

“In recent years, the number of protests taking place in Africa has increased as youth across the continent voice frustration with their governments. Many young people see their countries’ leadership as corrupt and lacking credibility. It’s clear that Africa is in need of strong institutions, not strong men. It is also in need of a robust civil society. How can young people make meaningful contributions to their societies? Africa’s youth population is large, energetic, and determined. This energy must be harnessed for good—to promote a ‘new type’ of African citizen and build strong democracies.

An emerging generation of activists is using hip hop to speak out about issues affecting their countries. Hip hop has taken on a new importance around the world as youth utilize the musical genre as a vehicle to address their grievances on a local, national, and even international scale. We see this when young Africans use hip hop to describe the oppressive conditions they experience and to speak out about the injustice of their governments. The *Y’en a Marre* movement in Senegal illustrates that hip hop can be used as a central tool for organizing and creating peaceful, political change. As such, hip hop can also be used to build connections among various youth groups across Africa working toward democratic change.”



—Thiat, January 30, 2014

# *Y'en A Marre:* Youth Engagement in Senegal



Thiat

Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow  
National Endowment for Democracy  
January 30, 2014

The views expressed in this presentation represent the opinions and analysis of the speaker and do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for Democracy or its staff.

# Presentation Overview

- I. Brief History of Keur Gui Crew
- II. Social and Political Context in Senegal
- III. *Y'en a Marre* Movement
- IV. NTS: “New Type of Senegalese”
- V. Beyond Senegal’s Borders
- VI. Next Steps

# ***Y'en A Marre Timeline***

- ***March 5, 2011:*** Y'en A Marre issues a complaint against the government
- ***March 19, 2011:*** Public demonstration
- ***April 5, 2011:*** Sharpen Your Weapon (“Daas Fanaanal”): The Voter Card as a Weapon
- ***June 10, 2011:*** Don’t Touch my Constitution
- ***June 22, 2011:*** Leading Rappers Arrested
- ***June 23, 2011:*** Anti-Wade protests intensify
- ***June 23, 2011:*** Wade backs off constitutional change
- ***December 21, 2011:*** Do Not Push! (“Faux! Pas Forcé”)
- ***March 1, 2012:*** Finishing the Enemy Off (“Doggali”)
- ***March 22, 2012:*** Victory by Macky Sall



# Senegal





# I. Brief History of Keur Gui Crew

## KEUR-GUI : LA MAISON, LA FAMILLE

KILIFEU A.K.A KLASHNIKOV : LE MAÎTRE DE MAISON, LE CHEF DE FAMILLE  
THIAT A.K.A MASS 36 : LE CADET DE LA MAISON

UN PREMIER ALBUM CENSURÉ AU TEMPS DU RÉGIME SOCIALISTE AU SÉNÉGAL N'AURA PAS EU LE DESSUS SUR LE DUO KAOLACKOIS DÉSIGNÉ ET RECONNU COMME ÉTANT LE GROUPE LE PLUS ENGAGÉ DU SÉNÉGAL. DEUX ALBUMS ET DES CENTAINES DE CONCERTS À GUICHETS FERMÉS PLUS TARD, KEUR-GUI REVIENT AVEC "NOS CONNES DOLÉANCES", ABOUTISSEMENT DE 4 ANS DE TRAVAIL ACHARNÉ ET MÉTICULEUX, UNE ALCHEMIE PARFAITE ENTRE UN CONTENU INTÈGRE ET CONSTRUCTIF ET UN RAP PERCUTANT, ÉDUCATIF ET SOLIDE, LE GROUPE S'AFFAIRE À DÉLIVRER UN HIP HOP QUI S'ATTAQUE FRONTALEMENT À LA MAUVAISE GOUVERNANCE, AINSI QU'À LA CORRUPTION PRÉSENTE JUSQUE DANS L'ACTUEL « RAP GAME » SÉNÉGALAIS. AU MOMENT OÙ BON NOMBRE D'ARTISTES, Y COMPRIS CEUX ÉTIQUETÉS « HIP HOP » VENDENT LEURS SERVICES AUX POLITICIENS LES PLUS GÉNÉREUX (...), KEUR-GUI PULVÉRISE LES VENTES EN 2008 AVEC UN ALBUM FRANC ET ASSUMÉ ÉGRAINANT UNE À UNE LES RAISONS QUI SONT RESPONSABLES DU CHAOS POLITICO-SOCIAL QUI S'ÉVIT À L'HEURE ACTUELLE AU SÉNÉGAL, ET QUI, SANS UN RÉVEIL RAPIDE DU BAS PEUPLE ET DE LA JEUNESSE ÉTUDIANTINE, TERMINERA D'ACHEVER LA PAIX EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST.



KILIFEU A.K.A  
KLASHNIKOV :  
LE MAÎTRE DE  
MAISON, LE CHEF  
DE FAMILLE

THIAT A.K.A  
MASS 36 : LE  
CADET DE LA  
MAISON

RAPPEURS DU KEUR GUI

## «Le rap de Dakar n'est pas positif»

Le gangstah rap, style révolutionnaire à travers des lyrics pointus et engagés, est bien la spécificité du groupe Keur Gui de Kaolack. Créé en 1998, le crew, venu fraîchement de l'underground, est constitué de deux jeunes Mcs, Kilifeu et Thiat. Avec trois albums, dont un censuré par le Bsdg, le groupe n'a jamais tergiversé sur les maux dont souffrent nos sociétés actuelles.

«L'arme qu'utilisent les Américains pour s'entretenir, nous en faisons une métaphore en représentant cette arme comme un instrument verbal pour tuer ce système qui nous b...». Tels furent les propos de Thiat interpellé sur la question de savoir ce qu'est le gangstah rap. Keur Gui a fait son apparition sur la scène hip hop en 1998, à Kaolack. Le contexte culturel au début était déplorable et bigarré, à cause de la corruption. Cette situation dans laquelle le crew faisait ses pas nécessitait un suicide individuel pour la bonne marche du groupe. Car, selon Thiat, «il n'y avait pas d'infrastructure culturelle ni de logistique. Les promoteurs et les studios d'enregistrement étaient presque inexistant. Il a fallu que Kilifeu se tape un boulot à la Sonacos pour garder un peu de sous. Et moi je gardais l'argent de ma scolarité».

Dès cet instant, l'engagement naissait dans le crew. Le premier souhait était d'opérer une rupture entre le rap soul et le rap raga. Car il fallait que la population fût consciente de la manière dont le système les trompait. Avoir l'œil sur les dérives d'une société causées

par un régime despotique. Une manière d'apporter plus d'authenticité dans la musique. Il n'était plus question, selon eux, de se figer sur les «yamma nekh», «yaaya sama sadia baane». Mais de faire de la musique une affaire sérieuse, une affaire d'homme qui ne se limite pas à de la plaisanterie.

Dans cette optique, le groupe avait préparé un opus intitulé *Match bi* qui, malheureusement, fut censuré par le Bureau sénégalais du droit d'auteur (Bsdg) suite à des pressions politiques sur le morceau intitulé *Première mi-temps* qui parlait essentiellement des «mains sales utilisées par le régime Ps». Et pour le groupe, «nous ne pouvions pas regarder avec nos mains rachitiques le Sénégal aller à la dérive. C'est une plaie et un ganglion. Certains essaient de soigner le ganglion, nous, au contraire, c'est la plaie qui nous intéresse. C'est elle que l'on soigne, c'est tout. Autrement, c'est la jambe que l'on ampute».

Cet album censuré leur vaudra deux convocations à la police pour justifier leurs propos à l'encontre du gouvernement du président Diouf. Interpellé sur les rai-

sons de cette censure, le groupe dénonce les Sénégalais comme quoi «ils ne veulent pas entendre la vérité».

Le deuxième album *Ken Bugul* paru en juin 2002, a fait le bilan de l'alternance. Le groupe n'a pas hésité à mettre le couteau sous la gorge des policiers corrompus par le système et de dévoiler le mystère des jeunes filles perverses par la conscience occidentale.

Deux ans plus tard, le groupe sort un autre album intitulé *Liye Raam*, paru sur le marché du hip hop en mai 2004. Dans cet opus, on retrouve les tendances religieuses que connaît le Sénégal ainsi que l'incompréhension des principes de l'islam et surtout une analyse sur le bilan politique des opposants qu'ils considèrent comme étant de beaux parleurs.

Autre mission pour le Keur Gui, c'est d'essayer de décentraliser le rap. «La scène hip hop ne se limite pas seulement à Dakar. Et puis, faites les régions pour voir combien il y a de rappeurs positifs et engagés», nous confie Kilifeu. Pour lui, le rap dakarois n'est pas du vrai rap, car «ce n'est que de la tricherie. Là où il faut dire la vérité, ils préfèrent parler de sexe et d'argent. Ils oublient que nos sociétés souffrent. Et que le bas peuple n'a point de bouche. En tout cas, nous Keur Gui, nous disons que certains rappeurs de Dakar sont des hypocrites».

Tels sont les différents aspects qui constitueront le contenu de leur opus prévu pour avril 2006.

Babacar Diouf



## II. Social Context in Senegal: Creating *Y'en a Marre*

- Power outages
- Unemployment
- Rising cost of food and fuel
- Education
- Healthcare

The screenshot shows a news article from RFI (Radio France Internationale) dated Tuesday, June 28, 2011, at 03:52. The article is titled "Sénégal : Dakar et sa banlieue s'enflamment contre les délestages" (Senegal: Dakar and its suburbs erupt against power cuts) and is written by Laurent Correau. The text describes violent protests in Dakar and its suburbs on June 27, 2011, against Senelec, the national electricity company, due to frequent and long power outages. It mentions that several public buildings were looted or set on fire, including Senelec offices. A photograph shows a worker in a hard hat and blue uniform standing next to a high-voltage electrical substation. A caption below the photo states: "Un ouvrier devant un poste haute tension du réseau électrique de la Senelec. Des bâtiments de la compagnie publique d'électricité ont été incendiés par des Sénégalais en colère, le 27 juin 2011" (A worker in front of a high-voltage power station of the Senelec network. Buildings of the public electricity company were set on fire by angry Senegalese, June 27, 2011). The article also notes that similar protests occurred in Mbour, a coastal town about 80 km from Dakar.

# III. Y'en A Marre ("We're Fed Up")







# ***Y'en a Marre* Drafts a Complaint**

One Thousand Complaints against the  
Senegalese Government

*(“Les Mille Plaintes Contre le  
Gouvernement du Senegal”)*

# Y'en A Marre Demonstration



Accueil Politique Société Economie International Sports

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**[Audio] 19 mars : Y en a marre promet de terribles révélations**

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**LERAL.NET - Ils ne voulaient pas dévoiler le lieu de leur rassemblement du 19 mars mais ils y ont été contraints par la police.**

**Y'EN A MARRE**



# NTS (“New Type of Senegalese”)

Improve behavior and responsibility by encouraging citizens to:

- Take an active role in solving societal problems
- Understand the power of their votes
- Respect public property

# Sharpen Your Weapon (“Daas Fanaanal”): The Voter Card as a Weapon













# The Political Context

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Senegalese Protests Face Down Constitutional Change

Amid claims that he is grooming his son for the presidency, President Wade has had to abandon his attempts to modify the constitution.

ARTICLE | 7 JULY 2011 - 9:36AM | BY TAMBA JEAN-MATHEW III

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Senegal's opposition is still reflecting over what can be seen as the first major victory against President Wade's ruling Parti Democratique Sénégalais since he came to power 11 years ago. On June 23rd, after riots broke out, President Abdoulaye Wade was forced to drop his



# Don't Touch My Constitution



# Tensions Rise in Senegal: Leading Rappers Arrested



# Anti-Wade Protests Intensify





# Anti-Wade Protests Intensify





# Anti-Wade Protests Intensify



WORLD BULLETIN

Africa - 17:17, 15 February 2012 Wednesday



A picture made available on 08 February 2012 of thousands of Senegalese anti-government protesters walking through the streets of the capital Dakar during an opposition coalition rally, Senegal 07 February.(EPA)

## Senegal police fire tear gas to disperse protest


Cat-and-mouse battles continued between rock-throwing youths, some wearing bandanas against the teargas, and security forces on Dakar's back streets, Reuters witnesses said.


# Anti-Wade Protests Intensify

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## The Lede

[Blogging the News With Robert Mackey](#)

July 26, 2011, 2:25 pm | [Comment](#)

### Protest After Senegal Arrests Activist Rapper

By J. DAVID GOODMAN

Young protesters seeking to oust Senegal's aging president filled the streets outside a central courthouse in the capital, Dakar, on Tuesday, a day after the police arrested a rapper and prominent democracy activist.

A Facebook page for the country's youth-driven protest movement, [Y'en a Marre](#), or We're Fed Up, had urged supporters to gather in peaceful protest in front of the court building in the capital where the rapper and democracy activist, Omar Touré, was brought [after spending a night in jail](#).




Image via Facebook


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27 July 2011 Last updated at 03:59 ET

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## Senegal police free anti-Wade rapper Toure aka Thiat

**Senegal's police have released prominent rapper Omar Toure after questioning him for criticising President Abdoulaye Wade.**

Mr Toure, who is known as Thiat, was arrested on Monday for opposing Mr Wade's plan to stand for re-election next year.

The opposition said his arrest suggested growing intimidation ahead of the polls.

Dozens of his fans protested in the capital, Dakar, demanding his release.

Mr Toure is a member of Senegal's popular Keur Gui band.

In January, he helped launch the Enough is Enough movement, which is



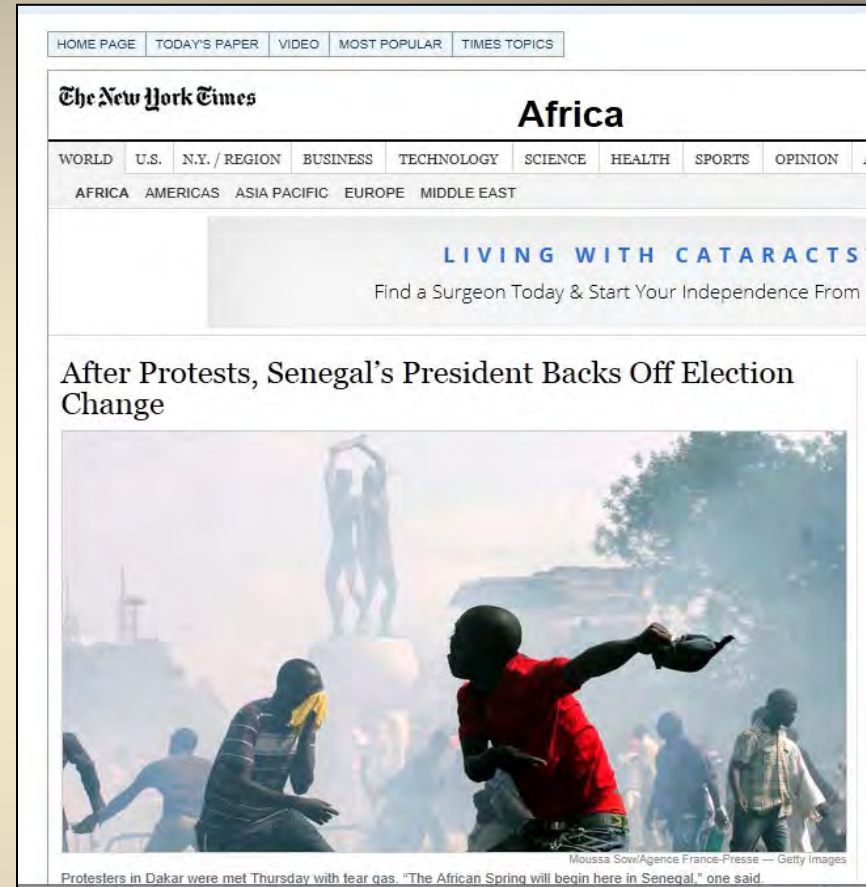
Senegalese rapper Omar Toure has denounced President Abdoulaye Wade's bid for a third term

**Related Stories**

[Senegal rappers fight for freedom](#)



# Wade Backs off Constitutional Change



**“This proves once again that the mobilization of the people  
is a formidable source of democracy”  
—Former Prime Minister Moustapha Niasse**



# Delivering the Message





# Delivering the Message





# Bringing the Message to the People





# Bringing the Message to the People



# The Political Context

Senegal's President Abdou... K

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## Senegal's President Abdoulaye Wade Seeks Third Term Despite Calls For Resignation

 AP

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DAKAR, Senegal — A spokesman for Senegal's president says he will seek a third term despite unrest and calls for his resignation.

Spokesman Sengne Mbacke Ndiaye said Tuesday that Abdoulaye Wade will soon submit his bid to the Constitutional Court ahead of Feb. 26 elections.

The 85-year-old Wade is attempting to run for a third term by exploiting a constitutional loophole that would circumvent the two-mandate limit.

Wade's plans to run, as well as frequent power cuts and the spiraling cost of living, have sparked violent



# Do Not Push! (“Faux! Pas Forcé”)



“I swear you were a role model  
until you turned our constitution into your toy!”  
– Y’en A Marre Protestors to President Wade

# Do Not Push! (“Faux! Pas Forcé”)



# President Wade is Allowed to Run for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Term

## The Telegraph

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### Protests sweep Senegal over president election ruling

Two people including a 60-year-old woman died as protests again swept Senegal on Monday following a legal ruling that allowed the president to run for a third term.



Abdoulaye Wade took power after elections in 2000 and was re-elected in 2007, but argued that new laws introduced in 2001 limiting presidents to two terms did not apply to his first stretch in office Photo: FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP/Getty Images



## Senegal's president can run for third term, court rules

Abdoulaye Wade, 85, cleared to stand again but opposition claims constitution has been violated and urges people to 'show resistance'

---

Agencies in Dakar  
theguardian.com, Monday 30 January 2012 05.40 EST



Abdoulaye Wade, pictured in 2006, has been cleared to run for a third term for the Senegalese presidency. Photograph: Hasan Sarbakhshian/AP

# Finishing the Enemy Off (“Doggali”):

Through education and non-violent protest





# Finishing the Enemy Off (“Doggali”):



# Victory: Peaceful Elections and Securing Democracy



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### Macky Sall Senegal win confirmed by official poll results

Senegalese politician Macky Sall has won a crushing victory over veteran leader Abdoulaye Wade in the country's presidential election.

Official results showed he won 66% of the vote compared with Mr Wade's 34%.

Mr Sall, a former prime minister, will assume office after his inauguration on 3 April.

Mr Wade, 85, who had been in power for 12 years, conceded defeat just hours after polls closed on Sunday. The poll was praised by observers as being fair.

Thijs Berman, head of the European Union's observer mission which had over 90 observers in Senegal, said the campaign and election had been relatively trouble-free.

He said there were a few minor incidents of vote buying and use of state resources by both sides.

"It was a credible vote and the result was accepted by all," the Reuters news agency quoted him as saying.

The African Union said the peaceful conduct of the presidential elections



Macky Sall (R) is a former protege of Abdoulaye Wade, who he defeated in the election

#### Related Stories

- Senegal proud of peaceful election
- Who is Macky Sall?
- Profile: Abdoulaye Wade



# IV. NTS (“New Type of Senegalese”): Keeping Youth Engaged



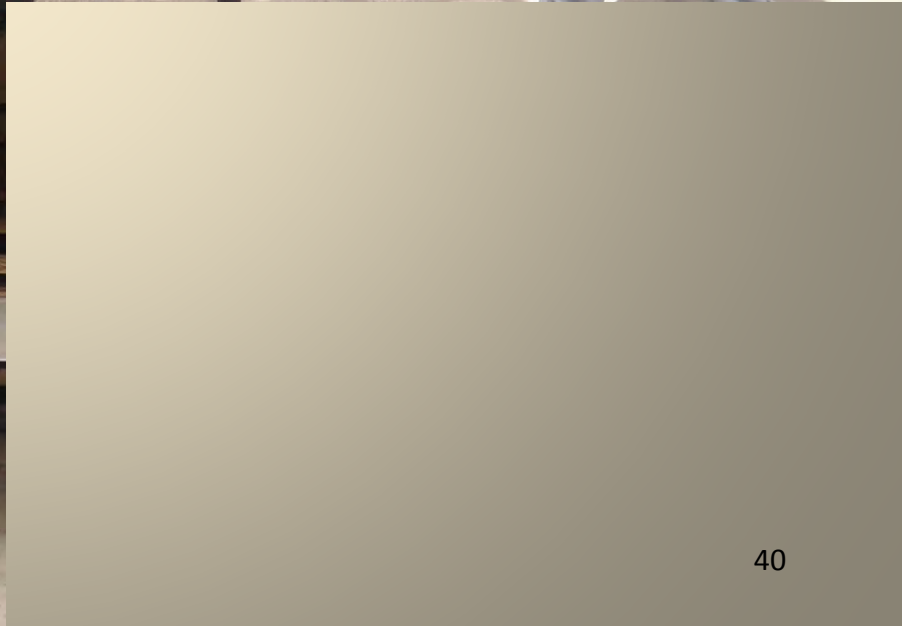






















# *Y'en a Marre* Rappers Continue to Engage the Public



## *Amnesty International Report on Senegal:*

Senegal's rapper-activists recently collaborated on a new single in support of Amnesty International's campaign against impunity in the country. The human rights advocacy organization launched the campaign to draw attention to the fact that there has been no justice for those who died during the 12-year regime of former President Abdoulaye Wade especially during the period just before the 2012 presidential elections. The campaign puts public pressure on President Macky Sall and calls for follow-through on criminal investigations in order to get justice for victims of violence and torture.

"100 Coupables: Impunité! Nous Avons besoin de Justice" (100 Guilty: Impunity! We Need Justice) is the brainchild of rapper/producer Simon of 99 Records. The single featuring Simon (Bisbiclan), Drygun (Yatfu), Beydi (Bideew bu Bess), Djiby (Dabrain), Thiat (Keur gui), Keyti and Books (Sen Kumpë) aims to bring the issue of impunity to the public's attention. When Simon called the collective of rappers were more than willing to head into the studio in support of human rights. In fact, several of the rappers were either arrested themselves or victims of police brutality because of their work with the now famous *Y'en a Marre* movement—a social movement founded by rappers and journalists that gained mass popularity after president Wade attempted a power grab by changing the constitution and running for a third term in office. The song is a call for justice, respect for human rights and memorializing of the many victims of violence with rapping in Wolof set to a Hip-Hop beat.

If the social media response is any indication, Amnesty International was wise in its decision to collaborate with the rappers because the music video has been shared widely on multiple social networking outlets while official Amnesty International reports remain the reading of a select audience. Once again, Senegalese rappers continue to impress with their ability to take the message directly to the people.

# V. Beyond Senegal's Borders (Gambia): Against Impunity





# Observing Democracy ("Dox Ak Sa Gox")



# Observing Democracy ("Dox Ak Sa Gox")



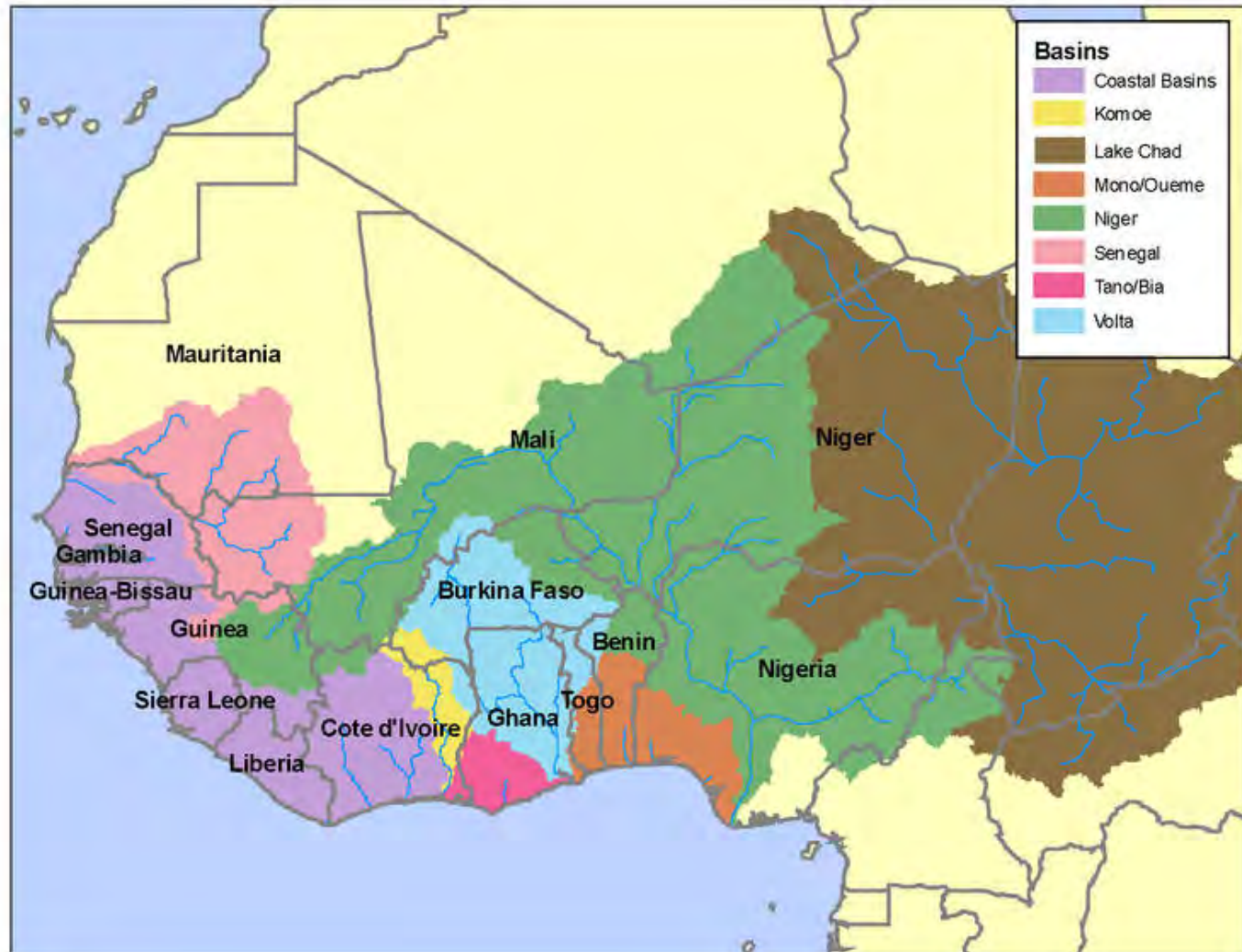


# VI. Next Steps

All of these activities lead to the next step in my activism:

- Working with youth across Africa to improve conditions in their countries

# ECOWAS Region







## Grassroots democracy

### Goals:

- Civic education
- Population gains awareness of social, political, and economic issues
- Population is then able to participate in development and change



- **Target:** Grassroots population
- **Where:** Begin in the ECOWAS zone
- **Who:** Youth, artists, journalists, women's group leaders, and others





**How:** through art

1. Rap music compilation album in local languages
2. Tour by all participating artists throughout their various countries (including to universities)
3. Radio Station – “Voice of the Youth” in the ECOWAS zone
4. Website – information tool and networking platform



## Activities and Timeline:

1. Early 2015
2. Develop a “social contract”
3. Outreach
4. Recording
5. Tour (marketing, conference planning, and actual tour)

**\*Long term Goals: Radio Station and Website**





## Needs:

- Refine concept
- Develop “social contract”
- Create Organization
- Develop Budget
- Seek Funding