Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) are joining forces to implement the AVENIR project, which will improve the socio-economic well-being and resilience of women and youth from farming households in the Sédhiou and Tambacounda regions of southern Senegal.
Quick Facts
(World Bank)
• Total Population: 16.3 million
• Rate below poverty line: 46.7%
• Rate in rural areas: 52%
• GDP: $23.5 billion (USD)
• Rate of businesses in the informal sector: 80%
• Rate of the national labour working in agriculture: 36%

Background
The AVENIR project recognizes the central and leadership role of women and youth in agriculture and agribusiness, in farming households’ nutrition and socio-economic well-being, and in the management of natural resources (especially water and soil). The project aims to reduce the unintended negative environmental impacts of agricultural interventions and policies among vulnerable populations, particularly women and youth, and will directly benefit 10,000 women and youth from agricultural households (70% women), through the introduction of climate-smart agricultural and irrigation technologies and practices.

MEDA’s Approach
AVENIR will promote:
• Diversified, productive and profitable agricultural systems (rice, horticulture and agroforestry), adapted to agro-ecological conditions, and resilient to climate change.
• Increased supply of and demand for diversified nutritious foods.
• Enhanced value-added activities, including product aggregation, storage, processing and marketing of rice, baobab, mango and cashew products to increase the profitability of agri-businesses.
• Increased participation of women and youth in decision-making concerning the governance of water and soil resources.

In the Tambacounda region, the project will focus activities on the rice and baobab value chains, in the Goudiry and Tambacounda Departments. In the Sédhiou region, AVENIR will focus its interventions on the rice, mango and cashew value chains, in the departments of Bounkiling and Goudomp. Project activities will improve the input supply, production, post-harvest, processing and market linkages where women and youth have the greatest opportunity to increase incomes.

Outcome | 5-Year Project Budget
• Farmer groups led by women and youth supported
• Women and youth trained to run profitable businesses
• Aggregation and product processing units supported (producer groups and / or buyers)
• Households trained on the rights of women and youth
• Women and youth trained in climate smart agriculture and irrigation techniques and technologies
• Market actors receiving smart incentives (innovative, climate-friendly, business solutions)
• Women and youth trained in sustainable and equitable management of water resources.