

Ndereppe Epicenter Declares Self-Reliance



About The Hunger Project

The Hunger Project is a global, non-profit, strategic organization committed to the sustainable end of world hunger. Our vision is a world where every woman, man and child leads a healthy, fulfilling life of self-reliance and dignity.

Our mission is to end hunger and poverty by pioneering sustainable, grassroots, women-centered strategies and advocating for their widespread adoption in countries throughout the world.

Our programs across Africa, South Asia and Latin America are based on an innovative, holistic approach that empowers women and men living in rural villages to become the agents of their own development and make sustainable progress in overcoming hunger and poverty. We mobilize entire communities to transform their mindsets and enhance their leadership skills.

While adapted to meet local challenges and opportunities wherever we work, all our programs have at their foundation three essential pillars:

- They start by empowering women as key change agents
- They mobilize entire communities into self-reliant action
- They foster effective partnerships to engage local government

One of our first activities is a Vision, Commitment and Action Workshop, which serves as the foundation of our work, inspiring individuals to move from “I can’t” to “I can” to “We can.” Through participation in our trainings, people set a vision for their communities, and then lay out the actions they will take to achieve that vision.

The Epicenter Strategy

In eight countries in Africa, The Hunger Project’s Epicenter Strategy mobilizes clusters of rural villages into “epicenters,” which band together 5,000 – 15,000 people to carry out community-led integrated strategies to meet basic needs. Women and men in 121 epicenters create and run their own development programs, reaching 1.6 million people in their communities.

This holistic strategy builds a path to sustainable self-reliance through four phases that last about eight years. Individuals build the confidence to become leaders of their own development, and communities come together to unlock a local capacity for change.

Through the Epicenter Strategy, The Hunger Project builds people’s capacity to successfully access the basic services needed to lead lives of self-reliance. The centerpiece of the strategy is an L-shaped epicenter building where communities from clusters of rural villages run their own activities. The strategy includes programs in health (including HIV/AIDS prevention), nutrition, education, adult literacy, women’s empowerment, improved farming and food storage methods, microfinance, and water and sanitation. The momentum built from accomplishments that involve the entire population contributes to a thriving sense of community spirit.

The Epicenter Strategy in Senegal

Our strategy in Senegal focuses on mobilizing entire communities for self-reliant action.

Increasing food security: The Hunger Project supports farmers with trainings and materials, such as seeds and farmhand tools, to diversify their food production. During lean seasons, food banks at the epicenters provide villages and households with access to food grains to overcome food shortages. The community also makes available a plot of land for a community farm at the epicenter site. The Hunger Project also supports farmers through an agricultural input revolving fund to minimize the effects of price escalation.

Access to health services: Epicenter health centers provide primary health care for all, with a focus on family planning, maternal care and immunizations for children. Intensive and continuous awareness campaigns are carried out on combating communicable illnesses, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. These programs are conducted in close collaboration with the District Health Office and Health Extension agents.

Microfinance program: The Hunger Project empowers communities with microfinance programs on savings and credit. We also empower women and men to become economic players, decision makers, planners, entrepreneurs and leaders.

Access to basic education The Hunger Project increases access to basic education for eligible children, youth and adults through formal and non-formal systems. The Hunger Project collaborates with partner districts and the District Administration to furnish primary schools, which are also used to conduct functional adult literacy programs. A preschool with meal program is also being scaled up in some villages.

Access to safe and clean drinking water: The Hunger Project promotes the use of safe and adequate drinking water through the development of medium water wells. Partners are trained on sanitation and hygiene practices, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) committees are formed and trained to manage the water supply.

Environmental sustainability: The Hunger Project supports environmental sustainability through roof and running water harvesting, rehabilitating gully areas, enclosing degraded areas, planting trees, supporting seedling production and introducing clean technology for cooking and heating.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hunger Project began working in Ndereppe in 2001. The epicenter includes 13 communities, where we reach a total of 10.5 million people. According to the Demographic and Health Survey of Senegal, in 2005 only 37.75% of individuals were voting in elections. Only 50% of births were attended by a licensed healthcare professional, and only 26.7% of households were using an improved sanitation facility. In the 12 years that The Hunger Project has been working with community members at Ndereppe Epicenter, we have seen drastic improvements across the 8 goals listed below.¹

GOALS:

- 1. Mobilize rural communities that continuously set and achieve their own development:** The participation rate in The Hunger Project-Senegal's meetings or training workshops at Ndereppe is 30.49% showing that individuals believe in the ability to positively affect their communities. The last elections saw 54.88% of individuals voting at the polls, a 45.38% increase from 2005.
- 2. Empower women and girls in rural communities.** This is measured by the Women Empowerment Index (WEI), based on five equally-weighted domains: agency, income, leadership, resources, and time. The Ndereppe Epicenter's "Women Empowerment Index" is below the 80% threshold at 57.19%. This suggests that the time spent on housework is a barrier to women's entrepreneurship and leadership.
- 3. Access to safe drinking water and sanitation in rural communities.** Between 2015 and 2016, there was a 57% increase in the proportion of households using an improved sanitation facility now that 89.81% of households use an improved, private sanitation facility. Ndereppe Epicenter has had great success in their effort to promote Community-led Total Sanitation.
- 4. Improve literacy and education in rural communities.** Nearly 95% of households have at least one literate person. This is a 7.21% increase from the midline survey. Literate parents improve the likelihood of children achieving academic success.
- 5. Reduce hunger and malnutrition in rural communities, especially for women and children.** Between 2015 and 2016, there was a 54% decrease in the prevalence of households with hunger. There was also an increase in women's dietary diversity, almost reaching the recommended five food groups. This shows that women are healthier, eating better, and more likely to give birth to healthy children.
- 6. Improve access to and use of healthcare.** Today, 95.41% of community partners visit a health clinic when sick. This is a 18.98% increase from the midline! Households have access to and see the value of seeking professional health services during illness.

¹ We measure progress by comparing results at the endline evaluation with results recorded throughout the process. By "endline" we mean a final outcome evaluation of the epicenter and progress across the 8 goals.

7. **Reduce incidence of poverty in rural communities.** There was a 20.85% decrease in the proportion of households below the poverty line from, improving the likelihood of better health, education, and social mobility for community members.
8. **Improve land productivity and climate resilience of smallholder farmers.** There was a 46% increase in millet yields showing Smallholder farmers have more productive land and 95.61 percent of farmers are implementing risk-reducing practices/actions to improve resilience to climate change enhancing the likelihood of being food secure.

Ndereppe Epicenter

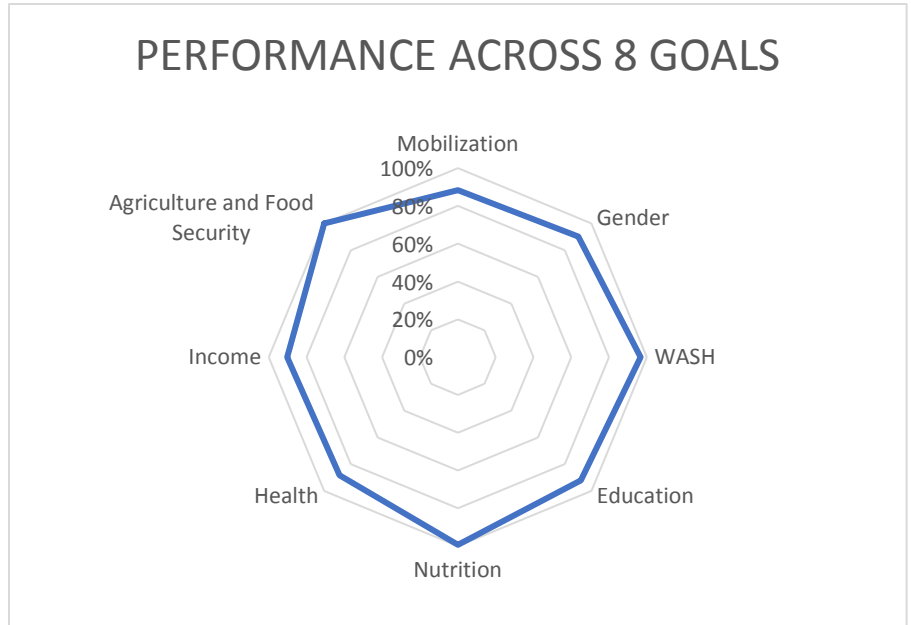
The epicenter of Ndereppe is located in the town of Refane in the department of Bambey. The Hunger Project has been working at Ndereppe since 2001, although the epicenter did not complete construction until 2009. Ndereppe serves 13 villages all located within a 5 km (3 mi) radius of the epicenter. The surrounding 13 villages are home to 10,586 people.



PROGRESS ACROSS THE EIGHT GOALS

The measure of self-reliance depends on a variety of factors that assess progress in all program areas. A diverse set of indicators measures both the immediate results of each activity and the longer-term changes in communities as a result of The Hunger Project’s work.

In order to reach “self-reliance,” a community must demonstrate sufficient local capacity, skills, behaviors and knowledge, all of which are defined as “meeting or exceeding the locally set target for each indicator.” The Hunger Projects believes that people are the drivers of their own development and that through the Epicenter Strategy communities set their own targets for development. We estimate that Ndereppe will meet meet over 80% of its targets. The chart below shows Ndereppe’s progress across all the 8 goals highlighted above. Agriculture, food security and nutrition stand out as areas that have achieved exceptional progress.

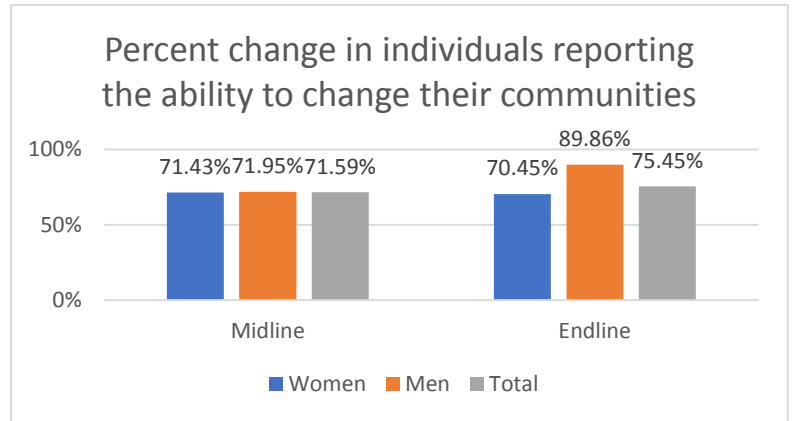


GOAL 1: Community mobilization

The first step The Hunger Project takes to mobilize an epicenter’s population is to embark on a process that emphasizes the importance of leadership. We encourage our partners to create a clear vision of the future, generating commitment and action at the individual and community level. We do this through the Vision, Commitment and Action (VCA) Workshop, an intensive workshop that focuses on leadership training with a public commitment to identifying and achieving the final goals through practical steps. VCA Workshops are repeated over time, and each new workshop engages new members of the community.

Community mobilization in Ndereppe

In 2015, 71.6% of people in Ndereppe believed they had the ability to change their communities. By 2016, the number grew to 75.6%. This demonstrates that individuals are becoming active members of their community and taking ownership of their own development, thereby crafting their own future and that of their communities.



Goal 2: Women's Empowerment

Women play a crucial role in development, especially in rural areas where they divide their time between domestic tasks and economic activities such as agriculture and livestock. Often, however, their daily efforts to meet family needs are often overlooked or underestimated.



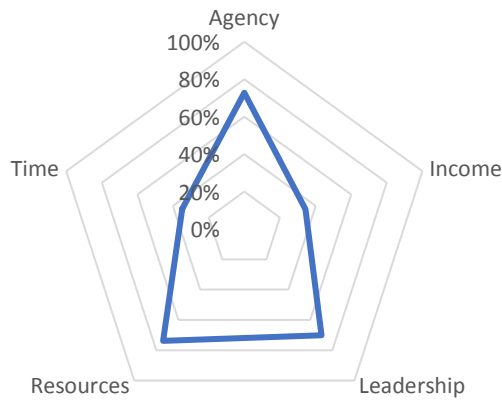
The Hunger Project places women's empowerment at the heart of *all* its activities, and we implement the Women Empowerment Index (WEI) as a tool to measure progress across time.

The WEI focuses on five areas: agency, income, resources, leadership and time devoted to domestic tasks.

Women's Empowerment in Ndereppe

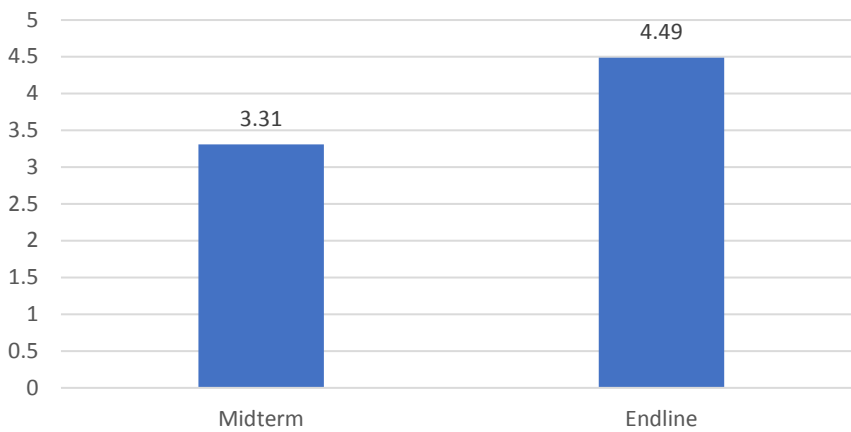
The chart on the following page shows that women in Ndereppe have achieved good progress in prenatal care and in efforts against spousal abuse. The graph also shows, however, that they continue to face challenges in business ownership and household decision-making.

Women's Empowerment Index by Domain



When it comes to nutrition, women in Ndereppe have improved considerably since 2015, yet still fare slightly below the recommended minimum. The “dietary diversity” graph below is based on a maximum score of 10, with a recommended minimum of 5. Women in Ndereppe on average consume foods from 4.49 food groups compared to 3.31 in 2015.

Women's Dietary Diversity: Mean number of food groups consumed by women of reproductive age



Why is this important? As women often eat least and last, the dietary diversity score indicates overall household nutrition habits. In addition, the nutrition of pregnant women is especially important as it is reflected in the health of her children throughout their lives

Goal 3: Access to safe drinking water and sanitation

Access to clean water is important not only because it helps decrease the incidence of diseases, but it also contributes to women’s empowerment. When women spend less time travelling to secure water for their families, they are then able to devote more time to cultivating their financial or educational pursuits, thereby improving their family’s and community’s quality of life. That is why The Hunger Project actively works to empower rural communities with access to clean water and improved sanitation, the development of new water resources, and the implementation of water conservation techniques.

Access to water & sanitation in Ndereppe

By 2016, 99.03% of households use an improved drinking water source, an improvement of 4.11% from 2015. Over its lifespan, Ndereppe Epicenter has established water projects made up of community leaders who are trained by experts on how to monitor, maintain and repair water systems. Epicenter animators have also trained people in the use and repair of water pumps and generators.

“Houses without toilets are very few. In fact, after raising awareness of the dangers and diseases caused by open defecation, measures were taken by world vision and also by The Hunger Project-Senegal particularly to build toilets.”

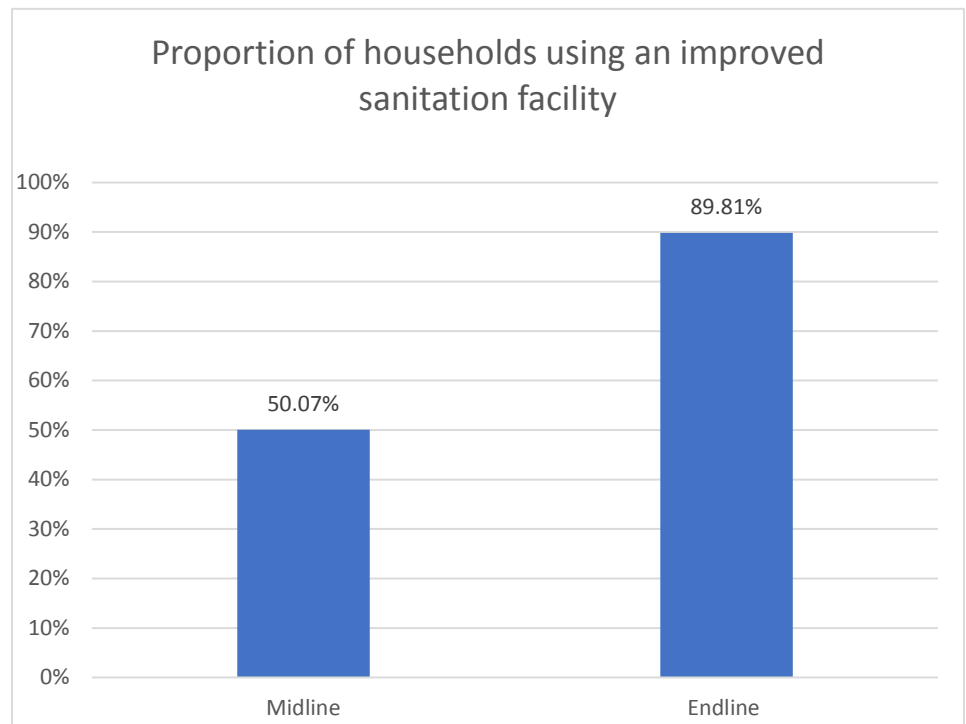
- Djib Ndour, community member

GOAL 4: Improve literacy and education of rural communities

Education programs for both children and adults can improve all aspects of life in entire communities. Literacy equips learners with essential life skills for personal and community development; it also builds their capacity for income-generation and self-reliance; and it equips them and their families with knowledge and skills to attain improved living conditions.

Literacy and education in Ndereppe

In Ndereppe, 94.66% of households have at least one literate person. The epicenter community operates pre-school programs that include the provision of one nutritious meal per day. The one-meal-per-day model has two primary goals: It ensures a nutritious meal for the children, thereby promoting healthy growth; and it encourages parents to bring their children to the preschool. An additional advantage of this program is that while children are in school, mothers have more time for their own



education and other income-generating activities.

The schoolroom also hosts adult literacy and numeracy classes, which allow partners to become more independent and confidently make business deals on their own. In Ndereppe, 1,186 people have enrolled in Functional Adult Literacy classes, which build capacity for income-generating activities and promote education at all levels of the community.

“Literacy education is beneficial because we can now read and especially count our money.”

- Excerpt from the focus group discussion in Sarsar

Goal 5: Reduce hunger and malnutrition, especially for women and children

Hunger stunts growth and hinders (i) children’s ability to learn in school and (ii) adults’ ability to be productive in the workforce. The Hunger Project works to empower rural communities in strengthening their self-reliance so they can develop sustainable, self-reliant, hunger-free communities. In that regard, The

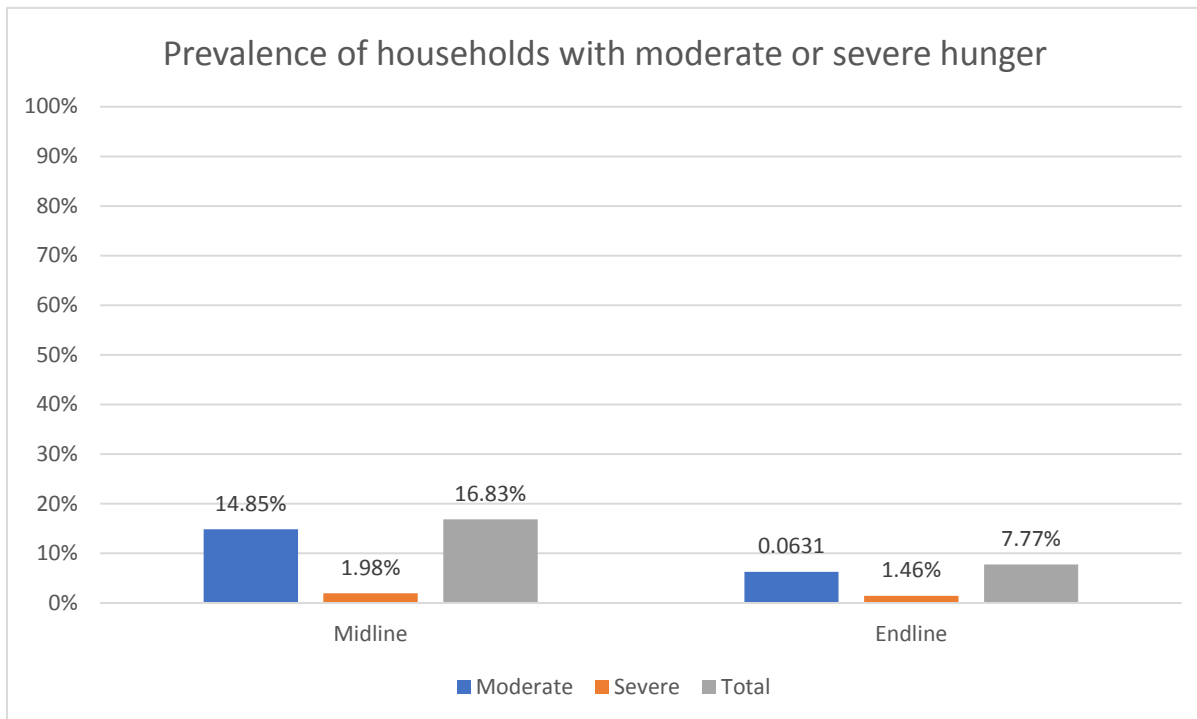


Hunger Project-Senegal's epicenters are making great strides toward ensuring that the villages have the necessary food and food production mechanisms.

Reducing hunger and malnutrition in Ndereppe

Ndereppe epicenter boasts a food bank, food processing equipment, fertilizer distribution facilities, and crop diversification programs. Most of the activities in Ndereppe and in other epicenters in Senegal focus on developing new techniques, conducting trainings, and implementing studies. Innovations cover the areas of technology and farming techniques, trainings occur to update the food security program to the latest ideas, and studies are conducted in large part to measure the impacts of certain methods.

Between 2015 and Ndereppe's graduation to self-reliance in 2016, **the number of households facing moderate hunger decreased by 57.51%**, a remarkable achievement.



GOAL 6: Improve access to and use of healthcare

Poor healthcare facilities in rural communities worsens peoples' health and leads to lost wages, increase in healthcare costs and the spread of poverty. In Senegal, as in many other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, the HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to pose serious challenges. In 2003, The Hunger Project launched the

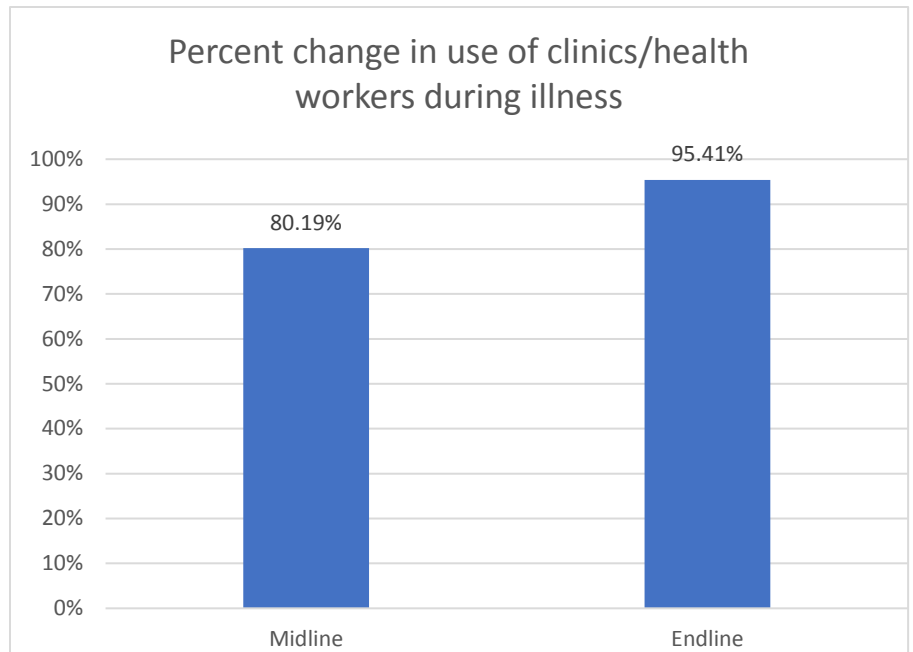
HIV/AIDS and Gender Inequality Workshops, which aim to empower people at the grassroots level with knowledge and information to combat the epidemic.

Healthcare in Ndereppe

In Ndereppe, the Health Committee assists in operating the health clinic (including a delivery room, consultation rooms, pharmacy and toilets). The clinic typically tracks child and maternal health, provides malaria and tuberculosis prevention and treatment, offers nutrition

education, administers medications and supplies, and coordinates with government and local agencies to host medical staff. By Ndereppe's graduation, 27,117 community members have accessed the health services at the epicenter. The percentage of individuals using clinics during an illness grew by 18.89% between 2015 and 2016. By the epicenter's graduation to self-reliance, 95.41% of individuals reported using clinics during an illness.

The Hunger Project also works to limit the spread of malaria. In Ndereppe, a total of 10,626 insecticide-treated bed-nets have been distributed throughout communities. However, only 67.87% of children living in the epicenter sleep under a bed-net.





GOAL 7: Reduce poverty in rural communities

The Hunger Project takes a holistic approach to hunger, which means addressing its root causes – including poverty. We build the capacity of women, men and youth to move beyond poverty, training them in the skills, methods, knowledge and leadership needed to take self-reliant actions so they can meet their own basic needs, improve their communities and build better futures for themselves and their children.

Poverty in Ndereppe

As part of the Microfinance Program in Ndereppe, local volunteer loan-committees gain government recognition and operate as a licensed saving and credit cooperative (SACCO) or Rural Bank. Owned entirely by community members, the Rural Bank then provides the entire epicenter community with sustainable access to savings and loan facilities. Participants at Ndereppe have deposited nearly \$22,000 in savings in epicenter Rural Banks and revolving loan funds.

Trained partners implement income-generating activities, often joining together in self-help groups. In Ndereppe, 1,298 of The Hunger Project's African partners participated in income-generating workshops to learn new and innovative methods of increasing household income. This helped contribute to a 20.84% drop in the proportion of households below the poverty line between 2015 and 2016. Using a truly holistic approach, partners in Ndereppe are lifting themselves and their entire community out of poverty.

“Women’s groups are a good thing for women. The funding granted by The Hunger Project has enabled us to have a peanut crushing machine that produces oil.”

- Leader of the Sarsar, Mbokh and Ndourndour focus



GOAL 8: Improve land productivity and climate resilience of smallholder farmers

In Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture is the largest sector in which women are employed. This makes women particularly reliant on natural resources and more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Over recent years, The Hunger Project-Senegal has come up with several initiatives to secure and store food in

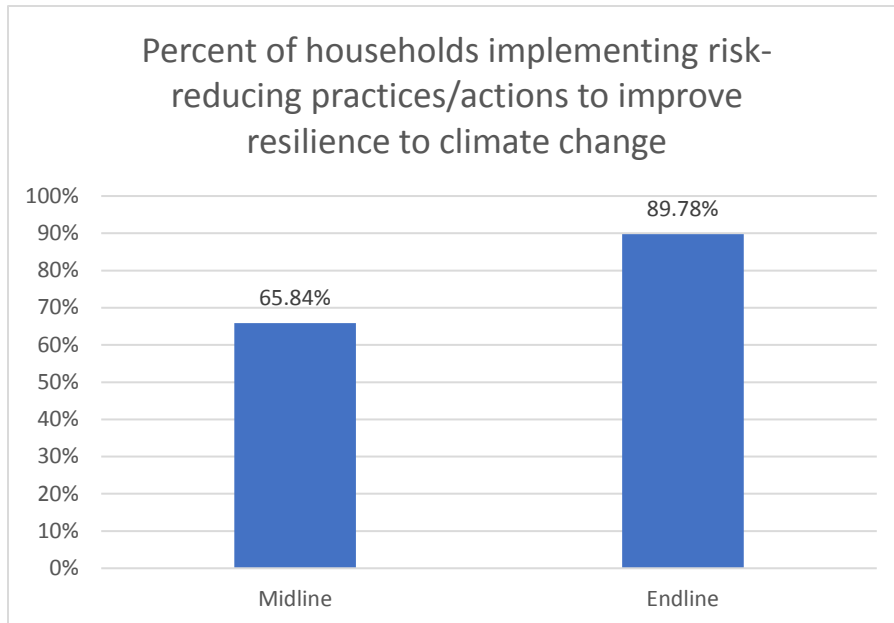
cases of extreme weather conditions. The most significant have been a method for storing cow peas called PICS (Purdue Improved Cowpea Storage), and a technique called “conservation farming,” which combines fertilizers to maximize sustainability of production systems.

At first, The Hunger Project-Senegal employed the micro dose method; however, as finding sustainable agricultural techniques became a challenge, trials were conducted to compare conservation farming to the micro-dose method. Though these trials have not yet produced a scientific conclusion about which method is better for The Hunger Project-Senegal’s epicenters, different community members have actually observed that the micro dose method is actually less time-consuming than conservation farming.

Land Productivity in Ndereppe

In Ndereppe, 2,742 people were trained in food security and agriculture by 2016. Training sessions have also been a popular food security initiative, as the above innovations have been accompanied by training sessions in order to disseminate the new information.

In Ndereppe, there is also a farmers’ cooperative that allows farmers to collaborate and promote development within their own communities. Today, nearly 90% of all farmers in Ndereppe are implementing risk-reducing practices to improve their resilience to climate change. This is a 36.5% increase from 2015.



Conclusion: Ndereppe's Path to Self-Reliance

In 2016 Ndereppe met its development goals and was declared self-reliant. Self-reliant epicenters do not necessarily have every single need fulfilled. Yet, these communities have an increased ability and willingness to tackle development challenges and identify ways to have outstanding needs met thanks to the capacities built in partnership with The Hunger Project.

Looking back at Ndereppe's journey until now, we have seen a community make measurable progress toward their own development goals, as demonstrated by the eight goals discussed above. The Hunger Project's partners in Ndereppe have mobilized themselves to be the drivers of their own development. Ndereppe has met many goals and seen great success in areas of sanitation and hygiene and nutrition.

Ndereppe is an example of men and women making measurable progress and living a life of dignity and self-reliance. The Hunger Project has activated its exit strategy by scaling down its program activities as the community solidifies its own leadership and management. We will continue to monitor Ndereppe's progress for two years following self-reliance and will continue our work in partnership with ten other epicenters in Senegal.