

---

# **“Basketball Diplomacy in Africa: An Oral History from SEED Project to the Basketball Africa League (BAL)”**

An Information & Knowledge Exchange project funded by SOAS University of London. *Under the direction of Dr J Simon Rofe, Reader in Diplomatic and International Studies, Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, SOAS University of London* [jsimon.rofe@soas.ac.uk](mailto:jsimon.rofe@soas.ac.uk)

**Transcript: Syra Sylla  
Basketball Storyteller  
Founder, The Lady Hoop  
Founder, Women’s Sport Story**

**Conducted by Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**  
*Research Associate, Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy,  
SOAS University of London* [Lk16@soas.ac.uk](mailto:Lk16@soas.ac.uk)



---

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

For the record, could you start by just giving us your name, your age and how your first arrived to the basketball world?

**Syra Sylla**

My name is Syra Sylla. My parents are from Senegal, and I'm 36 years old. I first arrived in the basketball world when I was 18. One of my friends brought me to a basketball game, and that's how I fell in love with basketball. The day after, I got on the basketball team, and since this day, I've played basketball, and am working in basketball.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Right, doing all kinds of work in and around the basketball world. And so you grew up mostly in France. Could you just explain a little bit to our listeners, how did you first become involved with basketball in Africa? And you've done a lot of work there, especially in Senegal, what has driven your work on the continent thus far?

**Syra Sylla**

So, as you said, I grew up in France, but as a kid I went to Senegal in the summer every two years with my parents, so it was only for holidays that I was with my family [there]. And when I was 18, I started to go to Senegal on my own. Two years after, I was working in basketball journalism and started to travel for basketball and to work, and one day I was in Senegal. I did an interview with Amadou Gallo Fall, who is the president of the Basketball Africa League (BAL), and that's how I started to travel in Senegal, but only to witness how basketball was big in the country, and I started to know people close to basketball.

And then I met players and I saw what was missing there: shoes, jerseys, shorts and everything. So, when I went back in France I started to... Because I have all my friends in France, you have a jersey, and then you buy another one so you don't wear that previous one anymore. But in Africa they are playing with their shirts for five or six years. So, I started to gather all the gear and shoes that my friends were throwing away to bring them to Senegal. And that's how I started to get involved on the social side.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

And what was the reaction of the players in Senegal who received this largess, the shoe donations?

---

## **Syra Sylla**

When I did it the first time, it was for my cousin because my cousin played basketball there. So, I wanted to do it with someone I was close to, just to have the reaction, not to have a thank you but a polite thank you, so I gave her my shoes that I was wearing for four years. They weren't brand new shoes, but she was so happy. She couldn't stop thanking me and she was always posting pictures of the shoes and she was almost sleeping with the shoes, and then I was like, "Those shoes aren't even new and you were so happy to have them." Because for her, I don't think we have the same value of those shoes. We buy shoes because we need to, in France, it's not only to play with, but it has to have the same colour as your shirt, as your jersey, so it's a whole thing. But there, it's any, because if you have good shoes, you can run on the court. They can play without shoes, because they do it. They play without shoes. But if you play with shoes, you can do better things and you are not always injured and everything.

She was so happy, so I started to get more for her team and they were happy too. I was afraid that they would say, "Someone wore them already so I don't want to wear them," but it was not at all like this. They were just happy to have them. Even if it was not new, if it was not only basketball shoes, if it was the Kobe Three, while we are wearing the Kobe 8, they were just happy to have shoes. And even the gear, they were just happy to have gear. It was not about the brand and everything. Maybe today it's more about the brand because everything is all about the brand when you are young, but when I was doing this at the beginning, they were just happy to have basketball gear to wear and to feel like basketball players.

## **Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Right. Certainly, that goes a long way. And how long ago did you first start doing this program?

## **Syra Sylla**

I started six years ago, I think. So, I started by bringing shoes for my cousin, who was in the city. And then my parents, they are from the countryside, and they don't play basketball there. They have courts, but they never saw a basketball. And I was like, "How can you have four courts and not shoot on them?" But they were playing football on it. So, four years ago, I started to bring basketballs, and then I showed them how to play, and they asked me to do some practices. So, every time I went there, and I was going there a lot, like three times a year, every time I was there they were like, "Can we practice? Can you show us how to shoot? Can you show us this and this?" And then they were playing, they were actually going to the court and trying to improve their game by watching videos on YouTube and everything.

## **Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

And what is the exact name of the town or the region where you were doing these basketball...?

---

**Syra Sylla**

The region is called Ferlo. The city is called Ranerou. And it's very deep in the country. It's close to the Mauritian border, so it's a region where they don't have water and they don't have power. When it is night-time, nobody can see.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

And yet they still have four basketball courts?

**Syra Sylla**

Yeah, and I don't know how or why. It's almost like they didn't know how to use the hoops. They didn't know how to put the ball in there, if it would fit. Because they all know how to play football, but they don't have power, so they don't have TV. So, if you don't have TV, they cannot watch basketball or anything. And soccer, every nation knows everything about soccer.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Right. So how would you describe the change in this particular area over the past several years, in terms of how basketball is played or how people view it?

**Syra Sylla**

In my village? From what I can see, they are playing... They have a plan now. They have a team and they're out traveling to play other teams. It's good because it's only about football in these countries, football has to be played by men, not by women. So, the women didn't have any sports to do there, because they cannot play soccer and everybody plays soccer. So, they cannot do anything. But with basketball, basketball is a mixed sport. It's for women and for men, it's for young and for older people. So, it's for everybody. So there, the boys still play football, but the girls now can play basketball, and the boys can play also basketball. So, they were playing four days per year when I was there, and now they're playing every day because they found people to help them to practice and have shoes and basketballs and everything. And they have a team, they have jerseys, so they play games, they have practices. They do everything.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Terrific, because that touches on a question I wanted to ask you. I know you've done a lot of thinking about it. In what ways do you perceive basketball, in Africa more generally but you can certainly speak to this particular region of Senegal or Senegal more broadly, to what degree does basketball offer maybe greater opportunities for women and girls, their inclusion and working towards the SDG of gender equality?

---

**Syra Sylla**

I think basketball empowers girls there, because now they have a sport to play and they don't feel that their only role is to cook and educate their children. That was always the thinking before: that they are women so they have to get husbands; when they are kids they have to take care of the house and then when they grow up they have to get married and to have children and to educate their children, and that's the only way to be. But now with sports, and basketball in particular, it can feel like they are something else, not only housekeepers. At first basketball, in some countries, can bring them things they don't know about and bring out the best of them; they can be educated also through basketball, because through basketball they can find good schools. And it's also, for health, it's also a way to mentally... sports can help you to get away from all the things you have to do at school, at work and everything, and just be you. You just feel good just by running and playing and everything. Just for your body.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

One other area I wanted to ask you to talk to since you've done so before, are there traits that basketball perhaps helps to teach these girls, in particular leadership and confidence?

**Syra Sylla**

Yeah. That's what I meant when I said empower, because on the court... When I was a kid, I was so shy. I couldn't speak when I had a group of people around me. Even today, I cannot speak. But with basketball I feel confident because on the court I knew how to play and I was confident and I have the team with me, trusting me when I had the ball. I think I learned how to be confident in life thanks to what I learned on the court, because of the values of basketball. But I think it's one of the sports that has so many values, like leadership and team spirit, teamwork, and resilience and respect for the opponents but also for your teammates. There's a lot of values that you learn in basketball that you can learn in life, and that will help you to grow as a person.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Well it certainly also helps to create identities or helps to strengthen identities. In what way have you witnessed basketball help to strengthen identities either in Senegal or Africa or more generally, globally?

**Syra Sylla**

If I speak for myself, it's helped me build my mentality and my identity, because it's helped me... I would say I started playing basketball and then I worked in basketball and I was confident in it. And I found myself, thanks to basketball, I became someone who was wanting to help people through basketball, but this is something that you can help people, you can do it with everything. But when you have a passion, and I think with sports it's something very special, this

---

is the values you learn. Basketball is a team sport, too. If you want to win you have to help your teammates. Your teammate has to help you. So, we learned how to go forward thanks to the teamwork. And I think it's the same in life, and that's how we build identity. That's how we build people. We have to live together and to play together to be able to go forward and to go further.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Okay. Along those lines, do you see yourself as a sports diplomat? And if so, would you identify with being a sports diplomat of France or of Senegal or somewhere between the two?

**Syra Sylla**

I would say between the two, because I try to... I think I'm a basketball diplomat and I started to do it in Senegal when I was trying to create my basketball team. I had to go through the process with the kids and to explain to them how basketball could help their kids to the world. So that's how I figured out how to negotiate and everything, and this is diplomatic for me. So, I started it there, and then when I came back I looked around me and I saw that it was also needed in France, but it's popular there because it's mostly in the African community here in France. I was like, "I need to do this in Senegal," but I realized that I could do it also in France with my peers. There are little girls that are like me, their parents' origins are from Africa, so we have both traditions and both cultures. We are French because we live in France, and we have the French way of life.

But we still have our African roots deep inside us, and it's in the way we eat at home with our sisters and brothers. And it's the way we dress when we have weddings and everything. So, we have both of our cultures, French and African. So that's why I said I'm in both of them.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Okay. Well terrific, because I wanted to ask you what roles some of the diasporas, particularly there in France, play in the sports diplomacy at large, but you have touched on that, that it's a little bit more nuanced. Given that, taking a broad picture of sport and diplomacy as the communication, representation and some kind of negotiation that occurs in and around the court, how do you view the intersections of basketball and diplomacy as they relate to the African continent?

**Syra Sylla**

I think diplomacy needs basketball, needs sports, to move on in Africa, because diplomacy is a big thing there. In France, you can do anything without even talking to the mayor of your city, all those people running the diplomacy, but in Africa you cannot do anything... In Senegal, it's

---

easier if you know people who are in politics and everything. And I think all politics also use sports. Like in Senegal, for example, we did not have any venue to host a basketball competition, and the girls [national team] won [AfroBasket] four years ago [2015]. So, the president of Senegal promised, after they won the African Championship, he promised we would build an arena so we can host competition. We have such good teams but the Senegalese people can't enjoy [them] because we don't have the competition here in Senegal. So, then he built the arena and then we had the women's African Championship here last year, and now we have the NBA coming. So, this is all thanks to sports and diplomacy, and I think that's how we'll be able to bring and to build a lot for the young generation through sports, thanks to diplomacy and through diplomacy, but thanks to sports. I think two of them cannot be separated if you want to build Africa as a modern continent.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

All right. With that in mind, in your experience or from your perspective, who plays a leading role in conducting or developing basketball diplomacy in Africa or in Senegal? You can speak to either one. Is it grassroots people like yourself? Is it...

**Syra Sylla**

I think this is people like me, so the diaspora, grassroots people who are passionate about it and trying to bring in Senegal, but also the NBA players, professional players, because they are the ones who have the biggest impact in terms of image. For example, now we have more than 12 African NBA players, and I feel like people... Take last year: Pascal Siakam won [with the Toronto Raptors], he is from Cameroon and he won the NBA title, and he was on the podium with the Cameroonian flag. And I think nobody knew about it [the flag] like African people, nobody knew that was the Cameroonian flag but now they know it because the players are proud of their roots, and every time they can, they show that they are from Africa. I remember one of the All-Star Games, Luol Deng was selected and he was an All-Star, and at the All-Star Game everybody's wearing the same t-shirt, the same short and everything, and when he got introduced for the All-Star Game, he had a shirt with Africa on it. And this is how proud he was to be from Africa and how proud he was to... He wanted to show how proud he was to be from Africa.

So those players that are now playing in the NBA and earning millions of dollars, they still show where they're from, and they don't forget where they are coming from, and this is helping us. This is helping the young players, because now people know they have talent in Africa, because we have some examples that they are talented. And if there is one Joel Embiid, they got have ten other Joel Embiids in Cameroon. But I think they are the first people, because of the impact they have.

---

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Through your journalism work and some of your other basketball communications work, you've exchanged with many of the players from Africa who are in the NBA or playing in other elite professional leagues. Do you have a sense that they welcome the role of being unofficial athlete ambassadors? Or unofficial sports diplomats? What's your sense of their understanding?

**Syra Sylla**

I think some of them realize, because some of them are, not smarter, but they realize. I don't know why, but they realize they are ambassadors. Like Luol Deng, he was wearing the shirt so he knew the impact that would be because he knew the All-Star Game is viewed by everyone, so everyone will see his shirt. So, when he did it, he did it on purpose. And then I think you have some players, maybe they're younger, they don't necessarily realize how big the impact can be. I think a guy like Joel Embiid, through his first years he was focused so much on his NBA season. He has to be one of the best players and he has other things to do than thinking of how he's going to help Africa and everything. But now that he grew up and also that he was involved in some events on the African continent, now I think he realizes how kids here in Africa are following his steps. But I think you can't realize if you just get in the NBA and then you don't come back in Africa to witness this. You don't see how big this is.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

How big is it? Give us some indication of how big the NBA and having African NBA players is.

**Syra Sylla**

This is huge. It's huge. No, but I mean, when you go to the streets of Dakar before everybody was wearing football jerseys, and now everybody's wearing NBA jerseys. This is how big this is because I think we changed the perspective of sports and I think everybody was thinking that if you want to succeed in sports when you are from Africa, you have to play soccer because there are a lot of African players playing in Europe. Soccer players in Europe. Now, we're showing that if you play basketball you can also succeed. And you succeed in the U.S., you can succeed in Europe, and you can also succeed, and this is important I think the step we have to show to the kids that even if you play in Africa for your country, you are successful. And it's a goal. The Olympics is the goal for every sport, but it's also important that if you can't go to the NBA, you still can have a career by playing in Africa, and this is how the BAL will be so important.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Is there kind of a demarcation point in your perspective of when that switch over was from the football jerseys in the streets of Dakar to the NBA ones?



---

**Syra Sylla**

Yeah. I'll say maybe ten years ago. Maybe starting ten years ago slowly, but you really could see with the LeBron James jerseys and the Stephen Curry jerseys, and it's also because of the social media. Because, as I said, not all people have TVs in Senegal at least, and even if you have TV you have to have the good channels to see basketball and everything. And now with social media, you just have to follow your players and you know how to wear the jersey, you know how much points he scored in one night. Through social media everything changed, and it's also changed the players. They are owning their own narratives now. They can tell their story thanks to social media. They don't have to wait until ESPN or CNN comes to their house and tells their story. They can tell it just through their social media.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

And how do you think these consumption habits and the changing content habits of players, in the NBA especially, is impacting or changing how people learn about basketball and/or the NBA in Africa?

**Syra Sylla**

Do you mean the social media?

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Yeah.

**Syra Sylla**

I mean, now you don't have to watch the TV. Now you just wake up and you don't have to watch the... When I was young I was not sleeping because I was watching the game at night. Because in France and in Senegal, when the NBA is playing at night at like 8:00 PM, it's like 2:00 AM here. So, you have to not sleep if you want to watch the game. You cannot watch it in the morning or in the afternoon. Today with the social media, with the NBA League Pass, with all the websites and everything, you just have to wake up and in 30 minutes you can know everything that happened in the NBA. Thanks to Twitter, thanks to Instagram.

So, you can know literally everything without watching a game. It feels like you watched the game, but you are not watching the game at all. Only the big things that happened, highlights, the social media are highlighting this, and now you can... I mean in Senegal when I see my cousin, they know everything about every player, about their wives, about their lives, about everything. And thanks to social media. Thanks to the videos because before if you wanted to see a documentary about one player, if it wasn't ESPN or big channel who showed it, you can't. But now, there are so many people who are doing a lot of content, creating content, just to tell stories

---

and tell their stories their way. So now you can see all the content they are creating on the internet, on social media, you can watch everything. You can know everything you want about everyone.

And this is kind of scary, but it's also amazing. Yesterday was the memorial of Kobe Bryant passing away, and everybody in the world followed it. It was US event, but I watched it and I felt like I was in the Staples Center with them, and this is part of the new media.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

And this is really important because it talks very much to the communication function of basketball diplomacy and transmitting some of the cultural cues and game knowledge through these exchanges. From your perspective, there's many benefits for basketball diplomacy in Africa, but what are some of the challenges that confront conducting or engaging in basketball diplomacy in Africa? And are these challenges more unique than in other parts of the world?

**Syra Sylla**

I think the challenge is to use all of this to build our own stories on the continent, because we always say that we don't know how to get the benefit from something concrete, to transform it. Now we have BAL, we just did it, they are staying in Africa in the future and they are doing a lot of talk about Africa in the future, and at some point, you're like, "Stop doing that. This isn't future we have to do something." So, I think the danger of social media is that it can show you things in a positive way, and then nothing gets done. And the thing is we have to act, and not only posting about how basketball can be big in Africa. We have to do things so basketball will be big in Africa. And that's what they are doing with the BAL.

To give you an example, it's not from Africa but from Asia. I think with the Houston Rockets, I think it was in the press, they had kind of a fight between the NBA and Houston because one of the people on the staff of Houston gave his point of view on the revolution in China, and everybody was upset about it. But this is how the social media can be dangerous. And I mean, the NBA was trying to arrange it and did it. They apologized because they didn't want to lose partnerships they had with China, which could help with Africa if they had some investment. But I think that the social media, we should be aware that it's not only talking and saying this and this, it will be Africa in the future. We have to take care that we act and not only talk.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Right. To ensure that it's following through in reality, which brings me to the BAL itself. You touched on this a little bit, but why do you think people are so excited about the BAL?

---

**Syra Sylla**

Because it's the NBA. This is the NBA coming to the African continent. I mean they are in the continent for a few years now. They are organizing the African Games in South Africa. South Africa is not the biggest basketball country in Africa. They don't have a national team winning the titles and everything, but still, when the NBA players are coming, the arena of 20,000 people is full, just to see NBA players. So, imagine it would have been Senegal, which is a big country, or Nigeria, or those kinds of countries. But I think everybody is excited about it because it's new, first, and then because it's the NBA coming. And when the NBA's watching you, that's something. They are not watching just to have friend, they are not spending this kind of money just to spend money. If they spend money they know that there is something there to get.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Well, so in your perspective, from your point of view, do you view the BAL as a neo-colonial entity? It is the NBA, but the NBA is an American league. Even though the BAL is being undertaken by Africans and got dreamed up by Africans... Or is the NBA perhaps much more global now and not as imperialistic as some critics might call it?

**Syra Sylla**

I don't think it's a colonial thing because... I would feel like this if it was the NBA from 20 years ago coming in Africa and just saying, "Hey we are building this without you." But the BAL is a consequence of Amadou Gallo Fall, an African guy, who built his reputation and his own journey in the NBA, and now he's bringing his plan into Africa. So, I think they took care of building their way in the NBA in the U.S. with the NBA Africa office, and now they can handle things in Africa with the help of the NBA. U.S. of course, but it's not like its only American people coming on the continent bringing everything. They are still going to do things... Like for the jerseys, they took the traditional corners of the countries and everything. So, I think they're building the league by taking care of keeping the spirit of Africa. So, I don't see colonial thing.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Okay. And certainly, the BAL being pan-African, it serves in many different ways, as a tool of sports diplomacy, just for the teams and the players that will be involved, let alone anyone else who follows it or covers it. It's naturally serving in that communication, representation and negotiation fashion. So, in your view, how will the BAL impact intra-Africa sports diplomacy. And then on the flip side, how do you think it will impact what Africa communicates to the world?

---

**Syra Sylla**

I think it will improve and I like the things that are already happening in Africa. I really think how we can benefit from the NBA. They are a big stage. The NBA's not coming alone... They always do big things. So, if there are videos of the game and everything, we know that this is going to be big things. So, it's a way for the players who play here in Africa, who play in the BAL, to show how they can play and how they are good and everything. But I think it's not only helping the African players to show how they can play, it's also maybe influencing the players here in Europe who are waiting to go to America to play. Maybe they'll say, "Hey, I don't need to go to the NBA and just be sitting on the bench for 40 minutes. I can go and play in Africa, because they have the BAL now." I think it's going to be a big league. So, African basketball is going to be legit thanks to the BAL. I hope so at least.

I already saw some players who signed from countries for the Tunisian team. Well the player was playing in France for 20 years, and I was like, "Is he retiring?" And he's not. And he's not going to the U.S. And he's not trying to find a contract in China. He signed in Africa. And two years ago, I was dreaming of players from Europe who would wish to go to Africa. So now all the players that are involved in the basketball community here, and now everybody is asking, "How can we go there? Which are the teams?" And everything. So, everybody's looking at it. And two years ago, it was not this big thing.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Looking into your crystal ball, where do you see the BAL in five years?

**Syra Sylla**

I think it could be one of the five best leagues in the world. We have the NBA, then you have the EuroLeague, then I think you have the Chinese League, which is pretty good because of all the foreign players going there, and then I think we can... I hope we will put the BAL in the top five best leagues in the world. I hope so.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Okay. Great. And just two last questions, because I believe you have been involved with SEED project, correct?

**Syra Sylla**

Yes.

---

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

So, more through that lens, how has SEED project and SEED academy impacted the intersections of basketball and diplomacy in Senegal and the West Africa region?

**Syra Sylla**

I don't know, because SEED was founded by Amadou Gallo Fall, which is not related at all to the federation, and I think this is interesting because we have a Sports NGO which had a big impact in the world, and the federation was not at all involved. So, it showed how you can do things without the federation and the diplomat people and everything. Amadou Gallo Fall succeeded at this. And now the federation needed to be bigger because it had the contacts and had all the networks and everything. And usually when you are other country, if you want to do something in sports, you need the federation. You need to ask them for materials and for machines and everything, but SEED leads its way without asking anything. And now I think the government and the federation needs it, because SEED is... When you say basketball in Senegal, if you are in the U.S., everybody knows about SEED, but nobody knows about the federation. It shouldn't be like this, but it is like this because Amadou Gallo Fall did really great job with this.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Right. And that leads to my last question. Obviously, Amadou, founder of SEED and now founding president of the BAL, has helped to drive a lot of the growth of basketball in Africa. What is the intersection of SEED with the BAL? How might some of the values or alumni and staff be involved or reflected in the BAL? Or not at all?

**Syra Sylla**

I guess they're going to give them a chance, the alumni, to play in the team from Senegal, but I think the bigger thing is going to be the staff, because the staff was used to work with the NBA people, because when the NBA was coming in Senegal, organizing these events, SEED was involved. They did a lot with SEED, so SEED knows how to work with the NBA and how the NBA's working. And they are speaking English because when they worked with coaches from America they spoke English with them. So, I think it's going to be bigger for the staff than for the players of SEED. They can take a lot of people who used to or are still working in SEED to help them prepare the team in Senegal.

**Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

Okay. And then this last question on SEED, do you think SEED has been more impactful on the basketball diplomacy front than NBA Academy in Africa, or Basketball Without Borders? Or is it just really difficult to compare?

---

**Syra Sylla**

I think it's difficult to compare because the NBA Academy and Basketball Without Borders are led by the NBA, it's through the NBA. So, the NBA means more money, more everything. So, it's easier to do things. And SEED really has to struggle to move their own way through the year. Yeah, it's really difficult to compare, but I still think that without SEED, the NBA Academy may not be that powerful right now, because the NBA Academy, when they came in Senegal, they came to Senegal because they could work because SEED prepared everything. They had the team, they had the kids, they had the coaches and everything, and if you wouldn't have SEED in Senegal, maybe the NBA Academy would have been in South Africa or in Nigeria. We don't know. But I think they came in Senegal because the work SEED was doing. SEED showed that we could do things in Senegal.

END

---

**Interview with Syra Sylla, February 2020**

*Founder, Women's Sport Story & The Lady Hoop*

**Conducted by Dr Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff**

*Research Associate, Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, SOAS University of London* [Lk16@soas.ac.uk](mailto:Lk16@soas.ac.uk)

Part of “**Basketball Diplomacy in Africa: An Oral History, from SEED Project to the Basketball Africa League (BAL)**,” an Information and Knowledge Exchange project funded by SOAS University of London. *Under the direction of Dr J Simon Rofe, Reader in Diplomatic and International Studies, Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, SOAS University of London,* [jsimon.rofe@soas.ac.uk](mailto:jsimon.rofe@soas.ac.uk)

**Published Online May 2020**

© **Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, SOAS University of London**

All rights reserved

**10 Thornhaugh Street**

**Russell Square**

**London WC1H 0XG**

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/cisd/>

**Keywords**

Basketball

Africa

Senegal

France

Sports Diplomacy

Gender

U.S. Department of State

Basketball Without Borders

NBA

Basketball Africa League

**Subjects**

Africa

Sports Diplomacy

Basketball

