

## HEALTHY SOIL HEALTHY FOOD & AGROECOLOGY SUCCESS STORIES

## Fertility management: Unveiling Union Alheri's blueprint for soil revitalization in Niger

n the region of Dosso, nestled within the village of Goberi, a groundbreaking initiative spearheaded by Union Alheri has been taking monumental strides towards revolutionizing soil fertility management. Initiated in 2021, the project encompasses 40 villages within four municipalities in the Boboye department, positively impacting 2,938 individuals, including most women.

Situated at the crossroads between two significant geomorphological zones of Niger - the plateau zone of Fakara and Dallol Bosso valley, Goberi offers a rich tapestry of agroecological opportunities. With fertile grounds ideal for both pastoral and agricultural activities, the region presents itself as a living laboratory to experiment with innovative agroecological practices that have been a focal point for Union Alheri for over two decades.

Through this initiative, we witness the transformation of the landscape, notably affecting the soil due to the consistent application of these practices and the abundant water resources in the Dallol area.

Under the aegis of the second phase of the ACOTAF project implemented by RECA in Niger, Union Alheri is showcasing the ideal practices to augment soil organic matter, fostering a symbiotic relationship between labour and agroecological transitions, and facilitating adapted mechanization to support these transitions. The Chairman of Union Alheri (Souleymane Ousmane)

## HEALTHY SOIL HEALTHY FOOD & AGROECOLOGY SUCCESS STORIES

The collective, aptly named "Alheri" which translates to "well done" in the local dialect, has developed a comprehensive strategy that integrates organic matter management, mechanized transportation for soil fertilization, and encouraging the use of agroecological techniques. Their combined efforts over the years have dramatically enhanced soil fertility, thereby boosting agricultural productivity.

Union Alheri has embarked on a mission to utilize all possible organic materials without waste. They have initiated a comprehensive program to increase organic material supply, involving the distribution of animal kits to members, particularly targeting women. This initiative ensures the steady production of organic manure, a critical component in enriching the soil.

Moreover, the introduction of carts facilitates the efficient distribution of organic matter across cultivated lands, optimizing the use of organic waste and residues in agricultural processes. Through sustained efforts and collaborations, Union Alheri managed to secure significant funding to bolster its mission, distributing necessary kits to members at subsidized rates.

Inaninterestingturnofinnovation, the problematic invasive plant, Pergularia tomentosa, once a



Collection of organic residues (Souleymane Ousmane)

menace, now plays a crucial role in soil conservation, capturing and retaining organic matter, and preventing its erosion through winds.

The strategy adopted by Union Alheri is deeply ingrained in a series of complementary actions that integrate various supports and funding into a cohesive, long-term vision. This approach embraces traditional practices, local innovations, external advancements, and substantial training programs, weaving them into a coherent and sustainable strategy to enhance soil fertility.



STORY BY: **Souleymane Ousmane Mamadou** Niger - RECA (National Network of Chambers of Agriculture of Niger).

## WHO IS AFSA?

AFSA brings small-scale farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, faith groups, consumers, youth and activists from across the continent of Africa to create a united and louder voice for food sovereignty. AFSA encourages the use and reproduction of this case study for non-commercial use provided that appropriate acknowledgment of the source is given.



For more information and more African case studies see our website www.afsafrica.org