Newsletter 8, January 2014

Aw ni tié – aw ka dèmèla

Thank you very much for your continuous support;
in Bambara the local language in Bamako

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We are looking forward to 2014 mainly because the political situation in Bamako, the capital of Mali, has stabilized in 2013. One year before in 2012, DJOM KOSSAM, the local small-scale dairy that we support, had to close down its business activities for multiple weeks after a military coup[1]. The situation had been improving last year and elections were held successfully in July 2013.

Summary of 2013

As the political situation improved, we seized the opportunity to expand our activities including setting-up infrastructure to test a project on improved farming practices, supporting DJOM KOSSAM to start a collaboration with a local NGO to empower farmers, and financing the travel for Aguibou Sali, the CEO of DJOM KOSSAM to participate on a training in France. Aguibou was selected with 14 other entrepreneurs from West Africa by the UEMAO[2] for the 3 months program „talent du monde“, in which he had business training and a 10 days internship at a dairy in Northern France.

Highlights of our projects in 2014

Developing local and sustainable dairy businesses

We believe that empowering private businesses is an effective and a long term way to build the capacity of the Malian local dairy industry. We therefore continue to support DJOM KOSSAM, a small-scale dairy. It has in total 8 employees, of which 5 work in rural areas.

Figure 1: Aguibou Sall visited a farm in France during the practical part of its training program.

[1] Newsletter XII: http://promilchmali.jimdo.com/medien-bilder/newsletter/
[2] Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africa

Currently, DJOM KOSSAM is running its operational business fine. In order to make it more sustainable, we will support reshaping its sales operations as well as maintaining and expanding its infrastructure.

Figure 2: Aguibou Sall attended a 10-days internship at a dairy within his training program in France.

Improve farming practices through a new project

Farmers in Mali keep local breeds and practice extensive farming[3], which is the reason why the average milk production is very low, about 1-2 liters per day per cow.

To raise the production capacities, we decided to set-up a project for intensive farming[3] by first building required infrastructure and later providing trainings to farmers. We have already built a fence close to the small-scale dairy and keep 5 cows of the crossing Zebu-Montbeliard according to traditional farming practices. In 2014, we plan to add a hangar and a silo to stock feed in the farmhouse and also to expand the herd in order to have a pilot run on intensive farming practices. After we will have gained experience in intensive farming, we will then transfer the skills to local farmers through defined training courses.

Set-up local collaboration to engage more farmers

In Mali, fresh milk is of high demand in urban areas. However, fresh milk is mainly produced in rural areas and locally consumed. DJOM KOSSAM targets at linking the rural supply with the demand from urban areas. In this way, farmers can sell fresh milk at higher prices and the urban consumers can enjoy fresh local milk instead of milk reconstituted from imported milk powder. In 2014, we continue supporting the new collaboration between DJOM KOSSAM and a local NGO that familiarizes more farmers with regular milk production and regular delivery of milk. In this way, rural farmers can earn higher income and improve their living standards.

[3] Extensive farming:The herds are walked twice a day similar to nomadic farming practices to feed the livestock. Intensive farming: The herds are kept stationary and fed regularly.

Medical support of farmers and their families

We offered in 2009 within a pilot project medical care to farmers and their families by a doctor. Some smaller findings were treated immediantly. This project[4], which was highly appreciated by farmers, was expanded to more locations and farmers during the following years and we plan an additional execution in 2014.

How you can contribute

The objective of our association is to support the local dairy sector (farmers, producers, sales organizations) in Mali and hence to improve the standards of living of the population. This objective can only be achieved through regular support by the members and sponsors. Therefore, we would appreciate very mcuh your support to our work.

Join Pro Milk Mali as a member (annual membership fees: single person CHF 100, students CHF 40, institutions CHF 1000) or donate an amount to support our activities in Mali long-term.

We appreciate your interest and support and wish you the very best for 2014.

Kind regards

Dr. Stephan Wullschleger,
President association pro milk Mali.

P.S.: The cantonal tax office of the canton of St. Gallen excluded the association Pro Milk Mali from its liability for taxation. The exclusion for taxation was declared on harmonized national taxation law and is valid in each canton of Switzerland. The deductibility of donations is regulated on cantonal taxation law.

[4] Newsletter III: http://promilchmali.jimdo.com/medien-bilder/newsletter/