



NEWSLETTER XV, DECEMBER 2020

„Kobalalew tjouna tjogo o tjogo, anw bè ka sinignèsigi bara kèla “

In Bambara, the local language mostly spoken in Bamako:

„We continue to build the future despite unforeseen challenges”

- **We succeeded to embed the two local jobs we created last year in a self-sustainable business.**
- **We strengthened the farming capacity of the small-scale dairy DJOM KOSSAM and purchased 4 young cows that expect to give birth to newborns in 2021.**
- **We are implementing step-by-step the innovative and fully integrated dairy value chain for which we got awarded by the Global Resilience Partnership in 2019.**

Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa and among the poorest countries globally. In addition to the global pandemic, Mali experienced a coup d'état in 2020. The country is now ruled by the post-coup government. Mali was regarded as a stable democracy in early 2000, since the coup d'état in 2012, it struggles with a country-wide security situation. The Economist described Mali close to a tipping point that might make it the world's worst humanitarian disaster (The Economist, 17. October. 2020). Nevertheless, Mali's economy stayed resilient and showed a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 5% in 2019. However, GDP is still very low with about USD 2,200 per capita. The GDP growth was mainly driven by gold and cotton production. Mali remains under-industrialized and heavily dependent on imports (also food including milk powder, African Development Bank, 2020).

The objective of the association Pro Milk Mali is to support the local agriculture sector in Mali in a sustainable way and to create local jobs based on economic principles. We are achieving this objective by technical and managerial support to the small-scale dairy DJOM KOSSAM and knowhow transfer to local farmers. In addition, we fund selected activities with DJOM KOSSAM, or local farmers based on our financial possibilities. A big thank you to all, who supported our activities in 2020.

The “self-sustainable” business of the small-scale dairy DJOM KOSSAM



Figure 1: Fatoumata, who opens the new shop every morning and starts selling healthy milk from Mali.

DJOM KOSSAM is a small-scale dairy that is run by local management and currently employs five staff in rural Mali and the capital Bamako. In addition, it purchases milk from rural farmers that adds to their family income. Fluctuating milk volumes and unpredictable events in an African business environment are the daily challenges of DJOM KOSSAM. These challenges need to be mastered to keep DJOM KOSSAM in business and make the venture more successful. We are glad that we could equip DJOM KOSSAM with skills that allow the small-scale dairy to cover its operational costs for many years now. The association Pro Milk Mali gets active in order to lift DJOM KOSSAM to a next level of sustainable business, educate farmers or provide emergency funds to fully or partly cover losses due

to unexpected events. For example, back in 2016 the authorities were unexpectedly banning overnight almost all point of sales at the roadside and removing the sales kiosk DJOM KOSSAM had been running for over 10 years. With the emergency funds we provided, DJOM KOSSAM could open a new point of sales, create new business opportunities and hire two local employees (figure 1).

Strengthening farming capacity and implementing an innovative and integrated dairy value chain

A dairy value chain is complex in under-industrialized countries, as operations are mainly manual. It is difficult to establish and maintain quality controls and an adequate cold chain. This makes the dairy value chain vulnerable to food safety risks and quality variations. In addition, sourcing milk from rural farmers leads to supply irregularities due to seasonality and planning issues at each farm, which make it difficult to balance demand and supply in an economic way. We therefore aim to implement an innovative and fully integrated dairy value chain from feed production to the consumer of milk.



Figure 2: Ongoing construction work to extend the farm. Left: A hangar to store feed during the dry season, back: raising the wall of the free-walk farm.

Such a value chain can be scaled partially or in full. Theoretically, it can also be replicated to other stressed regions in the world. We were honored that our concept of the innovative and integrated dairy value chain was awarded by the Global Resilience Partnership Innovation Challenge in 2019

(<http://www.globalresiliencepartnership.org/innovation-challenge/>).

DJOM KOSSAM exists of a small-scale dairy that pasteurizes and bottles milk, simple logistic infrastructure and point of sales that are all adapted to a small-scale African environment. This year we purchased 4 cows (figures 3 and 4) and enhanced the farm (figure 2) to learn DJOM KOSSAM how to organize an own milk production. In parallel, we started some small trials to cultivate feed. Once we have a successful pilot, we will repeat trials at a larger scale. The final objective is to have a reliable dairy value chain, which is based on regenerative agriculture and can be scaled. Once we will be successful, we look forward to sharing our learnings with the local community and support the local agriculture in a sustainable and responsible way.



Figure 3: Two of the four young cows enjoying the fresh herbs during the rainy season close to the small-scale dairy DJOM KOSSAM in Siby, Mali.

We will reach our objectives with your support

The objective of our association is to develop the local dairy sector in Mali and thus to improve the standards of living of local people. Our focus in 2021 will be to further strengthen the self-sustainability of the small-scale dairy DJOM KOSSAM, create more local job opportunities and collaborate with more farmers. These objectives can only be realized with your support.

Become a member of the association pro milk Mali (annual membership fees: individual CHF 100, student CHF 40, organization CHF 1,000), sponsor a name for a new-born calf (CHF 250) or buy a cow in Mali (CHF 1,250) and support us to develop the local agriculture sector in Mali.

Please visit our homepage (www.promilchmali.ch) or contact us via email (info@promilchmali.ch) for more information.

I thank you for your generous and continuous support and wish you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kind regards



Dr. Stephan Wullschleger,
President, Association Pro Milk Mali.



Figure 4: The two other cows of the four young cows enjoying the fresh herbs during the rainy season close to the small-scale dairy DJOM KOSSAM in Siby, 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.