



UGPM

ACTIONS LOCALES



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ACCOMPANY WITHOUT ENTERING



GUNGÉ TE DOO TÈNK

THE UGPM'S PHILOSOPHY :

"Accompany the group according to its pace of progress and help it to reflect on its perspectives and strategies for social change »

At the heart of its mission for peasant self-help and social transformation in the Méckhé region, the Union des Groupements Paysans de Meckhé (UGPM) has set itself the goal, in its strategic orientation document, of revitalising peasant groups so that they are credible and active interlocutors at the local level and, above all, are recognised by all as a space where it is possible to express oneself and act. To review the actions it has carried out in this respect and their effects, the UGPM has undertaken a capitalisation project with one of these groups, the village of Femboul. The aim of this capitalisation was to analyse the political and technical support provided by UGPM and focused in particular on community activities.

One of the aims was to capitalise on the team's leadership practices and to link them to the group's trajectory and dynamism: to see what was effective, as well as what was less so, to feed off it and to share it at different levels.

This document focuses on the village grouping of Femboul.

The UGPM warmly thanks all the actors who took part in this work.

VILLAGE PORTRAIT DE FEMBOUL

The village of Femboul is located in the commune of Méouane (Tivaouane department).

The NDOYE are the first inhabitants of the village.

The Wolofs are the majority ethnic group and the population is mainly Muslim.

The village is located in an area with a Sahelian climate. It is characterised by a long dry season (9 months) and a short rainy season (3 months). The average rainfall in the area is 300mm. The soils, mostly of the dior type, are not very fertile. There is a degradation of the land, the absence of fallow land, and the disappearance of the vegetation cover. The population is engaged in agriculture (groundnuts, millet, cowpeas, cassava, bissap, etc.) and livestock farming (sheep, cattle, goats).

Mining with the presence of the Industries Chimiques du Sénégal (ICS) in the Méouane area has a negative impact on the environment.

The population of the village is approximately 343. The age structure of the village shows that young people constitute the majority of the population. However, they leave the village during the dry season to go to urban centres (Dakar, Thiès, Mbour, Touba). They generally work in the informal sector.

There is a French school in the village, with two primary classes. There is also a Koranic school in the village. However, the illiteracy rate is high, especially among women.

There are no problems with the water supply in the village.

For medical care, people travel to Meckhé or Ndande because the village has no health facilities. Land management is entrusted to the municipal council. However, traditional management is still the most common: the land is held by families, with a large share held by men. There is an undeniable organisational dynamic in the village, particularly through the grassroots organisations (group, religious association, ASC). The leadership of the village through its group inspires all the surrounding villages.

Thanks to the grouping, we can also note a strengthening of the forms of solidarity towards the most deprived (solidarity calabash, collective field, etc.), the provision of accessible foodstuffs in the village.



PRESENTATION OF THE UGPM

The Union des Groupements Paysans de Meckhé (UGPM) was created in 1985 in response to the changing context that made life in rural areas increasingly difficult.

UGPM's vision is a "social development" in which the economic dimension is not an end in itself, but a means among others to contribute to the development of families and local societies.

Four objectives characterise the UGPM's territorial project:

- Managing and restoring the environment
- Developing income-generating activities
- Fighting the rural exodus
- Valuing the peasant identity and strengthening solidarity and mutual aid

The UGPM has more than 4500 male and female members in the communes of Meckhé, Koul, Méouane, Mérina Dakhar and Ndande.

The main types of **UGPM** — **ACCOMPANYMENT** **IMPLEMENTED IN FEMBOUL**



THE SOLIDARITY CALABASH

The Femboul calabash was founded in 2013 under the impetus of the UGPM with the technical and financial support of *Action de Carême*. It brings together men and women from the village. At each meeting, each person slips money into a calabash covered by a cloth, in complete confidentiality. The money collected is used to finance interest-free loans in the following areas: food, health and education for children.

Thanks to this instrument of solidarity and mutual aid, the problems of the village find solutions in the village. Beyond emergencies, the money collected by the calabash can be directed towards group purchases of basic necessities. The calabash of solidarity helps to revitalise the local economy in our areas, to free the population from the grip of usurers and to maintain the spirit of solidarity bequeathed by the elders. It is an instrument of social, economic and psychological transformation.



DIARRA GAYE:
MEMBER OF THE CALABASH

"At the beginning of the school year, the calabash settles many problems of supplies and school fees in the form of loans. It is generally mothers who ask us to meet these expenses. Thanks to the calabash, loan sharks are in sharp decline.

THE COLLECTIVE SHOP

Within the framework of the partnership with UPA Québec, UGPM has integrated the Le Savoir des Gens de la Terre (LSGT) programme. This programme is based on local potential. It includes both individual and collective projects. Within this framework, the Femboul group received a development fund for the construction of a collective shop. The development fund that enabled the shop to be set up is part of the group's empowerment strategy. The shop's management committee has received training to do its job better. This committee has the possibility to buy cereals in the post-harvest period when prices are relatively low and to resell them on the Meckhé market later on.

FATOU SEYE :
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE GROUPING

"Before the shop was built, members sold their produce after the harvest at the weekly market in Meckhé. Today, thanks to the collective shop, we can keep our surplus produce until the prices are interesting at the weekly market in Meckhé. Also, the shop allows us to keep seeds bought by the group and to sell them on the eve of the winter season to our producer members at prices without any profit margin.

Similarly, the shop allows us to keep our individual savings (millet, cowpeas) and to better cope with the lean season. We also have the possibility of selling our produce to the village collective shop. It allows us to give advances on the harvest to members.



COMPOST

The village of Femboul has benefited from a programme to popularise the use of manure on small ruminants. This is part of a UGPM/ASODIA partnership.

The programme aims to increase millet productivity by controlling the proliferation of a harmful plant called striga. Members of the group were introduced to the technique of composting manure from small ruminants. More than 15 households in the village have used this strategy to increase their millet yields. In some households, yields have increased from 1 tonne to 1.5 tonnes. Also, this composting technique allows for a considerable reduction in the area under cultivation. Previously, manure was sold to carters at very low prices, but now, thanks to the FPR system, the soil is better fertilised.

THIERNO DIENG : **SECRETARY IN CHARGE OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COLLECTIVE S**

"We were trained in the composting technique at UGPM and then we adopted this practice. I did the composting three months before the wintering season next to my plot, then I concentrated my efforts on a small area (less than one hectare), and with less working time, at the end I harvested a much larger quantity of millet. The manure generally comes from our livestock activity (sheep, goats).



LITERACY

Illiteracy is a recurrent problem in rural areas, disabling at several levels. Within the framework of the functional literacy programme in Wolof, part of the project to revitalise the groups created by the partnership between UGPM and Frères des Hommes, the village of Femboul has hosted a class for two years in 2018 and 2019. Functional literacy is intended for adults, it starts from their knowledge, their preoccupations, to make the basis for more conventional learning in reading, writing and arithmetic. In this case, literacy is taught in Wolof because it is the language spoken by the majority of the target group and is much more practical.

As a result, several women from the village have followed and acquired new skills that improve their autonomy in their daily lives and in the management of their activities, as well as their self-confidence.

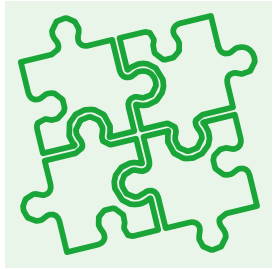


SALLA NIANG : **MEMBER OF THE CONSORTIUM**

"This training has enabled me to better manage my income-generating activities, I can now plan, calculate and know what I earn or lose on each activity I carry out. I can now plan, calculate and know what I earn or lose on each activity I do. I can also write my name on all my luggage in my business activities. The same is true for several other women in the group.



UGPM's four main types of support



1 TRAINING :

Training is UGPM's main form of support.

The UGPM uses training to achieve its objective, which is peasant self-help.

The trainings are technical; that is, they allow the groups to acquire new skills in their practices. For example, the training in small ruminant manure and composting had a great impact on the members of the group, but also on the village in a more general way, since several people adopted this practice.

Organisational training also concerns the individual farmer's activity.

Training can also be organisational; in this case it is a matter of training the group so that it becomes as autonomous as possible in its management and organisation. For example, management committees for community activities can be created and strengthened. The group is trained to be able to carry out detailed monitoring of its activities, the information from which can easily be passed on to the UGPM for general monitoring.

In addition, the political aspect, in the sense of life in society as a citizen, is also a subject that is addressed in the training courses and tends to be the subject of specific training.

2 FUNDING :

Funding is a way for UGPM to support the structuring of the group. The funding concerns both individual projects at the level of family farms and collective projects.

Financing is part of the group's empowerment strategy because whether it is interest-free or interest-bearing loans, the emphasis is on the group's self-management of the funds made available. The method has been improved over time and in the LSGT project, the financing was preceded by a training course. The financing makes it possible to develop economic activity in the group and in the village. It is therefore a means of combating the rural exodus, but it is also a tool for strengthening social cohesion and the group's *raison d'être*. Indeed, the group must regularly organise meetings related to the management of the funds.

3 CONNECTING THE DOTS :

The networking takes the form of contacts with resource persons, local authorities or national or international organisations, depending on the opportunities or needs of the group. It also consists of exchange trips. This openness to the outside world also aims to create links that will serve both individual emancipation and the dynamics of the group.

4 THE PROVISION OF A FACILITATOR :

For many years, the central coordinator of UGPM was the one who accompanied the group closely. He was involved in the life of the group and available, so that a special relationship was built up. However, this relationship was limited by the fact that a single central coordinator had to manage several groups and that he was generally an actor from outside the village. The relationship now remains, even though the central facilitator's presence in the group tends to diminish. In 2017, the UGPM introduced an endogenous facilitator as part of the "group revitalisation project", who has taken over the role of providing close support. This person, who comes from the village and is chosen by the group on the basis of his or her voluntary commitment, follows a training programme that should enable him or her to run meetings and support all the activities that keep the group going.



MOR SALL :
CENTRAL ANIMATOR

"These four types of support can be considered by UGPM as the feet of development. This is the strategy that must be followed in order to achieve autonomy. The groups that benefit from the four types of support, such as Femboul, are well structured and have services for their members. They participate in and contribute to the development of the terroir. They are examples that their neighbours are copying. The best solution for improving the groups is to combine these four types of support.

SAMBA MBAYE :
LSGT PROJECT COORDINATOR

"The added value of UGPM is to be found in the complementarity of the four types of support/coaching. In Femboul, we first installed the skills through training before financing and each time the need arose we put them in touch with another external skill. **In order to ensure the sustainability of the activity, UGPM has chosen to set up an endogenous facilitator to ensure that the system is well oiled: training, financing, support/advice and networking.**



FATOU BINETOU DIOP :
**HEAD OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST
HUNGER AND INDEBTEDNESS AND FOOD SECURITY**



"These types of support that have been deployed in Femboul help the group to be on the path of development and to achieve its objectives. The training allows the group to move towards **farmer autonomy, makes it more visible and ensures transparency.** Once people have been trained, their dream is to have funding to set up activities and realise their ambitions. Secondly, networking is necessary because there are things that UGPM does not know how to do or does not have the means to do, so it will call on its relations and partners.

The added value of UGPM lies in its teamwork, in its group work, because everyone participates. The team, the leaders and the facilitators are always together. UGPM has a capacity to anticipate and make proposals, which means that it is listened to by organisations at national level.

ADAMA NIANG :
CENTRAL ANIMATOR

"For me, support for **structuring activities and capacity building in administrative and financial management of activities allows the group to be autonomous in managing activities to move towards self-promotion.** But above all, training is essential because every action to be carried out in a village requires training. The added value of UGPM lies in this aspect, which was first applied with LSGT and is still being pursued today with the revitalisation project.



