



## Seeking partners for the development of a solar distiller for essential oils of plants.



Essential oils are used in a wide range of products (detergents, soaps, toiletries, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, perfumes, foods, drinks, insecticides, insect repellents). World production and consumption of essential oils are rapidly increasing. Compared with other plant extracts, they have an interesting added value and can be valued on a local, national or international level. The limitation is mainly about consumption of energy, since they are usually produced by steam distillation of water, the steam generation requiring high energy.

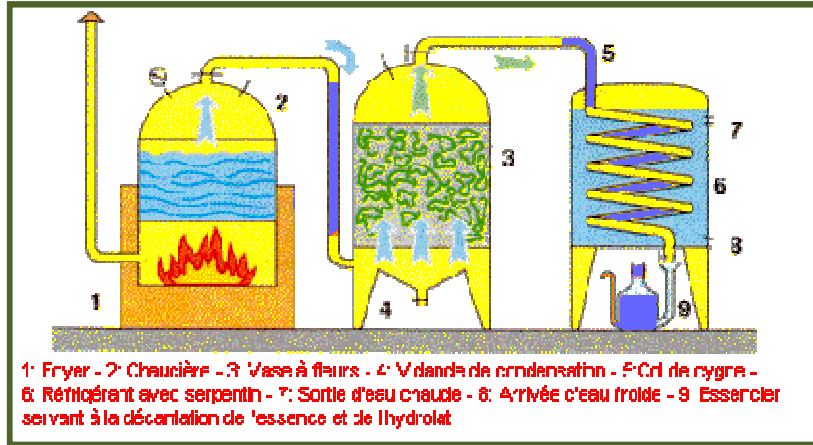


Figure 1: Distillateur classique.

In tropical and subtropical countries, and particularly in Mali, where aromatic plants are numerous and present a great potential for medicines and cosmetics, these energy costs are difficult to overcome, either for industrial and semi-industrial production, or for a production at the community level with intensive manpower utilisation. The electrical energy or fossil fuels are very expensive, while the use of wood or coal is not proposable because obviously it is not ecologically sustainable. The solution of energy problem for the distillation of essential oils is important for the valorisation of the sector of medicinal plants and for local development, with a direct impact on the incomes of women who are the protagonists of the plants production and distribution chain.



Figure 2 : Herbalist woman of Ségou (Mali)

That is why *Aidemet*, which is a non-governmental non-profit Malian organisation specialized in resources of traditional medicine development in health, socio-economic and environmental fields, in partnership with the IDEASS program, is since some time looking for technical and financial partners for a research project whose objective is the development of a prototype of communitary solar distiller, able of a decentralised production of essential oils in total energy independence in sufficient quantities, while ensuring the quality of essential oils produced and the profitability of the operation. The research project is carried out in the context of the activities to support women herbalists that *Aidemet* Ong is currently conducting in Mali since 2005.

Resource persons, organizations, laboratories and other research and development structures interested in sharing their experiences and in supporting and/or participate in this research project are kindly requested to contact us: [aidemet@sotelma.net.ml](mailto:aidemet@sotelma.net.ml); site web : [www.aidemet.org](http://www.aidemet.org) – [www.ideassonline.org](http://www.ideassonline.org) .