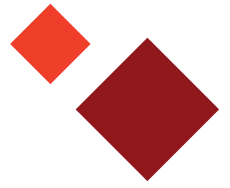


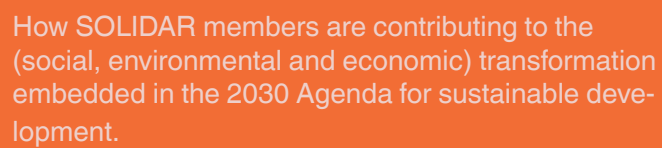


# CASE STUDIES

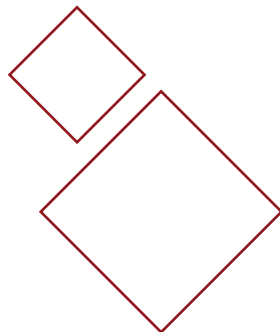


## Make Europe Sustainable for All: Examples of transformation

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How SOLIDAR members are contributing to the (social, environmental and economic) transformation embedded in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.





## Introduction

On 25 September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ‘Successor’ of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the 2030 Agenda represents the ‘new’ global consensus on how to move towards more equal and inclusive societies that “leave no one behind” and a development model that serves people, promotes shared prosperity, puts at the center the respect and the protection of human rights, respects planetary boundaries, fosters peace and it is based on a spirit of global solidarity. It sets a series of 17 goals (SDGs) and 167 targets to be reached by 2030.

Among the main features of 2030 Agenda, there are the following:

1. The 2030 Agenda is **universal**: with the sustainable development goals and targets, UN member states have agreed to a transformative agenda that involves both developing and developed countries alike. As a consequence, also European countries – as well as the EU as a regional institution - will need to develop, with the involvement of civil society, their own strategies to implement the 2030 Agenda within and outside their borders (i. e. through their domestic and external policies).
2. The 2030 Agenda promotes an **integrated approach**: with the sustainable development goals and targets, UN member states have committed to achieve sustainable development in its four components (economic, social, environmental and governance) – in a balanced, integrated and indivisible manner.

SOLIDAR believes that the transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda offers a great chance to shift away from the current (unsustainable) development model that has put at its center economic growth, has led to growing inequalities, to the destruction of the environment, to a great concentration of power in few hands and that is exacerbating social conflicts and putting into question our model of democracy.

SOLIDAR members - working within Europe and worldwide - are already contributing to this (social, environmental and economic transformation) promoting

- a strong human rights based approach as well as,
- collective empowerment and independent and representative CSOs able to work and contribute to advocate, monitor, and raise awareness on the SDG at local, national and regional levels.

This booklet brings together examples of this ongoing work.





## Empowering Women through Community Based Organisations in Niger

This case study is based on MPDL program in Niger that uses a comprehensive and community based approach to empower women in rural communities in the Region of Tahoua.

### SDGs Addressed

**Goal 5.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

**Goal 8.** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

### Poverty has a female face

According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Niger ranks second to last (187) in the classification of the group of countries according to their levels of development. Approximately 48.2% of the Niger population lives below the poverty line, that is, with less than 1 dollar a day.

Poverty in Niger is eminently a rural problem: of every 10 people considered poor, 9 live in rural areas. In addition, the levels of inequality between the poorest and the most privileged households are five times higher than in the urban environment. Moreover, women are considerably more affected than men: they have lower level of education and less access to land and resources, accompanied by a lower participation in the labor market and access to credit.

These features characterise also the Region of Tahoua, where the Movement for Peace (MPDL) operates. Several factors perpetuate women condition of subordination. Among them there is:

**1. The lack of education and training.** In rural areas, 1 woman over 20 is literate. The net percentage of primary school enrollment is 30.3% for girls compared to 43.4% for boys.

In secondary education, the national rate of schooling is 8.6% for adolescents and 13.8% for adolescents.

**2. The difficulties in accessing productive resources**, such as land, equipment or credit. Even in cases where the family owns assets such as parcels of land, livestock or some type of material, these belong formally to the (male) head of the family.

**3. Finally, their precarious health situation** (fruit of a poor diet, the poor sexual and reproductive health, and other causes) limits their level of education and of information, as well as their capacity to develop productive activities.

### Empowering Women through a Comprehensive Approach

Within the described context, MPDL started working with community based women associations in order to reinforce their capacity to be a real engine of transformation of the current power relations.

The strategy to achieve this objective focuses on strengthening existing women's groups in each of the 20 villages involved in the program and has been built on the following axes:

**1. Literacy campaigns:** 20 literacy centers have been set up set up for the implementation of literacy courses aligned with national educational strategies and methodologies.

**2. Training in associative life and leadership.** A program of women' associations capacity development and permanent support has been developed with the aim of building an active, participatory and transparent associative fabric, capable of carrying out different types of activities.





*Throughout the program we have seen a huge evolution. Before, women's associations were not functional, they hardly had activity. Now they are aware of the importance of working collectively and having initiatives for their own good, as well as that of their families and communities."*

Ibrahima Idrissa, MPDL Níger.

**3. Training on promotion and defense of women's rights.** Issues such as forced marriages, sexual and reproductive rights, or rights to economic and social participation have been widely addressed and they have been the object of public campaigns led by women themselves and socialized within the community. As a result, **in many villages women themselves have created communication and awareness channels with traditional and religious leaders, health agents, young people and the population in general.**

**4. Planning and development of income generating activities.** Once the training itinerary has been completed, the program has contemplated the development of small collective businesses that reinforce the autonomy of women in terms of obtaining their own income and economic participation in the community. For this purpose, a training itinerary has been developed (small business concept, management tools, business plans, etc.) and accompaniment that has given birth to a business project in each of the 20 intervention villages. Today, a good part of the businesses launched to the market are beginning to give their benefits, in a process of continuous learning on the part of women that begins to place them in a better position within their families and communities.

*Our mentality has changed. Now we know how to read and write, and together we have started a business selling soaps and creams that is giving us benefits. We say that we are rich, because we can have some money of our own to reinvest in the business and with which to take care of our families.*

Kambari Arziki, President of the women association Mun Samu in Doumbou.

### **Innovative approach and lessons learned**

One of the innovative aspects of the program lies in its **comprehensive approach**. The strengthening of the social and economic position of women in rural areas depends on a series of factors -formative, access to resources, capacity for collective action, lack of community awareness, etc.- that are addressed in a global and specific manner by the intervention.

On the other hand, another of the innovative aspects is the fact that it does not only focus on **improving the situation of women from a purely economic point of view (their ability to generate income), but also in terms of their global participation (social, economic, political), etc. in the management of their community's affairs**. In this sense, the appropriation by women themselves of a conscience in relation to the rights they are entitled to, and the awareness of all the community about it represent two essential tools to reinforce the global position of women in the bosom of each town.

The impact of this approach has been the inclusion of women in spaces of **community management** (committees of water management, cereal banks, etc.), as well as the institutionalization of practices through which the community





consult women's associations on topics of general interest.

### Empowering Women Farm Workers in South Africa

This case study is based on FOS programme 'Women's Health and Empowerment' run in cooperation with Women on Farms Project.

#### SDGs Addressed

- Goal 5.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 3.** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 8.** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 12.** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

#### Bitter grapes: the real cost of South African wine

Thanks to the massive growth in exports of South African wine, we can all enjoy a good glass of South African wine from time to time. But, what's the real (social and environmental) cost of the wine we drink? Under which conditions has wine been produced?

On a daily basis, women and men who work and live on commercial farms in the Western Cape and Northern Cape provinces of South Africa, try to overcome various challenges, such as severe labour rights violations, poor health, violence, evictions and food insecurity. Life in the farms is harsh, with living and working conditions close to inhumane.

Women farmworkers are particularly disadvantaged: over the last ten years, there's been an increase in **casualization of women's labour**. They are generally employed as seasonal workers, as opposed to men who are likely to be employed as permanent workers. This means

that women only work and have an income for 4 to 6 months a year, exacerbating their financial dependence on their male partners. **Poor health** is pervasive among farmworkers: workers report not having access to clean sanitary installations, or even not having access to a toilet at all, in the vineyard where they work. More than two-thirds of seasonal workers are exposed to dangerous pesticides at their workplace and report negative impacts on their health. Most workers aren't provided with protective clothing by their employers. Many farmworkers suffer injuries at work, which they often do not report to the employer nor to the Department of Labour fearing to lose their daily wage or even their jobs.

Poor health among farm women is compounded by the nexus of **gender based violence (GBV), alcohol dependence and HIV/AIDS**. Attributable to the legacy of the «tot» system, alcohol consumption by farm workers is twice that of the urban poor. Alcohol abuse is one of the most critical and immediate health issues facing farm women. The psychosocial impacts of alcohol abuse are still pervasive in the farmlands, contributing to risky and unsafe sexual behavior, and thereby contributing to greater HIV infection rates.

#### Women on Farms Project: Empowering women and girls on the vineyards

In the Western Cape and Northern Cape provinces of South Africa, FOS works with Women on Farms Project (WFP): a feminist organization that works with women who live and work on commercial farms. WFP seeks to empower farm women primarily through rights-based capacity building for women as well as support for their organizations in community based structures. WFP enables farm women to know and claim their rights. Recent campaigns have included violence against women, access to quality healthcare, and proper sanitation facilities on the farms.





*“We are 12 families living and working on this farm. There’s no clean running water, we use water from the irrigation canal. My daughter suffered from diarrhea for 3 months, probably because of the water. We don’t have decent toilets in our living area, neither on the field. Toilets come and go. The farmer seems to know when inspectors of WIETA will come, and then he puts some toilet cabins. But when the inspectors leave, the toilets leave...” “Before joining WFP, I wouldn’t have dared to talk to you. But now I feel strong. I’m not afraid to tell you what’s going on here.”*

Danielle, 30 years old, farm near Robertson

Through the **Women’s Health and Empowerment Programme**, WFP ensure that farm women’s health needs and rights are accessible and respected, and that these women are empowered to take individual and collective action around abuses of those rights in the home, workplace and community. WFP seeks to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of farm women to enable them to know, claim and realize their rights to physical and mental health, safety and security. With an emphasis on the right to health, and an understanding of farm women’s contextual circumstances (the social determinants of health), WFP consistently and explicitly highlights the intersectionality between living and working conditions, alcohol (and substance) abuse, gender inequality, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. Farm-based health teams, made of farm women, are playing a leading role in health education and mobilization at the farm and community level.

### Main Achievements

In 2016, Women on Farms Project celebrated its 20th anniversary. This was the occasion to look at some key achievements through the stories of women farm workers and dwellers.

**Transforming through knowledge!** Farm women have emphasized **the importance of learning about their rights** through WFP. For all these women, this resulted in strong feelings of empowerment and more control over their lives. Often, such feelings were underpinned by anger at the realization of the extent to which their rights had been violated, because they had previously lacked knowledge of these rights. Such **personal transformation**, has been accompanied by the **commitment to sharing information and knowledge**, as well as defending and advancing the rights of other farm women.

*“Since I’m going to the meetings of WFP, I feel stronger. Thanks to them, I’m able of saying no to alcohol and drugs...”*

Ju-Kaylin, 16 years old, New Rest

**Transforming through sharing!** The **participatory and transformative methodologies** (popular education, drama, free writing, etc.) used by WFP staff in all programmes, created **“safe spaces”**, where women have found invaluable and unique opportunities to share the most painful aspects of their lives, where they have found support, love and empathy. For most women, such spaces are often their first and only opportunity to talk and share deeply-buried insults, abuse and humiliations.

*“I was raped at the age of 8, by my stepfather. That is the one thing that made me the person that I was (quiet); Until I could talk about it, when we had that workshop around health, and the abuse of women and children. And that day I could talk, because for years, years, years, I did not talk about it, until that day...because see, there were other women in the workshop who also went through the same thing, and who also did not talk about it... Because if you feel that trust, that confidence...when you know someone builds your trust and confidence (to talk), then*





*you can talk about your past, and you can release yourself from it. Then you are free... really."*

Jacoba, 57 years old, Rawsonville

### **Transforming through the new generations!**

Evidence shows that there is a strong tendency towards the **intergenerational transfer** of socio-economic conditions. Young farm women are hence highly likely to grow up and lead lives which are very similar to their mothers (and other adult farm women). For this reason, farm adult women started to bring their daughters to the workshops, with the will to break the cycle of poverty and violence.

### Resources

- Report: "Understanding the labour conditions of women farm workers in the Western Cape and the Northern Cape, South Africa": <http://www.wfp.org.za/publications/general-reports.html>
- Video: "Allemaal samen" (English and Afrikaans spoken, English subtitles): [www.fos.ngo/womenonfarms](http://www.fos.ngo/womenonfarms)
- "Celebrating 20 years of Farm women's Activism", Women on Farms Project, 2016





### Promoting local (sustainable) development through women-led community radios

The case study is based on Progetto Sud work in the municipalities of Rioverde and Eloy Alfaro in Ecuador.

#### SDGs Addressed

**Goal 2.** End hunger achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

**Goal 5.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

#### Context

Despite being rich in resources, the northern region of Ecuador presents a considerable degree of poverty and the level of people living in extreme poverty is dramatically high. The region faces serious social crisis aggravated by the proximity to the border with Colombia, from which many refugees have fled over years of armed conflict, as well as by organized crime, drug trafficking, kidnapping, and human trafficking.

In this context, and as part of the government's strategy to promoting peace, security and improving living condition in the area, Progetto Sud supported the creation of a community radio lead by women. The radio has been the engine to promote local sustainable development and the recuperation of ancient, local and traditional cultures.

#### SOLIDAR Member's Intervention

The main purpose of the proposed action was to train and promote local women leaders through the development of their communication skills and the creation of a community radio equipped with audio booth, transmission, production and field tools. The radio, managed by four local women's associations, played a catalytic role to promote the concept of human security, local development, territorial cohesion for the reduction of social inequality and to rediscover the values of

ancestral cultures.

An example of this, is the revalorisation of an old cocoa crop: the «fine aroma» cocoa, which represents only 4.7% of world production and is the oldest type of native cocoa, supplanted, in the last 30 years, by cocoa Forastero (the most common quality in the world and resistant to climatic changes with an astringent and acid-bright taste) or hybrid with 95.3% of world production. The cacao «Forastero» belongs to the category of ordinary commercial type. The «fine aroma» cocoa has a lower productivity in terms of quantity but a clear superiority in terms of quality.

Through radio interviews, the story of this crop was recuperated. As a consequence, small companies that work with cocoa in Ecuador begun to search for the autochthonous cocoa variety, in order to recover and spread the crop. This generated a movement in the community that pushed elderly micro-farmers not to abandon the indigenous variety.

#### Achievements and Lessons Learnt

The action generated a broad participation of the community and has awakened in the community itself a recognition and a strong appreciation of the typical values of their culture. It has been understood that knowledge about one's identity as a value that must be recognized, disseminated and appreciated, can be the engine to generate resources and support the improvement of the quality of community life. This was crucial to create synergies and consolidate the development processes with local authorities and central government delegations and governmental and non-governmental organizations that see with interest the levels of consolidation of women's organizational processes.







## Stop violence against women: a joint responsibility

### SDGs Addressed

**Goal 3.** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

**Goal 5.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

### Context

In Italy, Auser (Association of Autonomous Service Providers), a social volunteers' association aiming at creating the cultural, social and legal conditions that allow the elderly and the old to continue to enjoy a high quality of life, to participate, to plan their future and to have access to a thriving network of social relations, has put in place several actions to tackle violence against women. These actions target or involve, in their delivery, old women.

### Stop Violence against women: good practises

**1. Training sentinels-** According to the World Health Organization (WHO), violence against old women is a phenomenon that is «too undervalued». Scams, verbal and physical violence (including sexual), deception, harassment, often remain not denounced. «Older women experience the fragility of the third and fourth ages with income often modest..., moreover they have more difficulty in defending themselves and asking for help and they are less aware of their rights and, if they know them, less ready to claim them «.

To break down the wall of silence on cases of violence and abuse against elderly women, a collaboration between different actors, including Spi Cgil and Auser has been put in place in the Northern Italian city of Piacenza around a simple but effective idea: deliver trainings to provide basic tools to physicians, social and health workers, but also to the police and to volunteers in order for them to be able to

recognize abuses on the elderly, in particular against older women over 65, who are the most exposed, and intervene in time. Real «sentinels» to break up the wall of silence and help the victims.

**2. The Veneto Centre for Women** founded in the city of Padova in 1990, provides gender educational-cultural activities, but, above all, services for women who are victims of domestic abuse. The centre offers individual or family counselling; legal advice; therapeutic groups; career guidance; help in finding housing; accompaniment to support services in agreement with local health services, town councils and social services. The centre has two “safe houses” and two “second welcome houses” that can accommodate ten women with children, for a period ranging from six months to a year. In addition, the Auser volunteers and social workers play an important role in raising awareness of the problem of gender violence through research, conferences, seminars, training in schools, training courses (both supplementary and experimental) for police, social and health workers, teachers and volunteers.

With the objectives to protect women who suffer violence and their children; to foster knowledge of the phenomenon of gender violence; to promote cultural change in the vision of gender, the principles of the actions are: the promotion of the rights and dignity of women; the Impartiality, free availability, accessibility and confidentiality in welcoming women.

**3. The Anti-violence counter** was set up in 2010 by Auser in a site provided by the Frosinone Town Council in collaboration with local institutions, to be one-stop service providing help and psychological and legal support, for women at risk of domestic violence. Available free of charge are a social worker, two psychologists, a lawyer and a doctor, plus a





group of Auser volunteers formed to address various needs: help in finding a house, accompaniment to support services. The office is open from Monday to Friday, from 9.30am to 6.30pm. For emergencies, 24 hours a day, there is a hotline connected to an operator's mobile phone. The service is also connected to the national number used for cases of violence and stalking. Currently the project is entirely run by the Frosinone Auser.

The principles that inspired the project Empowerment and listening to woman who have been abused.

With the objectives to create better living conditions for women who suffer violence or ill-treatment; To provide answers to the increase in violence against women; To place the woman in touch with the network for initially approaching social services, the action is lead by the principle of empowerment and listening to woman who have been abused.

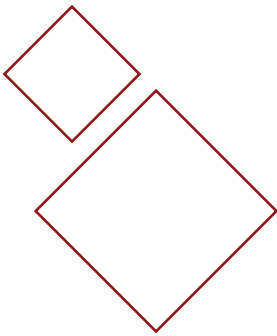
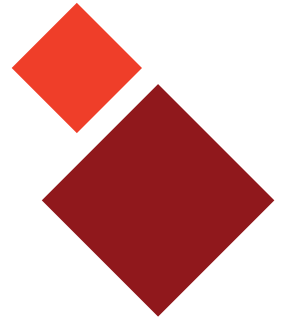




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SOLIDAR is a European network of membership based Civil Society Organisations who gather several millions of citizens throughout Europe and worldwide. SOLIDAR voices the values of its member organisations to the EU and international institutions across the three main policy sectors; social affairs, lifelong learning and international cooperation.



This publication has been realized with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this activity are the sole responsibility of SOLIDAR and can under no circumstances be taken as reflecting the position of the European Union.