



LOCAL FEDERATION OF ECONOMIC INTEREST GROUPS OF NIODIOR (FELOGIE)

Senegal



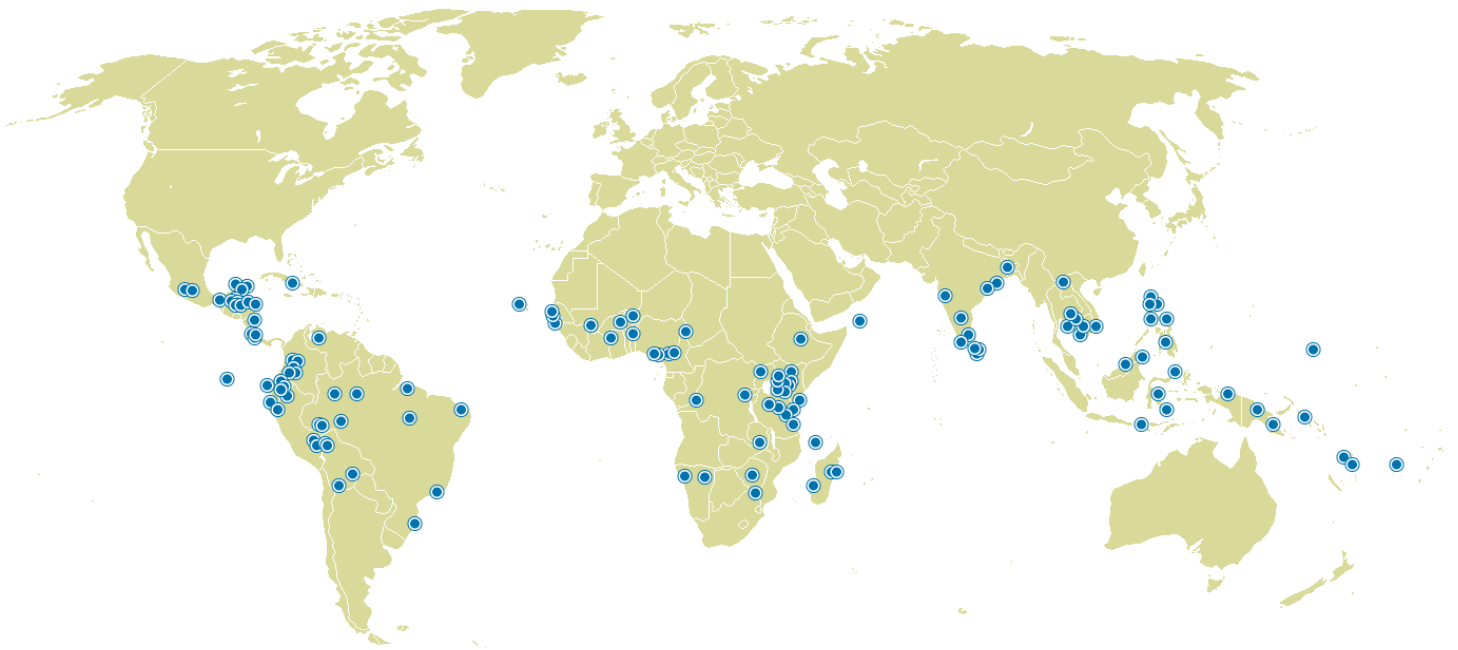
Equator Initiative Case Studies

Local sustainable development solutions for people, nature, and resilient communities

UNDP EQUATOR INITIATIVE CASE STUDY SERIES

Local and indigenous communities across the world are advancing innovative sustainable development solutions that work for people and for nature. Few publications or case studies tell the full story of how such initiatives evolve, the breadth of their impacts, or how they change over time. Fewer still have undertaken to tell these stories with community practitioners themselves guiding the narrative.

To mark its 10-year anniversary, the Equator Initiative aims to fill this gap. The following case study is one in a growing series that details the work of Equator Prize winners – vetted and peer-reviewed best practices in community-based environmental conservation and sustainable livelihoods. These cases are intended to inspire the policy dialogue needed to take local success to scale, to improve the global knowledge base on local environment and development solutions, and to serve as models for replication. Case studies are best viewed and understood with reference to *'The Power of Local Action: Lessons from 10 Years of the Equator Prize'*, a compendium of lessons learned and policy guidance that draws from the case material.



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PROJECT SUMMARY

Since 2005, this federation of women's economic interest groups, centered on the island of Niodior, has worked to rehabilitate mangrove ecosystems and promote natural resource management in the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve. The group was founded in response to multiple pressures on the reserve's mangrove and marine resources, and a 22-woman monitoring committee was established to regulate the harvesting of marine and forest resources.

With funding from the UNDP-implemented GEF Small Grants Programme, the initiative developed a participatory code of conduct for marine harvesting, purchased equipment to monitor access to the reserve, and established a central fund to provide loans to individual groups, benefitting more than 7,000 local people through the provision of microcredit. This fund is supplied with revenue from the harvesting of zones following year-long enforcement of 'no-take' regulations.

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KEY FACTS

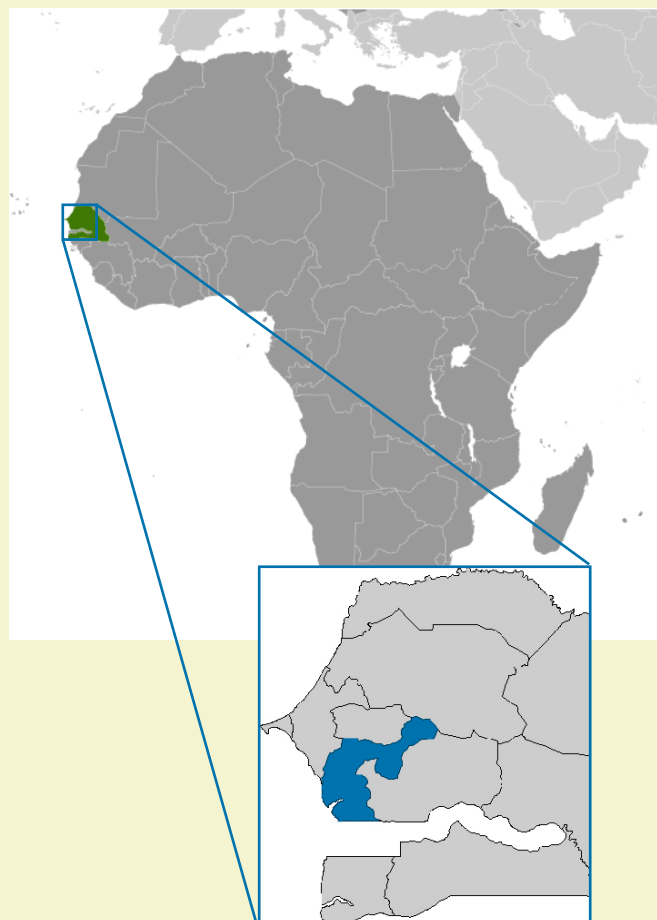
EQUATOR PRIZE WINNER: 2010

FOUNDED: 2005

LOCATION: Niodor, Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve

BENEFICIARIES: Several hundred villagers

BIODIVERSITY: Sustainable harvesting and reforestation



Background and Context



The Local Federation of Economic Interest Groups of Niodior (FEL-OGIE-Niodior) addresses issues of biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in Senegal's Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve, an area that includes mangrove, marine, and forest ecosystems. Established in 2005, the federation reforests local mangroves and aims to regenerate shellfish beds in areas that have been degraded. FELOGIE-Niodior implements a participatory approach to resource governance. A local monitoring committee oversees, supervises and regulates the harvesting of marine and forest resources. Community education and outreach are at the heart of the organization's work, with particular attention given to increasing local awareness of the rules and regulations around forestry, fishing and other sectors which have been developed to stem over-exploitation. Project sustainability is ensured through an Environment and Development Support Fund (FAED). Women's economic interest groups form the membership base of the organization and function as local micro-lending institutions and savings schemes.

Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve

The Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve is situated 150 kilometers southeast of Dakar. It is comprised of 234,000 hectares of marine, flooded, and terrestrial ecosystems. Mangrove forests account for 60,000 hectares and are composed of four principal species: *Rhizophora racemosa*, *R. mangle*, *R. harrisonii* and *Avicennia nitida*. These mangroves play an essential role in preventing coastal erosion and act as a breeding ground for several species of fish and shellfish. The reserve is also a globally important migratory site for Palearctic birds, with over 60,000 nesting sites and 95 species identified. It is also the only breeding site in the world for the Royal Tern (*Sterna maxima*). The reserve marine and coastal ecosystems also host breeding sites for green sea turtles (*Chelonia midas*), manatees, and Sousa dolphins. Coastal waters contain over 115 species of fish, making it the sixth most biodiversity estuary in the world. In addition, 186 tree species and 35 medium- and large-sized fauna species have been counted in the reserve.

Local economy and environmental threats

Shellfish occupy an important place in the Saloum Delta economy, and on the island of Niodior in particular. Ark clams (*Anadara senilis*), mangrove oysters (*Crassostrea gasar*), Melongena snails (*Pugilina morio*), and gastropod mollusks (*Cymbium sp.* and *Murex sp.*) are some of the most important species for local livelihoods and home consumption. The harvesting of shellfish is the primary source of income for women on the island of Niodior and throughout the Saloum Delta. Beyond being a source of food and revenue, shellfish are also used in the construction of homes, in the production of chalk, and in artisanal crafts. Shellfish are in all respects the cornerstone of the local economy and of local wellbeing. The mangrove-based ecosystem of the Saloum Delta faces myriad threats. The extension of rice agriculture, overexploitation of forests, forest fires, overfishing, the destruction of habitats for migratory and endemic birds, and industrial development are just some of the many drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem decline in the region.

So too, in recent years, climate variability has begun to negatively impact the traditional practice of harvesting shellfish. As amounts of rainfall began to decrease, water salinity began to increase. This problem was further exacerbated by the degradation of mangrove forests, which when healthy would have served as a natural buffer and defense against sea level rise and a natural filter of salt and sediments. Then, in 1987, the Niodior area of the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve was affected by the breaching of the Sangomar headland. This breach, which was a consequence of the rising sea level of the Atlantic Ocean, considerably modified the biotope for fish species by introducing sea water into the bolongs (fresh-water creeks) of the Sine-Saloum River. This led to further degradation of the mangroves and a decline in the number and size of virtually all species of fish and shellfish. Within a few years of this event, the depletion of shellfish stocks in particular began to result in serious food shortages and income loss, and people began to leave Niodior to seek work in urban zones. Further, considerable coastal erosion was taking place

and threatened to wipe out some villages entirely.

The evolution of a marine resource management model

The village of Niodior is an island located in the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve. The island population lives mainly by fishing and harvesting shellfish. Faced with environmental deterioration and depletion of a number of species, the community organized themselves to self-manage their marine resources. FELOGIE-Niodior was born of the idea of setting up a monitoring committee of 22 members from various organizations in the village. Once established, this committee received catalytic funds from the UNDP implemented GEF-Small Grants Programme (SGP). With these funds, the organization was able to purchase equipment (a motorboat, lifejackets, uniforms, and identity badges), sensitize the local population to prevailing environmental laws, establish an Environment and Development Support Fund (FAED), and draw up a 'participative code of conduct'. The vision was to use traditional knowledge and a participatory approach to develop an efficient system of managing, conserving, and regenerating endemic species and their habitats in order to ensure their continuity and sustainability in the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve.

The first concrete action taken by FELOGIE-Niodior's monitoring committee was to enforce a three-month closed season for fishing during the rainy season. In addition, the group selected a site which would be closed and protected for a full year, and which would later be harvested collectively. Proceeds from marine resources harvested and sold from this no-take zone were invested in a communal fund set up to support social projects, the Environment and Development Support Fund (FAED). From early on in its organizational development, FELOGIE-Niodior has found it necessary to establish close relationships with local authorities since all matters related to community development and natural resource management are within their jurisdiction. FELOGIE-Niodior often invites officers from the Fishing Service to attend their meetings and relies on these officers to help inform local people about changes in fishing codes. The Center for Local Development is another government structure with which FELOGIE-Niodior works closely. Representatives from the CADL work in the Saloum Delta to connect women's groups like FELOGIE-Niodior with resources and support.

FELOGIE-Niodior based its organizational system on the already existing institution of women's economic interest groups. This group model has gained popularity in Senegal as a way of promoting the economic development of rural communities, with women in the lead. Economic interest groups function as both a savings and microcredit scheme. By joining one of these groups, local women have access to financial resources that would ordinarily be denied to them as individuals, as the vast majority of financial institutions prefer to

lend money to groups. While FELOGIE-Niodior is primarily a federation of these economic interest groups, it has sought to involve all segments of the local population in decision-making—including women, men, children, local and administrative authorities, and religious and traditional leaders.

The organization has several mutually reinforcing key objectives including mangrove restoration, shellfish bed regeneration and repopulation, implementation of a code of participatory conduct (standards of engagement with the environment), raising public awareness of responsible and sustainable shellfish harvesting techniques, strengthen the capacity of local women in developing fish and non-timber forest products, development of alternative income-generating activities to reduce pressure on shellfish, fighting sea pollution, and operating a fund (FAED) to finance community development projects and provide local women with a degree of financial autonomy.

Governance and organizational structure

The initiative is managed locally by the members of FELOGIE-Niodior who are supported in their work by the Center for Local Development. Each of the 22 participating economic interest groups has a leader who represents her group in larger meetings and decision-making processes. The 22 leaders gather regularly to plan and brainstorm project ideas. All members of FELOGIE-Niodior meet monthly to discuss and approve project proposals. Seasonally, the members of FELOGIE-Niodior meet with surrounding villages to make decisions on dates of the closed season. After these meetings, regional and local authorities issue the necessary documents and decrees to formalize decisions taken. The monitoring committee is then responsible for monitoring and regulating adherence. Social mobilization and participatory exchange meetings are frequently organized in order to evaluate and build on the achievements of the initiative. The FAED is opened to participating members for both small loans and larger projects. Each member of FELOGIE-Niodior may take a loan of up to 300,000 CFA to be paid back within six months at 10% interest. With the money earned through loan interest and other projects such as collective harvesting, the women have been able to invest in larger projects, such as a processing center, building local schools and more.

The key players in FELOGIE-Niodior's founding were the women of Niodior, the local monitoring committee, the UNDP implemented GEF-Small Grants Programme team, the Rural Council, the local ministerial representative (sub-prefect), the head of the Center for Local Development (CADL) – a decentralized government agency which provides technical guidance and monitors the project activities – and local traditional and religious leaders.

“Let's preserve biodiversity for the continuation of life on earth. Let's mobilize to save endangered species. Let's form a compact to combat climate change through reforestation.”

Amy Ndour, FELOGIE-Niodior

Key Activities and Innovations



The problems that prompted the creation of FELOGIE-Niodior have been significantly addressed through ecosystem restoration, mangrove reforestation and a community-based resource management system of no-take zones (closed seasons) which allows for the rejuvenation of shellfish and other marine species. Local women have been able to add value to their fish and forest products, improve catch sizes, pool money into a communal fund – and in turn access small loans for social projects – and gain new skills. Project beneficiaries extend beyond the women, men and youth of Niodior to local religious, education and health institutions and the populations of surrounding islands within the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve. The federation actively involves all 7,000 members of the local community in its activities.

Closed seasons for shellfish and mangrove reforestation

The group has developed and implements a participatory code of conduct for the sustainable management of biodiversity. A monitoring committee has been established to monitor and regulate the use of marine and forest resources, including the enforcement of closed seasons for biological recovery. The organization has made it a priority to raise awareness among the local people regarding national forestry, fishery, and environmental regulations so as to promote the sustainable and responsible use of natural resources. Outreach and communications campaigns often employ community radio. Awareness-raising also takes place by way of popular theater, exchange visits, television reports, and participation in fairs.

With federation leadership, Niodior and its surrounding islands regularly create and enforce at least one closed season a year which permits the regeneration of shellfish. The process of restoring and repopulating shellfish beds begins first with identifying which mudflat beds are degraded, a process that is supported through the use of traditional knowledge of village elders. The characteristics of the targeted mudflat bed are examined, verifying whether it is muddy, sandy, or sandy-muddy. Shellfish which are still in their growth stage are

transplanted from a mudflat bed with the same characteristics as the degraded one. After this stocking and distribution, the zone is closed and closely monitored for at least one year. After a year of closure, collective harvesting is done at the repopulated mudflat bed with revenue being placed in the FAED. Thus far, eight degraded shellfish beds covering an area of more than six hectares have been identified and restored in this fashion. No-take zones are complemented by prohibitions on certain types of destructive fishing practices, the use of unregulated fishing gear, and the catching of undersized fish and sea turtles.

The identification and stocking of degraded mudflat beds began for the first time on the islands of Niodior and Dionewar. After several exchange workshops, the head of the Center for Local Development (a trained oceanography and fishery technician) had the idea to repopulate the degraded shellfish beds. This technique was applied in the image of the concession areas projects in Senegal/Mauritania where communities were putting into place pastoral-forest areas in Walo to ensure forage reserves for livestock.

FELOGIE-Niodior had to overcome some initial challenges in implementing this model. In the early stages of the project, it was difficult to get seasonal and non-local fishers to comply with closed season regulations. So too, the women of Niodior share some mudflats with women on neighboring islands. The closure of shellfish harvesting sites for biological recovery, therefore, often triggered disputes between these groups. Success came after disseminating information and widespread awareness-raising to these other local stakeholders who gradually came to understand and appreciate the importance of these project activities. Today, an inter-village committee for the island populations that share shellfish beds meets to harmonize conservation activities.

FELOGIE-Niodior is also actively involved in the restoration and reforestation of mangroves. Every year, two reforestation campaigns are organized using money from a communal fund. A typical campaign

mobilizes at least 300 women, with each woman planting at least 300 roots or propagules. After every tree-planting campaign, a sum equivalent to USD 2.20 is given to each woman as a symbolic gesture of thanks for their participation.

A communal rotating fund

The financial engine of the federation is the Environment and Development Support Fund (FAED). Established in 2006, this rotating fund was created by the 22 economic interest groups in each village with guidance from the head of the Center for Local Development. The 400 women who were members at the time agreed to contribute 1kg of shellfish each month (equivalent to 1,000 CFA). In addition, each economic interest group made a one-time contribution of 50,000 CFA to increase the size of the fund. Lastly, revenues generated from the communal harvesting of a stocking zones were also paid into the fund. (The latter has been a significant source of revenues. In early 2007, for example, communal harvesting generated more than 2.5 million CFA.)

The federation initially used interest from the fund to make donations of 50,000 CFA to six places of worship and three schools. At a later stage, interest was channeled into the construction of a processing center to meet the quality standards of fishery and forest products that would be sold beyond local markets. Since completion of the processing center, interest has been distributed to village schools, health centers and places of worship.

Trainings and workshops

FELOGIE-Niodior aims to contribute to poverty reduction by building the capacities of local women. The federation has provided training and workshops on a range of topics, including marketing skills and business development. One central focus of trainings has been value-added secondary processing. This has allowed participating women to gain skills and learn techniques which create new value for their mangrove forest and marine products. Local women have accordingly been able to increase their incomes and strengthen their financial independence. Previously, local women harvesting marine and forest resources were in a position of needing to sell their product through middle men for processing. Today, these same women have a processing center and the technical skills to transform their products locally.

Traditional knowledge

Traditional knowledge has played a central role in the success of FELOGIE-Niodior activities. In particular, traditional knowledge and authorities have been instrumental in the drafting, acceptance and application of the participatory code of conduct which governs local resource management. The village of Niodior is more than 99% populated by ethnic Sérère people. Long before decentralization began in Senegal, customary chiefs made all decisions deemed necessary for sustainable natural resource management. There was a high level of compliance with these dictums. For example, at the approach of the rainy season which coincides with the reproductive season for shellfish, harvesting was forbidden for the simple reason that shells were too hard. Local wisdom also held that if the community harvested shellfish during this time, the rainy season would be protracted and produce poor harvests of subsistence crops. Even though FELOGIE-Niodior's monitoring committee was only recently set up, they have been able to draw from traditional knowledge and reverence for local tradition to raise awareness among the local population.



“Our advice to other communities wishing to establish an effective project for sustainable biodiversity conservation would be to establish a fund similar to our FAED. This type of fund, in addition to creating financial independence and refinancing conservation activities, enables the organization to regularly exchange knowledge at a frequency that follows the length of credit cycles.”

Amy Ndour, FELOGIE-Niodior

Impacts



BIODIVERSITY IMPACTS

Each year, two mangrove reforestation campaigns are organized for the regeneration of degraded sites. As a result of the reforestation campaigns, the mangrove ecosystem has been essentially restored, resulting in the reappearance and abundance of certain fish species. Certain species had not been seen in forty years, and have now returned, including three species of shellfish. So far, a total of eight mangrove sites have been reforested which has resulted in an increase in biomass and in the intake of large quantities of a species of shellfish. There are now several spawning and nesting sites within the zone for both fish and sea turtles. Additional positive impacts of these reforestation campaigns include improved carbon sequestration and the mitigation of coastal erosion.

Participatory code of conduct

The source of the majority of biodiversity benefits resulting from FELOGIE-Niodior work is the organization's participatory code of conduct. This document (a de facto charter of local duties and responsibilities) outlines the rules and guidelines for the use of specific resources which underpin the local economy. The document has been approved by the community and the local government. The code of conduct is particularly explicit regarding: open and closed periods for the collection of timber and non-timber forests products; a biological recovery period for fish and shellfish; restrictions on certain types of fishing techniques and equipment in sea turtle nesting and fish breeding sites; the use of selective sieves for harvesting shellfish; restocking and closure of degraded shellfish beds; and the reforestation of degraded mangrove sites.

Habitat restoration

The application of community-based management and conservation methods has enabled habitat restoration for several species and has more generally contributed to the improved health of marine

and coastal ecosystems within the biosphere reserve. This can be seen by the restoration of spawning grounds, renewed productivity of mangrove ecosystems (through the reappearance of *Iphigenia sp.*, a species that had previously disappeared), and the flourishing of previously rare species (*Carpella aurita*, *Epinephelus aenus*, and others). The food chain also seems to have been restored, as phytoplankton have become abundant due to biological recovery periods, and the phytoplankton serve as a food source for the clams which then feed the mollusks. Migratory birds have also benefited from improvements to the health of the habitat and ecosystem.

Biological monitoring and impact assessment

FELOGIE-Niodior measures its impacts on biodiversity in two ways: i) through community-based resource monitoring and the use of weight logs, and ii) by working in collaboration with research institutions to take inventory of biodiversity and assess the impacts of management practices and biodiversity conservation activities. Weight logs, with a 500 kilogram scale, are made available to the economic interest groups. Women harvesters pass directly through a weighing site after each harvesting tide. There, they weigh the shellfish collected and record the number in log book. The total weight of each group is then calculated at the end of each month. As points of comparison, this weighing exercise is undertaken in three different mudflat beds: one mudflat used regularly by local women, another degraded one which had been repopulated and closed, and a third which had closed naturally without repopulation.

SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS

The restocking of degraded shellfish beds has led to the regeneration, sustainability, and abundance of shellfish populations, which has in turn improved the availability of food and increased local incomes. The island of Niodior, which had been suffering population decreases due to young people leaving to seek employment in the capital, has seen a noticeable return (particularly among young women) due to

the improved economic opportunities created by the federation. Each member of FELOGIE-Niodior has a distinct role; some focus on collecting and processing products while others bring products to market for sale in larger cities like Dakar and Touba.

Improved incomes and food security

By allowing forest and marine resources to rejuvenate and recover, the federation has significantly increased the incomes of local women and given them a greater degree of financial independence. The tonnage of shellfish sold by the FELOGIE-Niodior women has increased dramatically due to the introduction of closed periods, the restoration of degraded mudflats, and the reappearance in 2007 of the propagating *Iphigenia* species. On average, each woman collects eight kilograms per tide, and two tides can be exploited per month. This means that each woman can harvest sixteen kilograms of shellfish per month. Including the three-month closed season, the annual tonnage sold for this newly emerged species (*Iphigenia*) is 57.6 tons for all 400 women. Harvesting yields of the common edible cockle species have also increased. Local women have also received capacity building support in value-added secondary processing and training in the use of modern shellfish-harvesting technologies. The women of Niodior sell their products in the Fatick region, as well as in Dakar, Touba, Thies, Kaolack and Diourbel.

Revolving fund and micro-credit

The independence of local women has been further enhanced by the credit provided by the Environment and Development Support Fund (FAED). The rotating communal fund – which currently stands at roughly USD 55,500 – has given women who were previously excluded from form credit and savings systems access to small loans of between 50,000 and 300,000 CFA. Loans extend over a six-month period at an interest rate of 10%. The FAED is grown through: i) monthly contributions of 1 kg of *arca noae*, valued at 1,000 CFA by each of the 400 members of FELOGIE-Niodior; and ii) communal harvesting carried out each year of the restocked and monitored shellfish beds. The latter generates approximately 2,500,000 CFA per year. This revolving microcredit program has also facilitated the construction of a forestry products processing center (at a cost of 8,000,000 CFA), which has created employment and contributed to the conservation and sustainable use of shellfish resources by diversifying local livelihood activities. Improved access to financial resources in the form of FAED micro-credit loans has also helped to reduce inequalities between men and women.

Investments in education and health

Income from communal harvesting activities is also reinvested in school fees, a health center, places of worship, reforestation activities and the purification of well water during the rainy season. Another activity which benefits the community is allowing students to collect and sell ripe forest produce to purchase school supplies, which considerably reduces the burden of school fees for their parents. Previously, women earned money to pay for their children's school supplies by overexploiting the mangroves. Now, as women respect the closed season, there is a lack of additional income when school

begins in October. By allowing students to go to the forests to collect fruits from trees to sell, they are able to pay for their own school supplies. A sum of 50,000 CFA francs is also deducted annually from the FAED interest and distributed to various schools in the village. This same sum is also given to the Niodior health center. In 2007, the health team received a total sum of 400,000 CFA to disinfect wells in the village.

POLICY IMPACTS

The FELOGIE-Niodior model has inspired the national government to place considerable emphasis on co-management arrangements with communities in the revised Fisheries Code which. Initial outreach and advocacy was targeted at the local fishing population, as this was to be the source of behavior change and needed compliance with new rules and regulations governing marine resource access and use. As a second phase of program development, FELOGIE-Niodior invited government officials to visit and observe the community-based resource management model in action, and experience first-hand the biodiversity and income benefits that are possible from co-management arrangements. As a result, when the Government of Senegal was revising its fishing code, they solicited the advice and guidance of representatives from FELOGIE-Niodior.

The federation has also helped pioneer a model of local councils and local surveillance committees for marine resources and mangrove forests. On November 5, 2008, a decree for the creation, organization, and operation of local councils for artisanal maritime fishing was signed by the Minister of Maritime Economy and Transportation of Fish and Aquaculture. This model was based on the FELOGIE-Niodior experience. Surveillance committees are developed at the local level, eventually expanding to include the sub-prefect and the prefect. The committee then works to establish rules and advice in relation to the fisheries sector. This committee format is now prevalent throughout Senegal.



Sustainability and Replication



SUSTAINABILITY

The key elements which make FELOGIE-Niodior sustainable as an organization are increased capacities of community members, the participative code of conduct, and the FAED fund. These project components help to explain why, several years after the end of the SGP-financed project in 2007, FELOGIE-Niodior has been able to not only continue activities, but to add new ones.

The organization draws its operating funds from fees charged to those who fail to comply with the participatory code of conduct as well as interest accrued from the FAED interest. These funds have enabled FELOGIE-Niodior to finance continued mangrove reforestation, the maintenance and replacement of equipment, remuneration of committee members, and the purchase of fuel for the federation boat. The fish and forest products processing center is perhaps the best illustration of this reinvestment model at work. Construction of the processing center was financed through transgression fees, micro-credit loan interest, and through the FAED – all funds which were drawn from the local community, but which have been given a second life as a mechanism for greater efficiency, value-added secondary processing, and improved incomes.

Since the end of the first phase of the project, the FAED continues to grow and the monthly ark clam contributions continue as well. Since 2008, each collection allows the organization to receive more than 1,700,000 CFA in interest. This enables management and biodiversity activities to continue without touching the revolving capital which grows from cycle to cycle. In order to continue to strengthen the sustainability of its activities, FELOGIE-Niodior seeks to grow the revolving capital by contributing outside financing and local donations to the FAED. This will make the FELOGIE-NIODIOR-Niodior women even more independent and continue to increase the revenues used to finance conservation.

Other key factors that made FELOGIE-Niodior's success possible were its participatory approach to problem-solving, the involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation of projects, the determination of the local population, the enthusiasm and agreement of the women, and the technical framework and monitoring system introduced by the SGP team. Annual awareness-raising campaigns and capacity-building exercises further contribute to the social capital and solidarity which underpin the project.

REPLICATION

FELOGIE-Niodior's knowledge and successful track-record in the participatory management and conservation of natural resources has established the federation as a leader in the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve. FELOGIE-Niodior shares its model with other communities through knowledge exchange meetings, social mobilization sessions, and awareness campaigns which use community radio broadcasts and theater performances. The FAED enables the organization to regularly host exchange meetings between participating economic interest groups, ensuring that best practice transfer is facilitated within the federation as well.

The federation's many successes in biodiversity management and natural resource conservation have prompted the majority of nearby islands to engage in the community management of their own resources. For example, Niodior's monitoring committee has been replicated on neighboring islands and the island of Falia, whose 157 active women began a FAED in 2007. FELOGIE-Niodior also works closely with its sister organization, FELOGIE-Dionewar, located three kilometers from Niodior. The organization has 19 economic interest groups, 280 individual members, and shares certain shellfish mud-flats with the women of Niodior.

The Niodior and Dionewar FELOGIEs also play a leadership role in workshops and exchange meetings organized by the Network of Organizations for the Protection of Mangrove Ecosystems (ROPEM),

an SGP initiative which brings together all economic interest groups in Niodior, Dionewar, Falia, Mound, Thiallane, and Djirnda Diamenadio. The network meets every June in one of the member villages to discuss and exchange knowledge regarding environmental issues being faced by each village and the actions being taken to address them.

PARTNERS

FELOGIE-Niodior's partners include the UNDP implemented GEF-Small Grants Programme (SGP), the Centre for Local Development (CADL), the sub-prefecture, the Rural Council, the Heads of the Fishing, Water and Forestry Service, the Monitoring Committee, and the Network of Organizations for the Protection of Mangrove Ecosystems (ROPEM).

UNDP's Small Grants Programme provides funding for FELOGIE-NIODIOR's community actions and was critical to the project's initial phase, which was carried out from 2005-2007. Their team is responsible for monitoring project implementation. Monitoring visits have contributed positively to the achievement of project activities.

The Monitoring Committee is responsible for monitoring and controlling the sustainable use of fishery and forest resources.

The Center for Local Development is a decentralized governmental organization which provides support in terms of technical guidance and is responsible for monitoring, writing project activity reports, and drafting the code of conduct.

The Sub-Prefect is the district-level representative of the President of Senegal and of the national ministries. This government official is responsible for enforcing the closed season of fishery resources and, in case of conflict, for restoring order. The person holding this position is in charge of those who are arrested for not respecting the biological recovery periods, approves the decisions of the rural council, and supports the monitoring committee in carrying out their task.

The Rural Council brings together elected advisers who deliberate and decide on all issues involving their constituents.

The heads of the Fishing, Water, and Forest Service play a role in giving technical guidance and support. Each participated in the design and validation of the Code of Conduct.

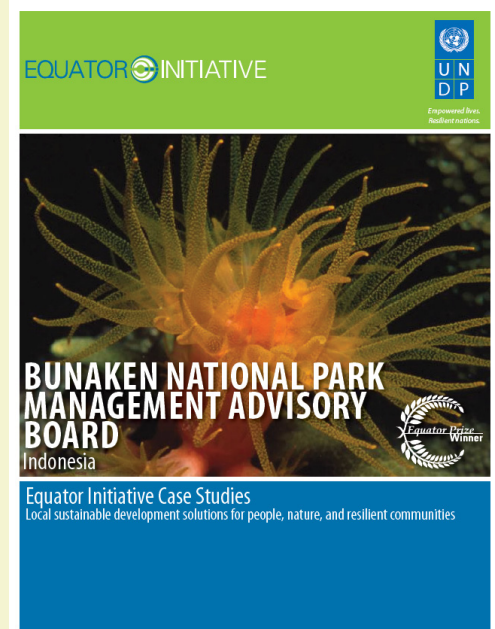
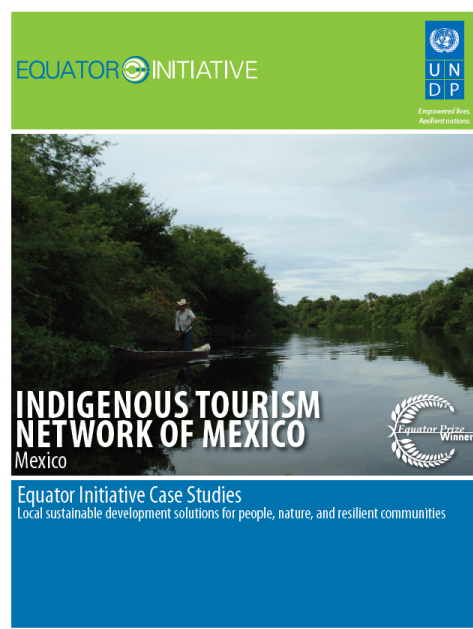
ROPEM is an association that brings together all SGP projects working in the protection, restoration, and conservation of mangroves in the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve. It organizes workshops and meetings for its members in order to strengthen their capacities. It also plans exchange visits and celebrations such as World Environment Day.



FURTHER REFERENCE

- Local Federation of Economic Interest Groups of Niodior (FELOGIE-Niodior) Photo Story (Vimeo) <http://vimeo.com/15782000>
- Brenier, A., Henriques, A., Le Douguet, L. 2009. *Des femmes et des coquillages ... Expérience d'un projet de conservation dans le Delta du Saloum*. FIBA, ENDA Graf Sahel and IRD.
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