

Network of Mediterranean LSPs for Agroecology,

Learning Journey to Ankara/Turkey

5-8 October 2017



SUMMARY REPORT - DRAFT

By Ceyhan Temürcü, Nov 18, 2017

SCOPE AND AIM

The "Learning Journey" took place between October 5-8, 2017, in Ankara and surroundings, with participants from the Mediterranean Network of Local- and Solidarity-based Partnerships. The event was organized by the cooperation of URGENCI (International Community Supported Agriculture Network) and Terre & Humanisme, and locally hosted by the Natural Food, Conscious Nutrition Group (DBB) and the Tahtacıörencik Village Natural Living Collective (TADYA).

This was the first of two FAO-funded international Learning Journeys planned for 2017, as part of a memorandum of understanding between URGENCI and the World Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The second journey is scheduled for 21-26 November 2017 in Lebanon.

Ankara Learning Journey was planned to coincide (on October 7) with two meetings organized by local actors, with participation from all over Turkey: "Local- and Solidarity based Networks for Agroecology Meeting" and "DBB Orientation Meeting", with the aim of maximizing interactions among local, national and Mediterranean levels. The program was designed to include experience-sharing visits to initiatives in the city center as well as to farms in villages. Another aim of the event was to conduct a collective work to create a training curriculum on LSPs and Agroecology, to be adapted to each Mediterranean country, starting with questions like "How to establish a LSP / CSA group?", "How to form and organize a core group?". This work is expected to contribute to the longer-term vision of establishing a communication network and training centers in different regions to share and disseminate information and experiences in the fields of LSPs and agroecology.

Eleven representatives participated from the Mediterranean Network of LSPs: Jocelyn Parrot from URGENCI, Mickael Beji from Terre & Humanisme, Meriem Sator from Algeria (Le Collectif TORBA and AMAP Algeria), Jenny Gkiougki from Greece (AgroEcoPolis Hellas, Neighborhoods in Action, Permaculture Caravan), Rita Khawand from Lebanon (Soils Permaculture Association Lebanon), Annie Mellouki, Touriya Atarhouch and Najib Bendahman from Morocco (RIAM: The Network of Agroecological Initiatives in Morocco, Swani Tiqa gardens), Miodrag Dakić from Bosnia-Herzegovina (Permaculture, ecological advocacy), Roberto Bossi from Italy (Italian Solidarity Economy Network, Solidarity Economy of the District of Brianza), and Denis Carel from France (Cheese producer in Marseille).

Many Ankara-based initiatives actively participated in various parts of the program: DBB, TADYA, Güneşköy, Çiğdemim Association, METU Garden, Ecology Collective, Slowfood Ankara, Çankaya Municipality City and Agriculture Unit, etc. CSA / LSP representatives from outside Ankara included Slowfood Bodrum, Gediz Ecology Community (İzmir), İzmir Nature and Human Friendly Food Group, Yeryüzü Association CSA groups (İstanbul), Şile Municipality Earth Market (İstanbul), and Boğaziçi University Kooperatifi-Bükoop (İstanbul). 14 DBB PGS producers were present to represent Elbademi Çiftliği (Antalya), Güneşköy (Ankara), Oğuzhan Çiftliği (Yozgat), Nimfeon Zeytinli (İzmir), TADYA's Rural Children, Yunus's Natural Egg Farm and Duran Family Farm (Ankara), Bayramiç Yeniköy (Çanakkale), Dr. Tomil Fruits (Zonguldak), Nusratlı Village Producers (Çanakkale), Suyugüzel Farm (Ankara), Tanal Farm (Antalya), Ulupınar Environmental Protection Cooperative (Antalya), Pir Family Farm (Muğla) and Turanlı Kardeşler (Elazığ), as well as many producers not included in DBB.

CONTEXT

In collaboration with URGENCI and Terre & Humanisme, a mapping study was conducted in the first half of 2016, to identify a situation with the Local- and Solidarity-Based Partnerships in the Mediterranean Basin. In March 2016, various actors from 12 different countries (producers, consumers, group and network facilitators) met in Marseilles (France) and wrote country reports to describe CSAs and agroecology initiatives in their respective regions. One the important result of this survey was to identify common features and values of these initiatives, independent of regional contexts. They all (1) support small-scale farms who have intentionally adopted agroecology practices as defined by 2015 Nyeleni Declaration (<http://www.foodsovereignty.org/es/forum-agroecology-nyeleni-2015/>), (2) value consumers' solidarity with producers, (3) share the principles of social inclusiveness, restoring degraded social ties and bringing people closer in processes of food production.

LSPs for Agroecology, including CSAs and other food communities, make a significant contribution to the creation of sustainable local food systems through sharing of risks and supporting for small-scale farms. Spreading of eco-friendly production methods in the Mediterranean region emerges as an urgent need, as current agricultural practices are a main source of environmental pollution, depletion of water resources, soil erosion and degradation of soil structure. Small-scale agro-ecological farming and associated LSPs also provide an important strategy for mitigating climate change, by supporting localization of production and shorter transport chains.

SUMMARY OF THE EVENT

October 5, Thursday

Visits to neighborhood- and community gardens in the city center of Ankara, with the participation of about 35 people from local organizations, including the DBB network, and LSPs from other cities.

The group first visited the Çayyolu Neighborhood Garden, led by Çankaya Municipality's City and Agriculture Unit. After a presentation by the unit's representatives, the groups visited vegetable plots and educational areas. A lively interaction happened with questions, answers and suggestions. Participants then conducted the "mindmapping" exercise as described in Activity 6 of the "CSA in action" Module of the "Be Part of CSA! Trainer's Guide" (2016). In six groups of 3 to 4 persons, they analyzed and depicted various aspects of the organization.



After a lunch together at the Middle East Technical University (METU) campus, METU Garden was visited. An oral presentation was made by garden volunteers and interaction continued with questions and answers.



In the afternoon the group passed to Çiğdemim Association Community Garden. Participants introduced themselves and their relevant work. Then the garden was visited and a visual presentation about the project was made. Lastly, groups of the mindmapping study done at the Çayyolu Garden presented their maps to the whole group.



In the evening the group met at a vegan restaurant in city center for a dinner prepared with vegetables and ingredients from producers of local PGS (DBB).

October 6, Friday

A whole-day visit to Tahtacıörencik Village (<https://tahtaciorencik.org/>), in the Güdül District of Ankara, with 65 participants excluding the villagers.

At the village center, after a description of the work of the TADYA collective, the group visited to the farm and the greenhouse of Adnan Bey and his family. The visit gave an opportunity for experience sharing among various participants. After lunch, prepared by the Araç family with local

food, the group visited Süvari River valley. Group interaction continued with participants from the local community. The agroecological potential of the basin for was emphasized.



Then the groups transferred to TADYA producer Yunus Çevik's free-range egg farm. The study titled "Free range farm investigation", described in Activity 6 under the "CSA in action" module of the "Be Part of CSA! Trainer's Guide" booklet (2016), was conducted collectively: Participants in groups of two inspected the farm's critical points and then asked the producer questions and gave him feedback. Questions and comments that could not be expressed due to the time limit were delivered to the farmer by the "Well of ideas" application defined in Activity 8.

Then a village bazaar was set by producers of the village. Before departure, the group had the dinner with a local menu, prepared the Duran family.

In summary, this was a day with rich interactions and experience-sharing among participants from the village, from Ankara center, from other cities and Mediterranean countries.

October 7, Saturday

Saturday was the day of public events at the Yılmaz Güney Stage in Ankara. "Local Solidarity-Based Networks for Agroecology Meeting" and "DBB Orientation Meeting" were held, and posters were presented by participants.

There was a participation of around 140 people from the local and solidarity-based networks, CSA groups, official organizations, farmers, producers and buyers. The following presentations were made: LSPs and URGENCI (Jocelyn Parrot), Terre et Humanisme and Agroecology Perspective (Mickael Beji), Food Communities in Turkey (Ayşegül Çerçi), CSA Experiences of Yeryüzü Derneği (Earth Association) (Müge Alaboz and Ebru Seval Yıldız), DBB Producer Perspectives: Bayramiç Yeniköy (Mustafa Alper Ülgen) and Ceyhan Temürcü on behalf of Alp Pir (Köyceğiz),

Çankaya Municipality City and Agriculture Unit (Mehtap Yüksel and Sertaç Hekim), Work of ÇARIK - Association for Natural Beekeeping (Şamil Beştoy / Muğla), İstanbul Şile Earth Market Experience (Nihan Akbay), Ancient Production Basins (Güven Eken, Nature School), Bioregionality (Timuçin Şahin), DBB, TADYA and Kır Çocukları (Ceyhan Temürcü) and a brief introduction of participants of Mediterranean LPS Network. There was simultaneous translation into French and English, and consecutive translation to Turkish as needed.



In the afternoon, participants shared information and experiences, with poster presentations from Mediterranean guests and various people and groups in Turkey. There was a particularly vivid and multifaceted interaction between Mediterranean guests and producers of the DBB network.



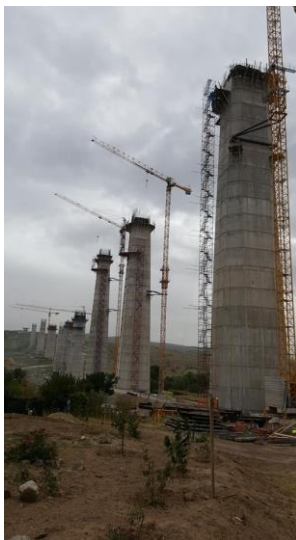
In the last part of the day (between 16: 00-18: 00), the DBB Orientation Meeting was held, open to public. Participants shared views and suggestions about the DBB PGS system, while those who did not participate continued their interaction with posters.



October 8, Sunday

Visit to Güneşköy (<http://guneskoy.org/>) and collective work for a training curriculum/booklet.

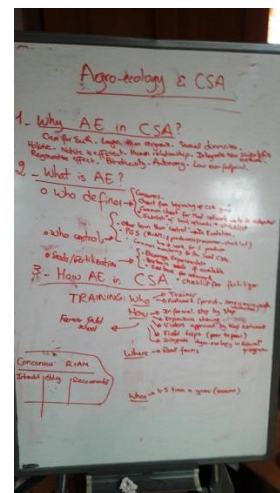
In the morning, a group of about 45 people, who moved to Güneşköy with common vehicles, joined a group of about 20 people who came with their own vehicles. Ali Gökmen from Güneşköy shared the story of Güneşköy, their goals, work, with positive and negative experiences. With the contributions of Fikret Şimşek, Claire Özel and Evren Yılmaz, a deep knowledge- and experience sharing happened. Among the topics were: Advantages and challenges of CSA boxing-schemes, dimensions of interaction with local people and the need for voluntary workforce and particularly, their decision to not to give up the project after the high-speed railway project, for which the construction of pillars took a significant portion of the Güneşköy land in its middle.



At noon, Güneşköy's projects, including organic gardens, the greenhouse and other eco-projects were introduced. Participants helped with collecting and boxing vegetables. Then lunch prepared by Güneşköy's and the nearby Hisarköy's people, was eaten.

After lunch, about 25 participants gathered in the “mandala” building and conducted a collective work for a LSPs for Agroecology training curriculum, which could be adapted to each of the

Mediterranean countries. In World Cafe format, 6 different groups worked on different modules, on the basis of the four training modules in the Be Part of CSA! Booklet ("General background of CSA", "Starting a CSA initiative", "CSA community building", "Field training"). Two additional groups worked on "Agroecology and CSA" and "A web application".



At the end of the day, participants assessed the Learning Journey organization, on four dimensions: Logistics and food, field work, collective work and experience sharing.

A farewell dinner was given to the group in a café in Ankara center.

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- This four-day learning journey, realized with the support of many institutions and organizations and voluntary contributions from a large number of people, has enabled war and multifaceted interactions which included visits to villages, gardens and farms, presentations, meetings, thematic workshops and lots of experience-sharing.
- Initiatives, producers, consumers and facilitators at local, national and international levels came together to establish foundations of many prospective projects of solidarity and collaboration projects
- Participants shared information that can shed light on the development of agroecological practices and local- and solidarity based partnerships in the country and in the Mediterranean basin. Besides, practical applications were worked-out, such as mindmapping, collective farm evaluation, well of ideas, World Cafe and multi-dimensional evaluation.
- Outputs of the World Cafe study on a Mediterranean curriculum for training on LSPs for Agroecology curriculum were compiled. The network is going to continue to work, on the basis of these outputs, during the Lebanon Learning Journey (November 21-26) and following activities.
- An e-mail list for a drafting committee for the training curriculum work is being formed, with participation from each country involved in the Network.

- The meeting was effective in spreading the notions of "agroecology" and "local- and solidarity-based partnerships" in Turkey.
- Shortly after the event, the host organizations DBB and TADYA have received an invitation from The Developmental Agency of Ankara for a presentation to the institutions staff members.
- The creation of a "Turkish LSP/CSA Network" has come to agenda. Beyond responding to the need for coordination and solidarity within the country, this network can be part of the Mediterranean LSP Network, and collaborate with URGENCI and other international networks/organizations.
- Slides of Agroecology Meeting presentations have been added to the Web site of the event (<https://learningjourneyankara.wordpress.com/>). Soon the slides will be combined with voice recordings and opened to public access. The current summary report, photos and other outputs of the event will also be uploaded.
- We had volunteers for making a film of the journey, who filmed activities throughout the event. The film will be uploaded to your website when ready.
- The report of the DBB Orientation Meeting was shared with DBB participants. Changes in the structure and functioning of the DBB PGS group will be possible on the basis of this report.