



SUCCESS STORY

University Launches Website

With its new website, a Dakar university attracts more students



Computer science students Rodolph Bekoule of Cameroon, left, and Ahamada Moustakima of the Comoros, review course offerings. Both say their chances of landing a job after graduation are high.

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By improving online access to a private university in Senegal, USAID is helping make quality education for African students a real alternative to costly study in Europe or North America.

As part of an initiative to improve access to information technology in developing countries, USAID helped the *Université du Sahel* in Dakar set up a website (www.unis.sn), online registration, an electronic library, and online courses — all important services to boost the university’s competitiveness.

Building an interactive website has been a long-time dream of the university’s leadership. “Having traveled and visited many universities, I wanted to have a website similar to the best American universities,” said University Director Dr. El Hadj Issa Sall. Technology has made him a busier man, but he is not complaining.

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Greater visibility has led to more students and more revenue. The university, which opened in 1998, has grown into an institution with over 400 students from 20 African countries. With a faculty of 80, it offers courses in information technology, law, and economics. With USAID support, the university was also able to provide every computer science student with access to a fully networked computer linked to the Internet.

Since more than 80 percent of the university’s students come from African countries, the website has made registration easier for everyone. “I wasted a lot of time during the registration process. Now it takes only one week to process applications, make decisions, and inform parents,” he said. About one-fifth of students now register online.

The university received assistance as part of a USAID project to equip developing nations with information technology tools. Its success ensures that it will be replicated in other countries.

Photo: USAID/Richard Nyberg