

HEALTHY SOIL HEALTHY FOOD & AGROECOLOGY SUCCESS STORIES

Blooming Resilience: The transformational journey of N'goral Guidala's women

Pioneering a shift towards a greener future, they delve deep into the realms of agroecology, ...

In the heartland of the Mauritanian landscape, where the vivid red of the Diéri soils meets the tranquillity of the Senegal River, a tapestry of change and revolution weaves steadily in the hands of resilient women. Nestled in the southern region of Mauritania, N'Goral Guidala has become the pulsating heart of an agroecological movement steered with conviction by Ibrahima Niang and his dedicated organization, Banlieues Du Monde Mauritanie. From 2019, this riveting initiative cast a transformative spell over the sleepy hamlet, scripting a tale of empowerment and sustainable innovation, which witnessed the metamorphosis of 170 women and a village that now stands as a beacon of sustainable development.

In this riparian environment, where waters of the Senegal River nourish the alluvial valley, an intricate relationship between the land and its inhabitants unfolds. Diverse and rich, the soils of the region offer an enthralling canvas where women, previously confined to the fringes, have emerged as custodians of the land. Pioneering a shift towards a greener future, they delve deep



into the realms of agroecology, nurturing gardens that bear not only fruits and vegetables but also the seeds of change and emancipation.

But to understand this revolutionary transition, one must first acquaint themselves with the prelude of the saga. The origins of this project date back to 2013, when a seed was planted, laying the foundations for a resilient community that would later flourish amidst adversity. A close-knit bond with nature, coupled with innovative agricultural

practices, fostered a symbiotic relationship that thrived on mutual respect and conservation. Despite the slow pedogenesis, characterized by the fragile red-brown soils and limited vegetative cover, the relentless spirit of N'Goral Guidala's women turned challenges into opportunities, crafting an agricultural narrative steeped in resilience and innovation.

As the seasons changed, so did the narrative of this community. Through the cultivation of seasonal vegetables such as



Formation séchage légumes

beans, watermelons, and maize, among others, the once barren land transformed into a living testament to human perseverance and ecological harmony. The initial venture, focused on the production and commercialization of Guinea sorrel and other horticultural products, soon expanded, enveloping the village in a blanket of green prosperity. The local mango and lemon orchards stood as silent witnesses to the unfolding agrarian revolution, fuelled by a daily water requirement of 30 cubic meters, sourced sustainably from the Senegal River.

With each passing day, the women of N'Goral Guidala, equipped with newfound skills and knowledge, forged ahead, embracing the principles of

agroecology with open arms. Their journey, characterized by sustainable practices such as

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compost preparation and the use of organic fertilizers, not only amplified their yields but also resonated with a deeper philosophy – to tread lightly upon the Earth and to nurture it for generations to come.

Yet, this story transcends the boundaries of agriculture, weaving into its narrative threads of social and economic empowerment. In the bustling marketplaces, the fruits of their labour found eager buyers, cementing a fruitful alliance between producers and wholesalers. Moreover, training programs facilitated the transfer of knowledge on product transformation, unveiling avenues of economic prosperity through the creation of beverages and jams. And amid this bustling activity, renewable energy emerged as a silent ally, powering a new era of sustainable food preservation and storage.

But the true testimony to the success of this revolutionary journey can be found in the words of those who have witnessed it firsthand. As Mme Kadiata Samba Sow, the secretary-general of the village's women's cooperative, reflected during an interview with television animator Aissata Ba from AIDS TV, the rewards of their labour in the 2019 and 2020 agricultural campaigns have been bountiful, both in terms of personal growth and community development.

Indeed, the echoes of change reverberate through N'Goral Guidala, whispering tales of resilience, innovation, and a greener future. Here, in this small corner of Mauritania, the world finds a beacon of hope, where dreams blossom amidst orchards and where women lead the charge towards a sustainable and inclusive future, painting a canvas of possibilities where nature and humanity coexist in harmonious symphony.

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