

In their own words...

Senegal: How Awa dreads “salt season”

Awa, 9-year-old girl, said “Look at my hands, my palms are cracked. My skin is so dry and my eyes sting all of the time. That’s because of the salt. We have to work during the dry season when it’s very cold. From morning until dusk, we work under the sun without any protection. When it’s salt season, the schools are practically empty; everyone goes to harvest salt because it’s the only way to make money to buy clothes and school supplies. My parents can’t manage otherwise. We need the money that I earn. With it I can help them with family expenses.”

“I would like to go to secondary school like my brother, who is one of the rare students from our village to have passed the entrance exam. Now he is in town and he is going to continue his studies. School is my biggest worry – it’s difficult to both go to school and harvest salt.”

“No one forces me to go to work. I started when I was very little by accompanying my mother. I have seen the slogan “Red Card to Child Labour” on TV; I know that children are not allowed to work. But no one forces us. We have grown up working in salt and we don’t know anything else. “

