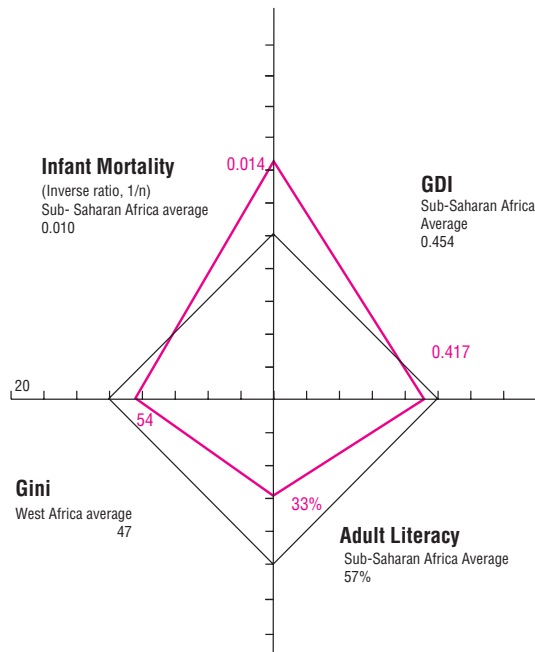


•ABDOUL SOULEYE SOW



The Equity Diamond: National values in terracotta compared to regional ones in blue.
 Source: **Infant mortality:** UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1998*, **Adult literacy:** UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1998*, **GDI** (Gender Development Index): UNDP, *Human Development Report 1998*, **GINI:** World Bank, *World Development indicators 1998*. (The regional average for this indicator was calculated by *Social Watch*).

According to the NGO Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, the Republic of Senegal ranked 58th in 1999 (scoring 3.4 on a scale of 0 to 10 where 10 is highly clean and 0 is highly corrupt). For the second consecutive year, Senegal maintained its rank as a relatively corrupt country.

In their first report to the President of the Republic on November 29th 1999, the Office of the National Consultation on the Quality

ECONOMIC GROWTH: 5,5% ABSOLUTE POVERTY: 30%

of Public Service and Good Governance stated that the primary cause of inaction is the politicisation of the Administration and its allegiance to public authorities. Other factors are: the extreme complexity of the government organisational chart; misappropriation of funds in favour of the political party or parties in power; and lack of transparency in the Administration, particularly with regard to management of government funds.

At the close of a seminar on corruption (January 12th of this year), the government decided to set up an independent instrument to lead the fight against it. The new organisation against corruption (OAC) will replace the existing anti-corruption agency, which has not met expectations in its 15 years of existence. The OAC will have the power to investigate a wide range of charges connected to, among others, passive and active corruption, influence peddling by elected officials and private individuals, favouritism, and misappropriation of funds in the course of drawing up and executing contracts.

Even though it will be headed by a judge appointed for a four-year term, many judges and lawyers view the OAC as a simple extension of the police. The reasons are that the judge will be domiciled in the Prime Minister's office rather than the National Assembly, and that the OAC's mandate is inadequate to the task. For the OAC to be independent, it must be domiciled at parliament so that its results are available to the representatives of the people, and it should have the mandate to repress as well as prevent crimes.

Senegal had a growth rate of 5.5% last year (1998). It ranks among the 20 countries in the world with the highest rates of growth, according to the British magazine *The Economist* (January 10th 2000). Poverty continues to reach Senegalese homes however. The UNDP report on poverty shows that 32% of Senegalese people lives in poverty and 30% lives in absolute poverty. Dakar has 90,000 beggars—a number equivalent to the population of a medium-sized city. Poverty in the Senegal is first of all rural since 70% of the poor come from the countryside, and secondly, it is female.

The 1997 UNDP report on human development ranked the country 160th of the 175 countries studied on the basis of the Human Development Index. This report stated that *«the global evolution of this situation shows not only that it is unsatisfactory but also that it denotes a clear-cut regression of social indicators through the years that is linked to the country's*

difficulty in translating its economic growth into sustainable human development.»

Aude Sauvaget, a French researcher who authored a study on economic growth and human development in Senegal supports the thesis of widening disparity. Using information provided by UNDP, he dissected the country's GDP (Gross Domestic Product). The average real GDP *per capita* (in purchasing power parity) is USD 1,815. For the poorest 20% of Senegalese, the real GDP *per capita* is USD 299; for the richest 20%, it is USD 5,010. The real GDP *per capita* of the poorest 20% is almost 17 times lower than that of the richest 20%. The real GDP per capita of the poorest 20% is six times lower than that of the average inhabitant. Sauvaget concludes that these inequities in distribution of wealth are equivalent to those in certain countries of Latin America (*eg*, Venezuela). Senegal is among the world's countries with the greatest inequality between rich and poor.

In 1997, the government set up the Programme Against Poverty (PAP) with a budget of CFA 60 billion (USD 100 million). The PAP is divided into five sub-programmes: improving incomes and creating employment; improving quality of life in disadvantaged districts; supporting regional development and managing rural space in the Department of Bambey through urban-rural exchange; economic promotion of women; building management capacity in PAP.

THE FIFTH COMMITMENT

Senegal has ratified the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and is implementing sub-programme IV (SPIV) of PAP on their economic promotion, which has the following objectives: guaranteeing equality of rights between men and women in legal instruments; reinforcing the capacity for intervention in institutions that promote the status of women; increasing women's access to information and their organisational capacity. These are essential pre-requisites for women's economic promotion; Increase women's incomes.

SPIV operational activities began in July 1999. Among these are: implementing the plan of activities approved by the steering committee for SPIV; training in gender and development of employees in the Ministry for Family, Social Action, and National Solidarity and at the focal points in the technical ministries to ensure outreach at central and regional levels; enhance negotiation and lobbying techniques; participatory methods; information-education-communication techniques; and launching a study on creation of a savings and credit bank in the zones covered by PAP.

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