

## LIVE WITH WATER COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS

Pilot project in Bene Baraque

Following the successful completion of the pilot project in Bene Baraque, community representatives were asked for feedback on project activities.

These testimonials provide evidence of the project's effectiveness and are also key to the project's evaluation process, making it possible to review and improve activities to make sure that each successive stage of implementation is better than the ones before.

They especially comment on how the project's community-centred and integrated approach worked for them.





**Mariama DIALLO**

President of the “Association of groups promoting women” (Association des Groupements de promotion Féminine) in Bene Baraque

Before the project “Live with water” neighbourhood women only had the possibility to generate income for themselves through small trade activities on tables outside their homes. The youth is one of the most vulnerable groups facing poverty in the neighbourhood, they have no opportunities. Either they leave the neighbourhood in search of jobs or they have to stay at home, where space is already limited.

The project “Live with water” has encouraged many of us to have a stronger spirit of initiative. It has not given us everything on a silver plate, but it has informed us and given us ideas about what we can do in our vulnerable situation. Initially some of us did not understand the approach very well. Today, on the other hand, many of us have realised that the project will not do everything for the community, but rather that it is here to help the community to search for solutions to their problems. The community is now working with this mind-set.



**Kalidou BA**

A 19 year old resident of  
Bene Baraque

At first, when we saw people with surveys discussing with the locals at the opening of the road that is now called “Thomas Sankara”, we instantly thought about politicians, who come before every election. We told our friends that they had to stay away from them. Also, when we were invited to participate at the meetings for the project called “Live with water”, we did everything to find other activities.

After the progressive improvements around the lakes and now the sports equipment (beach volleyball court and basketball court), but especially the development of the main road with excavators and the installation of the pipes for the rainwater and waste water, we realised that this was serious.

When I think back about the stagnant water on the road, and that you now have found a sustainable solution to the recurring problems of waste water from the toilets in the households, I am very embarrassed that I initially was so suspicious and unhelpful about the project. But we have had so many unfulfilled promises.



**Fatimata Dya MBODJ**

Resident next to the new road

At the start, when you did the surveys in the houses along the road, there was a rumour that the project would demolish the houses and stalls along the road. The consultations that you held allowed us to participate in tracing and securing the road with all interested parties - residents, those responsible for the market, taxi drivers [unlicensed] and users of the road - and reassured us that you value our points of view and that these were taken into account. We said to ourselves: finally a real development project that involves the beneficiaries by providing them with all the technical details and that doesn't hesitate to adapt to the concerns and shared views of the beneficiaries.

Today you have given us a technical solution for the road and the motorists who stopped us from sleeping because of a series of accidents that damaged the walls of our houses. With the modernised and accessible road this will not happen again.

I would like to reaffirm that you are always welcome back here. If it was not for Ramadan we would have brought the workers big meals every day to show our joy and gratitude for everything you do. May God bless your project and give you all the success you deserve. I hope that you know that the unanimous support and the applause from the representatives of the communities in Bene Baraque is not a façade of support, but that everyone you see feels valued by your approach. We do not see a project being developed like this every day.



**André Honoré MBENGUE**

Chairman of the “Movement for the Emergence of Yeumbeul” (Mouvement pour l’Emergence de Yeumbeul).

The project BRACED “Live with water” has completely changed our view on the lakes. Before the project, the lakes were a source of problems. They were places that the population avoided because they were a dump with all sorts of garbage and for small children there was a risk of drowning. Today, thanks to the concept “Live with water”, the lakes have been transformed to a source of public good, with green spaces and places where you can walk and do recreational activities

Today a dahira [an Islamic association] from the family of Youssou DIOP [former mayor of Yeumbeul], will shoot a video of the area. The area [around the lakes] will play a key role in the economic development of the neighbourhood, and will also be important for its social equilibrium. It will not only be a place for exchange and dialogue, but also for training, sports, recreation and economic activities, even religious activities. This is all thanks to the project “Live with water”

It is important to emphasise the diverse functions of the site and the [project advisory] committee has met and established a new organisation, with Boury Thioye DIOP as president.



**Seynabou NIANG**

Head of the Association for Recycling "Bajenou goxx"

One of the most acute problems in Bene Baraque was rubbish disposal, as it is an area where rubbish trucks can't pass. Every day it was a headache for households to get rid of their rubbish in the illegal dumps that polluted the neighbourhood. The project's first training program was to get people to recycle and to separate rubbish and to teach us about the importance of this. It was unusual to see households separating rubbish into different categories and using plastic to produce eco-bricks. At school the students were introduced to this technique, as well as to using organic waste as compost that can be used in market gardening.

Today, I receive requests from households all around the neighbourhood that want to benefit from the rubbish collection service. We want to manage a certain number of volunteers in the pilot phase and expand the number if it works well. We face a huge demand every day and I ask myself whether we can handle the growing household demand. However we will do everything we can to deal with this challenge.



**Lamine DIENG**

Sport and Recreation Association (Commission Sport et Loisirs)

Bene Baraque is a huge community in which the majority of the population are young people. Paradoxically, there are no playgrounds or spaces for recreational activities. The installation of these sport grounds [beach volleyball, football, basketball] has really been long overdue.

Since the recreational areas were built, the area has been heavily used, especially by young people. This is very positively perceived by parents since it entertains young people, keeping them off the streets with the risk of delinquency and the other dangers that young people face on a daily basis, especially now during the holidays. Now we need to contain their energy with training courses to play sport.

Discussions are underway with the community and especially with young people to see how to include even more sports (boulot drome, dojo, gym, etc.) in order to reach all members of the population.

Beside sports, the community is also cooperating to make space for cultural activities: festivals, summer camps, workshops, design workshops, etc. The community is really counting on the project "Live with water" to help with this process.



**Daouda SARR**

Security Association

These areas used to be covered with thick grass and all sorts of waste. In this terrible environment people feared for their safety and health because the high grass might hide criminals or reptiles. In addition rotten odours made the place stink.

Today, thanks to the project « Live with water », the area attracts visitors, athletes and walkers who enjoy the fresh air, the infrastructure or the pleasant atmosphere.

We are currently organising ourselves to make sure that the infrastructure and services established will be sustained.

Members of the community are constantly speaking to the people responsible for the project “Live with water” in order to share ideas from their consultations.

**Babacar NDIAYE**

Sanitation Association

The paving of the road “Thomas Sankara” was eagerly expected by drivers, especially unlicensed taxi drivers, because they were always getting stuck in some areas, as well as by residents who had to sleep with one eye open due to the frequent damage to their houses caused by cars and especially trucks, which sometimes caused their houses to collapse into the street.

Several meetings were held with the community of Bene Baraque and residents [of the street], as well as with drivers using the road to make it possible to address the problems faced by everybody on the road.

The meetings allowed all these problems to be taken into account in the planning of the improvements to the road now called “Thomas Sankara”.

Connecting the households to the sewerage system will be a relief for the community which is worried by the illegal emptying of septic tanks which were constantly overwhelmed during flooding.



**Emilie FAYE**

Market Gardening Association

The project “Live with water” supported the development of [gardening] plots with compost, boreholes and water cans. With this support we were able to start activities that are now popular with the entire community.

Currently we have built 140 plots that we have distributed between 28 market gardeners, with 5 plots for each member.

The return of market gardening to the area has been welcomed and tests are being carried out to diversify the gardens. Market gardening can be a good alternative for youth employment and we are working to get them more involved in the process.



**Mamadou NDIAYE**

Neighbourhood delegate

A few months ago, before the project “Live with water” began, the people who were here [on the day of the inauguration] would have been attacked by mosquitoes, flies or buried under waste and choked by the rotten odours that made the place stink. Everything was unsafe and there were a lot of diseases.

After the development of these areas into different open spaces, recreational areas and other services with the support of the project “Live with water”, we now live even better than the residents on the Corniche [an expensive waterfront neighbourhood in Dakar]. We no longer have to envy the better off neighbourhoods in Dakar thanks to the combined efforts of the project “Live with water” and the residents of Bene Baraque.