



## CASE STUDY

# Senegal: Promoting women in beekeeping – APISEN

## Summary

Senegal's rural communities face a growing economic insecurity due to climate induced agricultural decline and traditional gender barriers in income generating sectors like beekeeping. APISEN's "Burru-Yambi: The Queens of Bees" project empowers women by revitalizing honey production and processing, providing technical, management, and marketing training, and fostering gender-inclusive economic participation. The initiative strengthens women's economic resilience, improves product quality, and promotes sustainable livelihoods while addressing cultural and environmental challenges.

## Background

Senegal, located in the Sahelo-Sudan zone, faces sporadic droughts (SDG 15), particularly during the rainy season (May to October), characterized by erratic dry spells and severe rainfall shortages. Over the last decade, regions like Ziguinchor, Kaolack, and Kedougou, crucial for rainfed agriculture, have experienced significant rainfall deficits—26%, 30%, and 36%, respectively, in 2007. This resulted in a 15% drop in national agricultural production. In 2011, drought led to a 20% reduction in grain production and a 31% decline in groundnut yield, causing food price inflation and food insecurity for an estimated 800,000 people. In rural areas, drought particularly affects children, leading to malnutrition and hindering education.

In Senegal, beekeeping has traditionally been a male-dominated practice due to the aggressive nature of bees, the physical demands of the work, and the nocturnal honey harvesting activities. Consequently, women have been systematically occupying secondary roles, primarily in the processing of hive products. However, women's significant involvement in household management underscores the need for their support in pursuing inclusive socio-economic development. This support is crucial for ensuring household resilience and empowerment through income-generating activities.

In response to this vision, phase 2 of the "Burru-Yambi: The Queens of Bees" project aims to promote the active involvement and emergence of women in the beekeeping sector. This phase will build on the achievements of the previous phase, addressing the identified needs. To enhance women's income-generating activities, the project will capitalize on their existing knowledge and enhance it through targeted training. Additionally, new equipment will be purchased for the honey processing unit to optimize tools and boost productivity and sales.

To address the needs for technical, organizational, and communication support, APISEN staff provide comprehensive training for the beneficiaries. Furthermore, the project will support APISEN and the creation of a beneficiary network, fostering a collaborative environment. The initiative's sustainability is anchored in raising awareness about the importance of consuming local, healthy, and high-quality products. Through these efforts, the project strives to create a more inclusive and prosperous beekeeping sector for women in Senegal.

## **Actions taken**

To address the exclusion of women from Senegal's beekeeping sector and improve their economic resilience:

- **Objectives Defined:** The project aimed for women's financial independence through capacity building in honey production, processing, management, and marketing.
- **Leadership & Participation:** Women members of APISEN actively lobbied for and shaped Phase 2, ensuring their needs and contributions guided project design.
- **Capacity Building:** Technical training covered modern beekeeping techniques, equipment use, and eco responsible practices. Management and marketing training enhanced women's skills in finance, sales, and communication.
- **Equipment Upgrade:** New honey processing tools were acquired to improve efficiency and product quality.
- **Community Building:** A network of women beekeepers was established, alongside a monitoring and consultation committee involving women as decision makers.
- **Inclusive Governance:** The initiative promoted women's visibility in APISEN's structures while fostering male allyship.
- **Sustainability:** The project emphasized awareness of consuming local, organic, high quality products and integrated other women led activities like oyster farming.

## **Outcomes**

The project produced significant results:

- **Enhanced Production & Quality:** Improved techniques led to higher honey yields, better processing, and higher-quality products.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Women applied management and marketing skills to create income generating activities, boosting sales and financial autonomy.
- **Social Transformation:** Women gained visibility, leadership roles, and decision making power within APISEN and the wider community.
- **Sustainable Practices:** The initiative promoted eco-responsible, zero waste approaches, supporting environmental goals (SDG 15).
- **Community Impact:** Benefits extended to approximately 200 women and their households, enhancing overall food security and resilience.
- **Innovation:** Women introduced new production methods, diversified products, and adapted processes to local ecological conditions.

## Lessons Learned

**Inclusive Governance Drives Success:** Women's active involvement in project design and management enhances both ownership and outcomes.

**Community Networks Build Resilience:** Forming networks and consultation committees strengthens collective action and sustainability.

**Eco Responsibility Adds Value:** Aligning livelihoods with environmental goals creates multiple layers of benefit for communities.

### Corresponding Author

Étienne Manga

### Corresponding Author Contact

etiennemanga2005@yahoo.fr

### Organisation

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification - UNCCD, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - FAO

### Year

2024

### Country

Senegal

### Region

Africa

### Keywords

beekeeping , Gender Equality , climate resistance , SDG 15 , Rural development , Zero-Waste Approach , Gender , Women , Women's Leadership  
Language English

### Related IWRM Tools

Addressing Gender Inclusion

---

### Source URL:

<https://iwrmactionhub.org/case-study/senegal-promoting-women-beekeeping-apisen>