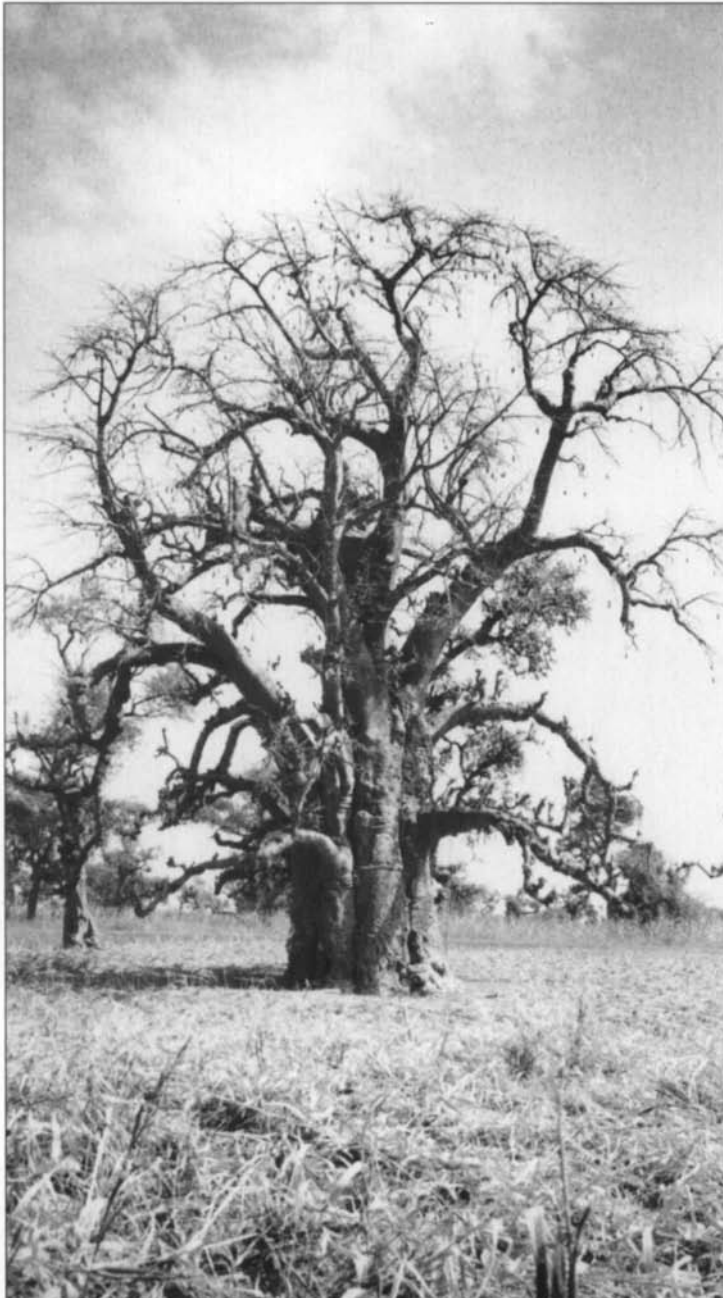


Facts and figures



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Baobab tree

Land area: 197,000 sq km

Population (1993 estimate): 8 million

Annual population growth (1990-2000 estimate): 2.8%

Life expectancy at birth: 48 years

Main urban centres: Dakar region (pop. 2 million), Thiès (319,000), Kaolack (181,000), St Louis (179,000)

Principal ethnic groups: Wolof, Serer, Peulh, Toucouleur, Diola

Languages: Wolof, Pulaar, and other national languages. Official language (understood by approximately 20%): French

Adult literacy: 38%

GDP per capita (1992): £440 (equivalent to approximately £250 at 1994 exchange rates)

Annual growth of GNP (average for 1980-90): 0%

Nutrition: Daily calorie supply per person, as percentage of requirements: 84%

Health: Percentage of population with access to safe water: urban 79%, rural 38%

Currency: 1 Franc CFA = 1 centime (under a fixed exchange rate, 100 FCFA = 1 French franc)

Main agricultural production: peanuts, millet, sorghum, manioc, rice, cotton, livestock

Principal exports: fish and fish products, peanut products, phosphates, chemicals

Foreign debt (1992): US\$3.6 billion

Dates and events

11th century AD: Arrival of Islam with the conquering Almoravids from North Africa.

12th century: Founding of the Kingdom of Djoloff.

15th century: Arrival of the first Portuguese explorers.

1588-1677: The Dutch establish fortified trading posts along the Senegal coast.

1659: Fort of St Louis founded and named in honour of Louis XIII of France.

1677-1815: The French and English compete for control of the island of Gorée and coastal trade.

1815: Treaties of Paris and Vienna give France control of the Senegal coast, and ban the slave trade.

1854: France begins to colonise the Senegalese mainland.

1876: Resistance leader Lat-Dyor is killed. The coastal region is annexed by the French. Dakar-St Louis railway constructed.

1871-80: Policy of 'assimilation' grants French citizenship to inhabitants of St Louis, Dakar, Gorée, and Rufisque, with the right to elect Deputies to the French National Assembly.

1904: Present boundaries of Senegal established.

1914-18: More than 200,000 men from France's African territories are enlisted to fight in World War I.

1957: France moves to split up its West African colony into small separate states. The future President, Léopold Senghor, objects to this 'balkanisation'.

1960: In June, Senegal achieves independence in federation with Mali. The



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Pekesse: recycling old rope from discarded fishing nets

- federation breaks up and in September the Republic of Senegal is proclaimed.
- 1962:** Political crisis, following which the Prime Minister, Mamadou Dia, is condemned to a long prison sentence.
- 1966:** Senegal becomes effectively a one-party state.
- 1968:** Start of long and devastating drought; great damage to livestock and crops through much of 1970s and 1980s.
- 1974:** A second political party, the Parti Democratique Sénégalais (PDS), led by Maître Abdoulaye Wade, is granted recognition.
- 1975:** Mamadou Dia is freed in a general amnesty: Senegal now one of the few African countries without political prisoners.
- 1976:** Constitutional change allows formation of a third political party, the leftist Parti Africain de l'Indépendance (PAI).
- 1978:** Three parties contest Presidential and legislative elections. Senghor is re-elected.
- 1980:** President Senghor retires to make way for Abdou Diouf.
- 1981:** Creation of Confederation of Senegambia. President Diouf amends constitution to abolish restrictions on formation of political parties.
- 1983:** Diouf wins popular endorsement in elections.
- 1988:** The Socialist Party of President Diouf wins 103 of 120 seats in general election, setting off violent demonstrations against alleged vote-rigging.
- 1989:** Conflict with Mauritania. More than 60,000 Mauritians deported to Senegal.
- 1993:** President Diouf re-elected for seven-year term.
- 1994:** The Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA) Franc is devalued in January by 50 per cent. (Since 1948 it had been worth 50 to the French Franc.)



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Many people helped in the preparation of this book. For the benefit of their ideas, experience, and practical guidance, the author particularly wishes to thank Thandika Mkandawire, Jacques Bugnicourt, Bara Gueye, Ousmane Sow, and the Oxfam-Dakar team.

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Oxfam in Senegal

MANY OF THE PROJECTS featured in this book are supported by Oxfam (UK and Ireland). In Senegal, ordinary people are free to form groups to improve their own living conditions, and to campaign for a fair share of the nation's resources. But poor communities often lack the necessary information and organisational skills to get things changed. So Oxfam's funding always has two aims: to bring practical benefits, such as clean drinking water or veterinary training — but also to strengthen community groups, helping them to identify their own problems, work out their own solutions, and get organised to manage their own lives.

In the year ended April 1994, Oxfam spent over £400,000 in Senegal, helping to

develop village federations such as **ADENA**, networks of urban women's groups such as **PROFEMU**, and local non-governmental organisations such as **Maisons Familiales Rurales**. Oxfam often takes risks and funds new grassroots initiatives which might not attract funds from other agencies. But all the groups that Oxfam supports must be democratically constituted, and able to manage their own affairs and represent the interests of their members and the neighbouring population. Projects are not funded if they are likely to make women's lives harder, or to damage the natural environment. The emphasis of Oxfam's programme is to help poor communities achieve positive change in their lives, through communal organisation and concerted action.



The well at Tekkangel village, Ferlo region

JEREMY HARTLEY/OXFAM

