

LOW COST ORGANIC FARMING

Working with women's groups is a key element of our work. It is also a key to improving women's welfare and family livelihoods. We have been working on a number of market garden schemes helping women develop sustainable and economically viable systems based on good management and organisational abilities.

Mariam Ba, below, is President of the 312-strong Sylla Women's Cooperative.



"We had nothing before the Sylla Project and nothing to do," she says. "Now we run a 9-hectare site and people come to us from far and wide to see how a good profit can be made from market gardening. We use compost and natural crop protection methods and keep our costs down. Our produce is good quality and is sought after at market. We are all better off now. I now help send my grand-children to school, where they didn't go before."

SOME OTHER ACTIVITIES

Micro-credit: small sums of money from a revolving fund are loaned to women's groups which, along with some training, motivates business start-up.

Provision of clean water: Tanzie Mint, below, says shyly of our **Well digging Program:** *"I used to spend 8 hours a day collecting 10 bidons of water from temporary wells five kilometres away:*



now it takes me 2 hours to get 20 bidons. I have more time for household chores and I also have time to go to town to buy fish, which I sell.'

CLIMATE CHANGE CENTRE

We are in the process of setting up a Climate Change Centre from where many activities will take place including the highlighting of local innovative good practice. **Hamed Ganky**, below, who has been implementing **Natural Tree Regeneration** on his land for decades, in one such example.



"I have worked hard all my life," Hamed laughs. "And now they will bring people to see my green land."

Rainbow Development in Africa

Working for farmers and farming communities in West Africa



Charity Registration Number 1087744

Castlefield, Stapleton, Presteigne, Powys LD8 2LP

Tel: 01544 260352

email: peter.rda@freeuk.com

www.rainbowdevelopmentin africa.org

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Rainbow Development in Africa is a UK-based grassroots development charity. We have been working with marginalised farming communities in southern Mauritania and northern Senegal since 2001. Our aim is to help rural people create economically and environmentally sustainable livelihoods.

We focus on improved and sustainable agricultural practices as a means towards not only food security but also the empowerment that comes from income and job creation. We also support access to clean water and micro-credit programs.

Experience has taught us that encouraging informed and well organised communities unlocks the local entrepreneurship that we see as vital to rural rejuvenation. Training, awareness-raising and motivation are therefore key to all the work we do.

The charity is run by Founder/Director, Peter Hudson, with the support of trustees and volunteers. It operates through local partners with around 90% of all funds raised going directly to in-country activities.

WHERE WE WORK



Centered on the small rural town of Leqceiba in southern Mauritania, the region in which we work forms part of the Sahel, the southern ‘shore’ of the Sahara.

Life here on the dry Sahelian plain is dominated by the increasingly unpredictable climate.

Most people practice agriculture or pastoralism but environmental degradation due to severe flooding and drought has made these activities difficult. For all people in the region life is precarious with economic hardship and marginalisation within the larger Moorish culture of Mauritania compounding this.

Local people are mostly of the Peul tribe, an off-shoot of the great Bantu Fulani tribe of West Africa. They are Muslims for whom the family and a devout but moderate devotion to their religion is paramount.

HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Since 2001 we have directly affected the lives of 20,000 people (and indirectly many more). Evaluation of our Sylla Organic Market Gardening Project, for example, indicated family incomes up by 30%. Projects and on-going work are implemented by partner ADMAPE in collaboration with communities and community leaders. Examples follow:

A Little knowledge goes a long way!

Increasingly unreliable rains and dramatically altered economic realities make farming a serious challenge in the Gorgol region. Our **Community Project** introduces simple new methods of farming such as the use of donkey ploughs and rain catchment barrages and different rice planting techniques to help combat these.

Amadou Goudi, below, is 48 and head of a family of 15 in the village of Talhaya. He was introduced to two new farming techniques: the use of Barbary Plante as an organic soil enhancer; and how to use an effective pesticide. Indicating how the plants in the foreground of his millet field are small compared to



those in the rear, he says: “Each of these new techniques has made a big difference. In this field, which has suffered from poor rains, I will get double the yield from the area I treated with Barbary Plante. People have also suffered from caterpillars this year, but because of the new pesticide we have my crop has been saved. This means we will not go hungry as a family this year.”



Ba Djiby, left, is a pastoralist from the village of Mbeidi.

“I was given a week’s training in Kaedi,” he says, “and provided with a stock of veterinary medicines

I now make tours of other pastoralists teaching them about common livestock diseases and selling them medicines from my stock. This is very helpful to them as their beasts live under more stress now than they used to because of the scarcity of pasture and so are more susceptible to diseases. It also provides me with an extra source of income. We thank Allah for this.”

In dry regions such as this, pastoralism is an important part of people’s livelihoods and so any help that will make it more viable is welcome.