



## PHOTO & CAPTION

### Books Spark an Eagerness To Learn



Photo: USAID/Senegal/Richard Nyberg

***Pupils at Khar Yalla Elementary School in the Grand Yoff district of Senegal's capital, Dakar, answer questions from science books donated by USAID to 6,000 schools across the West African country.***

Eager, young pupils at Khar Yalla Elementary School in Dakar couldn't wait to get their hands on the new science and language textbooks. A few minutes after cracking open the texts and reading a passage, they enthusiastically thrust their hands into the air. "Madame, Madame," they shouted, snapping their fingers rapidly, as is customary here to draw in their teacher's attention. If it weren't for their wooden, two-seater desks, they would all be on their feet. They had an answer to her question, and more than anything on this day in Senegal, they wanted to give it.

The books prompting excitement in this classroom were just a few of the 225,000 copies donated by USAID to Senegal's 6,000 primary schools as part of the U.S. President's Africa Education Initiative. At a ceremony, Education Minister Moustapha Sourang said the textbooks were "very strategic," as they arrived just as authorities were encouraging more students to pursue science and technology. "These books will help young Senegalese discover the world of science and develop a passion for it," he said.

In June 2004, Senegal received 270,000 reading textbooks under the same initiative. Portable boxed libraries – closed boxes with books that can be easily taken from one classroom to another – were delivered to primary and middle schools in all regions. Each portable boxed library contains at least 15 books that teachers and students can check out for a few days. A total of 600,000 books will be delivered to Senegal by the end of the program.