



CREATE!

Center for Renewable Energy
& Appropriate Technology
for the Environment

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From Cookstoves to Graduation The CREATE! Approach Towards Self-Sufficiency

CREATE!'s approach towards development has always been rooted in self-reliance and participation. It starts when a community participates in CREATE!'s improved cookstove building workshops where they learn how to build these cookstoves with freely available materials like clay, sand, straw and water. For a country like Senegal already beset with desertification and deforestation, this ability to save firewood for cooking purposes is critical. These cookstove building workshops are CREATE!'s way of judging a community's commitment towards a sustainable future, a commitment that leads to a partnership with CREATE!. During the next four years, each partner community is trained in the four development sectors of renewable energy, water, agriculture, and income generation. Women are trained on sustainable and organic agricultural methods to plant a diverse variety of indigenous nutritious crops. The income generated through the sale of surplus produce empowers them financially. Women are trained on poultry raising to improve their diets and income. Training on microfinance techniques and forming Voluntary Savings and Lending Associations that allow them to save their income and make out loans to each other are the final few steps of this journey.



Once communities are ready to assume control of project activities, our Senegal team arranges a "graduation" ceremony where CREATE! officially hands over all infrastructure and project management to community members. The women are awarded a graduation certificate which symbolizes their mastery of all the techniques and is a matter of pride for them. The community can now manage their projects without financial support or technical guidance from CREATE! and be a model for surrounding villages. This is the ultimate goal of CREATE!'s development approach in rural Africa- self-sufficient resilient communities.

Eight communities have successfully graduated from CREATE!'s program, with Walo, Gagnick Mack and Darou Diadji being the 2020 graduates. All these communities are continuing their program activities with minimal help from CREATE!. This has been possible because of the continued support of our programs from donors like you.

CREATE! Senegal Country Director's Passion for Community Graduation



After four to five years of working with CREATE!, the time comes for a community to graduate to self-sufficiency. While the CREATE! team leaves the site with a heavy heart, there is also the feeling of duty accomplished; a sense of having provided the women with a way forward to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The women are now able to respond to the global challenges related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace and justice throughout the rural world.

Graduation can be a separation, but it is not synonymous to farewell because the CREATE! team is always there to provide a community with necessary support.

A global shift towards valuing approaches that aim for sustainable development with community wellbeing as a preferred developmental goal underscores

CREATE!'s approach. We hope that a better understanding of this concept will help our graduated communities to continue activities even after we leave. This is also the concept we apply to all our partner communities. Using this concept since 2010, CREATE! has brought enormous environmental, nutritional, social and financial revolution to its remote areas of intervention that are left stranded by almost all the NGOs working in the field of sustainable development for the simple reason that the climatic and ecological conditions do not meet the standards for success in this sector. But the results obtained by CREATE! have largely exceeded expectations. Which is why even after a community graduates, the activities continue their course. We envision extending the same activities to more and more communities in the future to address their wellbeing.



CREATE!'s Newest Community's Path Towards Graduation

Keur Ndiouga Village is CREATE!'s newest and nineteenth community that we are collaborating with. Located six kilometers from Gossas in Fatick Region of Senegal, Keur Ndiouga is very unique in that their leadership was well organized and already possessed a shallow well, borehole and grain storage infrastructure from previously collaborating with a government-run agriculture project. CREATE! trained the women of Keur Ndiouga on fabricating improve cookstoves and signed our Memorandum of Understanding with their president and village leadership. The Keur Ndiouga Village project has progressed quickly due to the group's strong and organized leadership and effective training by our technicians Georges and Nogaye.

Since beginning activities in May 2021, we have installed a solar-powered pump to a borehole that was already located in the community garden. We also constructed six water storage basins to enable the women to water crops on a daily basis. Georges and Nogaye are training the Keur Ndiouga Women's Group on composting and other climate-smart agriculture methods. Later this year we will integrate agro-forestry into their garden by planting acacia trees around the perimeter of their vegetable garden. Our Senegal Country Director Omar Ndiaye Seck is very confident that the Keur Ndiouga Women's Group will capitalize on the training and organization skills that they are receiving from CREATE! and increase their vegetable production for sale and consumption and start their journey to improved nutrition, food security and additional income for their families.



Alice Gross Tribute

Alice (Couperus) Gross (1940-2021)

CREATE! is honored to remember a long-term supporter of our organization since its inception 10 years ago. Alice was a veteran who was trained as a physical therapist in the US Army and served during the Vietnam War helping with the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers throughout the USA. She loved her profession and, after leaving the Army, had a successful career as head of the Chest Physical Therapy Department at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Boston.

Alice worked at MGH with another long-term supporter and Board Member of CREATE! since its beginning, Dr. Susan Briggs, a surgeon at MGH. Through her, Alice learned about CREATE!'s many innovative programs in Senegal focused on improving the lives and livelihoods of the partner communities. She was especially enthusiastic about the focus on women and children in the remote villages of Senegal. She often talked fondly about the impact of CREATE!'s activities on improving educational opportunities, nutrition and medical care for those frequently neglected village populations. Alice, herself an avid gardener, was especially impressed with the extensive vegetable gardens the villagers developed as a direct result of CREATE!'s programs to rehabilitate community wells and install solar-powered pumps and irrigation systems for year-round water access. Surplus food production sold in local markets generated income for additional projects, such as the tree-planting programs which dramatically changed the desert landscape surrounding the villages. Alice will be missed by her friends and family who will continue her passion to support CREATE!

Alice played a huge part in CREATE!'s success over the last 10 years. If you would like to donate in her memory or become an annual donor like her, please feel free to reach out to: paulomi@createaction.org



Graduated Community Empowers Village Youth

One of the newest graduated community, Walo started the journey with CREATE! in the last quarter of 2014. A small, rural farming community distinguished by the surrounding baobab trees, Walo has been ably led by their group president, Arame Nguirane to successfully learn all the techniques required to thrive in the different developmental sectors. Today, according to Arame, the group feels their living conditions have improved since they now have access to free clean water, diversified food as well as better income opportunities. Situated on the main road to Guinguiné, Walo's lush community garden has also attracted attention outside their village, prompting the community to become the first CREATE! community to start training youth on sustainable agriculture.

Through the youth training initiative of CREATE! and the Senegal Ministry of Labor, the Walo Women's Group are sharing their organic agricultural techniques with 14 youth from around their own village and neighboring communities. The youth are being trained on vital agricultural skills like preparing seed nurseries, tilling the soil without using large machinery, organic composting to retain soil moisture, weeding, watering and growing a variety of indigenous vegetables. With this training, the youth trainees plan to begin agricultural projects within their own communities. CREATE! and the women at Walo are excited to play this small role in facilitating the transfer of such essential knowledge to youth in Senegal.

Impact by the Numbers:

CREATE!'s First Decade: Accomplishments

From 2010 through 2020,
CREATE! has achieved the following:



Partnered with 18 communities in rural Senegal to introduce appropriate technology development methods



Rehabilitated 18 community wells and installed 18 solar powered pumps and irrigation systems for year round water access



Cleared and prepared one or two-acres of land for 18 community gardens



Planted thousands of trees in partner communities, including cashew species



Trained 15 communities to raise and sell poultry and 16 communities to set up Voluntary Savings and Lending Associations



Impacted health, nutrition, lives and livelihoods of an estimated 18,000 beneficiaries (1000 direct and 17000 indirect)



Graduated 8 communities to self-reliance and sustainable change



CREATE!'s Next Decade: Goals for 2021-2023

Over the next two years, 2021-2023, CREATE! plans to support ongoing communities, while also accomplishing the following:



Partner with four (4) new communities



Reach 200 more direct and 2,000 more indirect beneficiaries, for a total of 20,000



Install 4 more drip irrigation systems in the 4 new communities and retrofit the gravity-fed systems of 15 earlier communities with the more efficient drip irrigation systems



Support launching 6 new poultry raising projects



Launch 6 additional VSLAs