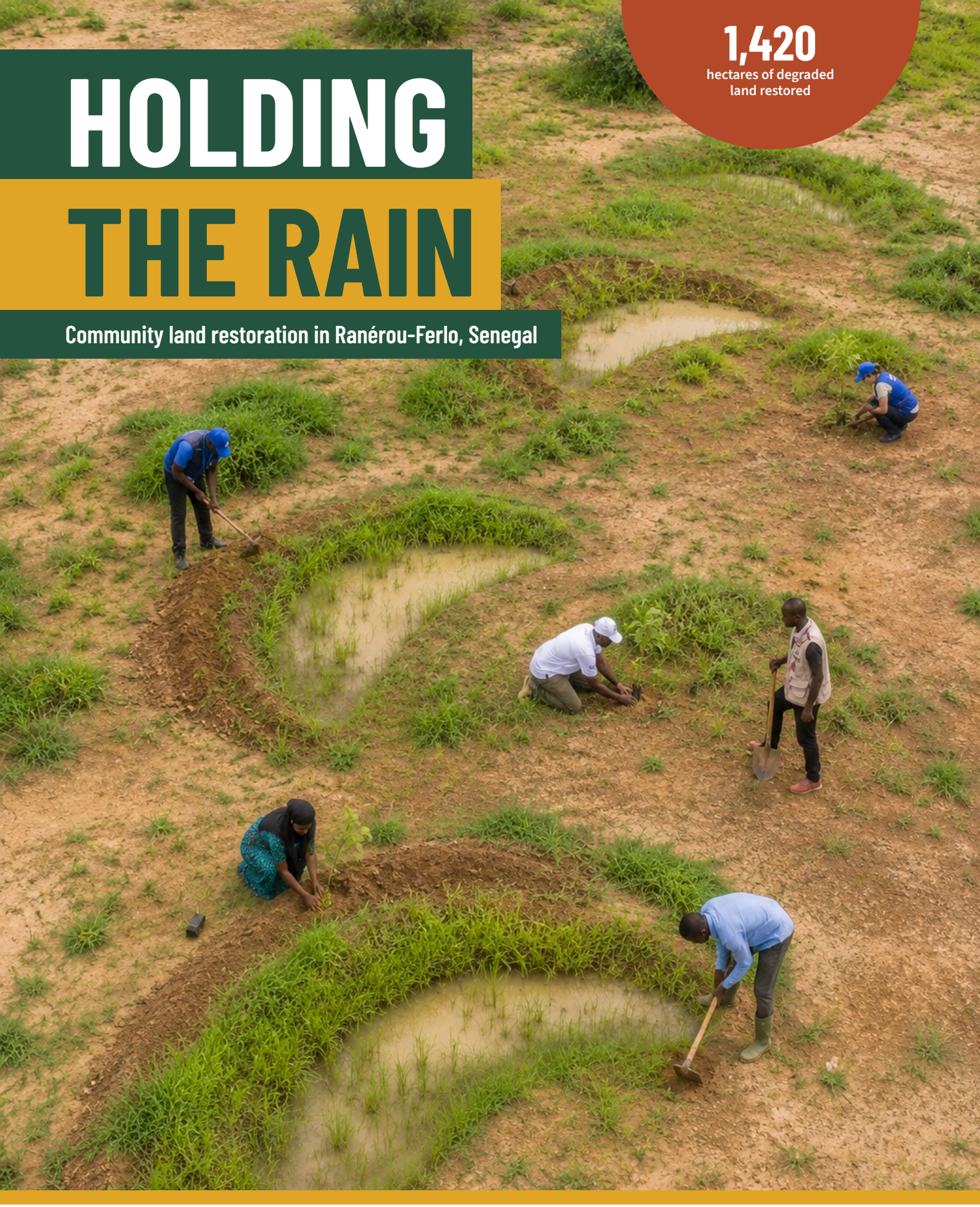
HOLDING THE RAIN

Community land restoration in Ranérou-Ferlo, Senegal

1,420
hectares of degraded land restored



demilune

Project report 2024-2026

With the financial support of

HARMATTAN Climate Fund

Alder & Rye Foundation

FONDS CITÉ SOLIDAIRE



WHEN THE RAIN RUNS OFF, THE LAND GOES WITH IT

In Ranérou-Ferlo, a year's rain falls in about three months, and most of it never reaches the roots. From January 2024 to October 2026, Demilune and three local partners worked with 18 villages to change that, one basin at a time.

THE CHALLENGE

Years of drought and overgrazing have left a hard crust across much of the Ferlo. When storms come, water races over the surface and takes the remaining topsoil with it. Harvests fall short, pasture thins out early, and herders must move sooner, which puts pressure on farmland and on relations between neighbours.

> **7 in 10** households told our 2023 baseline survey that their own harvest fed them for less than six months of the year.

OUR RESPONSE

Holding the Rain was planned village by village with local committees. Communities chose which land to restore, who would work on it and how the benefits would be shared.

Local partners led the work they know best: seed, land agreements and women's enterprise. They managed 41% of the budget directly. Demilune provided technical training, tools, monitoring and donor coordination.

WHERE WE WORKED



Project area: Ranérou-Ferlo department, Matam region, in the Sahel of northeastern Senegal.

- 4 communes: Ranérou, Vélingara, Lougré Thioly and Oudalaye
- 18 villages
- 1,850 farming and herding households
- 11,600 people reached directly

> **41%** of the budget was managed directly by local partners.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

DURATION
January 2024 – October 2026

BUDGET
€1.85 million

SECTOR
Climate adaptation, land restoration, food security

DONORS
Harmattan Climate Fund (€1.1 million), Alder & Rye Foundation (€500,000), Fonds Cité Solidaire (€250,000)

LOCAL PARTNERS
Kawral Ferlo, Graines du Djolof, Union des Femmes de Lougré

FOUR WAYS OF HOLDING THE RAIN

Water comes first, but restored land only lasts if people can farm it, share it and earn a living from it. The project worked on all four together.

CATCH Restoring the land

In the dry season, paid village teams dug 80,000 half-moon basins and laid stone lines along bare slopes. Together with rested pasture, this brought 1,420 hectares back into use: 320 of half-moons, 640 of stone lines and 460 of rested grazing land.

Led by Demilune with 18 village committees

GROW Farming and native plants

In 24 field schools, 720 farmers learned to compost and plant in the basins. Four nurseries and six seed banks supplied drought-tolerant millet and sorghum, along with 38,000 native tree seedlings. 71% of the trees survived.

Led by Graines du Djolof

SHARE Land agreements

Farmers and herders negotiated nine agreements that mark 62 km of grazing corridors, set rest periods for recovering pasture and agree access to water points.

Led by Kawral Ferlo

EARN Women-led enterprises

Six cooperatives with 412 members now process and sell moringa, hibiscus and gum arabic from restored land. Their savings groups give members access to small loans.

Led by Union des Femmes de Lougré

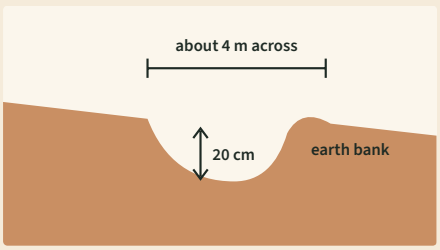


Village team digging basins before the rains, Oudalaye, April 2025.



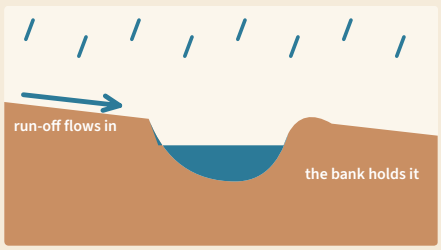
Cooperative members sorting dried hibiscus, Lougré Thioly, November 2025.

HOW A HALF-MOON WORKS



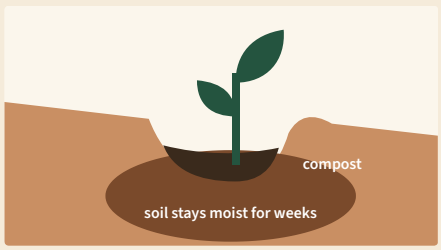
1 DIG

A curved basin is dug by hand, with its open side facing uphill. The soil forms a bank on the downhill side.



2 CATCH

When it rains, water running down the slope collects in the basin instead of washing away.



3 GROW

Compost and captured water keep the soil moist long enough for crops and trees to take root.

JANUARY – JUNE	JULY – SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER – DECEMBER
Dry season: dig, build and make compost	Rains: plant and tend	Harvest, sell, plan

WHAT CHANGED BY OCTOBER 2026

1,420 HECTARES
of degraded land restored

80,000 HALF-MOONS
dug by hand across 4 communes

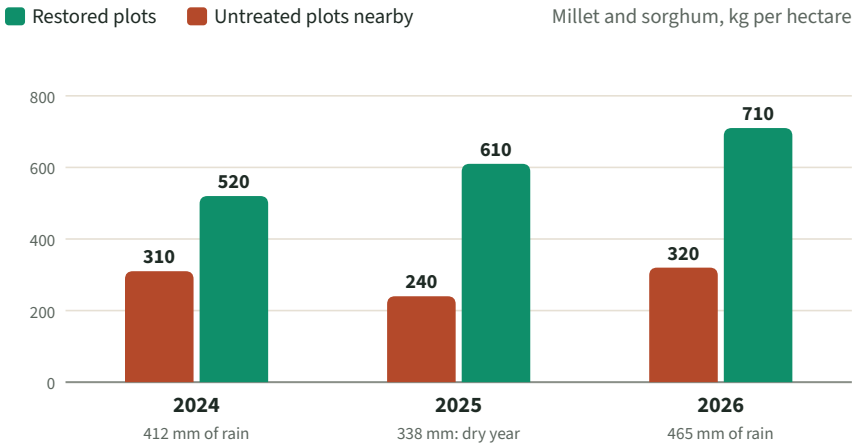
11,600 PEOPLE
reached directly in 18 villages

46,000 PAID WORK DAYS
in the lean season, 54% of them worked by women

9 LAND AGREEMENTS
now protect 62 km of grazing corridors

412 WOMEN
earning through six cooperatives

Harvests held up in a dry year and doubled by 2026



Source: harvest measurements on 60 paired plots, Demilune and village committees.

"Before, the water left before we could use it. Now it stays, and so do our young people."



Aminata Ba
President of a women's cooperative, Lougré Thioly

WHAT COMES NEXT

Village committees now manage upkeep, and six more villages have asked to join in 2027.

FUNDED BY

HARMATTAN Climate Fund

Alder & Rye Foundation

FONDS CITÉ SOLIDAIRE

DELIVERED WITH

KAWRAL FERLO Herders' association

Graines du Djolof Community seed network

UNION DES FEMMES de Lougré

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2 Zero Hunger · 5 Gender Equality · 8 Decent Work · 13 Climate Action · 15 Life on Land

demilune

Demilune helps communities in the Sahel restore degraded land with low-cost water-harvesting methods they plan, build and manage themselves.

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Demilune is a fictional organisation created for a design portfolio. All people, partners, donors, logos and figures are invented. As of October 2026. Photos: free stock images.