

Inclusion of the Saloum Delta in the World Heritage List



Shellfish mounds © Directorate of Cultural Heritage of Senegal

Women have been supported in organizing small-scale income-generating activities relating to the site's nomination for the World Heritage List.

BACKGROUND

The Saloum Delta is a mixed cultural and natural site and the surrounding community wished to have the site inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Culturally, the site bears witness to an ancient civilization, as its landscape is marked by shellfish mounds built as burial sites, which illustrate the region's millennia-old human history. Some mounds have unfortunately been mined and destroyed by public works companies. Local authorities considered that the site's inscription on the World Heritage List would contribute to its protection.

PROCESS

The site's inscription on the World Heritage List was a long-discussed project that had never come to fruition. On implementation of the JP, financial resources were finally available to carry out a study to evaluate the site's nomination. Many local experts and specialists were recruited to prepare the nomination file.

Women participated in the consultations, as did many other stakeholders, and played an important role in preparing the project. Many activities, such as trainings on how to make the most of the economic and cultural value of the site, were specifically geared towards women.

Outcomes

The Saloum Delta was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Property in June 2011. The new status was widely acclaimed in the press and by people living in the region and working in tourism. Women have been supported in organizing small-scale income-generating activities relating to the site's nomination for the World Heritage List. The whole region of the Saloum Delta has gained fame. The site has been inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of cultural heritage criteria, but the community hopes that natural heritage criteria will soon also be included.