



# Biogas Saves Women Time and Fosters Their Independence

## Summary

Country	Benin
Implementer	Vert-Monde
Target groups	Women farmers and their families
Duration	04/2022 – 04/2023
Type of energy use	Other

## Challenge

One of the biggest problems in the village Kontoubarou in northern Benin is the need for cooking energy, which the inhabitants cover almost exclusively with firewood. A family of eight needs an estimated three tons of wood per year for cooking. However, due to increasing deforestation, this resource is becoming scarce. Women and girls, due to a traditional allocation of roles, spend a lot of time collecting firewood or have to buy it at a high price. Some girls even leave school to be able to collect firewood.

## Impact Logic

By using biogas for cooking, women and girls have more time for other productive activities or to go to school. They can also process food with biogas and thus generate their own income. This considerably strengthens the position of women in the families and in the village. Another useful product of a biogas plant is high-quality biofertiliser. Farmers can use it to increase the productivity of their fields and they will no longer be forced to deforest more land for sufficient yields. Nature around Kontoubarou can regenerate. Therefore, the project implemented by the local non-governmental organisation Vert-Monde seeks to build a biogas plant, a storage room for the biomass and a room for management and food processing activities. The required biomass comes from nomadic cattle herds, which

pass Kontoubarou, local livestock and food scraps. A three-person administrative team takes care of collecting the biomass, feeding the digester and distributing the biogas and fertiliser fairly. Farmers bringing manure from their fields to the biogas plant receive a small compensation. Vert-Monde identifies 50 women, who, in their household, are responsible for cooking and processing of agricultural produce. Each one receives a gas burner and a bag to transport up to 1.2m<sup>3</sup> of biogas home – enough for about four hours of cooking per day. To cover the costs of administration and maintenance, each woman pays a small fee for the biogas.

## Innovative Project Elements

Innovative is the choice of the direct target group being the 50 women, since they are the ones struggling every day for fire wood for their households. By providing them the alternative of usage of biogas, they can easily save time and engage in income generating activities. This setting is at once improving the livelihood of the 50 women's households and reducing the pressure on the natural resources around the village. A further effect may be the stimulation of the women's social and financial independence. The success of the project is only possible through the sensitisation and facilitation of Vert-Monde on the ground. Sustainability is achieved through strong, long-term community involvement in the management of the biogas plant.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

[www.gruene-buergerenergie.org](http://www.gruene-buergerenergie.org)

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