



**4 SAHEL: HOW CAN WE CREATE  
A CRISIS-RESILIENT ECONOMY?**



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# ABOUT SOS SAHEL

Established in Senegal, SOS SAHEL is an international NGO that works with vulnerable populations in the Sahel, to support development in the region and ensure local voices are heard on an international stage.

SOS SAHEL promotes the formidable potential of the Sahel of by supporting local stakeholders and investing in sustainable, African solutions in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

In this region which faces many challenges, SOS SAHEL has set up and run flagship programs, such as the Green Initiative, to provide food and nutritional security for communities and adaptive solutions to climate change. SOS SAHEL prioritizes women's empowerment, recognizing the central role women play in producing and developing agriculture.

The charity's strength lies in solidarity and cooperation with its network of partners, by sharing its expertise gained from several generations of work with the Sahelian people.

Lastly, it brings ingenuity and innovation through the deployment of modern agricultural methods that are both environmentally friendly and promising in terms of sustainable development – in order to build a resilient, nourishing Sahel.

## ...IN NUMBERS

**400**  
collaborators

**98%**  
are based in  
the field

**65%**

of funding  
is earmarked  
for the  
development  
of projects in  
the field

**1,000**  
active partners in  
our network

**80%**  
of local actors  
are women

Programs in **11** countries  
across the  
Sahelian belt



## WHY DOES SOS SAHEL ORGANIZE THE AFRICA DAYS?

Each year, SOS SAHEL organizes the Africa Days to bring together local communities on an international stage and promote sustainable food security solutions against a backdrop of increasing challenges for agriculture. The Africa Days encapsulates SOS SAHEL's mission and celebrates the incredible potential of the Sahel.

The Africa Days helps SOS SAHEL's network of partners to rally around key development ideas and promote initiatives and solutions developed by SOS SAHEL and its partners. In addition, lessons are learned and recommendations are made to support the knowledge-management process and drive advocacy initiatives.

In 2017, SOS SAHEL organized the very first Africa Days in Senegal to celebrate Africa and 40 years of achievement on the continent.

In 2018, the theme for Africa Days was 'promoting local products.' SOS SAHEL organized 'Sahel, towards family farming' a forum which highlighted the potential of local farms to grow healthy and nutritious food for the Sahelian people, within a local, dynamic economy that creates jobs.

In 2019, the theme of the Africa Days was 'modernization and intensification of agriculture in the Sahel.' During the event, panelists discussed how family farming could be intensified and what solutions could be developed to help transition to modern family farming.

In 2020, the fourth Africa Days event took place beginning on May 25, World Africa Day, and ending on June 17, World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought. Workshops and a forum were organized from June 2 through 5 2020, World Environment Day. As the COVID-19 pandemic prevented people from gathering in Dakar, SOS SAHEL held events using remote communication technologies. The theme of the 2020 event was

**"The Sahel: How can we create a crisis-resilient economy?  
Let's get a network of partners to step up and energize the economy  
in the Sahel to overcome the current crises."**

In order to cope with future crises, we need to be confident that we can develop our own strategies and implement long-term solutions.

## A FEW FIGURES ABOUT THE ECONOMY AND THE CRISIS IN THE SAHEL

The food economy of the six CILSS\* Sahelian countries amounts to

**US\$260**

billion. In other words,

**35%**

of the region's GDP

\* Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel ([www.cilss.int](http://www.cilss.int))

**20**

million transhumant livestock farmers in the Sahel

**11**

million people needed emergency food aid in West Africa in May 2020.

Urban population growth is very strong. The rural/urban ratio has fallen from

**15:1 to 2:1**

in 40 years

**60%**

of the population is under the age of

**25** indicating significant human resource potential

Transhumant livestock farming represents

**15%**

of Chad's GDP

Over

**1/3**

of West African households do not have basic hand washing facilities (RPCA\*)

\* Food Crisis Prevention Network

## EDITORIAL

### Let's learn from the COVID-19 crisis to increase the resilience of the Sahel



Rémi Hémerlyck  
Managing Director, SOS SAHEL

In a complex situation characterized by extreme climate variability, security crises, a locust problem in East Africa and the prospect of high-risk election periods, the last thing the Sahel needed was a global pandemic. SOS SAHEL, which is active in supporting farmers, local institutions and economic stakeholders, certainly did not need additional constraints and difficulties in program implementation..

In 2019 and 2020, SOS SAHEL focused on sharing and disseminating knowledge and know-how to increase innovation and capacity for change driven by the stakeholders themselves. Thus, despite the isolation and segmentation of local communities due to the pandemic, SOS SAHEL was more determined than ever to organize the annual Africa Days in 2020. In doing so, we gave our partners from Nouakchott to Djibouti the opportunity to debate and find joint solutions to this crisis and prepare for future crises.

Given the exceptional context, SOS SAHEL and its partners decided to organize a virtual Africa Days. Through a virtual event, SOS SAHEL was able to search for local solutions, build innovative partnerships, encourage discussion between stakeholders from all walks of life and provide Sahelian stakeholders with development resources.

The 2020 Africa Days built upon efforts that were started during previous months, these include: (i) the Africa Camp, during which organizations in the field vied with each other in coming up with totally new and extremely audacious solutions for sharing knowledge and disseminating good practices; (ii) listening and collecting experiences to challenge intervention models; (iii) the strategic plan for 2030, which aims to meet the challenges, current needs and ongoing changes.

The COVID-19 health crisis has brought a host of negative impacts and new problems, slowing growth and affecting the most vulnerable. However, it also gives us an opportunity to ask key questions, find viable solutions and be mindful of the complexity of such challenges. As the meetings progressed, participants examined issues of food security, safety, economic development and social development in the long term. This booklet presents the results of these discussions and the subsequent achievements.

## AFRICA CAMP

13-14  
JAN

To rise to the challenge of disseminating knowledge and know-how, SOS SAHEL invited its partners to the AFRICA CAMP on January 13 and 14 2020 in Thiès, Senegal, to think about designing innovative technical solutions to stimulate agricultural production and strengthen food value chains and resilience in the Sahel.



On the general theme of **knowledge dissemination**, stakeholders, invited from eight Sahelian countries looked into the future and came up with six projects capable of delivering life-changing solutions within a short time frame. These projects are detailed below and fall within three complementary approaches to create resilience in the Sahelian economy.

## KNOWLEDGE CAPITALIZATION

In 2019, SOS SAHEL met with its partners on the ground in Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso and Chad to hear their thoughts on certain aspects of their collaboration and to explore important



questions about their experiences. This sharing session has helped to identify the knowledge and key steps that were fueling change for these actors. Throughout these separate conversations in each country regarding issues of knowledge dissemination, restoration of degraded land, organisation of producers and security concerns, the partners on the ground repeatedly circled back to topics related to their collaboration with SOS SAHEL. The two most important concepts that emerged from these meetings concern managing territories and the building trusted partnerships.

## AFRICA DAYS 2020



From June 2 to 5, the Africa Days included three thematic workshops and a virtual forum on the topic: “The Sahel: How can we create a crisis-resilient economy? Let’s get a network of partners to step up and energize the economy in the Sahel to overcome the current crises.”

### THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

Thematic workshops were held from June 2 to 4, 2020, in which SOS SAHEL partners were given the floor to discuss solutions that could help local partners amid the current Covid-19 pandemic. Each of three workshop analyzed one particular aspect of the overall Africa Days theme and connected it to the current crisis.

Workshop 1  
‘Africa Camp’  
June 2

How can we speed up the creation and spread of knowledge using digital tools?

Workshop 2  
‘Internal’  
June 3

What is the best development model for a Sahel region undergoing economic change?

Workshop 3  
‘Capitalization’  
June 4

How to strengthen the effectiveness of partner networks in a changing Sahel region?

The outcomes of these workshops were assessed and fueled further discussions.

### THE FORUM

During the virtual conference, seven panelists took the floor to share their insight and approach to development in the Sahel. These include long-term responses to huge, rapidly changing needs and the necessity to respond to recurrent crises that may increase in the future.

JUNE  
5



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COPING WITH FUTURE CRISES



## SUPPORT THE RISE OF AGRIPRENEURS (ENTREPRENEURIAL FARMERS)

These are hybrid stakeholders, who operate a farm, manage their own companies and drive innovation to support the development of their region. This is made possible, in part, by increasing their access to information and thus, their ability to anticipate future crises rather than suffer from them. By giving agripreneurs a voice, they can influence institutions and technical and financial partners.

*"Agripreneurs are therefore managers who need to have the necessary skills and information to plan for and anticipate crises. They are conscious of the risks and adapt to new trends. They must strive towards autonomy if they are to know how to benefit from the opportunities created by changes during times of crisis."*

### **Sidy SARR,**

Vice-President of SOS SAHEL  
International France

*"In a crisis, entrepreneurs must show great management and creative skills to reinvent themselves. The government should support the creation of a protective and reassuring local and national environment to encourage companies to innovate."*

### **Mame Khary DIENE,**

entrepreneur and agricultural-value-chain consultant for UN Women, Senegal



## BUILD AN AUTONOMOUS AND INTERCONNECTED SAHEL,

by empowering local territories, supporting local initiatives and promoting a range of partnerships among local stakeholders, as well as between local stakeholders and international partners.

*"In the short term, we have to respond to the food and nutrition emergency. But we need to invest in local resources through irrigation, agro-ecology, mechanization and cooperation between countries, to ensure that the Sahel can be independent over the long term."*

### **Djime ADOUM,**

Executive Secretary of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and Member of the SOS SAHEL Advisory Board

*In order to develop the region sustainably, we have to have a local approach in volatile areas and foster synergies between all stakeholders who are working to ensure social stability and development."*

### **Ibrahima NIANE,**

Project manager,  
Agence Française de Développement (AFD)  
in Dakar SENEGAL





## MOTIVATE LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS TO COME UP WITH THE SOLUTIONS THEY NEED.

Involving local stakeholders is key, as we must use their experiences and the available natural and human resources to develop sustainable, technological solutions that respond to the region's needs.

*"We need to make our production systems more resilient through professional development and innovation. We have to develop our own strategies and believe in ourselves if we are to find solutions."*

**Ndeye Fatou NDAO,**  
Groupement de femmes maraîchères et forestières de Mboro [Women market gardeners and forest owners group in Mboro], Senegal

*"We should not limit ourselves to applied research. We must support grassroots innovation. The techniques for greening the Sahel, including: half-moon, zai, and farmer management natural regeneration (FMNR), were developed within the region. They are effective and widely used because they are suited to the environment where they were created."*

**Jean Sibiri ZOUNDI,**  
Member of the SOS SAHEL Board of Directors, and Deputy Director of the Sahel and West Africa Club

## SECURING EFFECTIVE INVESTMENTS AND COORDINATING WITH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS,

provides a systemic approach that places local communities at the heart of development and supports private stakeholders in understanding the importance of long-term investment in the Sahel.

*"The development approach must be cross-sectoral and interconnected in order to overcome the crisis and transform the ongoing regional changes into local sustainable development opportunities."*

**Adama KABORE,**  
Employee of SOS SAHEL International France based in Burkina Faso, and Beog Puuto Project Coordinator

*"Pastoral farming has existed in the Sahel for 7,000 years. We need to manage emergencies during crises, but to increase our resilience, we must, above all, be active at the structural level through digitalisation, support of youth employment and promotion of livestock products."*

**Abdrahmane Saada WANE,**  
Economist in Livestock issues, French Agricultural Research and International Cooperation Organization (CIRAD)



## SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS.

We have to develop tools to connect environments, knowledge and stakeholders to strengthen ties between partners, bring the rural and urban worlds closer together, align the visions of those in the field with those of institutions and connect investments to local government resources.

*“SOS SAHEL was a step ahead of the crisis. It is important to develop technological solutions that make sharing good information and ‘best practices’ possible. Access to good information is key, especially in times of crisis.”*

**Félicité YAMEOGO,**  
Félicité Yameogo, Director  
of the Cooperative Service Agricole  
Coobsa, Burkina Faso

*“Interpersonal relations and direct contact are essential in the Sahel. However, alternatives must be found whenever any kind of crisis, be it health, social or security, makes this impossible.”*

**Youssef DIALLO,**  
Youssef Diallo, Water  
and Energy Specialist, Practica  
Foundation, Mauritania

## INSIST ON TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION.

By connecting academic knowledge with innovation in the field, we can ensure that the right information and best practices are disseminated across the region.

*“We make progress through innovation. We have to insist that digital technologies, tailored to farmers’ needs are developed. To achieve this, we need to involve farmers so that they take ownership of these technologies and tailor them to their needs.”*

**Ouma Kaltoum ISSOUFOU,**  
Ouma Kaltoum Issoufou,  
Founder of ProNat, Niger

*“The strategy to build resilience in the agricultural sector and strengthen the capabilities of farmers in Burkina Faso relies on innovative methods using information and communication technology to support agricultural, livestock and forestry production.”*

**Salifou OUEDRAOGO,**  
Minister for Agriculture  
and Hydro-agricultural Facilities  
in Burkina Faso

# 3 COMPLEMENTARY APPROACHES TO A RESILIENT SAHELIAN ECONOMY

EMPOWERING LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SAHEL

1

DEVELOPING LOCAL, INNOVATIVE, SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS THAT ARE TAILORED TO THE CONTEXT

2

RETHINKING TECHNOLOGIES AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

3



# 1

## APPROACH 1

# SUPPORTING THE EMPOWERMENT OF SAHELIAN TERRITORIES AND ACTORS

SOS SAHEL promotes a **local approach to development**. This approach is in keeping with the emerging phenomenon of a number of small African towns where markets and services are developing. This approach is also aligned with countries committing resources towards **decentralization** and involvement with local stakeholders, especially local elected officials. Finally, the approach supports the vision of the Great Green Wall, which promotes the emergence of **economic development centers** in mainly rural countries.

The local approach is key to mobilizing diverse stakeholders and ensuring that they build towards a common vision for their territory. The approach helps strengthen social resilience, by focusing on inclusiveness and governance. Thus, it's at the local level where dynamic economies are being created and farmers, including transhumant livestock farmers are becoming innovative. The incentive for them is, above all, economic. These stakeholders must be supported as they are the most suited to develop their own economic models and technological solutions.

The crisis has made this model even more relevant. **In the Sahel, we must continue to have an ambitious and innovative approach**, which supports farmers, and acknowledges them as entrepreneurs in an uncertain environment. At the same time, we must focus on an integrated development model that involves all stakeholders within the local government area.

We must act quickly to counter the negative effects and impacts imposed by the COVID-19 restrictions as well as the pandemic itself. At the same time, structural reforms to the Sahelian food system must be supported to overcome current and future crises.





PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAO IN BURKINA FASO



For the past 20 years, SOS SAHEL has supported stakeholders in Sao, Burkina Faso, some 50 kilometers from Ouagadougou. Initially, the municipality looked for partners to establish a health center in the town but funding partners felt the project was not feasible. Then the state suggested a road be constructed that would link the town of Sao to a nearby health center which was lacking in resources and capacity. The community was disheartened. SOS SAHEL came to the village shortly after and suggested a different approach. SOS SAHEL and the municipality discussed other challenges facing the region and they decided together to set up a literacy center in Sao which would equip the village with the resources necessary to develop their own projects and programs.

Since then, stakeholders in Sao have undertaken numerous projects, supported by the French town of Cholet and SOS SAHEL. Collaborations continued involving all development stakeholders in both Sao and Cholet.

Thanks to their newly acquired project management skills, Sao's stakeholders were able to convince the Ministry of Health to open a new health center within their community. Local stakeholders have been empowered to identify their needs, launch and carry out numerous projects and negotiate the conditions for their implementation. They catalyzed a shift in the traditional rules of governance and adapted to new decentralization rules.

The new institutions set up in Sao centralize decision making within the town and now include Village Committees, which benefit the village communities. In this way, the institutions take into account the perspectives and ideas of all stakeholders - large and small, and work in a coordinated way to develop their local economy.

**The most recent example of a project led by the stakeholders in Sao is an insurance and guarantee fund of 34 million CFA (€ 51 000) with the local bank, so that farmers who want to get a loan are not asked to provide a guarantee.**



## TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS

# IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT OF TERRITORIES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SHARING.

To help towns like Sao, SOS SAHEL asked its partners to imagine new innovative digital solutions which, if developed, would encourage knowledge sharing. During the Africa Camp in January 2020, stakeholders from 9 Sahelian countries conceived of Bouboudi and Çakanam which would exist to encourage the sharing of best practices when it comes to management of local territories and decentralization in the Sahel.

### **BOUBOUDI**

Bouboudi is a smart monkey-robot, powered by solar energy, which fulfills several functions: (i) collecting data within the local community, through audio and video recordings and drone photography; (ii) relaying information in local languages; (iii) ensuring that information is transferred between the population and the government institution so that inhabitants can become involved in developing their local area.

### **ÇAKANAM (FORWARD!)**

Çakanam is a solution providing Mayors with the necessary tools to optimally manage planning, monitoring, assessment and decision-making in their local area. It takes into account three major constraints: lack of human and financial resources, limited network coverage, and the presence of illiterate staff within teams.



# 2

## APPROACH 2

# DEVELOPING LOCAL, INNOVATIVE, SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS THAT ARE TAILORED TO THE CONTEXT

**There is no lack of opportunity in the Sahel.** This was FAO's initial assessment of trees, forests and land use in drylands. In this report, they rebranded the drylands as **productive landscapes with considerable economic potential and environmental value**, instead of marginal wastelands. They found a growing young population interested in transforming the world, urbanization, modern communication methods, local products, and non-timber resources. These interests represent both challenges and opportunities to sustainable local development.

SOS SAHEL's intervention model places **local stakeholders at the center of the processes when it comes to identifying and implementing projects.** SOS SAHEL prefers to **delegate project management**, putting trust in local stakeholders and their knowledge of the environment while establishing long-term partnerships. The men and women who work in agricultural production, processing or distribution are constantly adapting to climatic, natural, demographic, economic and political changes. In a rapidly changing region, local stakeholders know how to seize opportunities and find solutions to their needs.

Faced with these challenges and in the absence of advice and support, **stakeholders innovate, using their knowledge from traditional techniques** to evolve into something more efficient. But new knowledge and successful

experiences are still poorly documented and shared. The Sahel is a mosaic of sedentary and nomadic societies, in which each part of the mosaic has specific solutions adapted to its needs.

Dissemination of these ambitious solutions would strengthen the resilience of farming, processing and marketing systems in the face of current and future crises.



PRACTICAL EXAMPLE  
**MINI-FARMS  
IN THE RICHARD TOLL REGION  
OF SENEGAL**



Twenty million people live directly from transhumant livestock farming in West Africa. Despite this farming method often being decried for its nomadic nature, it is entirely suited to the extreme climatic constraints of the Sahelian zone and constitutes a significant portion of the region's gross domestic product. Facing climatic hazards, security concerns, and economic difficulties, livestock breeders operate a high-risk business which involves implementing long-term technical and economic strategies. Following the great droughts at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, herders organised differently and introduced new transhumance strategies.

With the help of SOS SAHEL, milk producers in the Richard Toll region of northern Senegal have tested and implemented various models of mini-farms, improving the local breeding habits and developing fodder production as a complementary strategy to pastoralism. Mini-farms make it possible to keep a very small number of animals close to the family home and provide income for those who stay at home. Herders appreciated the mini-farms and the government recognized the relevance of this approach. To support them, the government set up a credit system for financing 100 such mini-farms.

This approach has been coordinated with the Laiterie du Berger, a private company, who is committed to enhancing the value of local milk production. With the help of SOS SAHEL, the Laiterie du Berger and the cooperative of milk producers in the Dagana region set up the Kosam SDE - Société de Développement de l'Élevage - a service center to increase dialogue and coordinate operations between the company and local transhumant herders.

**SOS SAHEL encourages States to support local initiatives, rather than proposing standardized solutions, often sourced from external influences and experiences.**





TECHNOLOGICAL  
SOLUTIONS  
**STAKEHOLDER  
DISCUSSIONS  
TO IMPROVE  
PRACTICES**

In this spirit, during the Africa Camp in January 2020, SOS SAHEL's partners came up with two solutions for knowledge sharing between peers, as well as knowledge sharing between the agricultural sector, research bodies and institutions.

**GONGO**

Gongo is a bracelet which broadcasts an interactive 5D hologram, connected to a big data server. This bracelet, which runs without the need for electricity and can even be used in the rain, makes it possible to link traditional and academic knowledge in local languages. At the heart of this solution, is the user, who is both a beneficiary and a stakeholder helping to improve knowledge dissemination.

**AFRILINK**

Afrilink is a multilingual solution to interconnect all stakeholders, from farmers to researchers and technical government departments, enabling them to share agricultural knowledge in real time via multimedia channels. This solution must be simple to use and accessible to all, providing stakeholder interactivity with simple touch controls.



# 3

## APPROACH 3

# RETHINKING TECHNOLOGIES AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

**Mobile technology has undergone an extraordinary change** in less than fifteen years. In 2005, no one imagined that the internet could be accessed other than via landline telephone networks, which are poorly developed in the main cities of the region. Since then, the majority of the region's inhabitants have adopted 3G and 4G. Online services, in particular financial services have multiplied rapidly, **democratising access to information, knowledge and services**, which have resulted in a tenfold increase in stakeholder exchanges and the circulation of money.

**During the pandemic, stakeholders realized how much digital technology could help them**, including connecting farmers, suppliers and consumers as well as disseminating market information and pricing. The crisis helped convince producers that digital communication tools are vital to ensuring communication with partners and marketing their products.

Digital technology is promising in all areas: for the development of local government economies, knowledge sharing and strengthening all businesses. This major transformation, championed by Africans must be supported, strengthened and accelerated.





PRACTICAL EXAMPLE  
**THE USE OF ICT  
TO RESTORE DEGRADED LAND  
IN BURKINA FASO**



In Burkina Faso, the Beog Puuto project - a contribution to completing the Great Green Wall initiative - uses digital technology to monitor field-based activities, particularly while the security situation makes travel more difficult. Beog Puuto plans to restore 30,000 ha of degraded land, which is currently unfit for agriculture due to repeated use over the years, without investment in its fertility. The project also plans to create 7 pilot farms, dedicated to creating hedges and woodland hedges over 3,000 ha.

To strengthen this message, expand the training and extend the influence of best practices beyond the people directly concerned, the project has joined forces with the AGRIDATA platform, a system for mobile data collection, information and remote supervision of farmers via telephone networks. The association AGRIDATA Burkina Faso offers a wide range of online and telephone services such as: technical advice on best practices for family farmers, research; a Market Information System; agro-meteorological information, disaster warnings, parasite monitoring, security information; agricultural insurance, agricultural loans, online warrantage, mobile agri-banking and networking services, which creates groups, value chains, etc.

**The use of such an online service supports the spread of best practices over the long term and, in the event of a crisis, enables us to respond rapidly to the needs of all communities, including the most isolated, relaying information to all stakeholders concerned and informing them of the measures to be taken.**



TECHNOLOGICAL  
SOLUTIONS  
**DISSEMINATING  
INFORMATION  
TO STRENGTHEN  
AGRICULTURAL  
SECTORS**

In this spirit, SOS SAHEL asked its partners to design new tools to help disseminate information and knowledge about the Sahelian agricultural sectors. During the Africa Camp, SOS SAHEL's partners came up with the following two solutions:

**LINGUERE BA ZINDER**

Linguere Ba Zinder is an ecosystem of tools that can be used anywhere in the Sahel, even in the most remote places, without an internet connection. All the information within this ecosystem, including experiences, market trends, methods for reusing residuals, resources and environmental indicators are collected through exchanges between different stakeholders in the farming sectors.

**O'SAHEL**

'O'Sahel' is a tool, available to everyone, that collects information from its members and disseminates it to all stakeholders in a sector. Members can communicate via calls and voice messages translated into local languages. It captures and stores all information related to farming operations and is used for marketing, training and research. It broadcasts alerts and includes an online forum system.





## CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Sahelian stakeholders hard, particularly by interrupting the interactions which enable them to exchange knowledge and goods. The crisis has made them realize that their long-term strategies need to be strengthened by using **more efficient communication methods**, which operate even when travel is restricted. Stakeholders stressed the importance of coordination and partnerships which are made more effective by relationships of **trust**, developed over the long term and particularly during crises. When development decisions are made by local governments, that value the resources within their territories, it gives stakeholders considerable independence. This ensures they are free to **develop their own solutions**, tailored to their resources and constraints, and reduces the risks of compartmentalization and restrictions on movement.

All these approaches lie at the heart of SOS SAHEL's intervention model, which was confirmed during the Africa Days. All partners, from those who implement projects in the field to academic, institutional or financial partners, stress the importance of involving stakeholders from the field given the complex nature of their work. Furthermore, all partners agreed that there is an immense **need for governments to support them in their strategies and initiatives**, in particular through the use of digital tools to circulate of information, knowledge and know-how. This strategy is at the heart of SOS SAHEL's intervention model, on which the organization's 2021-2030 strategic plan is based.

# PARTNERS

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## In the same series:

'How to modernize and intensify agriculture in the Sahel,' 2019

'How to enhance the value of local products from the Sahel,' 2018

'Family Farming,' 2015

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