



# CREATE!

Center for Renewable Energy  
& Appropriate Technology  
for the Environment

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## FALL NEWSLETTER 2022

### Then and Now: A look at Fass Kane, one of *CREATE!*'s first partner community's journey

Located in the Fass commune in Senegal's Kaolack region, the community of Fass Kane started their journey as one of *CREATE!*'s first partner communities in 2010. A very active community composed of different ethnic groups, its proximity to the national road from Diourbel makes the village very accessible for merchants from different areas to gather here for weekly markets. This is the market where the women from the Fass Kane community garden now sell their vegetables. But things were not like this back in 2010.

As **Aïssata Ndiaye**, one of the first members of the Fass Kane community group recalls, when they first partnered with *CREATE!*, the community did not have fresh vegetables available in the village, mostly due to the lack of perennial water. The weekly markets served as their expensive source of vegetables. Partnership with *CREATE!* changed all of that, even if the initial phase of this journey was not very smooth. To gain access to perennial water, they first tried to sink a well. After a few unsuccessful attempts, the women from the community cooperative negotiated with the village leaders to be granted the old abandoned well. This well, which had become the village's garbage dump, was cleaned and rehabilitated by the *CREATE!* team and has ever since served as a source of abundant and clean water for the community. With this water, paired with training from *CREATE!*'s technicians, the community now has an abundance of vegetables.

"*CREATE!*'s programs are very important for rural communities. I decided to participate in a *CREATE!* agricultural cooperative because I believed that this training would change my life. I've met people from many NGOs but *CREATE!* is my favorite! I now have a good life and I will be able to use the skills that I have learned to support myself forever." – Ndeye Kane from Fass Kane

Out of the 118 women who started the program, more than 80, including **Ndeye Kane**, have continued working in their community garden years after they graduated from the program in 2016. The women, who previously used to buy expensive vegetables from the weekly markets, now go to those same markets to sell vegetables that they grow themselves. The skills that they learned in the program, including sustainable agriculture, poultry raising and microfinance through their Voluntary Savings and Lending Association (VSLA), gave the women a sense of independence and self-reliance. They took ownership of their projects, and continued to sustain and grow them according to their own needs and motivations. Many women from Fass Kane established small vegetable gardens and poultry sheds of their own, utilizing the training they received from the *CREATE!* team. Seeing Fass Kane's continued success makes us proud of the commitment that these women have showed to the program's sustainability. This is the journey that we at *CREATE!* envision for all our partner communities.

Fass Kane before



Fass Kane after



## Fass Kane's journey through the eyes of the women and their technician

Aïssata Ndiaye and Bintou Kane have been with the Fass Kane women's cooperative group since program initiation in 2010. They both remember the time before partnering with *CREATE!*, when there was a lack of abundant water in the village and the women would buy expensive vegetables from the local market. Before joining the *CREATE!* group, Aïssata was a vegetable seller in that market, but she used to buy vegetables and resell those. When asked why she joined the *CREATE!* project, she said **"With *CREATE!*'s project, I believed in the possibility of growing my own vegetables and selling them."** Bintou, on the other hand, like many other women in the village, had no occupation before. *CREATE!* gave her a chance to work while remaining with her family.

While both admit that the initial years were hard since they were all learning new skills, the support of the technicians helped them master techniques in gardening and other programs components. When asked about their hopes and expectations from the *CREATE!* program, both of them said they believed in the approach and commitment the *CREATE!* team

showed towards the project. Bintou added that she expected an improvement in her living conditions and a continued activity for her community. **"I don't regret joining *CREATE!*'s project because it is above my expectations. The project has given us many opportunities and good visibility for the community."**

It has been 12 years since Fass Kane started their project with *CREATE!* and 6 since they graduated from the program. The activities have continued with the same vigor as before. The impact of the program has not stopped at the community garden level but has progressed to the individual homes, with women building their own poultry sheds and small vegetable gardens. With the skills they learned from the team, Aïssata says **"*CREATE!* has shown us the right way for our own empowerment."** Both Bintou and Aïssata, being some of the first to be trained in the project skills, have shared their knowledge with the younger women in the community. At home, Bintou has also trained her children on poultry raising and says she feels very motivated in continuing the program: **"What motivates me more is the motivation and bravery of women of the group who have only one objective which is the continuity of this sustainable development program."**

Codou Gadji has been a technician with *CREATE!* since 2013 and has spent a lot of her time training and working with the women of Fass Kane. Codou recalls the motivation of this group when there was a water shortage in their first sunk well. **"It was very difficult to work in these conditions, but in order not to stop the activities, the beneficiaries decided to bring water from home and each one brought 6 bottles of 20 liters per day."** The community rehabilitated an old abandoned well after that with *CREATE!*'s help and have continued their activities till this date.

**"Fass Kane is a very motivated community that is easy to work with, they appreciate all of *CREATE!*'s programs, and they encourage each other for the success of the project. They are very brave and never give up despite all the problems they face and always look for solutions."**



Codou Gadji in Fass Kane

## *CREATE!* piloted a Nutrition Program in Mbossedji with support from Rotary

With support from Bellevue Rotary Club, Washington, USA, *CREATE!* piloted their first nutrition program in the community of Mbossedji in 2022. This initiative will target women of reproductive age and children, and is focused on growth monitoring of children, supplemental feeding of fortified corn flour and training farmers to plant nutrient-enriched corn on farmers' land outside of the Mbossedji gardens. To initiate this program, the *CREATE!* team in Senegal met with various administrative and health authorities in the region and presented the program to the community members of Mbossedji with a stress on the malnutrition problem in Senegal affecting young children. Following an exhaustive census of all children aged 0-5 years in the four villages of the Mbossedji site, 203 children were identified and registered for the fortified flour distribution program. The health of these 203 children will be monitored and registered periodically. For the other part of the nutrition program involving

growing fortified corn by the community members in their family farms during the rainy season, 400 kg of corn seeds and organic fertilizers were bought and distributed to the community members in June. These seeds were sown in family farms before the rainy seasons and are being harvested this Fall. This corn will be consumed by the pregnant women and children in the community and compensate for the nutritional deficiencies that they usually suffer from. In future, we hope to expand this initiative to other *CREATE!* communities based on the impact of this pilot.

Members of Bellevue Rotary in Mbossedji



## Technician Spotlight: Ousmane Diallo

Agriculture Technician Ousmane Diallo has worked with *CREATE!* since 2015. Currently based in the Guinguineo Department of Kaolack Region, Ousmane has worked in many of *CREATE!*'s regions of Senegal including Fass, Guinguineo, Linguere in Louga Region and is now with three of our new villages: Yougoure, Mbossedji, and Ndiange Kahone. Ousmane says, **"I was attracted to *CREATE!* by its renewable energy component. Many NGOs implement agriculture and water projects but very few NGOs use renewable energy to pump clean water for agriculture production."**



Ousmane Diallo

Some of Ousmane's great achievements were working in Fass Village. The women in Fass specialized in mint cultivation and marketing. They sell mint in Fass' vibrant market and other markets nearby. Many women adopted agricultural techniques taught by

Ousmane and transferred them to their individual farms. From 2017 to 2020, Ousmane advised women's groups in Santhie and Wereyane, in the Linguere region. His training and technical advice enabled these groups to produce organic vegetables in a region that only receives between 10- 15 inches of annual rainfall. Back in Guinguineo, Ousmane is advising women to face a new environmental challenge – *saline water*. Ousmane stated that *CREATE!* works with women's groups and their communities to rehabilitate shallow wells that are not salty to provide them with clean water to irrigate their gardens.

Ousmane's wish is for *CREATE!* to partner with more villages in Senegal. He believes that *CREATE!*'s integrated approach of training women to start community gardens, poultry sheds and cookstoves are having a transformative effect on their lives. Ousmane is an inspiration to the women that he advises and trains every day.



## Ngaraaf: *CREATE!*'s new potential partner community

Situated in the Louga region of Senegal, the community of **Ngaraaf** consists of 700 inhabitants practicing trade, agriculture and livestock raising. Located near to the Sahara, average annual rainfall in the region is about 10-15 inches, allowing only subsistence agricultural activities during the rainy season. *CREATE!*'s history with the community of Ngaraaf dates back to 2012 when we did an improved cookstove training there, an activity that led us to choose Ngaraaf as a potential future partner based on their commitment to the program.

Ngaraaf right now pays colossal water bills to obtain water from a borehole in the Ouarkhokh region to grow crops. Even though the village has a well that can serve as a water source, it needs repairs and rehabilitation. They also have land that has been earmarked for a community garden and a very committed group of more than 90 women who want to actively participate in a project to improve their life and livelihood while being mindful of the environment. The *CREATE!* team has met with the women and the other members of the community including the religious leaders and the village chief to discuss and gauge their need for *CREATE!*'s sustainable development program. Based on those discussions, we are certain of the ability of the women in Ngaraaf to be successful.

**All that this community now needs is financial support from donors like you to become self-sufficient, similar to Fass Kane. Please donate today to help the women of Ngaraaf achieve success.**



Current Ngaraaf site



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