



CREATE!

Center for Renewable Energy
& Appropriate Technology
for the Environment

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SPRING NEWSLETTER 2022

CREATE!'s Reforestation Efforts in Rural Senegal Help Fight Climate Change

CREATE! has been at the forefront of climate action in rural Senegal for 11 years with a goal to create a healthy, livable planet for everyone. Over this last decade of our work, we have come to see that this part of the world bears an enormous brunt of global climate change impacts through desert encroachment and decreasing rainfall. Deforestation compounds these issues, yet communities need to continue collecting wood for cooking. To develop a solution for this challenge, our partner communities actively participate in reforestation campaigns, planting trees every year during the annual rainy season. These trees provide shade, food, and firewood, and serve as windbreaks and living fences in community gardens while absorbing carbon emissions from the air.

DID YOU KNOW? Trees are usually 50% carbon by weight, and the vast majority of that comes from CO₂ absorbed from the air. On average, one tree offsets 34.6 pounds of Carbon.

As an [article](#) on Vox stated, "Reforestation may be one of our most powerful weapons in alleviating climate change." Initially CREATE! used to buy saplings and then distribute them to the communities to plant, but since 2014, our communities have been establishing tree nurseries themselves with seeds, nurturing the saplings, and planting them in the ground during the rainy season. Our reforestation efforts have been noticed by Senegal's National Water and Forestry Service with CREATE! being awarded a diploma of recognition for our contribution to environmental preservation and reforestation in rural Senegal for five consecutive years since 2014.

In 2021, CREATE! planted 30,000 trees, offsetting 1,038,000 pounds of Carbon, regulating harmful impacts of fossil fuels.

Over the years, the CREATE! communities have planted trees including Beechwood, *Albizia Lebbek*, and *Samanea saman* for shade, various citrus trees and nuts like cashews for food, and trees like *Acacia oleifera* and *Acacia melifera* for living fences and windbreaks.

To support our tree planting campaign in Senegal, you can [donate here](#).



Reforestation is a Team Effort: Stories from our Staff in Senegal

Every year, *CREATE!*'s staff collaborates with our partner communities to plant trees in the community gardens and at various open spaces within the village. Some of our staff members share their stories and memories here on tree planting in different *CREATE!* communities.

Ndeye Fatou Thiam: When I joined *CREATE!*, **Gagnick Mack** was just starting and there weren't any new trees. After their very first tree planting campaign, the transformation of the site was immediate. A few years later, the women started harvesting the fruits from their garden. *CREATE!*'s tree planting helped them discover many trees they didn't know before. Last year, **Ndiagne Kahone** had their first tree planting with *CREATE!*. What impressed me most about this site is that in less than one year, their papaya trees are in production. I was there for the first harvest and tasted it with them; they were so happy because it was the first time for most of them!



Enjoying some fresh papaya

*"We received trees from the water and forests department before, but due to lack of experience we could not maintain them. From *CREATE!* we learned the techniques of tree planting and have planted many trees in the village as well as in places of worship, schools and health centers."* - **Ndeye Diagne**, President of **Ndiagne Kahone** Community Cooperative

Ousmane Diallo: **Santhie**, a village in the northern part of Senegal, was feeling the effects of climate change and desertification, especially in periods of high heat when it is difficult to find vegetation. But after planting a diversity of fruit and forest trees at the site, Santhie has become the favorite place of the beneficiaries who seek refuge there. They take advantage of the Papaya and Moringa planted during the reforestation campaigns.



CREATE! technicians teaching beneficiaries how to cultivate trees

Papa Mayoro Diop: In 2020, with COVID, there was a regional travel ban and fewer beneficiaries at our partner sites. But the *CREATE!* team managed to run the reforestation campaign very professionally. To adapt to the situation, we created good communication between technicians, the community volunteers and staff, distributed masks, anti-bacterial gels and hand washers in all communities. Thanks to these efforts, we succeeded in the reforestation campaign, planted many trees, and distributed more to other villages, too!

Ndeye Fatou Sow: I witnessed the beautiful transformation of the **Yougouré** site. This site was almost deserted at the beginning, but thanks to *CREATE!*'s support and the dedication of the community, the site has become a place of convergence for people who are in search of a cooler microclimate and a peaceful environment that they get from this mix of tree species in the garden and surrounding area.

"We were planting trees without knowing the techniques, and many of them couldn't survive because of the strong heat and the hot, dry winds. But with this reforestation campaign we have a good mastery of the process. Now we have a good microclimate in the garden because we have planted windbreaks, shade, and fruit trees." - **Boury Thiam**, Yougouré Community President



CREATE! Field Coordinator

Amadou Diouf Talks

Reforestation

Deforestation, one of the causes of global climate change, has the greatest impact in areas of acute precariousness such as rural sub-Saharan Africa. As a part of the Conference of the Parties (COP), since 1991 Senegal's government has given considerable support to the water and forest service to carry out campaigns to contribute to the mitigation of greenhouse gases. But it is not sufficient. Today, to achieve vegetation cover objectives and improve the living conditions of rural communities, Senegal has opened its doors to all stakeholders in this area to support it. Since 2010, *CREATE!* and several other organizations have been working towards this cause.

At *CREATE!*, with our mission to create a true green revolution at the rural level, it is essential for us to contribute in a significant way to the country's annual reforestation campaign. In all our communities, *CREATE!* sets up tree nurseries that are able to satisfy local demand. Through the awareness-by-example that we've done, many people have seen trees from *CREATE!'s* nurseries grow, bear fruit and/or give a microclimate to their beneficiaries over a short period, hence the requests from these observers who have become defenders of the environment. This justifies the growth in the number of trees planted each year: from 5,000 trees in 2011, 10,000 in 2014, 15,000 in 2017, 20,000 in 2019, to 30,000 in 2021 and now 50,000 planned for 2022.



Senegal Deforestation Facts

- Climate change and deforestation are contributing to the rapid desertification in rural Senegal.
- Deforestation causes the soil to degrade, agriculture to be less productive, temperatures to rise, and critical natural resources to decline, making it a major environmental crisis
- From 2001 to 2020, Senegal lost 4.47kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 11% decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 856kt of CO emissions

CREATE! hopes to plant 50,000 trees in rural Senegal in 2022. These trees help nourish the soil, reduce erosion, reduce air temperature and provide food, shade and windbreak.

We can make this campaign a success with your [support](#).



Expanding Soupa Serere Elementary School

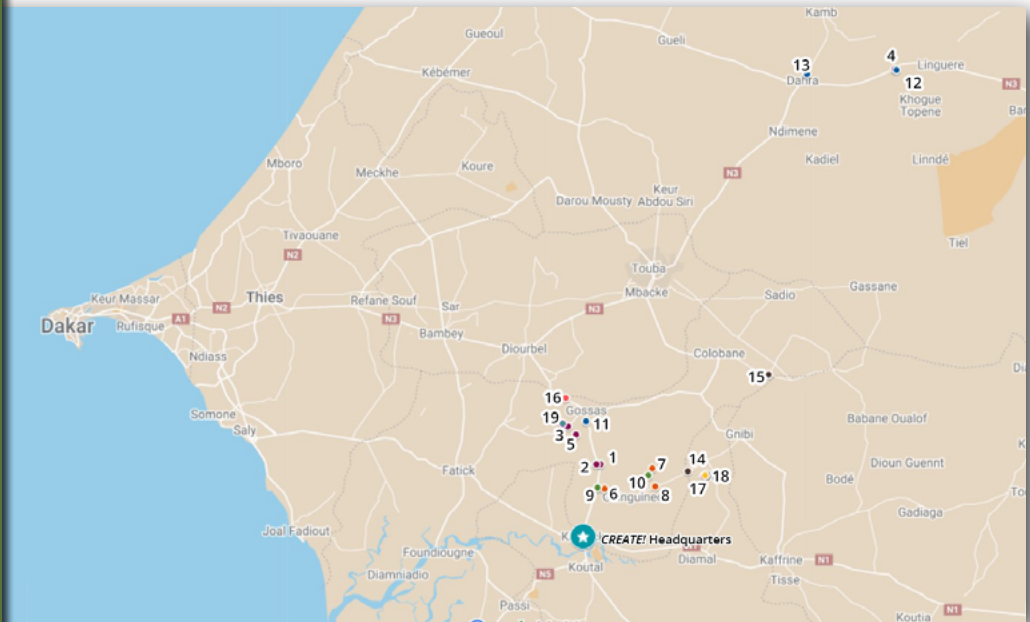
With the generous support of Groundbreaker and Cloudfest of Germany, *CREATE!* combined its village infrastructure and community development expertise to deepen its collaboration with Soupa Serere Village in the Fatick Region of Senegal, to build two new classrooms. During 2020, *CREATE!* previously collaborated with Groundbreaker and the Acronis Cyber Foundation from Switzerland to simultaneously respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and the famine in Soupa Serere Village by providing masks, a handwashing station, hygiene education and emergency food for 150 students and their families. The expansion of the Soupa Serere School has enabled the students, many of whom were previously studying outdoors in brutal 100°F temperatures, the opportunity

to pursue their primary education in a suitable environment.

CREATE! also installed a solar energy system at the elementary school which has provided power to the school and its newly constructed computer laboratory. Started in 2020 and finished in 2021, the computer lab provides the 150 students with information technology education and computer based learning. According to Mr. Diouf, the Acting Head of Soupa Serere School, *CREATE!*'s partnership has significantly improved learning conditions at the elementary school. Mr. Diouf stated that students' ability to study in a well-constructed school with access to information technology and solar electricity has improved their morale and performance. *CREATE!* is honored to partner with Soupa Serere Village and looks forward to continuing to help Senegalese villages alleviate the hardships of climate change and expand our sustainable development program with the women and youth of Soupa Serere in the future.

Our Partner Communities

1. Fass Kane
2. Fass Koffe
3. Diender
4. Ouarkhokh
5. Thienaba
6. Walo
7. Gagnick Mack
8. Darou Diadji
9. Back Samba Dior
10. Keur Daouda
11. Mboss
12. Santhie
13. Wereyane
14. Yougouré
15. Diabel
16. Boustone Lo
17. Mbossedji
18. Ndiagne Kahone
19. Keur Ndiouga



Meet *CREATE!*'s Board of Directors

Ronald Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, construction company (retired). Founding donor, *CREATE!*

Susan Miller Briggs, MD, MPH
Senior Surgeon and Endowed Chair of Global Surgery, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA.

Joyce E. Leader, Ambassador (retired)
Worked in Africa for 15 years as a Foreign Service officer, Peace Corps staff, and a volunteer teacher.

Fred Raley, former Chairman and CEO of SpawGlass, a 100% employee owned, Texas-based construction company. Now sharing my business experiences with *CREATE!* in supporting their mission in Senegal.

Mary-Kay Miller, Lecturer in French and West African literatures, Salem State University.

Delanson Y. Hopkins, BA, MBA
Retired health care and hospital executive. Brookline, MA.

Samba Gadjigo, Helen D. Gould Professor of French and Francophone Studies. Mount Holyoke College.

Binta Mamadou, Associate, Allen & Overy Magic Circle Project Finance Attorney.

*Our work would not be possible without your generosity. Please consider [donating](#) today to support *CREATE!*.*