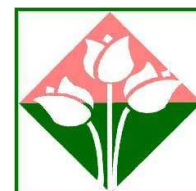


*FEMATH*



*Aidemet Ong*

## Two initiatives in support of the women herbalists of Mali.

Since March 2011, the Malian Federation of Traditional Healers and Herbalists (FEMATH) and the NGO Aid to Development of Traditional Medicine (*Aidemet* NGO) have been carrying out some concrete actions in support of women herbalists of Mali, funded by the Italian Cooperation, through UNOPS. These are:

- (i) a project to support the herbalists in the district of Bamako (Mali), of which the beneficiary is a group of women herbalists who are members of FEMATH;
- (ii) an action-research project on "Economic Autonomy and Women's Empowerment through the promotion of local knowledge about plants. The case of the District of Bamako and Segou Region".

The objectives of the actions, which have been developed in synergy and in partnership between *Aidemet* NGO and FEMATH, are to improve working conditions and incomes of women herbalists and to participate in the conservation of medicinal plants biodiversity. Direct beneficiaries of the two projects are 40 women herbalists, including 30 in Bamako and 10 in Segou.



Photo n° 1 : Training of women herbalists of FEMATH (Bamako, April 2011)

The two projects have the aims (i) to deepen and share knowledge on the situation of women working in the field of medicinal plants in Bamako and Segou, (ii) to facilitate their access to new knowledge and resources and also to appropriated tools to improve the quality of their work and their lives and their economic independence, and (iii) to measure the impact of these support activities, to ensure that the efforts of these women and

their contribution to local development are known and appreciated by their families and by society.

We hope that these actions may support women herbalists to step out from their current situation of vulnerability and poverty.

It should be noted that *Aidemet* NGO has a proven experience in training and support of herbalists : since 2006 it has promoted the campaign "Adopt a herbalist" which provided kiosks for the improved sale of medicinal plants to 26 herbalists of Bamako District. Indeed, the logic of *Aidemet* NGO has always been to develop field activities according to priorities expressed by the actors of traditional medicine.

**Text prepared by Dr Sergio Giani, Programs Officer of *Aidemet* NGO**

**Photo: Archive *Aidemet***