



Senegal Deep Dive Report

Getting to parity: Senegal's Journey
Towards Closing the Gender Gap

March 2022

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| AJS | Senegalese Association of Lawyers |
| AU | African Union |
| CCIEF | Coordination Framework for Interventions on Girls' Education |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CENAF | National Support and Training Centers for Women |
| CFJ | Judicial Training Center |
| CNDN | National Council of Nutrition Development |
| COSEF | Senegalese Council of Women |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| DEEG | Department of Equity and Gender Equality |
| DER/FJ | General Delegation for Youth and Women's Rapid Entrepreneurship |
| DPPD | Multi-year Expenditure Planning Documents |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| EIG | Economic Interest Grouping |
| ENO | Open Digital Spaces |
| GBV | Gender-Based Violence |
| GESTES | Gender and Societies Study and Research Group |
| GII | Gender Inequality Index |
| GPS | Gender Parity Score |
| HCD | Human Capital Development |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technologies |
| LPA | Law on Absolute Parity |
| MMR | Maternal mortality ratio |
| MSME | Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises |
| ONP | National Observatory for Parity |
| PAEF | Project to Support Female Education |
| PALAM | Literacy and Trade Apprenticeship Program to Fight Poverty |
| PAQUET | Quality, Equity and Transparency Improvement Program |
| PNEBJA-TIC | National Basic Education Program for illiterate youth and adults based on ICT |
| SNEEG | National Strategy for Gender Equity and Equality |
| SNPE | National Child Protection Strategy |
| STEM | Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics |
| TFP | Technical and Financial Partners |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UVS | Virtual University of Senegal |
| WIC | Women's Investment Club |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Senegal has significantly improved women's access to basic services and facilitated their access to political office. Substantial investments in the training and mobilizing of health professionals and construction of health facilities have paid off. The widespread use of modern family planning methods have resulted in a declining maternal mortality rate from 346 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015 to 323 in 2020 and the fertility rate has decreased from 4.86 births per woman in 2015 to 4.56 in 2019. Additionally, the construction of numerous schools closer to communities and the promotion of girls' education by the government have fully closed the primary school gender gap since 2007 and in secondary school since 2014. Additionally, young women's enrolment in tertiary school has increased rapidly from 0.59 in 2016 to 0.78 in 2020. Furthermore, the introduction of the law on absolute gender parity in elected office resulted in 43% of seats in the National Assembly being held by women, a record across ECOWAS member states. This progress has empowered Senegalese women and girls by granting them more opportunities to contribute to the country's growth and more direct influence in policymaking.

However, persistent gender-biased social norms prevent women from taking full advantage of these opportunities. Although relatively healthier, better educated, and better represented politically, harmful practices such as child marriage are still prevalent in Senegal with 30.5% of girls married under 18. Additionally, Women on average still have less access to necessary resources to transform the human capital into productive livelihoods. The time poverty of women who are traditionally constrained to household chores and childcare keeps Senegal's gender parity score in labor force participation around 0.6, the lowest in ECOWAS. Only 30% of Senegalese women have an account in a financial institution, compared to 38.3% of their male counterparts, making them more financially excluded. Additionally, persistent customary inheritance practices prevent women from inheriting land or other assets, which makes it difficult for them to collateralize their loans with banks as often required. These factors lead to gender inequalities in business ownership and income; Senegalese women earn on average only half the estimated income of Senegalese men resulting in a gender parity score of 0.49.

While Senegal has developed some successful interventions to close the gender parity gap, additional efforts will be required to achieve full parity by 2030. Senegal's experience in its fight for gender parity has provided lessons that can be used in future initiatives throughout ECOWAS. Additionally, recommendations emerge to overcome remaining barriers to greater parity such as (i) to increase the acceptance of awareness-raising messages by conservative communities; (ii) the development of incentive mechanisms to encourage women and girl's access to services and opportunities; (iii) capacity building for women and public institutions to improve the execution of gender parity initiatives; and (iv) changes in the legal framework to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

This report is positioned as one of six country reports within the overall study assessing ECOWAS member states gender parity performance, through their gender parity scores (GPS) on key indicators across education, health, economic participation and political empowerment dimensions. The report is primarily based on data analysis used to complete a modeling exercise to quantify the economic impact of closing the parity gap in West Africa. Detailed results from the modeling scenarios will be outlined in the final regional report. This country report includes current GPS performance comparison at the country, cluster and regional levels based on indicators projections through 2020. Additionally, the report is complemented by stakeholder interviews conducted in Senegal to understand persistent barriers to greater gender parity, identify lessons learned and formulate recommendations to close the parity gap.

A. CONTEXT

A1. Landscape analysis

Senegal has a young, ethnically diverse and mostly female population. In 2020, the country's total population was estimated at 16.74 million people, of which 51.20% are women and 42.59% are under the age of 15.¹ Senegal's population is ethnically diverse; however, five ethnic groups make up over 90% of the population, namely the Wolofs (37.1%), the Pulars (26.2%), the Serers (17%), the Mandinkas (5.6%), and the Jolas (4.5%). Most of the country's population is Muslim (95.9%).²

The country is considered one of the most politically stable in Africa. Since Senegal opted for a full multiparty system in 1981, the country has experienced two peaceful political transitions. The first democratic transition occurred in 2000, ending the 40-year rule of the socialist party. The second transition occurred in 2012, with the election of the current president, Macky Sall. There has never been a coup d'état in Senegal, which reflects the maturity of Senegal's democratic institutions and electoral processes.

Senegal's economy remained resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic despite restrictive measures at both the national and international level. Although Senegal's annual GDP growth dropped to 4.4% in 2019 and to 1.5% in 2020 after five consecutive years of growth above 6% per year from 2014 to 2018, it managed to avoid a negative growth, in a context of global recession of -3.29% in 2020.³ The decrease in Senegalese economic growth is due to a slowdown in tourism (-17.0%), transport (-8.8%), and trade (-0.6%) following the restrictive measures to contain COVID-19. The crisis hit fiscal positions from both sides. Tax revenue fell and health spending rose, resulting in a deterioration of the fiscal deficit to 6.0% of GDP in 2020 from an average of 3.7% in 2018-19. Growth is expected to rebound to 5.1% in 2021 and 6.0% in 2022, driven by the resumption of public investments and the hydrocarbon sector in tandem with the resumption of global growth.⁴

Although the government and civil society consistently promote equality between women and men, gender inequalities remain a reality. The Senegalese Constitution encourages gender equality, which recognizes "equal access of women and men to mandates and functions". Additionally, the creation of a ministry dedicated to gender, the establishment of the National Observatory for Parity (ONP) in charge of monitoring parity in public policies, the definition of a national strategy for gender equity and equality (SNEEG), have demonstrated an institutional commitment to advancing gender equality. Nevertheless, the country's Gender Inequality Index (GII) remains high with a value of 0.533, ranking it 130th out of 162 countries in 2019.⁵ Therefore despite many efforts, Senegal is one of the least gender equal countries in the world and still has a long way to go to achieve full parity.

¹ World Bank, Database, 2020

² CIA world factbook, 2022

³ World Bank, Database, 2020

⁴ African Development Bank, 2021

⁵ Human Development Report 2020, UNDP

A2. Objectives of the country deep dive

This deep dive analysis aims to provide an overview of Senegal's gender parity performance, identify key interventions to close the gap, and ultimately drive economic growth. The study will seek to identify underlying drivers of gender inequalities and binding constraints preventing further progress in Senegal. While not an exhaustive list, this report is based on a set of selected gender indicators to consistently track the country's gender parity performance over time. Additionally, gender-focused recommendations to address remaining constraints to closing the parity gap will then be formulated.

The ECOWAS region could generate up to \$105B by fully closing the gender gap by 2030

One of the study's key objectives is to assess the impact of achieving gender parity on the ECOWAS region's economy. A scenario analysis tested the hypothesis that the region is incurring an economic and societal loss by not reaching full gender parity. This best-case scenario measures the economic impact of reaching full parity in the ECOWAS region. Using the region's 2020 GDP as a baseline, the projected regional GDP value was estimated under the assumption that all Member States gender parity scores for the indicators selected for this study reach full parity (increase to 1).

Reaching full gender parity in education and workforce participation were determined to have the most significant impact on ECOWAS' GDP growth. Literacy rate (+1.53%), primary school enrollment rate (+1.54%), secondary school enrollment rate (+1.44%), tertiary school enrollment rate (+1.09%), and labor force participation (+1.62%). This finding implies that to optimize the economic impact of gender parity interventions, priority should be given to girls' education, from primary to tertiary education, and to helping women enter the labor force. These gender-related interventions will most likely have the highest return on investment.

While health and political empowerment indicators were not found to have a direct impact on the region's GDP growth, they contribute to women's ability to thrive both at school and in the workplace. Greater gender parity in health service provision and political positions were not found to have a direct impact on ECOWAS GDP growth. However, these indicators nonetheless showed a correlation with the five significant indicators mentioned above. For instance, increasing young women tertiary school enrolment results in the higher likelihood of more women holding ministerial positions across the region, while improvements in literacy rates can significantly improve women's maternal mortality ratio.

Senegal is on track to reap the economic benefits of greater gender parity. The country has already closed the gender parity gap in primary and secondary education and has improved young women tertiary enrolment rates. However, additional efforts will be required for Senegal to close the gender gap both in literacy rates and labor force participation by 2030.

B. THE CURRENT STATE

B1. Gender Parity Performance Overview

Senegal has made varying degrees of progress in recent years in terms of gender parity. While the country has done particularly well in girls' education and women's political participation, more needs to be done in women's health and labor force participation.

In the area of women's health and nutrition, Senegal has achieved mixed results overall, making great strides in improving women's access to sexual and reproductive health on the one hand, but underperforming in eradicating maternal and child malnutrition and harmful practices on girls and women on the other. Child marriage remains prevalent with 30.5% of girls married before 18 years old.

Senegal has made the most remarkable progress by improving girls' education, fully closing the gap in primary and secondary school enrolment as 115 girls attend primary school for every 100 boys, and 116 girls attend secondary school for every 100 boys. The country is also on track to improving the gender gap in tertiary education, with a GPS of 0.78 ranking as a top performer in the region. However, the country has not made much progress on female literacy rate and labor force participation.

Senegal remains far from improving support to women entrepreneurs and women's financial inclusion. Financial services offered on the market are often poorly tailored to women's needs, and they face many binding constraints such as limited access to collateral, or gender-biased norms and stereotypes discouraging them from starting or expanding their businesses.

While Senegal has not yet reached full parity in political involvement, the country can be hailed as a model for the ECOWAS region. Through its 2010 law on absolute parity, the country managed to elect 43% of women in the National Assembly, which is a regional record. However, this achievement has not been replicated at all levels of the country's political landscape, with women still representing only 21.87% of cabinet ministers.

Although more needs to be done to build on Senegal's progress, the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened further progress on gender parity. The pandemic induced shutdowns made it more difficult for women to access reproductive and maternal health services, increasing their exposure to gender-based violence (GBV), threatening the progress made in girls' education, and reducing women's economic opportunities.

B2. Health & Nutrition

Senegal has achieved mixed results in terms of improving women's health and nutrition outcomes.

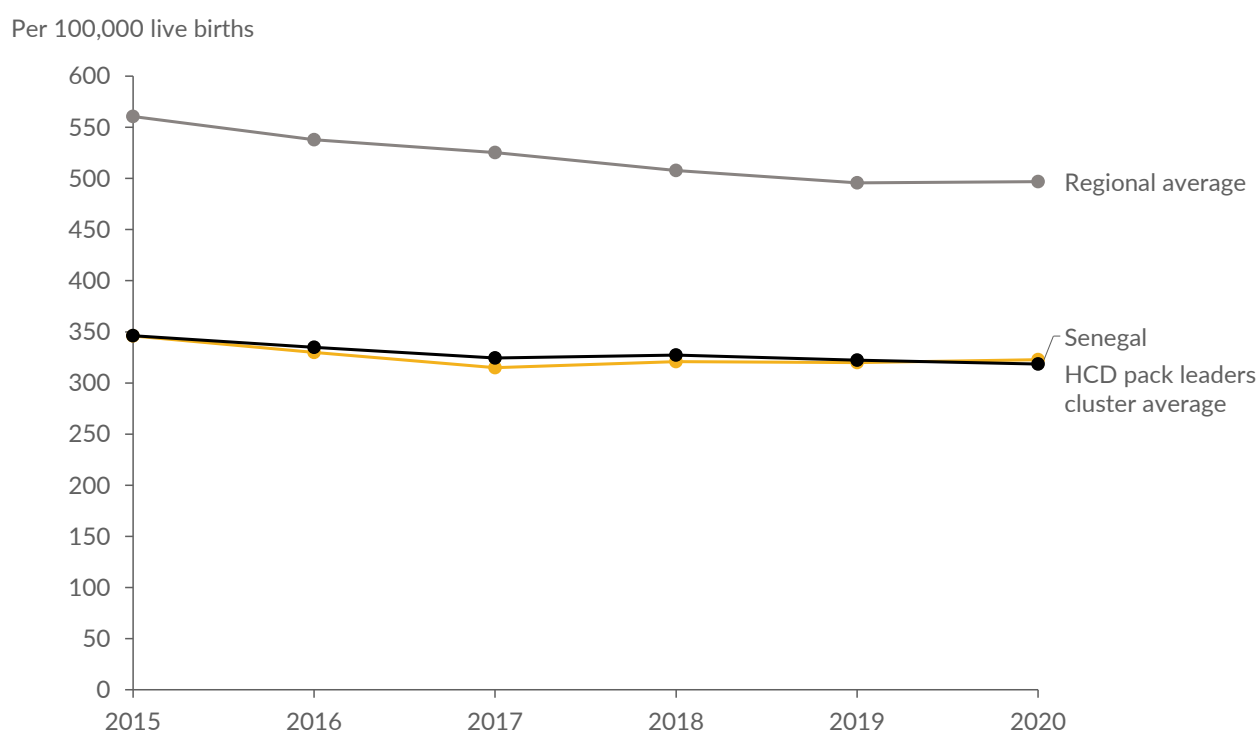
On the one hand, the country has made great strides in improving women's access to sexual and reproductive health over the last 5 years: by improving women's access to prenatal and natal care and expanding access to modern family planning methods. Senegal has succeeded in reducing its maternal mortality and fertility rates. While on the other hand, Senegal's performance remains low in eradicating food insecurity, which particularly affects mothers and children; in the country, chronic child malnutrition and stunting is prevalent mainly because of poor maternal nutrition and early

pregnancies. The prevalence of stunting in children under 5 years old slightly increased over the last 5 years, especially among girls, despite the numerous plans and programs to fight against child malnutrition from the government and the technical and financial partners (TFP). Furthermore, Senegal has demonstrated sustained commitment to the protection of women's and children's rights through the fights to eliminate child marriage and GBV.

Sexual, reproductive, and maternal health

Improved access to maternal healthcare has enabled Senegal to reduce its maternal mortality over the last 5 years. Out of 100,000 Senegalese women giving birth, 323 die in childbirth, down from 346 deaths in 2015. This number remains below the regional average of 496.78 women. Senegal also has the third lowest maternal mortality ratio in the region after Cabo Verde (41 deaths per 100,000 live births) and Ghana (297 deaths per 100,000 live births).⁶ The improvement is primarily due to (i) improved prenatal care, as the proportion of women who received prenatal care by qualified personnel increased from 93% in 2010 to 98% in 2019; and (ii) proper medical assistance during delivery with births taking place in a health facility increased going from 73% in 2010 to 80% in 2019.⁷ These improvements follow the government's efforts to reduce child and maternal mortality through the Comprehensive strategic plan for sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health (2016-2020). This plan provided training to health professionals, especially midwives, to change traditional practices during childbirth that were harmful to women. For instance, traditional midwives used to physically and verbally abuse women to prevent them from screaming or crying during childbirth, in order to "preserve their honor," especially in front of their in-laws.

Figure 1: Maternal mortality ratio (MMR)- Senegal's evolution (2015-2020) ⁸ - per 100,000 live births



The country also made great strides in expanding access to modern family planning methods. With government action and support from TFPs such as USAID, UNFPA, and MSI Reproductive Choices,

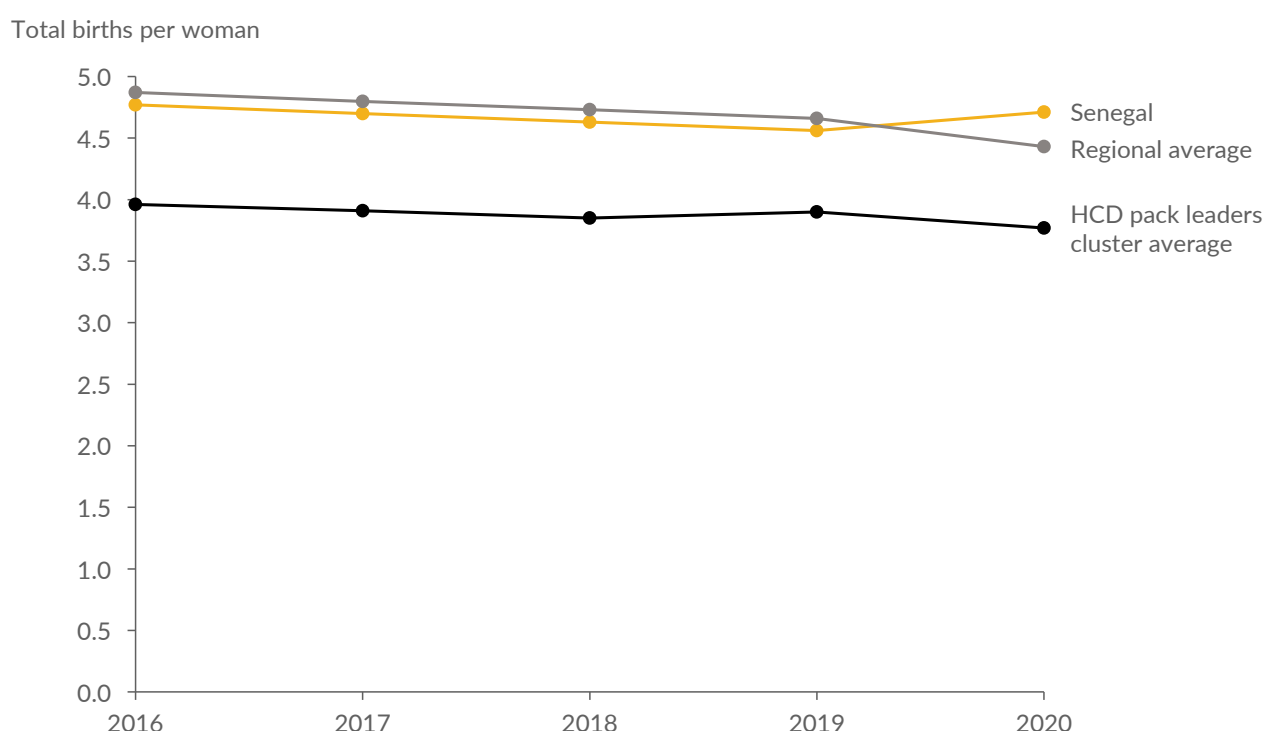
⁶ World Bank Data

⁷ Enquête Démographique et de Santé Continue (EDS-Continue), 2019

⁸ Due to missing data, regional average is excluding Guinea Bissau

Senegal managed to more than double the percentage of married women using modern contraceptives between 2010 and 2019, from 12 to 26%.⁹ The proportion of married women with unmet needs for family planning has also decreased slightly over time, from 32% in 2005 to 22% in 2019. As a result, the total fertility rate in Senegal has started to decrease after years of stagnation, reducing from 4.84 births per woman in 2015 to 4.56 in 2019. One government initiative has particularly enabled communities to take ownership of reproductive health issues: the Bajenu gox program (Godmother program in Wolof language) launched in 2009, which identifies local respected women to act as intermediaries between the community and the health system. They are trained to support women during and after their pregnancy and to advocate for the well-being of women and girls by guiding conversations on contraception, family planning, delivery, etc. More than 8,600 Bajenu gox served communities across Senegal.

Figure 2: Fertility rate – Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020)¹⁰ - total births per woman



Despite the progress made in reproductive health, disparities in access to care persist and remain to be addressed. To be effective, prenatal care must not only begin early in pregnancy, but also remain regular until delivery. In Senegal, although almost all women received prenatal care from trained personnel, only 56% of women received at least the recommended four visits. And, although more than 80% of women gave birth in a health facility, this was the case for only 52.7% of women whose households are classified in the lowest economic welfare quintile.¹¹

Women and food security

In Senegal, nearly one child in six (17.8%) suffers from chronic malnutrition essentially because of poor maternal nutrition and early pregnancies. Stunting due to malnutrition affects boys as much as girls: the prevalence of stunting for height among girls aged under 5 in Senegal is 16.02%, and 19.55%

⁹ Enquête Démographique et de Santé Continue (EDS-Continue), 2019

¹⁰ Due to missing data, regional average is excluding Guinea Bissau

¹¹ Enquête Démographique et de Santé Continue (EDS-Continue), 2019

for boys. This is lower than the regional average of 22.20% but is within the average for the HCD Pack leaders cluster of 17.82%. Chronic malnutrition in children can be explained by:

- Poor maternal nutrition. The patriarchal culture in Senegal makes the sharing of food in the household inequitable, especially in rural areas: nutrient-rich foods such as meat and fish are generally given in priority to adult men, depriving women and children of important protein sources and leaving them with less nutritious foods. It should also be noted that 54% of women of childbearing age in Senegal suffer from anemia.¹²
- Disparities in women's socio-economic backgrounds. Disparities in the prevalence of stunting are observed according to the mother's level of education and wealth: 13.6% of children whose mothers have had a secondary education were stunted in 2019, against 19.4% for children whose mothers have no formal education. Similarly, 9.3% of children in the highest economic welfare quintile were stunted, against 27.1% in the lowest quintile.¹³
- A high number of early pregnancies. Overall, the risk of chronic malnutrition is 33% higher among first-born children of mothers under 18 years in sub-Saharan Africa, and as such, early childbearing is a key driver of malnutrition.¹⁴ Childbearing starts early in Senegal and in 2019, 14% of girls aged 14-19 had already begun childbearing, which increases rapidly with age, from 1% of 15-year-olds to 33% of 19-year-olds.¹⁵
- Climate change. Salinization, successive droughts and floods impact crops and livestock production, hampering families' ability to feed. Recent climatic changes in Senegal have made agricultural production more difficult throughout the country. It has resulted in (i) a decrease of about 30% in rainfall since the 1970s, (ii) an increase in temperature of about 0.9°C, (iii) as well as an increasing aridification of the northern and central parts of the country, and a trend towards semi-aridness in the southern regions. Families are, as a result, often compelled to leave for less affected regions, putting additional strain on the host communities' resources or towards the already overpopulated cities and in particular the Dakar region, whose peri-urban areas are characterized by underemployment, predominance of informal sector, poverty, and difficulties to access a healthy and sufficient food in quantity and nutritional quality.

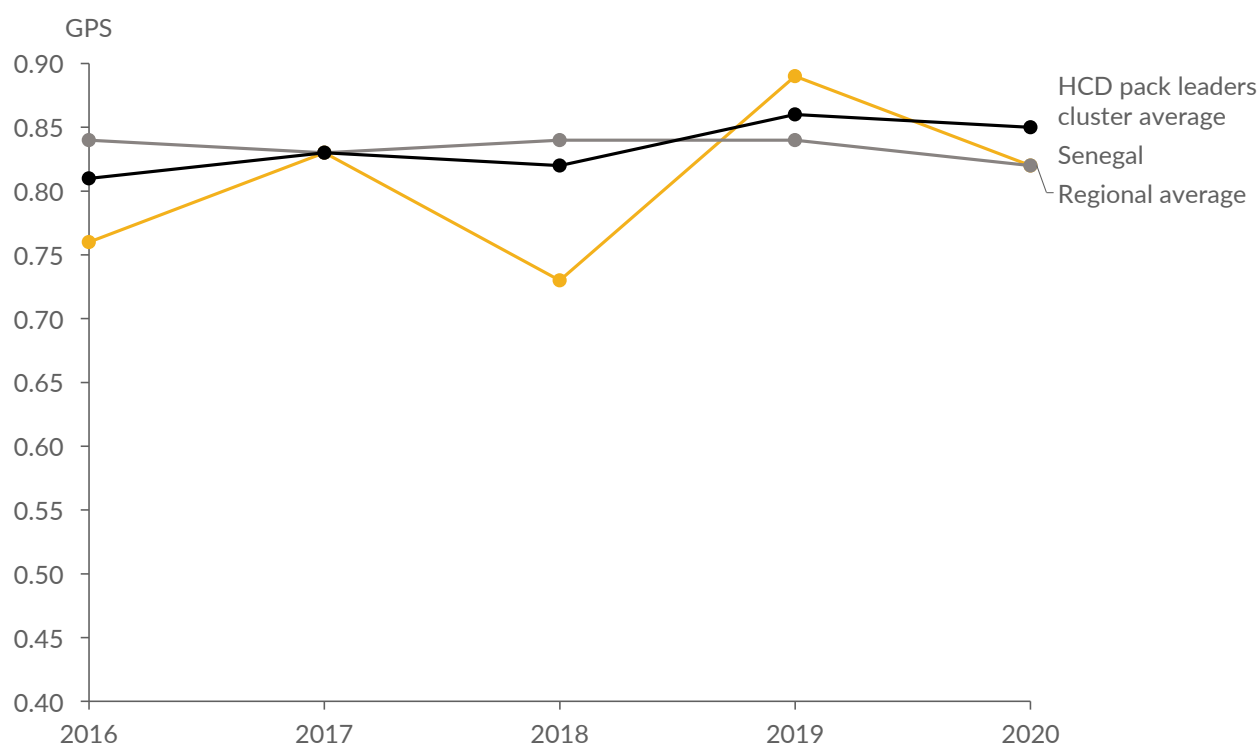
¹² ANSD and ICF International 2011

¹³ Enquête Démographique et de Santé Continue (EDS-Continue), 2019

¹⁴ Fink et al. 2014

¹⁵ Enquête Démographique et de Santé Continue (EDS-Continue), 2019

Figure 3: Prevalence of stunting for height –Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



Malnutrition persists in Senegal, despite the efforts of the government and TFPs to eradicate it. The prevalence of stunting among girls slightly increased over the last 5 years, from 14.7% in 2016 to 16.02% while it remained stable among boys around 19.5%, despite the numerous plans and programs against child malnutrition in Senegal such as (i) the government's Multisectoral Strategic Nutrition Plan (2015-2035) and Nutrition Enhancement Program to improve the nutritional status and healthy development of children under five living in poor areas of the country; (ii) USAID's Feed the Future Cultivating Nutrition (locally known as Kawolor), which aims to increase the production and consumption of healthy and nutritious foods in the communities, focusing primarily on women of reproductive age and children under two; (iii) World Bank's National Council of Nutrition Development (CNDN) that intervenes to empower women in the areas characterized by a high prevalence of food insecurity and acute malnutrition among children under five; and (iv) UNICEF's Nutrition Reinforcement Program (NRP) which targets women of childbearing age, adolescents and children under five in the region of Kaffrine. These efforts to combat malnutrition have been particularly challenged in recent times by restrictions resulting from anti-COVID-19 measures in addition to the effects of climate change.

Harmful practices against women

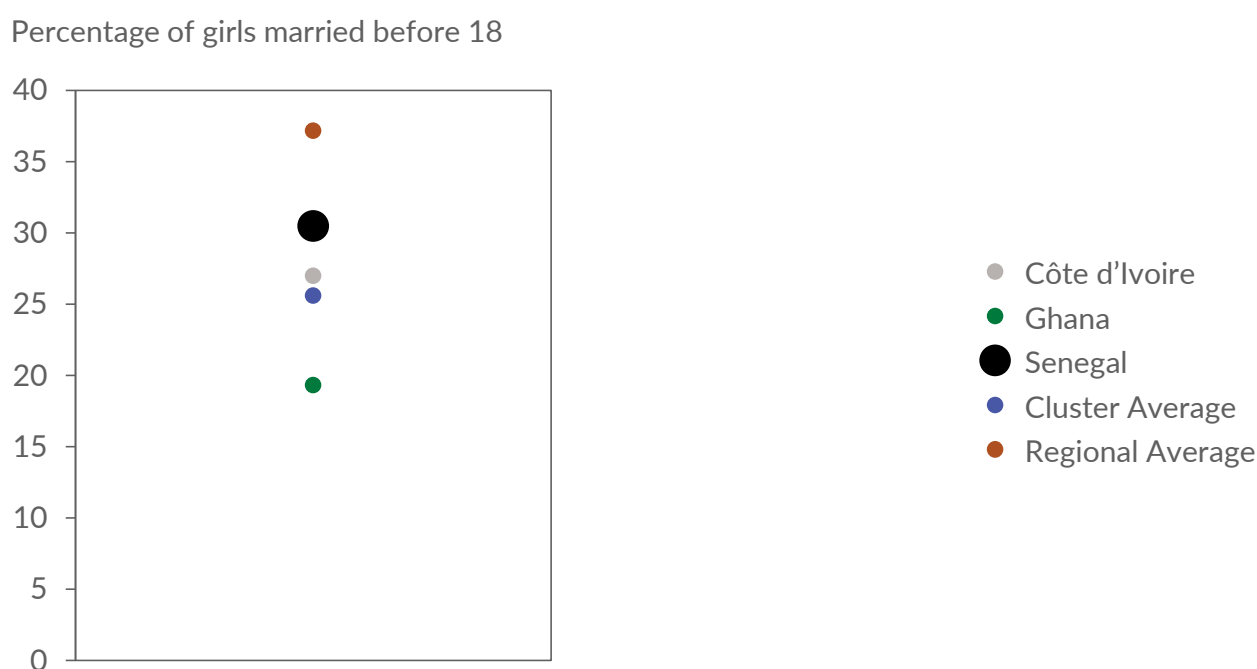
Senegal has demonstrated sustained commitment to the protection of women's and children's rights, especially through the fight to eliminate child marriage. Through the implementation of its action plans, the country has decreased the prevalence of child marriage by 16 percentage points over the last 20 years¹⁶ and is currently below the regional average of 37.18%. However, Senegal still has the highest child marriage prevalence of its HCD cluster, and it is a phenomenon that affects mostly girls. In 2020 it was estimated that the prevalence of child marriage of girls below the age of 18 in Senegal was 30.5% (against 0.7% for boys), including 8.5% of girls below the age of 15. The

¹⁶ Save the Children, Child marriage in Senegal, 2017

gender parity score for child marriage is 43.57 (i.e., 4,357 girls married before age 18 for every 100 boys). This large gap between girls and boys is due not only to tradition but also to the Senegalese Family Code adopted in 1972, which sets the minimum age of marriage to 16 for girls and 18 for boys. Senegal has put in place a set of policies and programs to reduce and end child and forced marriages, including the National Child Protection Strategy (SNPE) since 2013. Following the African Union (AU) Commission's recommendations, Senegal organized a campaign in 2016 called "Ending Child Marriage" with non-state actors.

However, some legal provisions in the Family Code remain to be revised to eradicate the practice of child marriage in Senegal. For example, early marriage is punishable under civil law only by annulment of the marriage, but under criminal law there is no penalty except in the case where the husband consummates the marriage with a minor under 13 years of age (Article 300 of the Penal Code). Finally, the revision of the family code to raise the marriage age to 18 for girls in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Maputo Protocol (ratified in 2004) has still not been done, despite alerting public authorities on the need to harmonize national legal texts with the international conventions ratified by Senegal, and the efforts of several institutions and associations (such as the Network of Women Lawyers of Senegal, the Senegalese Council of Women (COSEF) and the UNICEF) to advocate for legal reforms.

Figure 4: Child marriage - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison¹⁷ - Percentage of girls married before 18



*Cabo Verde child marriage rate is unavailable

Gender-based violence is still prevalent in Senegal, despite early efforts by the government to eradicate it. According to the study conducted by the Gender and Societies Study and Research Group (GESTES) in 2015, the prevalence rate of GBV in Senegalese households was 55.3% with some disparities from region to region: the rates are higher in the center and south of the country (72.3% in Diourbel, 67.5% in Fatick and 66% in Ziguinchor) and lower in the north (36.3% in Matam, 38% in

¹⁷ Child marriage data are sourced from the UNICEF Data warehouse which contains data gaps across years: calculated average are based on the most recent data by country between 2012 and 2019, Senegal data is from 2019. Cabo Verde data is unavailable.

Louga and 41.1% in Saint-Louis).¹⁸ As early as 2005, Senegal adopted the National Strategy for Gender Equity and Equality (SNEEG 2005-2015), which was followed by its phase II (SNEEG 2016-2026) and resulted in (i) providing support to women and girls who are victims of violence by setting up 5 "Boutiques de droit" ("legal rights stores") where women can get free legal advice and assistance, in partnership with the Senegalese Association of Lawyers (AJS); (ii) testing a project to support GBV victims and vulnerable groups (fistula sufferers, disabled people, etc.) by setting up social safety nets to empower them; (iii) developing and implementing communication and capacity building plans on GBV for beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in project implementation (iv) supporting the commune of Kaolack in the development of a gender-sensitive participatory budget focused on well-being; (v) translating the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) into 6 national languages to be disseminated within communities at the local level.

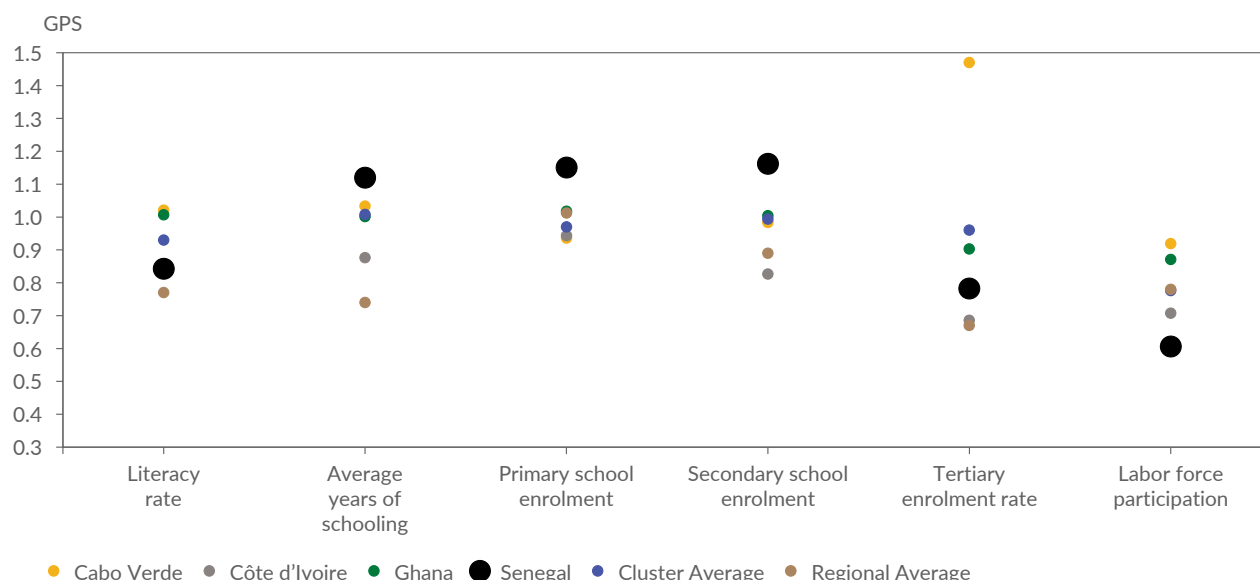
Although Senegal has seen significant improvements in women's reproductive health outcomes by reducing maternal mortality and fertility rates, additional efforts need to be made to reduce maternal and child food insecurity, and to change harmful practices that violate women's rights such as child marriage, and GBV, still prevalent in Senegal today.

B3. Education, skills, and labor participation

Senegal has made tremendous progress in recent years in terms of access to education for girls. Senegal has successfully closed the gender parity gap in primary and secondary schools by (i) building numerous new schools and classrooms, particularly in underserved rural areas (ii) equipping schools with separate latrines, (iii) establishing a national girls' education day, (iv) retaining pregnant girls in the educational system, (v) intensifying sensitization campaigns for girls' education, and (vi) strengthening statistical campaigns to monitor gender parity indicators. The country even leads the region in terms of gender parity in primary school enrollment (1.15 against a regional average of 0.99), secondary school enrollment (1.16 against 0.90) and average years of schooling (1.12 against 0.92). In addition, although parity has not yet been achieved in higher education, positive action and improvements in the university system for female students have led to significant progress in Senegal's gender parity score over the past 5 years. However, the country is lagging behind other ECOWAS member states particularly in terms of gender gap for literacy rate and the participation of women in the labor force. The government has been working to fill this gap through literacy programs and women's entrepreneurship programs.

¹⁸ GESTES report, 2015

Figure 5: Education, Skills and Labor Participation, Senegal regional average and cluster comparison (2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



Girls' primary and secondary education

Senegal has successfully closed the gender parity gap in primary and secondary schools. The country achieved gender parity in primary school enrollment since 2007 and has reached a score of 1.15 in 2020, which means that girls now outnumber boys in primary schools by 15%. It is the highest score in the region where only 5 other member states achieved gender parity in primary school: Burkina Faso (1.01), the Gambia (1.12), Ghana (1.02), Nigeria (1.02) and Sierra Leone (1.03). Similarly, Senegal reached gender parity in secondary school since 2014 and had the score of 1.16 in 2020, also the highest in the region where only 2 other member states reached parity: Burkina Faso (1.06) and Ghana (1.00). And finally, Senegal also achieved gender parity in the average years of schooling in 2011 and had a score of 1.12 in 2020, once again the highest in the region where only 3 other member states achieved parity: Cabo Verde (1.03), Ghana (1.00) and Nigeria (1.02). These excellent results obtained in girls' schooling are not only the result of a reconsideration of the role of women in the family and in society, but also of the various initiatives launched by the government to support girls' education, such as the Development Plan for Girls' Education 2009-2011, the Project to Support Female Education (PAEF 2010-2013 and PAEF-Plus 2014-2018), and the Quality, Equity and Transparency Improvement Program (PAQUET 2013-2025). These initiatives led to (i) the construction of many new schools and classrooms to facilitate children's access to classrooms and encourage girls attendance by not having to travel long distances away from reluctant parents; (ii) the improvement of the educational environment with the construction of separate latrines in schools; (iii) a national girls' education day on November 11th of each year, that became a high point of awareness and advocacy for girls' education; (iv) the permission to pregnant girls to return to school after childbirth, whereas they couldn't before the 2007 circular; (v) the intensification of sensitization campaigns for girls' education, especially in rural areas where the gender gap was the widest; (vi) the greater allocation of resources to data collection campaign of gender disaggregated data to properly monitor the evolution of gender parity in all localities and formulation of evidence based policies. These initiatives were successfully executed due to the creation of a Coordination Framework for Interventions on Girls' Education (CCIEF) as early as 2007 by the government to identify synergies between the actions of the various stakeholders involved in eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education.

Figure 6: Primary school enrolment rate - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)

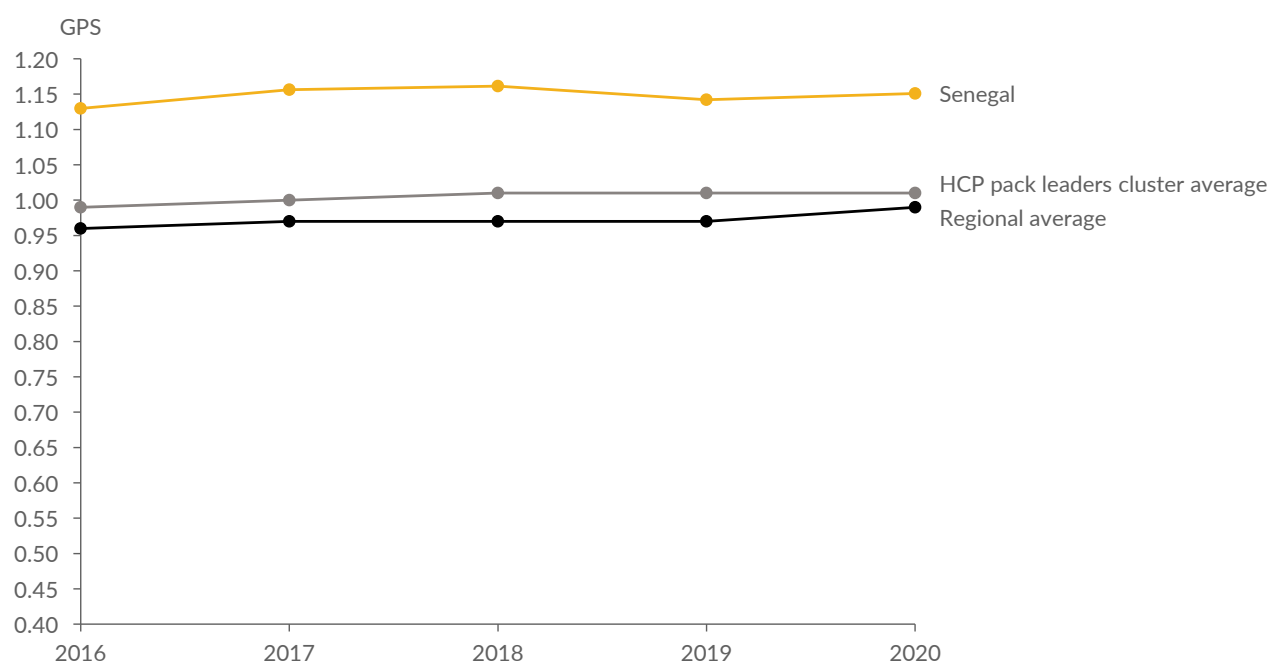


Figure 7: Secondary school enrolment rate - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)

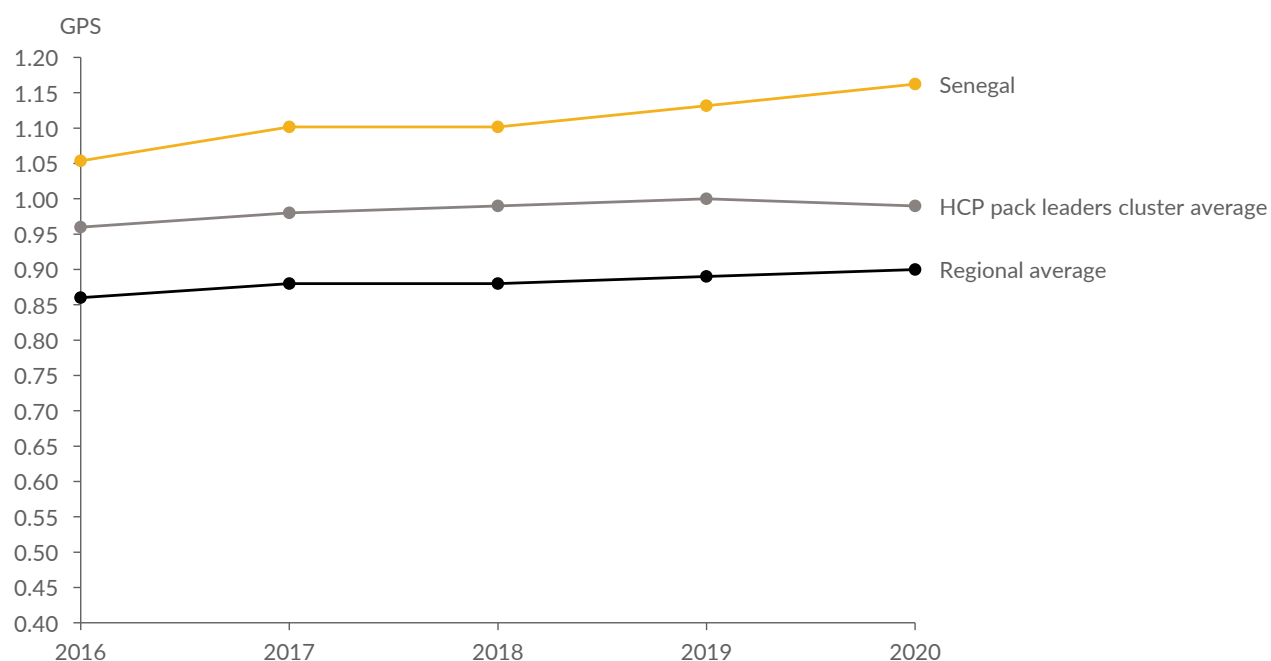
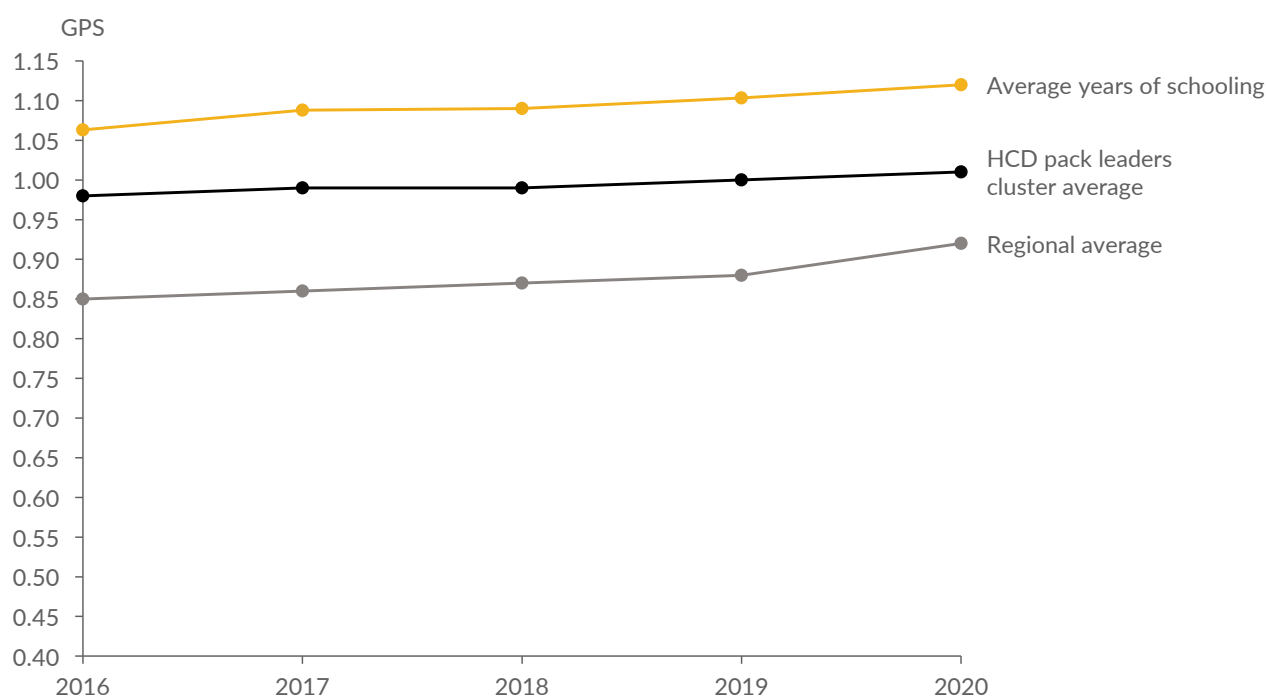


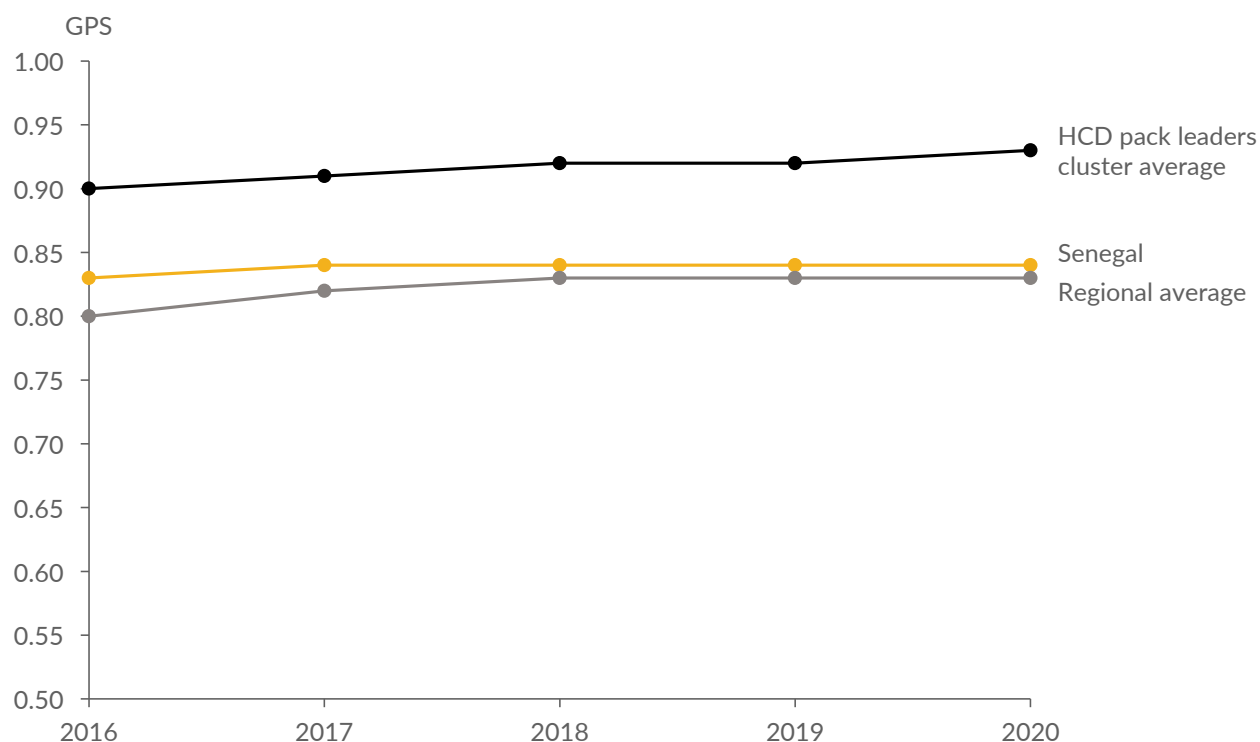
Figure 8: Average years of schooling - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



While Senegal is a high performer on girls primary and secondary education, efforts still need to be made to close the literacy rate parity gap. The youth literacy rate (aged 15-24) remains among the lowest in the region (67.88% compared with a regional average of 69.29%), and with a gender parity score of 0.84 (which has stagnated with a CAGR of +0.33% over the last 5 years), Senegal is barely above the regional average of 0.83 and ranks last in its cluster where Ghana and Cabo Verde achieved parity with respective scores of 1.01 and 1.02. Fewer than 2 in 3 young Senegalese women (61.9%) are considered literate, compared to 73.8% of young men. To address this gap, the government has launched several literacy programs recently, including (i) the Literacy and Trade Apprenticeship Program to Fight Poverty (PALAM 2009-2016 followed by PALAM II 2017-2021), which enabled the training of 9,996 vulnerable women (in technical, activity-based functional literacy, and management), the creation of 399 women's Economic Interest Grouping (EIG) and the financing of 85 micro-projects using the Islamic financing method;¹⁹ and (ii) The National Basic Education Program for illiterate youth and adults based on ICTs (PNEBJA-TIC 2012-2025) to deliver literacy classes through cellphones, computers and TV programs.

¹⁹ PALAM, 2022

Figure 9: Literacy rate - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



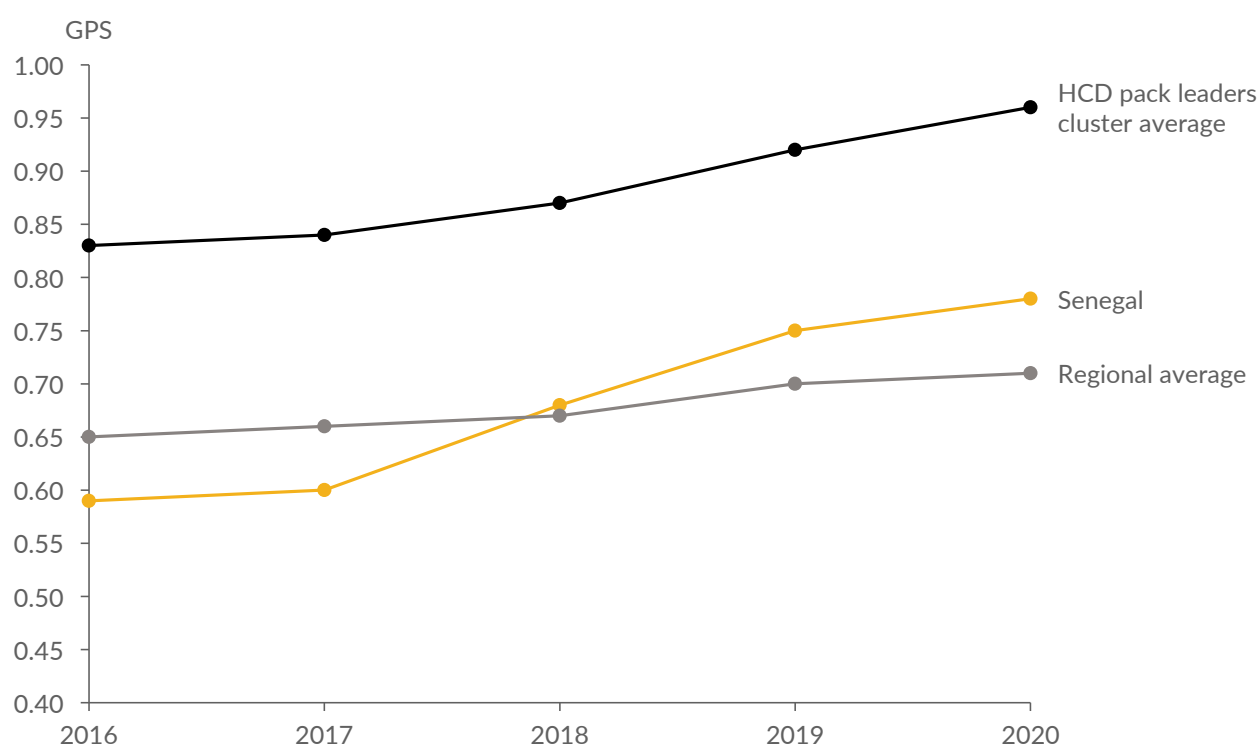
Women's higher education and vocational training

Positive improvements in the school environment for female students have led to Senegal's significant progress in terms of gender parity in tertiary education enrollment. With a gender parity score of 0.78, 12.3% of Senegalese women (1 in 8) are enrolled in tertiary education compared with 15.7% of their male counterparts. The country still has a gender parity score that is higher than the regional average which is 0.71; but lower than the average for the Pack Leaders cluster, where the country performs well below Cabo Verde (1.47) and Ghana (0.90). However, the government has put in place measures such as affirmative action to motivate girls to enroll in tertiary education. Additional public initiatives were implemented such as (i) the establishment of scholarships for girls; (ii) the construction of dedicated accommodation facilities for girls; and (iii) the creation of the Virtual University of Senegal (UVS) and the Open Digital Spaces (ENO) to overcome the obstacle of distance,²⁰ which is a limiting factor in Senegal where it is still considered wrong and unsafe for an unmarried girl to live alone. As a result, Senegal has shown strong growth in its gender parity index for tertiary enrollment over the past 5 years, averaging +5.8% per year, which should make it possible to achieve parity by 2025. Furthermore, it should be noted that ECOWAS contributed to strengthening Senegalese girls' representation in STEMs (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) through the ECOWAS Excellence Scholarship Program destined to girls who are brilliant in the scientific fields and come from disadvantaged families, which complements the state's "Miss Mathematics" and "Miss Sciences" initiatives. However, despite these initiatives, girls access rate to STEM programs remains relatively low. Girls make up less than 30% of STEM students and female researchers make up only 25%.²¹

²⁰ Joint Annual Review (RAC): gender theme, 2016

²¹ Gender equality in Senegal, Luxdev, 2021

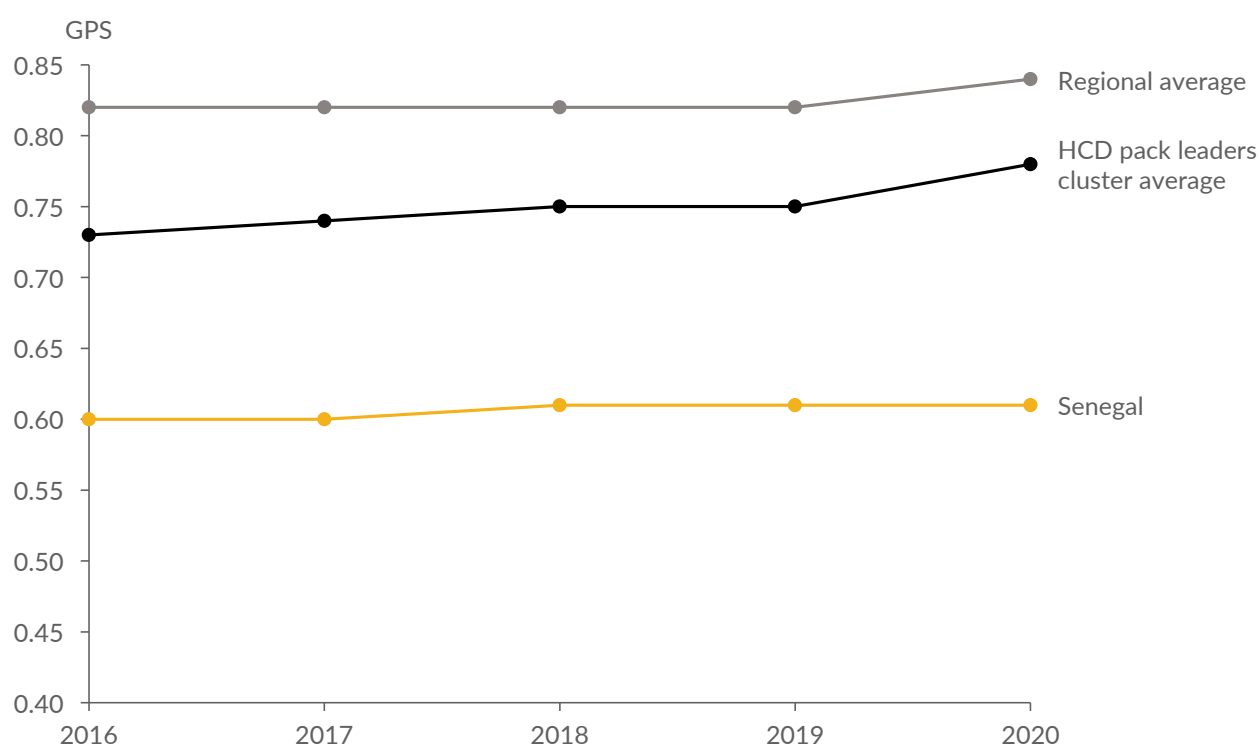
Figure 10: Tertiary school enrolment rate - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



Women in the labor force

High time poverty continues to limit the availability of Senegalese women to enter the labor market despite existing labor code provisions in their favor. With a gender parity score of 0.6 for labor force participation, compared to a regional average of 0.84, the country ranks last in the region, and is stagnating with a parity index average growth of +0.18% per year over the last 5 years, compared to a regional average of +0.55%. Gender disparities in the labor force are most pronounced at ages 30-49, the ages at which women are most affected by the constraints of motherhood and raising children, resulting in time poverty and causing them to limit their presence in the labor market in favor of their traditional caretaker role. Maternity and paternity leave policy affects the choices women make and the opportunities they can seize on the job market. To allow pregnant women or mothers to devote themselves to their family life without fear of dismissal, the Senegalese Labor Code grants them the right to 14 weeks of maternity leave (which can be extended by 3 weeks in case of illness resulting from pregnancy or childbirth), and the cost of the leave is borne by the state, i.e., employers do not necessarily incur higher costs by recruiting women. However, the Labor Code grants men only 1 day of paternity leave, which contributes, on the one hand, to perpetuating the idea that childcare is the sole responsibility of women, and on the other hand, to widening the gender gap in the labor market in favor of men with less household responsibilities.

Figure 11: Labor force participation - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)

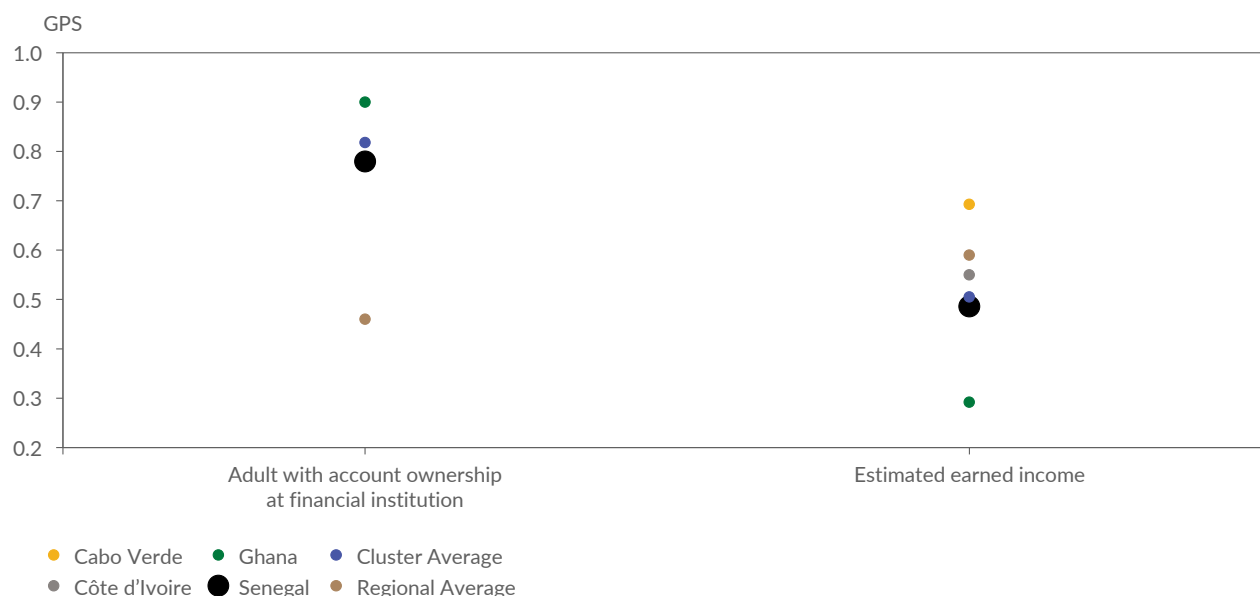


Although Senegal leads the ECOWAS region in girls' access to primary and secondary education and has made significant progress in their access to tertiary education by increasing girls' enrollment rates at all school levels, additional efforts need to be made to increase the literacy rate, especially of women, and to improve women's participation in the labor force where the gap is still large.

B4. Entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and digital economy

Senegal underperforms when it comes to supporting women's entrepreneurship and financial inclusion. Senegalese women face low levels of financial inclusion and an inadequate supply of financial services for women-owned businesses, which limits the development of women entrepreneurship. Yet, over the past few years, the Senegalese government, technical partners and private sector actors have created mechanisms to support female entrepreneurship, boost their financial and digital inclusion. However, despite best efforts to remove financial barriers to women's entrepreneurship, they continue to face many other obstacles that discourage them from starting or growing their businesses.

Figure 12: Adult with account ownership at financial institution and Estimated earned income, Senegal regional average and cluster comparison (2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



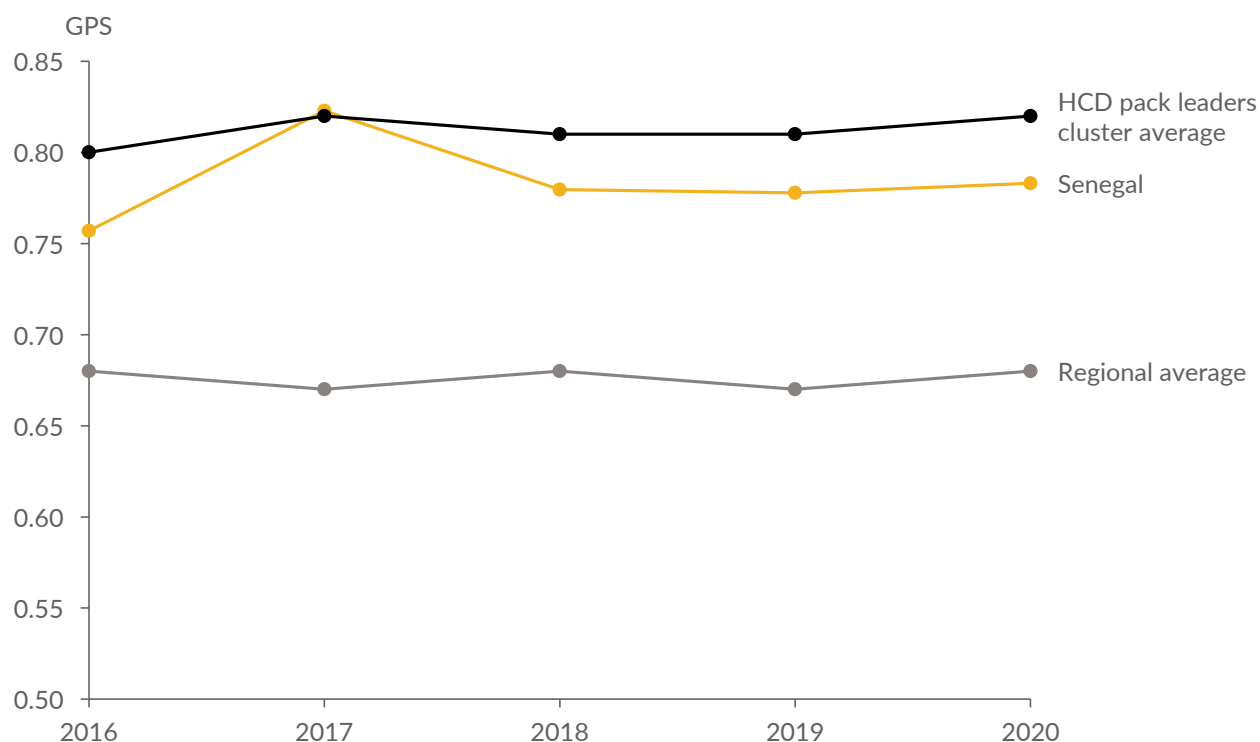
Women's financial inclusion

Low financial inclusion and inadequate financial services adapted to women's needs limit the development of female entrepreneurship in Senegal. The share of adult women who own an account in a financial institution stands at 30.01%, which places Senegalese women's financial inclusion in the regional average of 30.08%. However, the share of adult men who own an account in a financial institution is 38.33% in Senegal, i.e., a gender parity score of 0.78 for Senegal, which is higher than the regional average of 0.68, but lower than its HCD pack leaders' cluster (0.82). Men are more likely than women to be financially included mainly because women are generally less involved in household financial and budgeting decisions.²² This observation puts Senegalese women at a disadvantage in economic production and access to credit compared to men. Indeed, having a bank account provides access to financial services (savings, credit, insurance) that are important for starting or expanding a business. Additionally, existing loan packages from commercial banks are not the most adapted to the needs of women-owned businesses. Constraints related to collateral requirements prevents women, who generally do not own land titles or personal wealth to secure their loans due to persistent customary inheritance practices preventing women from inheriting land. Although microfinance institutions support women's projects, the amounts invested limits prospects for long-term growth. As a result of these factors, 43.9% of Senegalese women entrepreneurs who borrow money do so from family members,²³ which stifles their businesses' scale up potential.

²² Amélioration de la Capacité Financière et de l'Inclusion Financière au Sénégal, World Bank, 2016

²³ Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie (ANSD)

Figure 13: Adult with account ownership at financial institution - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016 – 2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



Women and entrepreneurship

In recent years, the Senegalese government has launched several initiatives to stimulate female entrepreneurship. To facilitate access to credit and strengthen women's entrepreneurship, the government has launched initiatives including the General Delegation for Youth and Women's Rapid Entrepreneurship (DER/FJ) in 2018, which aims to mobilize resources and finance business creation projects, particularly for women (all women aged above 18) and young men (aged 18-40). Since its establishment, the DER/FJ has granted credits amounting to USD 103 million (FCFA 60 billion),²⁴ of which 50% of the beneficiaries are women-owned businesses, with a particular focus on sectors that are crucial for women's employment, such as agriculture and handicraft. Additionally, women are more exposed to the informal sector, with 94.1% of them running informal businesses, compared to 86% of men.²⁵ The DER/FJ addresses this disparity by supporting the formalization process of women-owned businesses. As a result, a total of 3,100 businesses were formalized and 3,800 businesses have benefited from project structuring. In addition, TFPs as well as civil society organizations have launched initiatives to support the financing of women-owned businesses such as the Women's Investment Club (WIC), a private equity firm launched in 2019 that pools the savings of 83 women as well as financial partners, is one of them. So far, the WIC has invested USD 300,000 in 2 women-owned SMEs and enabled the creation of 54 jobs.

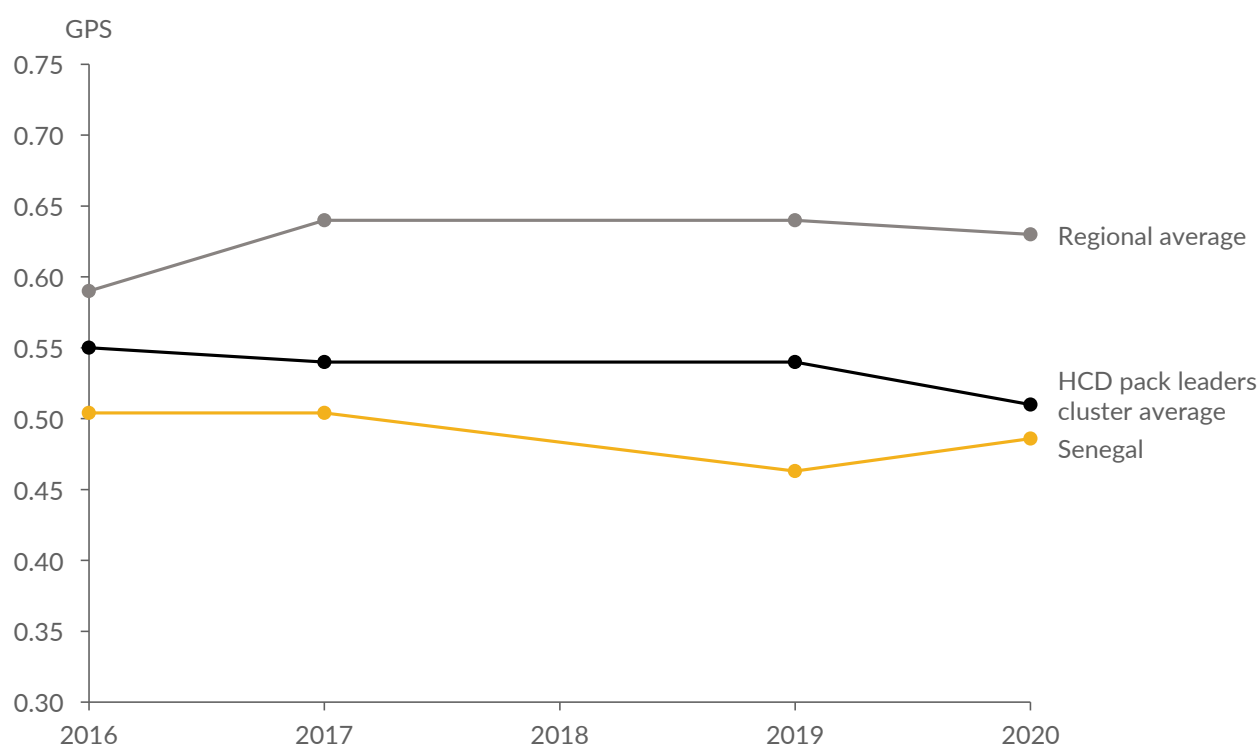
While access to financing is the main obstacle to the development of income-generating activities for women, the gender discrimination they face in their activities also limits their success. Overall, Senegalese women earn, on average, less than half the income (from employment or self-employment) of Senegalese men. The gender parity score for estimated earned income (including income from employment, self-employment, and other specific types of income) in Senegal is 0.49, compared to a regional average of 0.63. Only Ghana (0.29) and Mali (0.28) have lower scores. This

²⁴ DER/FJ, 2022

²⁵ Diagnosis of the informal economy in Senegal, ILO, 2020

results not only from the pay gap women face in the labor force as employees, but also from the barriers women have to deal with as entrepreneurs such as (i) social and gender-biased norms and stereotypes that require them to get married and do all the domestic work while men work outside the home, which often expose working women to questioning of their competence, sexual harassment, and intimidations from their male partners; (ii) limited access to business networks to share experiences and business information reduces women entrepreneurs' ability to access markets; (iii) The lack of tax and non-tax incentives specifically for women entrepreneurs does not encourage them to formalize or to grow their businesses and compete with more established businesses. It is common for women entrepreneurs not to take the opportunity to develop their business due to lack of confidence.

Figure 14: Estimated earned income - Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016 - 2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



* Unavailability of 2018's data

Women's digital inclusion

While the penetration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) promotes greater participation of women in the economy, Senegalese women have limited capacity to make use of the numerical tools. ICTs can potentially play an important role in achieving gender equality and empowering women. Through ICTs, women and girls can access important information, network, marketing their products, find jobs, and other services. However, poverty, illiteracy, lack of computer literacy and limited access to reliable internet are factors that prevent women from taking advantage of digital tools. To strengthen women's participation and access to the media and to ICT, the Senegalese government adopted the "Digital Senegal 2025" strategy in 2016. The initiative aims to (i) develop women's leadership in the ICT sector by supporting the existence of women-ICT associations; (ii) finance and support women's start-ups; and (iii) empower girls to pursue a career in the ICT sector. In addition, many private, civil society and TFP initiatives exist to (i) train women on digital tools such as "la Maison Digitale" (the digital house), launched in 2017 by Orange and Sonatel Foundations; it is a place with digital equipment for women to receive not only training in digital and

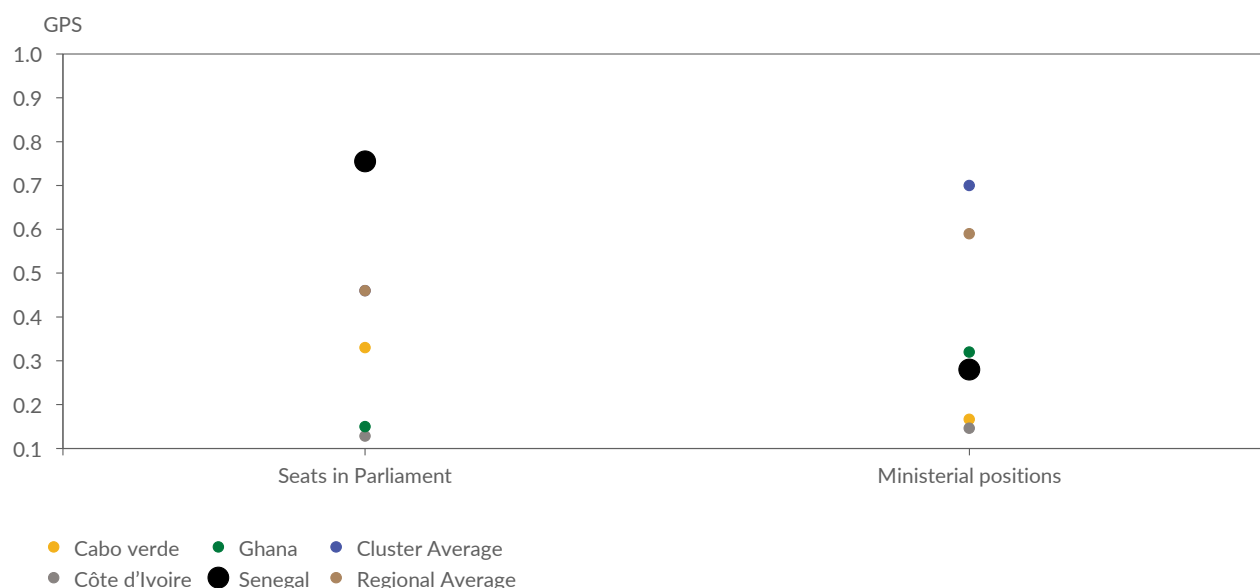
office automation tools, but also in literacy, basic business and financial management, thanks to the support of volunteers from Orange Association; or (ii) develop their business through ICT like Sooretul, an e-commerce platform that supplies agricultural products from rural areas to urban customers.

Although Senegal has undertaken many initiatives in favor of financial and digital inclusion of women to empower them to be entrepreneurs, this has not translated into improved gender parity. Additional efforts must be made to change both men's and women's mindsets to eliminate discrimination against women in business and to build women's self-confidence so that they can succeed in entrepreneurship.

B5. Political empowerment

While Senegal has not yet achieved full gender parity in political representation, its progress in terms of women's political empowerment makes it a model for the region. After adopting a law on absolute parity in 2010 Senegal has made great strides in terms of gender parity in political representation, particularly at the National Assembly, where 43% of deputies are women. However, this high performance is not found at all levels of the political ladder, for example in the executive only 21.87% of Ministers are women. Besides representativeness, the Government of Senegal has made efforts to mainstream gender in public administration, policies, and programs, through (i) its Ministry of Women, Family, Gender and Child Protection; (ii) its gender units which are present across 71.4% of the Ministries; and (iii) its gender monitoring agencies; and (iv) its women's capacity building entities.

Figure 15: Political empowerment – Senegal regional average and cluster comparison (2020) – Gender parity scores (0-1)

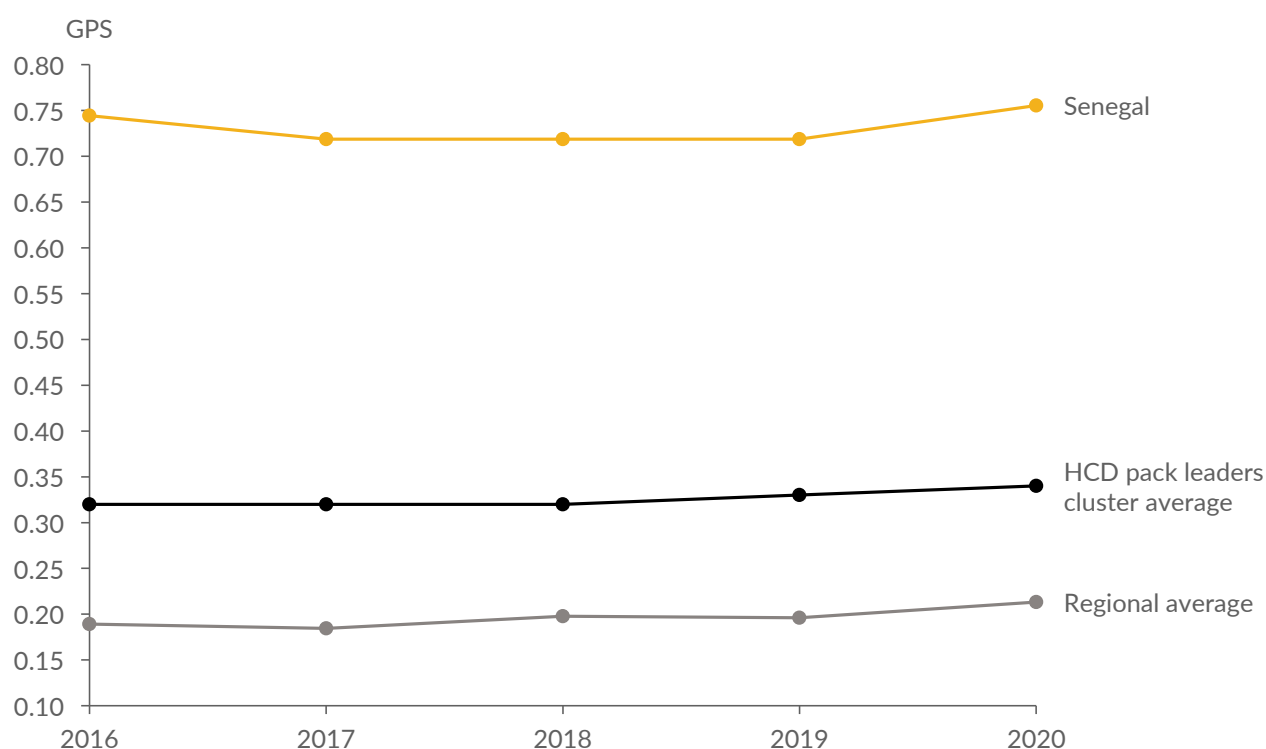


Women's political representation

Senegal became a female political representation model by adopting a law on absolute parity between men and women in elected institutions. Advocacy efforts by women's civil society groups, including the Council of Senegalese Women (COSEF) and others, were heard by both the public and political class. Then President Wade decreed the Law on Absolute Parity (LPA) in 2010. The LPA

requires "absolute male-female parity [...] in all elective institutions" and "lists of candidates alternately composed of members of both sexes," otherwise they are inadmissible.²⁶ As a consequence the country has considerably reduced the parity gap in the legislative branch where 43% of the seats in the Senegalese National Assembly in 2020 are held by women (compared to 19.2% in 2001), resulting in a gender parity score of 0.76 and placing the country well above the regional average of 0.21 and its HCD pack leaders' cluster average of 0.34. The implementation of the law also had an impact in local elections and there were three times more women among Municipal Councilors in the 2014-2019 term (47.9%) than in the previous term in 2009-2014 (15.9%). Parity had been achieved at the Councilor level in at least one out of three Communes in Senegal (36.4%).²⁷

Figure 16: Number of seats in parliament – Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)



However, great disparities remain in women representation within Senegal's political landscape. In the legislative branch, the practice of political parties of almost systematically appointing men as heads of electoral lists, are obstacles to absolute parity in Parliament; the same barriers apply to municipalities. In the executive branch, women held 21.87% of ministerial positions, resulting in a gender parity score of 0.28. Although it is slightly higher than the regional average of 0.25 and that of the cluster at 0.23, the gender gap at the ministerial level is far from full parity. Furthermore, gender disparities in the number of political appointments remains a problem, although there were improvements in 2017 and 2018 compared to previous years (cf. table 1 below). In the judiciary branch, women are underrepresented (i) in the bodies responsible for judicial governance with a share of only 17.57% of Magistrates and 16.86% of Clerks in 2018; and (ii) in the management of prisons and correctional facilities where they represent only 16.21% of prison directors.²⁸ Judicial governance positions are selected based on an entrance exam to the Judicial Training Center (CFJ),

²⁶ Gender equality in Senegal, Luxdev 2021

²⁷ Parity in public policies in Senegal, ONP, 2020

²⁸ Parity in public policies in Senegal, ONP, 2020

while correctional facilities leadership positions are nominated by the Minister of Justice. The low representation of women in political appointments as well as at the cabinet level is not in line with article 7 of the Constitution, which requires the State to promote equal access of men and women to mandates and functions, as stipulated in the Maputo Protocol, to which Senegal adhered to in 2004.

Figure 17: Ministerial positions – Senegal regional and cluster average comparison (2016-2020) - Gender parity scores (0-1)

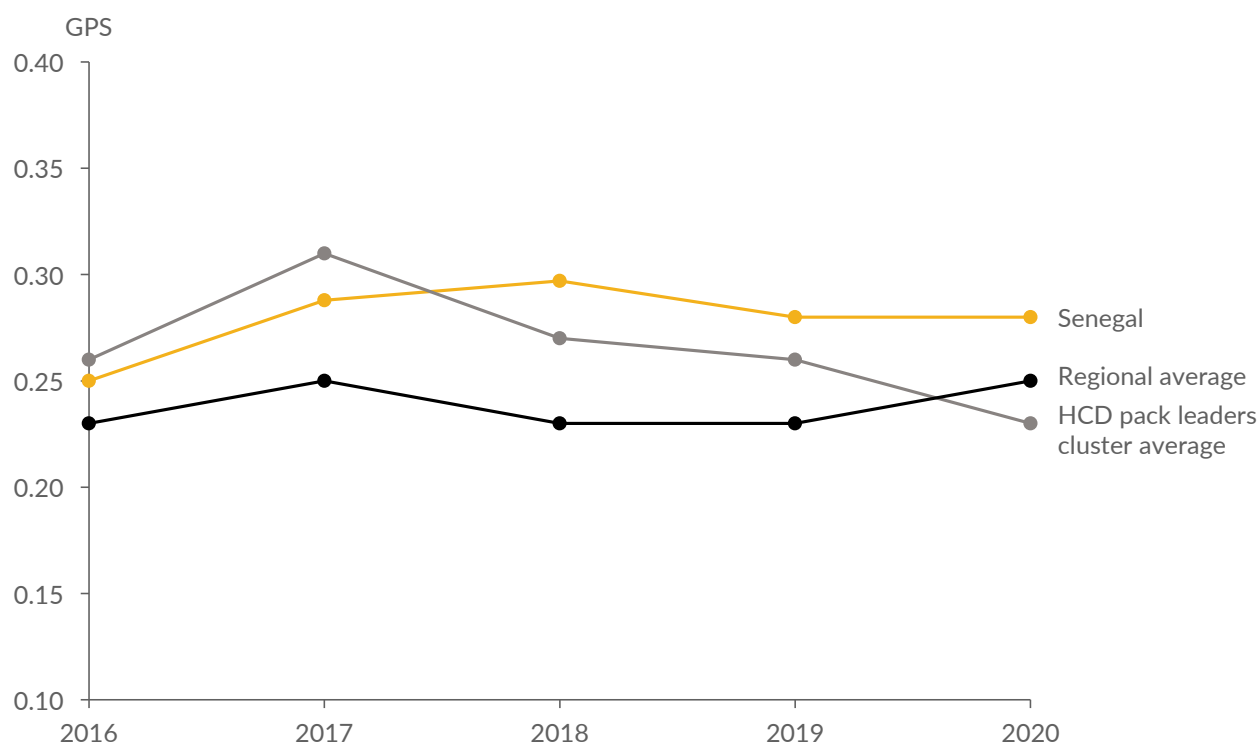


Figure 18: Female representation in elected positions of the executive and legislative branches, 2018

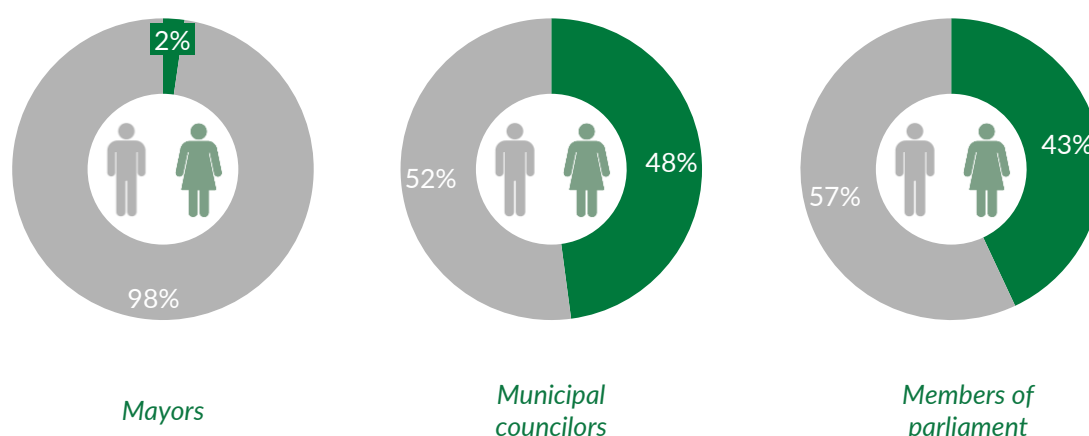
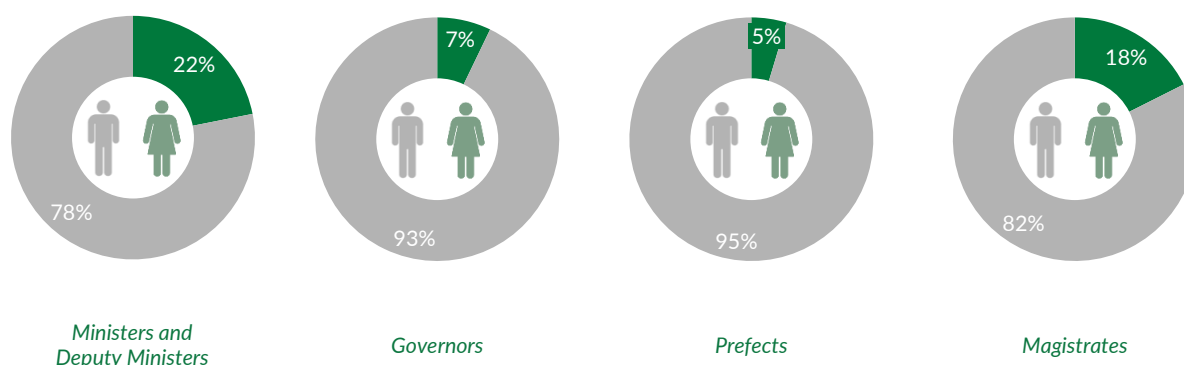


Figure 19: Female representation in appointed positions of the executive and judicial branches, 2018



Gender mainstreaming

In recent years, the Government of Senegal has made efforts to mainstream gender in public administration, policies, and programs. Gender mainstreaming in public administrations has progressed significantly with the creation of 25 gender units in the Ministries by 2018, and 71.4% of Ministries have existing mechanisms to incorporate gender in their programs (compared to 62.86% in 2017). These recent units are nevertheless confronted with challenges such as the lack of support from men as focal points, or the lack of knowledge, methods, tools and resources necessary to carry out their mission. Furthermore, gender is also considered in policy planning through (i) the mandate of the Ministry of Women, Family, Gender and Child Protection, which is in charge of policies for the protection of women's rights and gender; and (ii) monitoring and capacity building entities for women, including the Department of Equity and Gender Equality (DEEG) and the National Support and Training Centers for Women (CENAF). Thus, among results achieved, a Gender Budget Document has been attached to the Finance Law since 2017, gender has been integrated into the multi-year expenditure planning documents (DPPDs) of 21 Ministries in 2019, and gender discriminatory norms are being reviewed by the Ministry of Justice (including the legal age of marriage for girls, parental authority, and choice of marital home). Finally, since 2011, the ONP has been supporting the President on issues of gender equity and equality and monitoring the results of the execution of gender parity policies, as well as the level of compliance with national and international commitments to women and the correction of inequalities/discrimination between men and women.²⁹ At the local level, gender-responsive budgeting occurs in the local development plans of local authorities. But few local governments in Senegal allocate budgetary resources to address gender inequalities.³⁰

Despite the progress made in the past decade, Senegal is struggling to achieve absolute parity (50/50) in elected institutions (National Assembly, local councils, etc.) as well as in the executive and judicial offices. This is mainly due to the insufficient consideration of women in appointments both within political parties at the top of their electoral lists and at the leadership level of the executive branch of government. To achieve gender parity in the political arena, additional efforts must be made to strengthen women's leadership and communicating on parity.

²⁹ Parity in public policies in Senegal, ONP, 2020

³⁰ Gender equality in Senegal, Luxdev, 2021

B6. Impact of COVID-19

Senegal recorded its first case of COVID-19 on March 2, 2020, prompting the government to implement measures to contain the spread of the virus such as curfews, restrictions on movement, public gatherings, and school closures. Through these measures the pandemic has particularly affected the living conditions of women and girls by making it more difficult for them to access reproductive and maternal health care services, increasing their exposure to gender-based violence, and threatening advances in women and girls' educational outcomes and economic opportunities.

Impact on health and nutrition

Restrictions related to COVID-19 have made it more difficult for women to access reproductive and maternal health care services. Disruptions in the global chain have limited the availability of essential reproductive health commodities, including contraceptives. Restrictions on movement, particularly in rural areas, have further limited women's ability to access family planning and maternal and postnatal care; in Senegal home deliveries increased by 20% in 2020, putting mothers and newborns at risk. Where access to health facilities had not been compromised, the anxiety associated with contracting the virus in hospitals, as well as misconceptions about the virus, led to fewer hospital visits. In addition, restrictions on travel and mass gatherings forced TFPs to discontinue community-based nutrition programs, including growth monitoring and micronutrient supplementation, which contributed to putting children and mothers at risk of malnutrition; a 20% decrease in new admissions for treatment of severe wasting in children under five years of age was observed in the second quarter of 2020, compared to 2019.³¹

The economic crisis and voluntary home confinement that followed the anti-covid restrictions increased incidences of gender-based violence. Like in other countries, the stress induced by the reduction of household purchasing power and curfew measures in Senegal increased the risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation at home – and particularly against girls. The total number of survivors of domestic violence accessing services increased from 2,109 in 2019 to 5,496 in 2020 (i.e., +160%). A recent survey of the ONP showed that following the imposition of curfew, 8.4% of married women in the Dakar region were victims of physical or verbal abuse, and of these, 20% had experienced an increase in violence since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impact on education, skills, and labor participation

School closures due to COVID-19 have affected over 3.5 million children in Senegal. The Senegalese government decided to close schools to contain the rapid spread of COVID-19 as early as March 2020. More than 3.5 million children, 53% of whom are girls, were forced to stop attending school.³² Tools were then put in place to maintain the rhythm of learning at home with a revised school calendar to validate the school year. These included distance learning platforms on the Internet, learning through television, the provision of various digital teaching materials etc. However, unpaid domestic work has been culturally more the responsibility of girls than boys, they have less opportunities to take advantage of distance learning courses, further threatening girls progress in their studies.

³¹ UNICEF, The race against COVID, Outpacing the pandemic for children in Senegal, 2021

³² UNICEF, Impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on children in Senegal, 2020

Impact on entrepreneurship

The closure of markets and the curfew due to COVID-19 put a strain on women's economic empowerment. According to the ONP, following the start of the pandemic, the number of women in economic activity in the Dakar region dropped from 51.4% in March 2020 to 34.3%. The most affected were female white-collar workers. This drastic drop in women labor participation is due to women businesses being significantly affected by closures (36%), while 19.1% stopped working because they feared the disease. A joint study by the MasterCard Foundation and MSC found that the drop in revenue due to anti-COVID measures affected women-owned MSMEs (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) more than men-owned MSMEs in Senegal, as 74% of women-owned MSMEs reported a drop in revenue compared to 63% of men.³³ Women are very active in commerce and many of them lost their jobs as a result of the closure of the markets. The anti-COVID measures have not only weakened women financially, but also caused an increase in household caretaking responsibilities for 37.4% of women.

³³ MasterCard Foundation and MSC, Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Senegal, 2020

C. THE JOURNEY TO ADVANCE GENDER PARITY

C1. Lessons learned from Senegal's gender parity journey

Senegal has made some substantial progress in closing the gender gap, particularly in education and health dimensions. The Senegalese experience with gender parity initiatives across all four dimensions assessed, provides valuable lessons to leverage in future interventions to further close the parity gap in Senegal and across other ECOWAS member states.

Lessons learned in health & nutrition

- **Topics that are considered taboo in society, such as reproductive health, are better heard and owned by communities when raised by one of their own rather than by outsiders.** The Bajenu Gox approach, which consists of identifying respected local women to serve as intermediaries between the community and the health system, has helped to better convey reproductive health awareness messages within communities.
- **Victims of gender-based violence are more likely to bring their case to court if they are supported at every stage of the process.** "Boutiques de droit" were set up in partnership with the Association of Lawyers of Senegal (AJS) to provide free legal advice and assistance to women and girls who are victims of violence.

Lessons learned in education, skills, and labor participation

- **Strong commitment from the executive branch to push for girl's school enrolment contributed to closing the primary school parity gap.** In order to involve the entire nation in the push for girls schooling, the President has designated November 11th of each year as National Girls' Education Day by decree. It is a day of awareness, advocacy and strategic orientation on issues related to the participation of girls and women in the development of the nation. This day is celebrated in all school districts across the country.
- **Efficient coordination and synergy across key actors is essential for gender initiatives to be successful.** Many actors were involved in supporting primary and secondary education gender initiatives in Senegal, from government, technical partners and community-based organizations. Without coordination and synergy among them, initiatives would have resulted in ineffective action. By creating the CCIEF, the government has been able to effectively coordinate the actions of the many actors involved.
- **Bringing schools closer to the communities facilitates children's access to classrooms and encourage girls' attendance** by not having to travel long distances away from reluctant parents. Senegal has been able to overcome the distance barrier through (i) the construction of many primary and secondary schools closer to communities; and (ii) the construction of accommodation structures dedicated to girls in universities, combined with the creation of the Virtual University of Senegal (UVS) and the Open Digital Spaces (ENO).

Lessons learned in entrepreneurship, financial inclusion and digital economy

- **Targeted initiatives to empower women economically will not translate into their equal participation in the labor market as long as gender stereotypes remain so persistent in Senegalese society.** It is expected that women should marry and take on all domestic work while men work outside the home. Such perceptions of women's place in society are persistent and inhibit efforts to empower women economically outside of their household.

Lessons learned in political empowerment

- **Activism of women's civil society organizations significantly contributed to gender parity reforms.** In Senegal, civil society organizations like COSEF contributed to the evolution of public opinion by raising the public's awareness on gender equality issues and disseminating information on women's rights. After the introduction of the absolute parity law, women's groups held the government accountable for its equitable implementation.
- **The effective formulation and implementation of gender parity strategies requires the availability of gender-disaggregated statistical data.** By creating the ONP, the government has been able to (i) monitor the results of the implementation of parity policies, as well as the level of compliance with national and international commitments to women, and (ii) formulate evidence-based policies, using gender-disaggregated data.

C2. Recommendations

Senegal has made some substantial progress on journey to gender parity over the past few years. This report's analysis has identified some key areas that Senegal can address to build on the progress made so far. That include, gender-biased socio-cultural norms, women's disadvantaged access to education and economic resources, and discriminatory laws. Following are the initial set of recommendations to address these barriers and challenges.

Address persistent gender-biased norms

In Senegal, the prevalence of socio-cultural norms and gender stereotypes that are unfavorable to women prevents them from realizing their full potential. It is essential to conduct awareness campaigns to facilitate a change of mindset through (i) school curricula, (ii) the media, and (iii) focal points in the communities.

To achieve full gender parity in society, it is important to raise awareness among its youth from an early age by developing inclusive school curriculum that represent both genders out of their stereotypical molds; School based initiatives can go a long way to reshape preconceived notions on women and girl's role in society. Role modeling and mentoring can also be effective ways to show young women and girls what they can aspire to.

Another way to deconstruct gender stereotypes in society involves leveraging the power of the media. Movies, series (particularly popular in Senegal), and literature are a powerful way to reach millions to not only inform the population on what constitutes harmful acts against women, but also showcase women who have succeeded in their careers. Positive portrayals of women in various aspects of society, both at home and at work can contribute to gradually shifting mindsets.

To change mindsets in the most conservative communities, the Bajenu Gox approach could be scaled up to transmit awareness messages on women's rights (education, protection against GBV, inheritance of property, etc.) from within. The model could even be used to engage respected men within the community like religious figures sensitized to a more open approach to religious texts, who will advocate for women's rights in their communities, or any public figure that would give more strength to the message among men.

Introduce incentive mechanisms to compensate for women's disadvantaged access to education as well as economic resources

Financial incentives can be an effective tool to encourage a faster change in norms and practices.

Despite making great progress in girls' education, women remain underrepresented in STEM fields and more generally in the Senegalese formal labor market. Additionally, women are less likely to enroll in STEM fields than their male counterparts, despite the high demand for technical skillset. Incentives can encourage women's participation in both tertiary education and eventually the workforce by (i) providing scholarships for deserving girls to pursue higher education, with a focus on STEM fields; (ii) offer employers fiscal incentives for hiring of women (iii) offer tax incentives and expand guarantee schemes reserved to women entrepreneurs for women entrepreneurs that would encourage them to borrow at concessionary rates, formalize and expand their businesses.

Reinforce capacity

Reinforcing the capacity of both civil servants and beneficiaries themselves is necessary to improve the execution of gender parity initiatives.

One key barrier observed across dimensions, from women entrepreneurs who lack the business skills to grow their businesses to women who aspire to senior leadership positions in the private or public sector, is the lack of technical capacity to seize opportunities. Emphasis should be placed on business training for women entrepreneurs to help them structure their projects and make them investment ready. Training should also be provided to women politicians, particularly in public speaking and fundraising. These capacity-building efforts will enable these women to be better prepared to succeed in male-dominated fields.

Public institutions also need capacity reinforcement to carry out their mission for a more gender-equal society. In the education system for instance, teachers will need to be trained to avoid perpetuating stereotypes in their illustrative examples in class and show support to girls who want to pursue technical tracks. In Ministries and public Agencies, gender mainstreaming is slowed down by the lack of knowledge and familiarity with tools by key policymakers. They need training to systematically incorporate gender considerations into policies and interventions.

Create an inclusive legal framework

Reforming the legal framework to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women is essential to removing persistent legal barriers women face. Laws that discriminate against women, such as provisions on child marriage in the Family Code still exist in Senegal, despite the country's ratification of international conventions on women's rights.

The law that sets the minimum age of marriage for girls at 16 and boys at 18, legitimizes marriage for girls at an early age and encourages early pregnancies. This practice results in higher fertility rates and unfavorable outcomes for girls' education, especially in secondary and higher education, as married girls tend to drop out of schools. A revision of the Family Code to raise the minimum age of marriage for girls up to 18 would be a major step towards reducing child marriage in Senegal. Furthermore, early marriage, involving girls under 16, is only sanctioned in civil law by an annulment of the marriage, which is not dissuasive enough to stop this practice. Reforms to introduce criminal sanctions could help fight against the harmful practice of child marriage. These reforms would have to be paired with social behavioral change interventions to ensure enforcement and understanding from local populations.

In the labor market, the Labor Code grants 14 weeks of maternity leave and only one day of paternity leave. This law not only reinforces the gender biased social norm that the mother is the sole caretaker of children at home, while the father works outside the home. Additionally, it makes the recruitment

of men more attractive to employers, as they are unlikely to take extended time away from work. Extending the length of paternity leave to equal that of maternity leave will reduce the bias of recruiters who see young women applicants as future mothers who will be absent, which is a major barrier to women's participation in the labor market.

D. APPENDIX

D1. Methodology used for the case study

Anchoring the Gender Equality and Parity Study in the 2050 ECOWAS HCD Strategy

The ECOWAS Human Capital Development framework evaluates regional performance metrics across three dimensions, which measure social, economic, and educational elements, all critical for societies to thrive. Dimensions selected include:

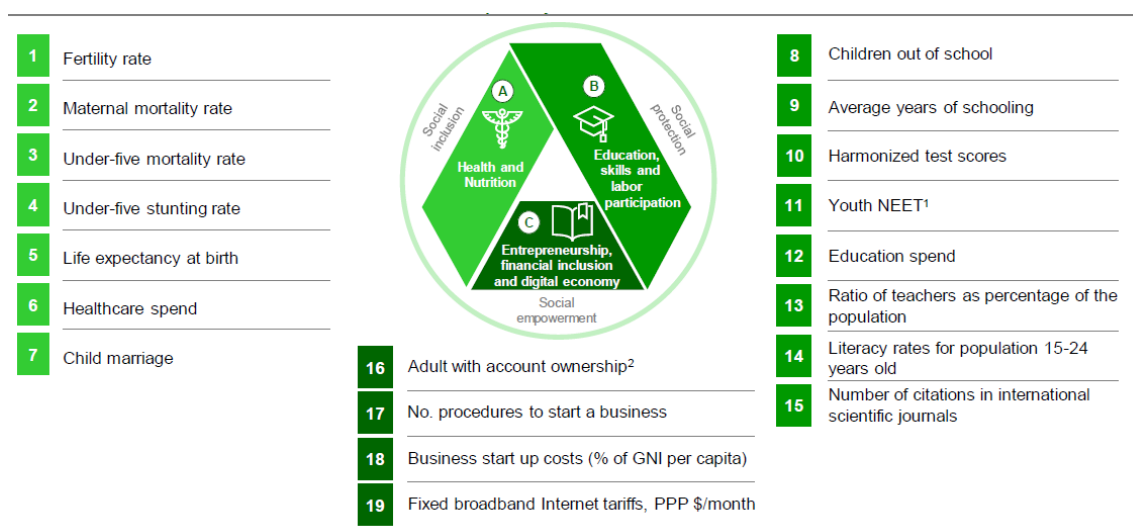
- Health and nutrition
- Education, skills, and labor participation
- Entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and digital economy

We have also added a political empowerment dimension to assess women's representation in the political arena and capture the challenges they still face.

The gender-transformative human capital development (HCD) strategy is anchored into this overall HCD approach and aims to promote gender equity and equality as key to reaching inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Gender inclusion is critical to drive economic growth and increase societal value. All fifteen Member States have untapped opportunities when it comes to gender equality and parity. For these reasons, gender inclusion is a cross-cutting enabler of the HCD Strategy aligned around the previously outlined dimensions.

Each one of these dimensions breaks down into a set of priority indicators as illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 20 : The ECOWAS HCD framework

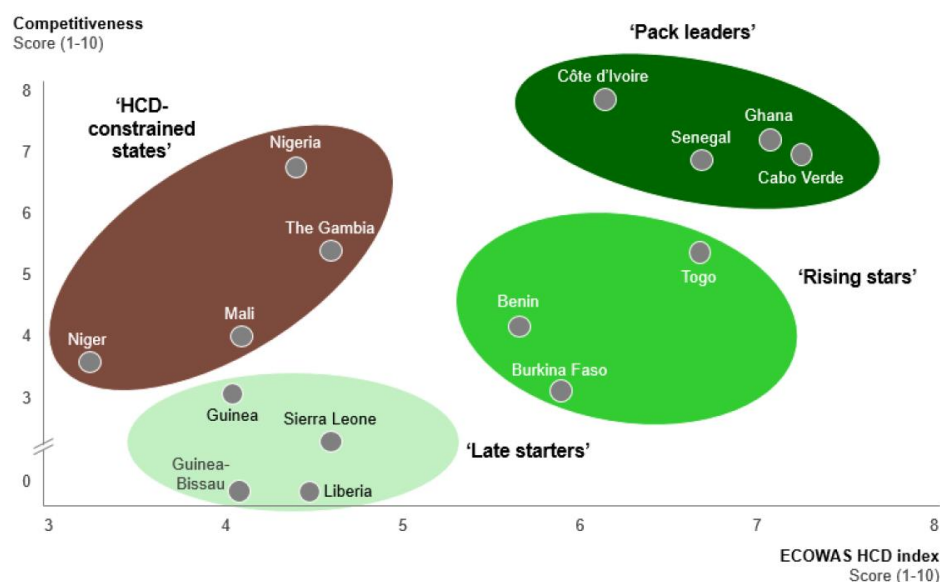


ECOWAS HCD strategy categorizes countries in four clusters based on their HCD performance and economic competitiveness.

- **The Pack Leaders** are the strongest performers on both HCD and competitiveness
- **The Rising Stars** have been registered average performances on both HCD and competitiveness

- **The HCD-constrained States** are lagging behind their peers on HCD indicators despite strong economic competitiveness performances
- **The Late Starters** have experienced a stunt in their progress on HCD indicators resulting in competitiveness under-performance

Figure 21: ECOWAS country clusters based on economic competitiveness and HCD performance³⁴



The country performance assessment will be framed around these four archetypes and use the selected indicators across each HCD dimension as guidance to evaluate MS' gender parity performance. This clustered approach will capture the region's diversity and allow a comparison of countries performance facing similar constraints. This study will then review the gender parity performance for each dimension of the HCD framework to understand the drivers and binding constraints to reach total parity (Score of 1 for the index).

Key indicators selected to assess gender parity performance

This study will seek to assess gender equality and parity across a set of key indicators under each dimension (health, education, entrepreneurship, and political empowerment). The figure below is an initial selection of relevant indicators for the gender parity analysis that are used to frame this country assessment. These indicators were chosen because they relate to gender parity and equality. While not an exhaustive list of indicators for lack of gender disaggregated data across all 15 Member States, these indicators capture the state of gender parity consistently across the region.

³⁴ ECOWAS 2030 Integrated Regional Strategy for Human Capital Development

Figure 22: Selected indicators across HCD dimensions for regional and country gender parity analysis

| Selected indicators | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|
| Dimension | Health and Nutrition | Entrepreneurship, financial inclusion and digital economy | Education, skills and labor participation |
| HCD Indicators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fertility rate Maternal mortality ratio Child marriage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults with account ownership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average years of schooling Literacy rate |
| Additional indicators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life expectancy Prevalence of stunting for height | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated earned income | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labor force participation Primary school enrolment rate Secondary school enrolment rate Tertiary enrolment rate Average years of schooling |
| Additional dimension | Political Empowerment Seats in parliament Women in ministerial positions | | |

D2. Methodology used to conduct interviews and type of stakeholders interviewed

A total of 20 stakeholder interviews were conducted to draft the Senegal deep dive report:

- 5 interviews with ministries and government agencies allowed us to identify challenges and potential opportunities in current gender focused interventions implemented by Member State governments.
- 6 interviews with technical partners were conducted to identify successful gender focused interventions to scale up and synergies between their activities and ECOWAS interventions.
- 3 interviews with civil society organizations focused on promoting women and girls' social, political, and economic inclusion. These conversations were critical to identifying successful initiatives implemented by these organizations to advance gender parity objectives.
- 6 interviews with private sector actors were held and conversations with female-led businesses across a wide range of sectors were prioritized to better understand the hurdles women face when pursuing their professional aspirations.

We applied a hypothesis-driven approach to develop tailored interview guides for each interviewees/stakeholder archetypes. The table below outlines the list of stakeholders interviewed for the purpose of this study.

Table 1: List of stakeholders interviewed in Senegal

| Type of stakeholder | Institution |
|---------------------|---|
| Government | Ministry of Digital Economy and Telecommunications |
| | Ministry of Women, Family, Gender and Child Protection - Gender Equity and Equality Directorate |
| | Ministry of Health and Social Action |

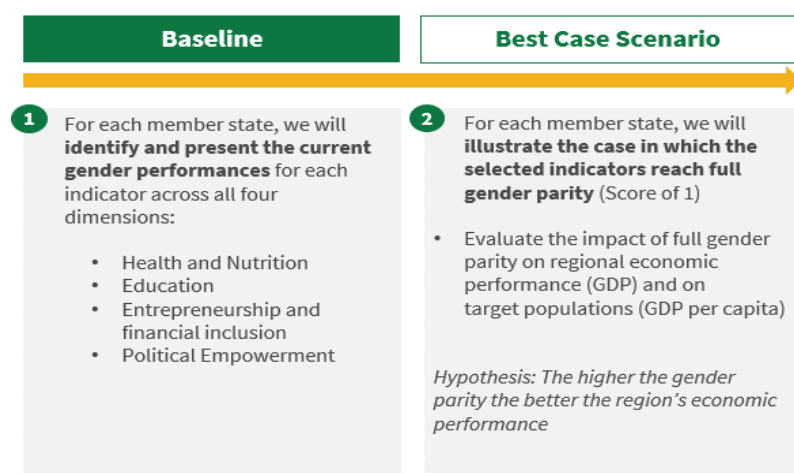
| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | Ministry of National Education |
| | Delegation for Rapid Entrepreneurship of Women and Youth (DER FJ) |
| Technical Partners | European Union Delegation |
| | Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) |
| | Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICAN) |
| | LuxDev |
| | United States Agency for International Development (USAID) |
| | Mastercard Foundation |
| Civil Society Organizations | Peace and Security Network for Women in the ECOWAS Region (REPSFECO) |
| | Women in Law and Development (WiLDAF) |
| | Leadership Jeune |
| Private Sector | Women's Investment Club (WIC) |
| | E & Partners |
| | National Bank for Economic Development (BNDE) |
| | The Dancehall |
| | Nest for All |
| | Synapsis Conseil |

D3. Methodology used to measure the economic impact of gender parity

The methodology focused on testing the hypothesis that higher gender parity scores lead to a more inclusive society and drive sustainable economic growth. The objective of the modeling exercise was to size the economic potential across each dimension if the region is to achieve gender parity. The purpose is to understand how improvements in gender parity in each dimension can positively impact economic performance.

By using GPS scores for selected indicators and for each country, a baseline and best-case scenario was developed as illustrated below.

Figure 23: Illustration of the scenario modeling methodology



Prior to running the simulations, the pre-selected indicators were presented to ECOWAS to review their relevance to gender. Upon validation of the indicators, a baseline was created for each country using their current gender parity performance scores and determine their current economic performance.

A panel data on the evolution of economic growth was used for each year between 2000 and 2030 in fourteen (14) West African states, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Capo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo³⁵. This model analyzed the impact of these different variables on the economic growth for the fourteen (14) countries.

$$\text{GDPgrowth}_{it} = \alpha + \delta \text{GPS}_{it} + \beta \text{X}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}$$

GDPgrowth_{it} = dependent variable- GDP growth for the country (i) at time (t)

α = the constant

δ = the coefficient of Gender Parity Index for country (i) at time (t)

GPS_{it} = Gender Parity Score is the variable of interest – independent variable for country (i) at time (t)

β = the coefficient of the control variables

X_{it} = control variables for country (i) at time (t)

ϵ_{it} = error term

A baseline and best-case scenarios simulation were conducted to estimate the impact on the economic performance and targeted populations. With GDP growth as the dependent variable and the GPS as the independent variable of interest. World Bank databases on population growth, the share of international trade in GDP, gross savings rate, and the corruption index were used as control variables in the model. Thus, the indicators whose coefficients were found to be more significant on GDP growth were retained. As a result, primary, secondary, tertiary enrolment rates, literacy rate and labor force participation were determined to be the indicators with the most significant impact on GDP growth.

³⁵ Guinea Bissau was excluded from the model due to insufficient data availability

D4. Indicators tables across the 4 dimensions

Health & Nutrition

Table 2: Senegal's GPS in Health and Nutrition within its cluster and regional average (2020)

| Indicators Countries | Fertility rate (total births per woman) | Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births) | Prevalence of stunting for height (GPS) | Child marriage (% of girls <18) | Life expectancy at birth (GPS) |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | | |
| Cabo Verde | 1.87 | 40.90 | 0.84 | N/A | 1.08 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 4.69 | 613.12 | 0.95 | 27 | 1.04 |
| Ghana | 3.81 | 297.08 | 0.79 | 19.33 | 1.03 |
| Senegal | 4.71 | 322.87 | 0.82 | 30.5 | 1.06 |
| Cluster Average | 3.77 | 318.49 | 0.85 | 25.61 | 1.05 |
| Regional Average | 4.75 | 496.78 | 0.82 | 37.18 | 1.04 |

Table 3: Senegal's GPS evolution in Health and Nutrition between 2016 – 2020

| Indicators | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | CAGR (2016-2020) |
|--|------|------|------|--------|--------|------------------|
| Fertility rate (total births per woman) | 4.77 | 4.70 | 4.63 | 4.56 | 4.71 | -0.23% |
| Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births) | 330 | 315 | 321 | 319.96 | 322.87 | -0.44% |
| Prevalence of stunting for height (GPS) | 0.76 | 0.83 | 0.73 | 0.89 | 0.82 | +1.58% |
| Child marriage (% of girls <18) | 30.5 | 30.5 | 30.5 | 30.5 | 30.5 | 0.00% |
| Life expectancy at birth (GPS) | 1.06 | 1.06 | 1.06 | 1.06 | 1.06 | -0.02% |

Education, Skills and Labor Participation

Table 4: Senegal's GPS in Education, Skills and Labor Participation within its cluster and regional average (2020)

| Indicators | Literacy rate | Average years of schooling | Primary school enrolment rate | Secondary enrolment rate | Tertiary enrolment rate | Labor force participation |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Countries | (GPS) | (GPS) | (GPS) | (GPS) | (GPS) | (GPS) |
| Cabo Verde | 1.02 | 1.03 | 0.94 | 0.98 | 1.47 | 0.92 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 0.85 | 0.88 | 0.94 | 0.83 | 0.69 | 0.71 |
| Ghana | 1.01 | 1.00 | 1.02 | 1.00 | 0.90 | 0.87 |
| Senegal | 0.84 | 1.12 | 1.15 | 1.16 | 0.78 | 0.61 |
| Cluster Average | 0.93 | 1.01 | 1.01 | 0.99 | 0.96 | 0.78 |
| Regional Average | 0.83 ¹³ | 0.92 | 0.99 | 0.90 ¹⁶ | 0.71 | 0.84 |

Table 5: Senegal's GPS evolution in Education, Skills and Labor Participation between 2016 – 2020

| Indicators \ Years | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | CAGR (2016-2020) |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| Literacy rate (GPS) | 0.83 | 0.84 | 0.84 | 0.84 | 0.84 | +0.33% |
| Average years of schooling (GPS) | 1.06 | 1.09 | 1.09 | 1.10 | 1.12 | +1.05% |
| Primary school enrolment rate (GPS) | 1.13 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.14 | 1.15 | +0.38% |
| Secondary enrolment rate (GPS) | 1.05 | 1.10 | 1.10 | 1.13 | 1.16 | +1.98% |
| Tertiary enrolment rate (GPS) | 0.59 | 0.60 | 0.68 | 0.75 | 0.78 | +5.80% |
| Labor force participation (GPS) | 0.60 | 0.60 | 0.61 | 0.61 | 0.61 | +0.18% |

Entrepreneurship, Financial Inclusion, and Digital Economy

Table 6: Senegal's GPS in Entrepreneurship, financial inclusion and digital economy within its cluster and regional average (2020)

| Indicators \ Countries | Adult with account ownership at financial institution (GPS) | Estimated earned income (GPS) |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Cabo Verde | N/A | 0.69 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 0.77 | 0.55 |
| Ghana | 0.90 | 0.29 |
| Senegal | 0.78 | 0.49 |
| Cluster Average | 0.82 | 0.51 |
| Regional Average | 0.68 | 0.63 |

Table 7: Senegal's GPS evolution in Entrepreneurship, financial inclusion and digital economy between 2016 – 2020

| Indicators \ Years | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | CAGR (2016-2020) |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| Adult with account ownership at financial institution (GPS) | 0.76 | 0.82 | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.78 | +0.68% |
| Estimated earned income (GPS) | 0.50 | 0.50 | N/A | 0.46 | 0.49 | -0.72% |

Political empowerment

Table 8: Senegal's GPS in Political within its cluster and regional average (2020)

| Indicators Countries | Seats in parliament | Ministerial positions |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | (GPS) | (GPS) |
| Cabo Verde | 0.33 | 0.17 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 0.13 | 0.15 |
| Ghana | 0.15 | 0.32 |
| Senegal | 0.76 | 0.28 |
| Cluster Average | 0.34 | 0.23 |
| Regional Average | 0.21 | 0.25 |

Table 9: Senegal's GPS evolution in Political Empowerment between 2016 – 2020

| Indicators | Years | | | | | CAGR (2016-2020) |
|--|-------|------|------|------|------|---------------------|
| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | |
| Seats in parliament (GPS) | 0.74 | 0.72 | 0.72 | 0.72 | 0.76 | +0.30% |
| Ministerial positions (GPS) | 0.25 | 0.29 | 0.30 | 0.28 | 0.28 | +2.29% |