



Sustainability is NOT Just a Buzzword

Countless projects across the development sphere have well thought out plans on paper, but they aren't able to stand the test of time. Andando does things differently in many ways, but we are not immune to one of the fundamental principles of development work: we are fulfilling needs which are beyond the means of our partner communities. So how does a community sustain a project over the long-term which they could not afford to do on their own?

Unlike schools and health posts, Andando's gardens have no government support to keep them going, instead they rely on savings from sales to cover future costs. This system has worked well for over a decade, but we noticed

after the pandemic that garden savings started declining and were no longer sufficient to cover the larger infrastructure elements, like a solar pump.

Nothing about us without us; this concept is paramount to our approach, and it was only through discussions with our garden partners that we found the cause of the problem and identified a path forward.

There were actually a myriad of contributing factors, from difficulties with the current bank, to rising seeds costs, to a general lack of understanding about maintenance and the costs involved. Together we helped the gardens change to a different more accessible bank, established our seed production program to

reduce costs, and hired a new maintenance technician to help repair infrastructure and train the women in basic preventative maintenance.

In addition to these improvements, we also agreed to sign a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement for future repairs with any garden that achieves at least 1,000,000 CFA (about \$1,700) in savings. So far five gardens have exceeded this goal with many more well on their way!

We congratulate these women on their amazing accomplishment and are proud to meet them as equal partners in the long-term sustainability of their gardens for years to come.

Lead photo: Mboyo Walo Garden celebrating reaching their savings goal.



Nguendar village leader explaining the new cost-sharing agreement to the other garden members.



Maintenance Technician Hamath repairing a solar pump controller. This new staff position supports garden participants in long-term care of garden infrastructure.



Mbantou Croissement, Andando's first garden in Podor, was the first to sign our new 50/50 cost-sharing agreement.

From the Director

As we move into another new year, I want to personally thank you for your support. I wish that everyone could see the incredible impacts of our work and hear the gratitude directly from our partner communities, but take a second to read these words and take them in for yourself because YOU helped to make this possible:

“As a midwife I can bear witness, all the new babies born in the village are now at least 7-9 pounds. Malnutrition has left this village; nobody is underfed now. We thank the lord, we thank everyone for this.”

– Mboyo Walo garden member

There are too many wonderful updates and stories to share, so here are just a few highlights since our last update. Mbadhiou Peulh Primary School opened its doors with three beautifully renovated classrooms and brand-new restrooms. The teachers shared that this is the first year classes started on time with a spot for every student who wanted to enroll. At Keur Soce High School our first-ever school garden started their first gardening campaign, which will soon support a school canteen to provide healthy meals to students from remote villages who otherwise wouldn't have anything to eat during the school day.

Due to our steadfast commitment to improving access to quality education for over a decade, Andando was recently recognized with an award from Senegal's National Minister of Education! This past fall Andando was also named as a finalist for the .ORG Impact Awards in Washington DC, out of nearly 1,000 candidates from 70 countries. We are so proud of what we have been able to accomplish together with you and our partner communities and are glad that more people are starting to take notice. Thank you again for all you have done to support the people of Senegal and we can't wait to make an even bigger impact in 2024!

“Jéréjéf!” – Thank You!



-Garrison Harward, Executive Director
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At Mbadhiou Peulh Primary school, students enjoy the renovated classrooms with enough space for everyone.



Students at Keur Soce High School are improving their food security and learning practical science lessons in their new school garden.



Andando representatives (left to right: Thiam, Fiona, Boubou, and Kevin) accepting an award from Senegal's National Minister of Education for our significant contributions in the education sector for more than a decade.

Meet Babacar, Garden Technician

Continuing in our series, we would like to introduce you to another member of our team. We think they are pretty amazing and are sure you will agree.

Babacar Sow joined our team in 2018. He is the second oldest of five, with an older sister and three younger brothers. Babacar grew up in Khelcom Biram, a small village close to Keur Soce. He attended elementary and middle school in his hometown and continued on to high school at Ibrahima Diouf High School in Kaolack (a 30 min. drive from Keur Soce).

Having grown up working on his parents farm, Babacar possessed a natural gift for agriculture and was selected to join a specialty agriculture training center to further develop his skills. The program also focused on developing leadership skills, facilitating partnerships, computer literacy, and financial management. At the completion



Babacar joined the Andando team in 2018 and has helped establish three gardens.

of his training, the National Agency for the Promotion and Employment of Youth put him in contact with Andando, and we asked him to join our team in 2018.

In 2022 Babacar married Fatou, one of his childhood friends, and they welcomed their first child, Ibrahima (named after Babacar's father) in March of last year. As is customary, they live together on a family plot in his home village of Khelcom Biran.

A dedicated father and brother, Babacar spends much of his free time with his family discussing goals and life plans for the future, as well as enjoying nature documentaries and listening to music-- Alfa Blondie is his favorite musician. He also enjoys spending time in nature, especially visiting the forest and the beach.

“Nature nourishes my soul. When I am in nature I feel happiness. I really like the color green which nourishes me and pushes me to go towards the forest and nature. I enjoy discovering the savanna, trees, and animals because I am a pure villager.”

Your support enables Babacar to help his fellow citizens. Thank you for investing in their future!

[MORE AT ANDANDO.ORG/TEAM](https://www.andando.org/team)



Babacar (left) with friends and colleagues during his agriculture training.



Babacar and Fatou at their wedding, May 2022.



Fatou, Ibrahima, and Babacar in traditional dress as they attend a local celebration.



ANDANDO

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Yaakaar! Hope!

Thank you for helping to make the auction and all of 2023 a great success! We are celebrating 15 years of bringing yaakaar (hope) to families in rural Senegal, and we cannot continue this work without you. Here's to a bright and change-making 2024!