



# «My garden is full of vegetables!»

Interview with Gaudence Kahabaye  
Vegetable gardens and agroecology in Rwanda



**fhAgriculture**  
TRANSITION TO AGROECOLOGY



# North and South

## What is agroecology?

Agroecology is a set of natural farming practices that can achieve good crop yields using simple and inexpensive techniques such as: minimizing soil tillage, using permanent soil coverage, and crops association. It is a sustainable form of agriculture not dependent on chemical inputs (pesticides and fertilizers) that are expensive and harmful for the soil. Both here and in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, there is ever greater interest in these practices which combine higher yields with respect for the environment.



Demonstration of how to make organic fertilizer using comfrey leaves.

## 18-22 september: Kigali/Rwanda

3<sup>rd</sup> International Training Workshop on Agroecology organized by FH Switzerland. 72 participants: farmers, agronomists, researchers, students, and scientists, coming from Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, DR Congo, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, Kenya, and Benin. Everyone was there to learn together how to develop agriculture in a sustainable manner. Demonstrations, exchange of experiences, practical and theoretical workshops.

More at: [fh-suisse.org](http://fh-suisse.org)

Young and old get to work during the demonstration of how to prepare compost at the Touvière farm!

## 14 october: La Touvière/Geneva

On the occasion of World Food Day, FH Switzerland and the platform for food sovereignty of the Geneva Federation for Cooperation organized a round table on agroecology in the North and South. At the end of the debates that brought together farmers from Africa and Geneva, the conclusions were clear – no matter where we are, the stakes are similar; farmers struggle to feed themselves and be paid decently. Farmers are convinced that unless they work in harmony with nature, the soil will be impoverished. Agroecology is a pragmatic and respectful approach to nature that can be used to feed people everywhere.

Check out the report and videos at: [fh-suisse.org](http://fh-suisse.org)



«It's a very useful project!»

Gaudence Kahabaye (64) lives in Nyamikamba in the Gatsibo district of northern Rwanda. She has a little less than one hectare of land. As a widow, she lives in very difficult conditions. At the organizational meeting in her community, she learned that FH Rwanda was encouraging residents to build vegetable gardens. Gaudence immediately wanted to get started. She received seeds for carrots, cabbages, beetroots and onions.

«It's a very useful project. I had a backyard full of weeds, now it is full of vegetables! My children helped me water and weed the plants. After 2-3 months, we have a variety of vegetables to consume, and everyone looks forward to eating them. After seeing my vegetable garden, many neighbors came forward to start this initiative at their own homes. In our community, most rural farmers have also developed orchards. I would like to thank FH and the donors for allowing us to create our gardens.»





## Families save money

Eric Hitimana is our partner in FH Rwanda. He is in charge of setting up the agroecological program in the Gatsibo district in the north of the country.

### **What changes have you observed since setting up the agroecology program in your area?**

Increased agricultural production and reduced costs have saved families money, allowing them to meet other needs such as school fees for their children or health insurance. Malnutrition among children has also fallen significantly. As for the authorities, they are already convinced by the program's activities and are now encouraging farmers to adopt agroecological practices.

### **What challenges do you encounter?**

There is climate change, lack of necessary tools, and insufficient means of transport to monitor program activities.

### **What do you want to say to the FH Switzerland donors?**

I would like to thank all the donors for their contribution. I would also like to ask them to continue to support our training to further develop sustainable agriculture in our community.

- Check out the full interview at [fh-suisse.org](http://fh-suisse.org) -.

## Thank you very much for your support

With CHF 50.- you provide a day of training to agroecological techniques for a farmer.

With CHF 100.- you help provide some chicken, goat or pork to a farmer. He will be able to start a small animal husbandry that will allow him to diversify his diet and produce manure.

FH Switzerland is committed to the fight against poverty locally through personal and community development throughout the world. FH Switzerland is part of the international network of Food for the Hungry (FH).



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FH Switzerland is a member of the Geneva Federation for Cooperation and is certified by the Code of Honor of the Swiss Evangelical Alliance (AES).

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