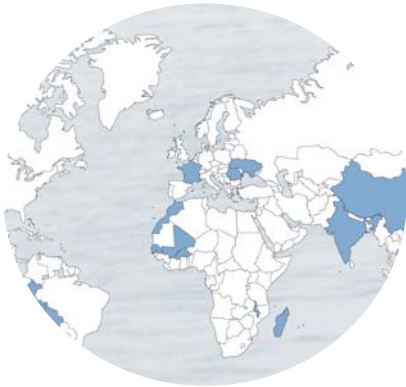


EDITORIAL

In the 3 years since it was set up,



The Foundation has invested nearly 10 million euros in 68 projects in 16 countries.

Dear Readers,

Fondation Ensemble is celebrating its third anniversary, occasion we have chosen to invite our partners, giving them their say in our 2007 activities report. Reading their accounts gives far more information than a long speech.

The figures themselves, speak volumes. Three years after it was set up, the Foundation has invested nearly 10 million euros in 68 projects. Our actions focus on 16 countries. 16 countries visited by experts, and also the Foundation's team, following and evaluating projects, listening to actors.

2008 also marks a new start with the introduction of the Small Grants Fund. Dedicating them, from this year on, 15% of our annual budget, they will provide new opportunities for support work, in particular for the protection of endangered species, theme that will represent 6,25% of this fund.

Finally, 2008 is the Sanitation year; a real priority for our Foundation from our beginning, as we already dedicate, with water, more than 65% of our grants to this field of involvement. A wish : that this year will favour the emergence of a sustainable dynamic corresponding to the human and environmental issues, in France and elsewhere.

Jacqueline Délia Brémond  
Vice-chairman.

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The annual report for 2007 (extracts) is available on the Fondation Ensemble website.



## THE LIFE OF THE FOUNDATION

### New in 2008

Welcome to Small Grants Fund. Three years after it was set up, the Foundation opens a new fund: Small Grants Fund. To welcome initiatives that, without a punctual grant, could not been implemented on the field.

Intended more specifically for small and medium-sized organizations looking for short term aid, *Small Grants Fund* will gradually represent 15% of the total amount invested and 6.25% will be dedicated to the protection of threatened and/or endangered species.

Organisations will be able to submit their project at any time during the year. The subsidy provided by the Foundation has a ceiling of 30,000 € for projects that have a maximum budget of 60,000 €

To find out more about the prequalification criteria, selection procedures and follow-up, please visit the Foundation website, where you will find all the information you need in order to present a project, including downloadable forms. The website has been updated to make searches easier for our visitors.

Please do not hesitate to pay us a visit and make your views known.



The protection of threatened and/or endangered animal species alone represents 6.25% of Small Grants fund.

*'Three years of existence that confirm importance of projects' follow-up.'*

*A little less than 10 million euros grants in more than 65 projects, for a total investment of more than 35 million euros.*

*'With Fondation Ensemble: 3,000 Suns and 15,000 Smiles'. These are the opening lines of the 2007 annual report, extracts of which can be consulted on our website. It begins with the testimonies that partners who followed our Foundation from its beginning, accepted to address.*

*They go straight to the heart as they underline what is the very bedrock of our strategy. Here are some extracts : 'mutual understanding... investing in projects for the long haul... a sincere commitment to biodiversity... following through, thoroughness... the importance of communicating and instilling confidence... personal involvement by the Foundation members... enough common sense to avoid the pedantry of the donor'...*

Also encouraging is the number of members who have joined the Foundation's Board of Experts. In total we have 36 permanent or temporary volunteers, providing invaluable support and experience.

After three years of existence, it is to each one of them that we would like to dedicate our initial results.

It could be said (but one must always use caution when talking about quantifiable results) that 200,000 people benefit directly from the work that we started back in July 2005.

40,000 people affected by the setting up of GIRE projects (Protos, Harvest, Aravis Vikas), 3 ecological drainage systems finalized for the same number of villages (Care, Migrations et Développement), over 6,000 latrines built (Water Aid, Inter Aide, Initiative et Développement), 610,000 trees planted (Aravis Vikas, Devalt, Oceanium...), 200 solar greenhouses (Geres), 1,400 solar cookers (Bolivia Inti), 35,000 hectares protected (FFI, Pronaturaleza).

In France, the Foundation is involved in bringing new practices to the attention of 140,000 people, and supports organizations with a total of 256 employees on reintegration work projects.

This list must not make us forget the big challenge of the projects : create the conditions of their sustainability and, as an implicit condition, give them time. Time for identification, time to act, time for awareness, strengthening capacities and finally, maintenance.

Beyond the quantifiable, the challenge is to create conditions for populations and institutionnals, to change behaviour, to try to achieve this sustainability so highly coveted.

Irène Serot Almeras  
Director



The Foundation would like to thank partners featured in this issue, for providing information from the field



Seed bank, food storage, agroforestry, market gardens, literacy programmes, school arboretums... In all, 24 villages are involved in this project.

**FOCUS**

# The seeds of change.

REMARKS COLLECTED BY USC CANADA

Doventza is one of the poorest regions in Mali. Here, for 80% of the population, farming is the only source of income on just 28 % of the land.

For Mali has not been spared from the process of desertification. In 2004/2005, the Doventza region was affected by severe drought that led to shortages for the inhabitants.

Kanda Ongoïba, Hammadou Boré, Aly OnGoïba, all farmers, bear witness to the remarkable capacity of the people there to survive and progress in spite of the extent of the challenges with which they are confronted.

Accounts from the heart of the Sahel, on a project advocating an integrated approach that is respectful of the diversity of the local human and natural resources.

A project that has been ongoing since 2004 led by the NGO USC Canada and supported by Fondation Ensemble in 2007.

**Kanda Ongoïba** lives in **Béguïma**. Thanks to his agro forestry plot, he now has an adequate source of income, to meet the immediate needs of his family.

Kanda Ongoïba is one of those who have benefited from the 20,325 saplings and fruit trees, mainly indigenous species, produced by local nurserymen and made available to local communities.



Once the fence was put up, I was the first to plant a date palm. I am still picking fruit off it and selling it'

*On his agro forestry plot, Kanda Ongoïba employs his son and two of his brothers. A step forward in the fight against the rural exodus.*

'After working on the land, they become market gardeners, selling their produce and buying what they need for their family'

In Béguïma, Kanda Ongoïba's house has become the village information centre. 'Ever since I learned how to read and write in my dialect, it's been me who record the amount of rainfall in our village and the whole village comes to me for information'

*In Béguïma, the women of the village have got together to trade.*

They have received funding to help their business. Pride lights up the face of Kanda Ongoïba: 'My second wife is president of the organisation'

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**Hammadou Boré** lives in the village of Dangol Boré. As village leader, he is involved in all the work of the project.

'I am a farmer and farming is all I know; I learned it from my parents. Thanks to the setting up of propagation plots (millet, sorghum and cowpea), I've learned new cultivation techniques to improve my production and increase the yield from my crops. I have also been taught about how to produce and store seeds (cowpea, millet, etc.).'

Hammadou Boré has also been involved in setting up adapted and fenced market gardening areas.

*'I use market garden produce to improve my diet and increase my income. The food I produce has enabled me to vary my diet.'*

'I am president of the seed bank and I am involved in every stage in the supply'. An involvement that brings results. The community seed bank that started out with 16 villages now has 36.

The results have been carefully documented, thanks to the literacy programme. Hammadou Boré can now keep the various documents in his local language.

Installing dykes, agro forestry, creating an arboretum to make young people aware of the need to protect their environment, health work... Hamadou Boré is involved in it all. And if you ask him why, he says: 'It's the methodology of the project that attracts us'.

**For Aly Ongoiba, who lives in Petaka, learning to read and write has changed his life, as it is a means of conveying scientific and technological information.**



**PROJECT DATA**

**COUNTRY:**  
Mali, Douentza region

**PARTNER ORGANISATION:**  
USC CANADA

**TARGET POPULATION:**  
31,000 people

**TOTAL BUDGET:**  
171,371 euros

Thanks to the project, he can now read, write, calculate and take notes in his own language, Dogon.

*He now takes an active part in local, regional and national meetings and in exchanges with scientists and representatives from development agencies.*

His status as village elder enables him to act as facilitator and communicator between the village and the project. It is he who obtains information from the village wise men, gathering their local knowledge on conservation and how to make best use of local agricultural biodiversity.

His involvement in the training of women in market gardening has been recognized and honoured by the minister for the promotion of women, children and the family.

It is also he who takes part in national workshops, an involvement that has enabled him to buy all the equipment he needs to carry out his work.

**OVER TO YOU**

**Please send us your fact sheets, articles, etc that you would like to see posted on our website or in a future issue of the Newsletter.**

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Improved hearth built by local women in Gad Damei Kalidou



Community Workshop held at a nursery



Drip irrigation kit installed at Thieppe

### Sos sahel: restoring the natural habitat

'The project has greatly improved the living conditions of the people in the Niayes Zone'.

Remarks collected by SOS SAHEL

The project set up by SOS sahel is located in Senegal. It aims to improve the living conditions of nearly 10,000 people living in the Niayes Zone.

M. Oumar Mbengue, agricultural engineer, project manager, shares his on-the-job experience with us.

« The project comes as a great relief for people living in the Niayes zone, who wanted to improve their production system for a long time, but didn't know how to do it.

#### What are the benefits of using improved hearths?

Women have to travel long distances to gather wood. Thanks to the improved hearth, the amount of wood needed and therefore the distance to be traveled have been greatly reduced. It now only takes about 4 bundles of wood to make the midday and evening meal, whereas it used to take 10. The construction technique used to build the improved hearths has spread very quickly via the 23 women representatives. The success can be explained by the choice of a simple technique that uses local resources (clay, sand, etc). So it's easy for the women to train the others how to do it.

**Water is getting scarce, as farmers are well aware... The situation is becoming serious. Is drip irrigation the answer?**

The water level in the wells is falling, whereas demand is tending to increase. The farmers wanted to use this technique, but the initial outlay was too great. They were desperately waiting for some aid that would enable them to put it into practice. It has so many advantages: reducing water consumption, improving crop yields, and reducing the need for backbreaking watering.

#### You are also working on the conservation of the belt of filao trees.

Yes. They act as the first line of defence protecting habitats and market garden land, slowing down the advance of sand dunes. Our work involves planting couch grass, which is known for its many properties in the fight against erosion by the wind and waves.

#### The mulch provided by the filao trees is used here as a form of organic fertilizer...

In the Niayes zone, large quantities of filao mulch can be found. The forestry commission is in favour of the rational use of the mulch. 90 producers have already been trained. The spreading news of the technique will enable the use of chemical fertilizers to be reduced, which pollute the soil and the underground water table, add to the production costs and are harmful to the grower's health. That is why local people are so keen to adopt the new technique.

#### There is also the problem of waste, which exposes families to a real public health danger...

It accumulates on the streets. After being given cleaning equipment, local people got together to collect the rubbish in the main roads through the villages thus improving their quality of life. These rubbish collection days are the first stage in making people aware of good hygiene and cleanliness practices. The aim is to extend them to all the villages in the zone. »

To find out more: [www.sossahel.org](http://www.sossahel.org)  
A project report is also available on [www.fondationensemble.org](http://www.fondationensemble.org)



A grower in charge of monitoring and upkeep



## Our favourites...

We were touched by the "Portraits of direct beneficiaries" (Senegal) that appeared in TERRE DES HOMMES SUISSE (N°87 AUGUST 2007). It provides an invaluable report of the visit, that leads us into the everyday lives of local people, allowing us to see the immediate impact of the project. Extracts.

**Simet Sarr from the village of Bakhamaye**, recipient of 150 kg of seeds: 'Right from the first harvest, I could see that yield had almost doubled: 700 kg instead of 400. By the end of the first year, I had repaid my debt. And most importantly, I was able to use top quality seed, from one year to the next.'

**Couba Goudiaby describes herself as a developer:** vice president of the credit committee of the Savings and Credit Cooperative. She hopes with all her heart that her three young daughters will continue with their education beyond primary school. Her radical dream is to break down gender barriers between jobs: she readily pictures her daughters working as carpenters or mechanics.

**Soda had no idea how to organize savings and credit**, but after following one of the free courses on the subject, she started out with her first loan of 35,000 CFA francs. She then started to rear cattle, processing local produce for sale (groundnut oil, etc). The profit she made from this work enabled her to improve her family's living conditions, for example by installing latrines on her land.

**In 2002 Maïmouma Ba was given training in how to produce natural pesticides made from neem seeds.** Today the amount she produces (...) is enough for her own use (...). As a result of her expertise in processing neem seeds, in 2006 she was asked to provide training in neighbouring villages. 'Now, I enjoy sharing my knowledge because it lets me meet lots of people.'

## Initiative Développement

# Biogas, a source of energy and a means of conservation.

Biogas tank



Remarks collected by ID

*Zhao Shunguo lives in the village of Xiajiatun, in the Caohai Reserve.*

*In the Spring of 2006, along with 100 other families, he signed up with ID and the bureau of Agriculture for assistance with building a biogas tank and latrines.*

*To fund the work, Zhao set up a mutual aid group with 4 other families. This enabled five tanks and latrines to be installed.*

'Biogas suits me perfectly,' explained Zhao Shunguo, 'When I get up early and when I come back from working in the fields, I only have to light the biogas stove to make myself something to eat. It's quick and it takes me less time to cook (wood-fired stoves are very slow to get going).'

'Before it was much harder. I had to bring in jins (half-kilos) of firewood every day, plus firewood makes an awful lot of smoke when it burns in the house stove. It makes your eyes sting. On top of that we needed coal.'

« This year, with biogas, I will definitely save at least 300 yuans. Every day, I am saving on between 5 and 10 kilos of coal, especially in summer when I don't need to heat the house. It's great. »

'Thanks to the latrines,' adds Zhao, 'Everything is cleaner now. You just need to pull the chain. Some of our neighbours come to our house to use the toilet. That gives me extra resources for the tank', he adds, jokingly.

Without adding any human waste, the biogas pressure in the tank can be maintained for several days. 'I know that my neighbours are thinking about installing their own tanks and latrines, which means I'll have less waste from them to use, which is a shame. So I'm going to fit out my pigsty to produce more of my precious biogas'.

Conclusion: 'Biogas lets us make real savings and the latrines make us more aware of hygiene'.

To find out more : [www.id-ong.org](http://www.id-ong.org)

A project report is also available on [www.fondationensemble.org](http://www.fondationensemble.org)



See technical report entitled 'biogas in China'.