In the north-east of the country, which is on the front line of climate change and the advancing desert, a lack of access to quality seeds and increasingly severe droughts are reducing crop productivity. In addition, all of the small-scale farmers are harvesting the same crops at the same time and they have no granaries to store them in. This overproduction with no means of storage leads to massive losses or sales at very low prices, thereby aggravating food insecurity for small producers and their families.

In 2018 Entrepreneurs du Monde set up a project to offer small farmers storage solutions and effective financing, so that they can store part of their harvest and sell it at the optimum time.

The team builds earth granaries that are simple, innovative and efficient, keeping the harvests in darkness and at a cool temperature (28/32°) day and night. Small farmers receive training in soil improvement, agro-ecology and management. The team tracks prices in the market and arranges group transport for agricultural products. The small farmers take out microcredits to finance the agricultural year and the storage of their harvests.

The project is being run by an Entrepreneurs du Monde team of Senegalese and French professionals and is supported by financial (Coopération Monégasque, Fondation EDF, etc.) and technical partners (CRAterre* and EdF). To roll out this project and make it viable the team is going to create a social enterprise for storage and marketing, helping to strengthen the agricultural sector.

*Moussa Diallo: His onion harvest was saved thanks to the granary!

Moussa is a young farmer with a disability. Married with five children, he lives in the Nawel neighbourhood of Matam. During the 2019 growing season, he dedicated an entire half-hectare plot to growing onions. But because his crop matured late, he had considerable difficulty selling it. In desperation he approached Entrepreneurs du Monde and was able to store 8.5 tonnes of onions in the brand new granary. Moussa stopped his produce from spoiling and improved his turnover, allowing him to survive the hunger gap and save money for the start of the new school year.

Experience and innovation
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*CRAterre: Laboratory for agricultural research based at ENSA in Grenoble, CRAterre.org - aecc.hypotheses.org
HIGHLIGHTS

Building the first granaries
We built the first pilot granary using local labour and materials. It was finished in March 2019 and the first onions were stored there in April. Scientific observation during this first period resulted in an improved design for the final version. Construction of a second granary using the new design began in November.

A space for seed production
To meet the need for high-quality seeds, we created a space alongside the granary for reproducing and experimenting with farmers’ seeds, equipped with a solar-powered pump and a 5000-litre water tower. We will be using this to offer practical training in how to produce high-quality seeds so as to help producers achieve independence more quickly.

OUTLOOK

Building skills
Failure to follow technical instructions (from soil preparation through to harvesting) negatively affects both the quality and quantity of agricultural produce. We will therefore be offering producers an appropriate range of technical training and support.

Providing financial services
Thanks to the opening of a service centre for FANSOTO, a microfinance institution incubated by Entrepreneurs du Monde, small producers now also have access to a range of services, both financial (savings and unsecured microloans) and non-financial (management training, follow-up and social support). Each loan is tailored (amount, instalments, term) according to the individual’s ability to make repayments and the seasonal nature of their work.

Agroforestry to combat desertification
Reforesting is the only way to stop soil degradation and adapt to the changing climate. In collaboration with the Water and Forestry Service and the municipality of Matam, we plan to develop nurseries for both forest and productive trees (fruit trees, hedgerow, aerial fodder etc) so that everyone will be able to replant around their houses, fields and even in the scrub.

PARTNERS

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