

Presenting the Organisation

APN-Sahel (Sahel Nature Protection
Association)

Creation and organisation

- The association for the protection of nature in the Sahel (APN-Sahel) was created in January 1994, recognised officially in May 1994, obtained the status of a development NGO in August 1997, under Burkina Faso law.
- APN-Sahel provides support services for local development, to communities in the Sahel, with emphasis on community participation. Via the concept of agro-biodiversity, the association promotes new techniques of agricultural production (locally improved seed, seed banks). Services are also offered for animal husbandry, health, education and social activities.

Organisation

- The organisation's board of administration is elected for a term of two years renewable only once. The headquarters are currently at Djibo in the province of Soum, the actions are developed all over the country, either directly with the local population, or in partnership with other national or international organisations. The farmers (men & women) are part of the decision-making structure ; the programs are supported by a technical team and a permanent secretariat.

Activities

- Combatting desertification via promotion of sustainable family farming;
- Protecting & restoring the natural environment and biological diversity;
- Long-term training of rural population (men & women) in climate adaptation, local selection of seed varieties, production & propagation of local farmers seed, information about the disadvantages of GMO seed..);
- Provision of credit to women for profitable activities;
- Support for establishing vegetable gardens for women;
- Supply of cultivation implements to families;
- Support for the restoration & reclaiming of degraded land, including improved zai manure pits;
- Combatting desertification by supplying plants for reforestation.

Results

- 30 000 trees replanted in 4 years;
- 237 manure pits built in 4 years;
- 3000 linear metres of stone cordons in 2 years;
- Equipment supplied to 7 gardens in 3 years (women's gardens & mixed gardens);
- 6 garden wells dug in 4 years;
- 20 multi-cultivators supplied to farming families;
- Support to 120 women for AGR (activities generating revenue) in 3 years;
- 20 ha improved via «zai» manure pits in 3 years;
- 2500 persons informed of disadvantages of GMOs and about climate change;
- 15 ravines planted with *Andropogon gayanus*.

Advantages

- The organisation being present in the villages where it intervenes;
- Reciprocal confidence between the communities and the organisation;
- Knowledge of the milieu in which we intervene;
- Knowledge of the languages spoken there;
- The desire to conserve & improve traditional resources (local seed..).

Gains

- Winning farmers over to the technical approach of the APN-Sahel;
- Persuading farmers to adapt to climate change;
- Slowing the rural exodus;
- Improving the purchasing power of families;
- The readoption of local varieties.

Challenges and Difficulties

- Coverage of the whole of Soum province and of the Sahel region of Burkina Faso;
- Expanding collaboration with other local & regional structures.
- Insufficient material & financial means.

Recommandations and perspectives

- Accompany farmers in learning more about land rights in Burkina Faso
(Land reform & Land Registry)
- Enlarge the area of intervention by involving more villages
- Reinforce the capacities of family farmers
- Organise inter-regional farmers seed exchanges