



Summer 2026

exchanges

Ensuring that the Work Continues

By Olivier HAUVILLE, co-founder of ECHOPPE

Today, ECHOPPE working through the **Planète Paysans** farm business, is trying **to make life less difficult for farmers and their families.**

In the past eight years, we have developed, tested, and demonstrated solutions that empower farmers to adapt to the effects of climate change, reduce the arduousness of their work, and improve their living conditions. Without us, farmers could not have had the information or technical advice or services needed. The government lacks sufficient resources to invest in small farmers.

But the most important step now lies elsewhere. **We must scale up and ensure that these new practices spread to other farmers and influence agricultural and social strategies of authorities. We must extend beyond the local village to all of Togo, Africa, and beyond.** This is a bold ambition, but it simply repeats the idea of **acting locally while thinking globally.**

We have built a strong motivated local team. **Our challenge is one of empowerment.** They must believe in themselves and their abilities. It takes time for strength of character to grow, to step up, to change things. We hope we have created conditions in which this can take place with our old and new team members.

With the experience they are gaining and their motivation, this team is ready to take over parts of the Planète Paysans work by organizing into a cooperative (similar to what transpired with the micro-loans program). This will require that we can continue to provide support for a few more years, but it will also **ensure the continuation of a better life for the farming families.**

(Below are pictures of several but not all of our team members. See page 3 for programs that are becoming autonomous, thanks to their work.)



Building leaders for tomorrow's development



A New Partnership for Water

One of the main problems raised by farmers, linked to climate change, is the shift in rainfall patterns during growing seasons, sometimes resulting in several weeks without water. Seedlings wither and plants dry out, forcing them to replant or lose a large part of the harvest. Drilling wells, constructing small water storage basins, and collecting rainwater by installing gutters on huts and houses are among the solutions proposed to create water reserves during heavy rains and reuse them to irrigate crops during dry periods. However, farmers lack the capital upfront to do this.

With specified funds received from a generous donor for helping reduce these problems, we are establishing a partnership with the Federation of Savings and Credit Unions of Togo to function as a guarantor to help provide farmers access loans to carry out these projects, with technical assistance from Planète Paysans. Extra funding in this project will increase the numbers of farmers served.

Planting trees and improving water storage: keys to re- ducing the effects of climate change

Sustainably raising Consciousness

As deforestation intensifies in Africa and climate change makes cultivated land even more arid, it is important that villagers become aware of the importance of trees. On page 3, Edmond, in charge of raising awareness about agroforestry and agroecology at Planète Paysans, tells us about his work with schools.



Edmond



« Planting a tree means believing in the future »

Raising Awareness with Youth Raises Consciousness for Trees

Interview of Edmond by Thomas Dossou

When did this initiative begin?

Planète Paysans began its activities in 2018, and in 2023, we started raising awareness about agroforestry and agroecology in schools. Initially in three schools, we now work in eight, including four high schools.

Why prioritize raising awareness in schools?

Changing behavior is a long and slow process. It's essential to start early. Educating children at a young age allows for a more lasting awakening of their awareness. Furthermore, these children are the future generation from whom will emerge new influencers and leaders who will make decisions in favor of agroecology.



How do you actually do this?

We do it in three phases: a question-and-answer session about the importance of trees in preserving the environment and combating climate change, then we show films on agroforestry and agroecology followed by discussions.

Finally, we move on to the practical part: teaching students how to create nurseries right at the school. They learn to sow seeds, pot them, and care for them. And with the seedlings they grow, we teach them how to reforest by planting trees in the schoolyard. We also distribute some to them for reforestation at home.

What is the impact of your awareness campaigns in schools?

There's a real buzz around the initiative. New schools are asking us to get involved, and the Regional Academic Inspectorate has accredited us to do so. Furthermore, many students are asking for seedlings to replant at home.

So, what are your future prospects?

Our goal for the future is to reach as many schools as possible and work with a large number of students. We want to teach them grafting techniques and introduce them to beekeeping and organic market gardening. They are the farmers of tomorrow.

What do you need to accomplish more?

Financing is important as education and tree growing cannot provide « profit » in financial terms except in a very long term. We also need educational documentation/films to help provide a variety of educational tools to attract students attention.

Moving toward Autonomization, (continued from page 1)

Some of our programs already being run autonomously are:

Agroforestry with Edmond and Nikabu now supervising education and tree planting in 11 villages and 8 schools, producing 12,000 trees last year in school nurseries.

Pierre has now trained over 50 farmers in beekeeping though dry weather kept honey harvest low last year.

Thomas, Mawussi and Jacques are the leaders responsible for the Howard Rowell Center for Mechanization. They maintained the equipment and drove tractors on over 300 acres in 2025. This Center also serves as a gathering place for farmers to share and provide community activities. Over 200 farmers were served by the Center.

Neem oil production is supervised by Raoul and Happy. The government is still dragging its feet in providing us the certification to sell the product, but over 2 tons of neem oil residue was sold as compost for farming.



Building Together

I want to help build the autonomy of actions through the work of ECHOPPE. Here is my contribution to assist----

Enclosed is my contribution to the work of Echoppe, Inc.
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Send contributions to:
Echoppe, Inc.
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Check here if it is not necessary that you receive a receipt. The money we save on postage will go into the projects.

Echoppe, Inc. is a 501c(3) not-for-profit corporation. Your contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Empowering Entrepreneurs

For over 35 years, ECHOPPE has been supporting individuals in building initiatives for economic improvement and social growth in several parts of Africa, particularly Togo and Benin.

ECHOPPE is a French word meaning shop or kiosk, like a street vendor. In French, it also stands for Exchange for the Organization and the Promotion of Small Entrepreneurs – those working in said



A new ECHOPPE site is up and running.

The site www.echoppe.org has just been revamped and updated to better correspond with today's work and vision. Check it out. Tell us what's missing! Your input is always helpful!

What if?

What if the next step of the work was that ECHOPPE USA became an endowment or another structure in order to fund locally supported actions in Togo and throughout all Africa? Reinforcing leadership means also finding other leaders who have projects that they want to present. Tree planting and social services will never be able to finance themselves yet these are basic in building other structures. Can we dream? Create something new—different? Who out there wants to help us in this endeavor?

Changing the world is possible, but we need more people (and we're getting old)!



In Memoriam:

In this past year, two very special donors have passed away leaving a mark on our lives with their passing: Dr Parks and Paula Adams, originally from N Manchester, Indiana and more recently of Forest Grove, Oregon. Beyond their investments in the local communities, they have also been great moral and financial supports to our movement. They have followed us for years with questions about our work, desiring to expand their thinking and learn more about the world. They were both world changers themselves, either through social work, political action or soft power such as healing or building houses for the poor. These were two special people who will be missed by many.



2070 S. Mosher Road
Columbia City, Indiana 46725

*Acting Locally
while Thinking
Globally*