

Rainbow Development in Africa

Registered Charity No: 1087744

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Mauritania: The Futa Initiative An Update

“For many years people have come to us and promised us many things, but always we get nothing. You came to us and promised us that you would help us, and now we can see and even touch the fruits of your work. This means more to us than a thousand promises.”

These words, addressed to Rainbow Development in Africa Director Peter Hudson on his recent trip to Mauritania, were spoken by Mohamedou Konte, President of the Mid-Gorgol River Valley Farmers Union, on seeing the tractor and rice de-husker bought by Rainbow for the Futa Initiative. It is these machines, and others in the process of being bought, that will not only service the agricultural sector in this southern, Black African region of Mauritania, helping it become more viable, but also finance the long-term development work of local partner, ADMAPE.

What is the Futa Initiative ?

Rainbow Development in Africa's Futa Initiative Project is about helping a community of 30,000 people gain some degree of economic independence. It is about creating a local development group with the human and material resources necessary to deliver crucial assistance to the agricultural sector, triggering confidence and local investment and so producing employment and food security in a region where currently there is only recurrent drought, urban migration and poverty.

Progress to date

2003, the first year of the Futa Initiative's two year start-up phase, has seen:

- The creation and building of local partner and development group ADMAPE.
- The purchase and usage of machinery, including a tractor and accessories, a rice de-husking machine, a cold-storage truck, a scale and a sack-stitching machine.
- The formulation of a farmer training program to be conducted by a local agronomist.
- The forming of links with, and strengthening of, other civil society groups, such as the local farmers union, irrigation cooperatives and pastoralist groups.



Tractor bought for the Futa Initiative.

In many parts of Africa, people have already begun to modernise their agriculture in order to pay for the high cost of living. This is a difficult and dangerous process, however, one in which they need assistance if they



Mohamedou Sall, of ADMAPE, with farmers.

ADMAPE (Assistance au Developpement de Modernisation de l'Agriculture et le Protection d'Environnement) is a local development group consisting of a Director, an engineer/mechanic, a book keeper/manager and a consultant agronomist. These are all skilled and motivated local people committed to working closely with local farmers in order to help them solve

What's next

2004 is a crucial year for the Futa Initiative. The remaining capital machinery will be purchased (including a service vehicle and second merchandise transport truck), a resource centre will be constructed, ADMAPE will receive further training and the farmer training program will begin. It will be a year of consolidation and expansion, including the development of micro-projects, such as seed selection and a fruit tree nursery.