


A woman with a patterned headscarf and a matching dress with yellow and pink accents is holding a piece of food, possibly a piece of bread or a small animal, in her right hand. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and structures. A green banner at the bottom of the image contains the text and a logo.

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AS TOLD BY SENEGALESE COMMUNITIES

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COASTAL EROSION: THE ROOTS OF THE PROBLEM (THE HEARTFELT CRY OF THE POPULATIONS OF THE PETITE CÔTE)

My name is Ndeye Yacine Dieng. I am 55 years old.

I was born in Bargny.

Climate change?

Today, I feel like I have lost a part of my childhood;

swept away by the fury of the sea waves; houses along with it. Several rooms in my home have been destroyed.

Exhausted, the populations have depleted their meager means of resilience. The losses are incalculable. Families can no longer help each other. I have two children who currently live with their wives because there is no more space at home.

I share a room with my six children. This overcrowding makes our daily life very difficult. The most dreaded time of the year is between August and September. The most dangerous swells hit during this time.

How did we get here?

The debris of houses destroyed by the sea also serves as materials to block the ocean's path. Things worsened with the project to establish a coal plant in Bargny. The cattle die due to the air's toxicity. Piles of coal and ash are deposited at the site intended for the coal plant (the greatest evil of the Bargny people). We battled for the state to reconsider its decision, but our arguments couldn't dissuade the firm will of our authorities to install this factory in Bargny. This is compounded by the appropriation of the land by real estate

predators and the decline of fishing activities.

The degradation of our community has forced many young people to leave the area. Hundreds of young people from Bargny have died trying to reach the West by sea, hoping for a better future. Bargny is one of the communities most affected by the phenomenon of clandestine emigration.

Bargny is not the only community facing the ravages of the advancing sea. The entire coastal area is affected. In Rufisque, the retreat of the coastline is quite visible. Palmarin (located in the Sine-Saloum Delta) is also left at the mercy of the waves. Coastal erosion hits this community hard.

The situation is worse in Djifer, where the sea has destroyed sacred sites, schools, and houses. To combat the sea's progression, the populations have planted stakes surrounded by branches of coconut or palm trees to mitigate the ocean's movements. The village of Djakhano has been completely relocated due to rising ocean levels, a phenomenon resulting from climate change. The village suffered its first maritime assault in 1987. The populations face the future with great pessimism given the grim forecasts for the coming years.

The time for action has come. We can no longer

be content with speeches and promises while our planet slowly dies. We must act now, or tomorrow we will regret witnessing the disappearance of several localities from the world map.

Story told by: Ndèye Yacine Dieng (Association pour la valorisation de l'environnement et des côtes - AVEC), Dialika sarr (Felogie niodor), Lamine Diouf (Felogie Dionewar), Louise Daba Sarr (Feprosel), Ndiaye Assane (Comité local des pêcheurs de Bargny Dakar), Abdoulaye Ndiaye (GIPS WAR)

Under the supervision of Oumar Sall

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Credit photo: @Djibril Dia

TERMINATOR: IMPOVERISHING THE SOILS FARMERS OF THE RIVER VALLEY

Forty years ago, in Ross Béthio, Gaya, Mboyo, Orkadiéré..., we cultivated and ate healthily. The village irrigated perimeters, with fertile soil and yields ensuring self-sufficiency, fed a local economy, often with a good barter model. Rice, the staple food, was good and enjoyed by all.

Then came the 90s!

With its string of misfortunes! New vocabularies and new practices: food security, new farming practices, massive use of chemical inputs, agricultural mechanization, combine harvesters, equipped tractors, hulling units, etc.

Since then, the land has been overused, and we



have witnessed a constant decline in yields.

With this modernity, misfortune entered our lives, bringing its share of dramas for humans and animals. Without masks, boots, or protective gloves, we handle urea, propanoyle, weedon... At the end of this catastrophe, the drainage into the evacuation channels exposes the cattle using them as a watering hole.

Since then, soil impoverishment rhymes with the fragility of beings: dermatological, pulmonary, and even deadly diseases.

Thirty years ago, we were not aware that we were adopting agricultural practices that destroy our environment and make us more vulnerable to climate change; they isolate and extinguish us.

Farmers and herders are becoming impoverished, losing resources, capital, land, livestock, no longer making profits, and becoming eternal debtors to banks.

Terminator

The systematic presence of a gene, called Terminator, forces farmers to obtain seeds every year, as the seeds are sterile from one year to the next.

Intensive agriculture, practiced with these seeds in the valley, no longer allows for the replenishment of the seed capital for the farmer.

We are obliged, every year, to buy seed by complying with strict rules for obtaining approval for the sale of seeds.

It is time that we return to sustainable agriculture. The kind that feeds its employees and respects the environment.

It is time that we implement solutions to make agriculture a response to climate change and food insecurity.

Otherwise, we will continue to suffer dependence on banks and other intermediaries in the sale of seeds. And our sons and daughters will leave, taking to the sea, at the risk of their precious lives which this valley, this country, and this continent so desperately need!

Story told by: Mame Fama Seye (ASESCAW), Dame Niang Diop (GAYA INFO environnement), Abibatou Fall (ARADES), : Ibrahima Ly (PINORD – Plateforme des initiatives du Nord), Amadou Ba, Haby Niang

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Credit photo: @Djibril Dia

PEASANT WORDS

We, the peasants, over the years, were lured by the prospect of gain, influenced by what television showed us from elsewhere: 'Yes, it is indeed possible to be bourgeois in agriculture, to be wealthy without much effort in fieldwork.'

The magic formula?

Applying products like herbicides to eliminate unwanted weeds and spreading urea to see yields double, or even triple. Far better than our feudal agricultural practices.

Good times passed, with the magic of chemistry.

But over the years,

- *our dependence on these chemical products increased,*
- *the yields decreased,*
- *our lands became impoverished,*
- *overexploitation took place as we had to clear new lands in the forest.*



Until...

- *the unexplained scarcity of rains darkened our lives, accompanied by the impact of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in our food,*
- *the emergence of diseases then unknown: cancer, obesity, rheumatism...*

Since then, we are no longer the same! Deformed, suffocated...

Despair is tangible: harvests without yield caused by loan repayments.

In search of alternatives, women and youth migrate. Others turn to timber trafficking.

Centuries-old trees, which once attracted rain, anchored the soil, and hosted nests of birds and bees, are disappearing.

The desert is here.

(If...)

The search for alternatives will lead us to the exhaustion of our resources

- *if the exploitation is normalised,*
- *if the profits are not distributed,*

- *if we do not benefit from the wealth of our subsoils.*

Because after the soil, it's the subsoil for gold. With mercury and cyanide, the pollution of groundwater and rivers.

And yet, we had never needed anything or anyone to teach us how to produce our consumption.

But that was so long ago...»

Story told by: Mamadou Mansaly (Green Sédhiou), Mouhamadou Soumbounou (Urgence écologique Kolda), Oudy diallo (Alerte Kédougou environnement), Salif Ba (Tamba Association pour la citoyenneté et le développement), Seydou Ba (Initiative Citoyenne Pour la Protection Du fleuve Gambie).

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