

# INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES IN MALI

## AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. KOUMAY, OWNER OF NEGSER SAHEL CO



Viola Holik  
*Commercial Technical  
Manager - Africa*



In this interview, Viola Holik, our Commercial Technical Manager, sits down with Mr. Koumay, the esteemed owner of Negser Sahel Co. Mr. Koumay shares his insights on the challenges and opportunities in the sector, as well as his vision for the future.

Africa is often called the “dark continent”. But it is not! Africa is vibrant colours, it is the scent of wood fires and rain falling on dry soil, it is fragments of music in a warm night. Africa is heartbreaking beauty and it is young!

**The average age is 19 years with a population growth of 3,2%. All of these young people are looking for a way of making a living and most of them are moving from the rural areas to cities or seeking a better future in Europe.**

**Today, 44% of the African population is urban. However, this migration into mega-cities often does not lead to fortunate outcomes, instead it can result in exploitation and poverty in metropolises whose infrastructures are not able to cope with the inflow of people.**

Poultry can be a pathway out of this dilemma. Over 85% of rural households in Sub-Saharan Africa keep poultry as a main or partial source of income, offering an interesting opportunity for young people to remain in the agricultural sector.

**Farmers are able to start with small investments and grow into profitable enterprises through education, wise planning, and effective management.**

**During the SPACE, the international exhibition for animal farming in Rennes, France, I met Mr Koumay, the owner of the Negser Sahel company in Mali. Mali, located in West Africa, has a rich history and holds some of the oldest cities on the continent, such as the mythical city of Timbuktu.**

It's legendary king Mansa Musa famously embarked on his pilgrimage to Mecca with two tons of gold and 60,000 servants. This diverse country is home to the Tuaregs and Bedouins and spans from the Sahara Desert to the fertile valleys of the Niger and Senegal rivers.

**Today, most of the population resides in the South, where poultry production plays a crucial role in the economy, providing vital nutrition. Political instability and limited resources hinder the growth of this sector, but there are also stories of success!**



Mr. Koumay is a quiet man with wide-awake eyes hidden behind shiny glasses but when we started talking about his business, he became lively and one could feel the pride and passion that drive him.

**He has not only managed to make a living out of egg production starting with a small farm in his local village, he is now the biggest egg producer and LOHMANN customer in Mali.**

**I was fascinated by his story and I am sharing my conversation with him here because I believe it will inspire both young and old entrepreneurs in Africa to venture successfully into the poultry sector**



*Mr. Koumay, have you always been in farming?*



No no, I explored several fields. I was active in the public sector, then I started working in the medical field and at one point I was even producing and delivering food for prisoners, poultry only came later in my life.



*How did you start your business?*



I started at the age of 49 and build a farm in my local village with a flock of 7000 layer DOC's imported from Senegal. I quickly increased the capacity of the farm to 24.000 hens, all on floor system in open houses. Mali has a hot and dry climate with a rainy season from June to September in which we are facing very high humidity. Therefore, I did not get the production the birds genetically would be able to give me.

Realizing that I could increase my income significantly with changing the environment for the hens, I decided to improve the farm and was able to secure a credit of 600.000€. This money I invested 2018 in a farm with 70.000 layers in 2 closed production and rearing houses from Big Dutchman with environmental control, all in cage system.

I also changed the location and am now producing eggs in my farm near Bamako, the capital, since this is the biggest market for me in Mali.





*And up to this time you still imported your chicks from Senegal?*



Yes, the chicks still came from Soproda, but in 2018 I imported my first flock of Lohmann LSL from Pluriton in Holland and have not changed ever since!

This is an incredible hen, there is no better one in the market than the LOHMANN LSL.

In May 2022 for example I received a flock of LOHMANN LSL Classic from Pluriton and we only culled it recently in December 2024 with a production of still 76%.



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*This is great! And you are still keeping 70.000 layers?*



Oh no! In 2019 I build one more house with a capacity of 90.000 hens, and in 2021 another 3 houses between 70.000 and 75.000 birds. Soon I will reach 500.000 layers, all in closed, full automated houses.



*And how do you see your future in this sector?*



I have 7 children, one of them is now working with me in the company. I believe the sky has no limit. We will continue growing and supplying the population in Mali with eggs from LOHMANN LSL.

