



# SUCCESS STORY

## MCGOVERN-DOLE FOOD FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

LOCATION: SENEGAL

DURATION: 2018-2022

FUNDED BY: USDA

### A SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM DEVELOPS STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

Literacy is the foundation of lifelong learning and is critical for social and human development (UNESCO, 2015). It unlocks the door to information and enables exchanges that can be essential for survival and improved livelihood. Improving students' reading and writing skills is one of the most important priorities for the Government of Senegal's Basic Education Curriculum.

Yet, due to the lack of teacher training in pedagogical education, coupled with high dropout rate, student reading test performance and literacy rates have suffered in Senegal. Access to and the availability of supplementary materials including textbooks has further exacerbated this difficulty. Senegal's nation-wide *All Children Reading* project is making advances in basic education by targeting grades 1-3 with increased resources. However, this still leaves out nearly 50% of Senegal's elementary schools.

Leveraging the efforts of *All Children Reading* and complementing Counterpart International's school feeding program in Saint-Louis, Senegal, Counterpart's *Sukaabe Janngo* project is working to address the priorities of Senegal's Ministry of National Education (MEN). With funding from USDA, Counterpart's local partner, Associates in Research and Education for Development (ARED), produced training materials to improve the quality of literacy instruction and teacher effectiveness. The training materials includes a practical guide that provides tools to teachers and explains concrete methods of implementing effective reading lessons and assignments to students.

So far, ARED's approach has involved cascade training for 17 inspectors, 128 school directors, and 220 elementary school teachers, on the use of this tool and the accompanying training module. After the incorporation of the new guides, teachers were able to apply these methodologies and implement a writing project in 220 trial classes.

The methodology provided teachers with a clear guidance for pedagogic practices by highlighting the various steps involved in the process. One such approach involved the use of writing journals in the trial classes, which improved student writing by inspiring their desire to create. *"The trial tested in the pilot classes allowed students to write at least once a week in their journals,"* noted Omar Sarr, teacher at Diami Galo elementary school in Pété. The use of writing journals in classes also increased student writing frequency. In two months, classes that incorporated writing journals produced at least eight writing samples compared to classes that did not, which only produced two.



Classroom tools and pedagogical practices also revealed that all the students involved in the project now own a writing journal. *"Since I started implementing the training received on the writing project, my students are more successful in writing texts, and I am more comfortable with executing lessons,"* said Madame Khady Fall, CE2 teacher at Ndioum elementary school.

This intervention has also encouraged teachers who were not initially involved in the project to request participation, showing potential programmatic scale and community benefit. Capacity building is the cornerstone of *Sukaabe Janngo* literacy activities and will sustain positive outcomes in improved literacy beyond the life of project.

*Sukaabe Janngo McGovern-Dole Food for Education is a four-year project funded by USDA and implemented by Counterpart International in partnership with Save the Children and ARED.*



## IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

