was taught by our peer-educator.

Mame Ndiaye, SorDaga

It is an interesting program that makes you aware of many things. It teaches us topics that are useful in our lives and which we can share with our friends. It is he who loves you who guides you to the right path. My parents also say it is a good program, and I shared with them things I'd learned about sexuality, education, and life. I once told them that we should let a girl marry a man she loves and not force her to marry someone she does not love. They told me that that is correct.

Fatoumata Sy, SorDaga

My parents say this is a good program. I share with them everything I learn. We have talked about AIDS, good behavior, growth of a girl, transmission of diseases, having a dream, and the menstrual cycle. They were very interested and have asked me to continue participating in the meetings.

When I participated in the yearly meeting of World Renew's West Africa Ministry Team last month, I heard again about how the program has an impact on other countries as well. We have been sharing our cur-

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riculum with World Renew partners working in Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Bangladesh. Because the cultural contexts are different, their programs function differently from the one in Senegal, but the needs of adolescents and their parents are very similar. It is encouraging to know that our work for a relatively small group of Senegalese adolescents pays off elsewhere as well.

In that vein, our volunteers David and Jessica Oldenburger are working on reviewing the curriculum. Some parts of it had gotten quite old, and Senegal and other developing countries are changing at a fast pace. We are trying to make the lessons more interactive (which is hard when participants can't read or write) and easier to use for peer-educators in environments where they cannot benefit from much training from our partner.



Participants at a community event. Here they present what they have learned to their families and community.

Joys and Challenges

- Volunteers David and Jessica Oldenburger are working with a group of SLDS educators on reviewing the curriculum. The work is progressing well; we hope the result will be useful to SLDS and other programs and countries.
- This past month the colleagues from the West Africa Ministry Team were in Senegal for our yearly team meeting. It was encouraging to be able to exchange experiences and make decisions about our work together.
- With our partners we are preparing changes to our programs for next year, when the government of Canada matching funds will end.
- The rainy season is about to start in Senegal. Farmers are praying for enough rain for plentiful harvests while poor city-dwellers fear for their homes and neighborhood infrastructure.

See also <http://volunteerblog.worldrenew.net/davidandjessica> for updates from Senegal volunteers David and Jessica Oldenburger.

CECS: *Comité Evangélique de Coordination pour la Santé (Evangelical Coordinating Committee for Health) is an association of the 3 protestant denominations in Senegal, put in place through World Renew consultation and support. The association works with local communities that do not yet have the capacity to manage HIV & AIDS, malaria, adolescent health and other health programming.*

SLDS: *Services Luthériens pour le Développement au Sénégal (Lutheran Development Services of Senegal) was formerly known as EELS: Église Évangélique Luthérienne du Sénégal (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Senegal)*