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# Innovations Session N°20

Successful agroecological practices by  
farmers and SMEs in Africa



INNOVATIONS  
SERIES







ASSOCIATION

*La Saisonnière*





## **PRESENTATION POINTS**

- I. Presentation of La Saisonnière
- II. Definition of peasant agroecology
- III. Agroecological practices developed
- IV. Achievements by La Saisonnière
- V. Difficulties encountered

# **PRESENTATION OF LA SAISONNIÈRE**

La Saisonnière is an association of women working to improve the resilience of vulnerable populations in the face of climate change by promoting and disseminating agroecological practices that protect the environment and develop the value chain. Its primary aim is to end women poverty.

La Saisonnière was set up in 2003 as a women's production group by Sophie SEDGHO, a retired teacher of Life and Earth Sciences in secondary schools, who is particularly sensitive to ecological issues and very involved in improving the living conditions, particularly of women. When the activities were launched they mainly focused on promoting local products.

In 2006, La Saisonnière became a development association with a scope of action covering the whole country, while diversifying its activities. Its aim is to contribute to the development of women, improve their living conditions and protect the environment for sustainable development.

- ▶ **Mission:** La Saisonnière aims for a society where women are not socially or economically vulnerable.

As part of its production activities, La Saisonnière promotes the value of local agro-forestry fruit. It also ensures that a fair, socially responsible and ecological approach is taken at all levels of the production chains developed.

- ▶ **Long-term objectives**

- Contribute to the promotion of women's socio-economic rights
- Contributing to the economic empowerment of women
- Protecting the environment

# **DEFINITION OF PEASANT AGROECOLOGY**

It is defined as "a reference to food and farming systems geared towards family farming and food sovereignty, and is based on securing natural resources, safeguarding the genetic diversity of cultivated heritages, sustainable farming practices based on notions of complementarity and adaptability, enhancing the role of women and young people, promoting local food systems, collective action, and developing public policies favourable to agroecology".

This definition is based on principles of agroecology as defined by the FAO, which are mainly:

- ▶ **Soil health**
- ▶ **Animal health and welfare**
- ▶ **Biodiversity**
- ▶ **Land and natural resources governance**
- ▶ **Social values and type of diet**
- ▶ **Connectivity**

The role of women is also highly valued, as they represent the majority of producers.

"Peasant Agroecology, with its philosophical, social, environmental and economic dimensions, integrates all forms of ecological, organic and fair-trade agriculture. It is the key to preserving humanity and the planet today and in the future".



# Agro-ecological practices developed

La Saisonnière has developed its own agro-ecological practices:

- ▶ Beds with different configurations, including zai beds, half-moon beds, raised beds, furrows, bions, compost beds or mounds (consuming less water and requiring fewer inputs), and subdivided beds;
- ▶ Organic inputs including one that is both a biopesticide and a bio-fertiliser, incorporating local yeast to boost plant growth and protect against microbial invasion; this input is called "Toukguili" in the local language;

- ▶ Biochar produced from household waste but also from field residues; this input allows the plant to incorporate nitrogen in sufficient quantities and reduces water consumption;
- ▶ The use of neem seed powder is a priority, as is the maceration of the leaves of local plants such as *acacia africana* to attack the toughest parasites, notably nematodes in tomatoes.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS BY LA SAISONNIERE**

Since 2010, La Saisonnière has been developing and supporting a number of agroecology and organic farming operators.

Today, more than 220 growers have stopped using synthetic products and are active in agroecology and organic farming, producing healthy vegetables.

La Saisonnière operates in ten locations to support the transition towards agroecology, particularly in the Green Belt.

The various achievements by La Saisonnière in the field of agroecology are mainly:

- Agroecological support for market gardeners in the peri-urban areas of Ouagadougou;
- Promoting the Agenda 2030 and promoting actions to make the lives of women and young people in Ouagadougou more sustainable;
- Training in micro-gardening and carpentry to help young people in difficulty in Ouagadougou find jobs;
- Raising awareness at the various sites still involved in conventional agriculture;
- Training in agroecological practices in several locations, notably in the Ouagadougou Green Belt;
- Promoting off-ground cultivation in the city of Ouagadougou;
- The promotion of organic and agro-ecological products through its 3 locations and its network of almost 400 members (organic product sales area).



# DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

Like any association, La Saisonnière faces a number of difficulties, including:

- ▶ **Financial difficulties due to the withdrawal of certain donors because of the security context;**
- ▶ **Insufficient material resources to reach all the members we work with;**
- ▶ **Difficulties linked to our socio-cultural beliefs, which need to be tackled by clarifying values and dropping unnecessary prohibitions;**

It should be noted that all these difficulties are exacerbated by the increase in the number of internally displaced people as a result of the security context.





*Example of off-ground cultivation developed in one of the locations operated by La Saisonnière*





***Awareness-raising session with producers on the Green Belt location***





*Learners cutting seams watering above-ground plants*





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# Thank you

