URGENCI
THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Rebuilding the broken relationship between producers and consumers: mapping and recommendations of local solidarity partnerships in West Africa. 2018

> *"Eating is definitely the most common political act we undertake in our lives. What and how we eat is what conditions our entire existence, both present and future. This is especially true in the current context of global change.*
>
> *When we eat healthy food that has been locally grown by small-scale family farmers using agroecology, we care for our health as well as that of natural resources; we fight climate change, create jobs in rural areas and thus wealth for a greater number of people. This in turn leads to greater social inclusion and stability for society as a whole.*
>
> *A project built around the agroecology of local solidarity partnerships and small-scale peasant agriculture should lie at the heart of all the policies that we implement.*
>
> *The CNOP Mali is working to build awareness of this through the national framework law on agriculture".*

Ibrahima Coulibaly, President of the National Coordination of Peasant Organisations of Mali (CNOP) and Vice President of the Network of West African Professional Organisations (ROPPA).

Illustration 1: Map of the West African region. Copyright: Wikicommons.

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SUMMARY

The whole sub-Region of West Africa is marked by the exponential growth of urban population: it has increased from 7 million inhabitants in 1950 to around 140 million today. This figure is expected to triple by 2030[1]. Urban growth is affecting not only large cities but also medium-sized towns. Urban agglomerations of over 10,000 inhabitants have increased form 125 in 1950, to over 1,200 today. In this context, the question of feeding these cities and towns has become a major concern. There is an increasingly urgent need throughout the region to protect green belt agricultural land from encroaching city sprawl. The most flagrant example of this is in Dakar, where the land that has been the historical market garden of the city is under ever increasing threat.

At the same time, the number of famers has significantly decreased: it is expected to have dropped by 15% in absolute terms by 2050, whereas the overall population of the region will have doubled. The globalisation of trade has created important imbalances. On one hand the peasants are being dispossessed of their land by land grabbing, the seed companies are trying to take control of local seeds, patent them, and sell farmers seeds that are often genetically modified. The peasants are then obliged to buy them as well as chemical inputs that are linked to this industrial model of agriculture. Finally imported produce, mainly surplus European production sold at bargain-basement prices, is flooding local markets and competing with local produce. Furthermore, the official policies of the countries in the region support export monoculture crops to the detriment of local food crops. The food riots of 2008 and 2010 were due to global food price volatility. They clearly demonstrated the fragility of local populations as a result of global market deregulation.

This triple challenge of exploding population, the undermining of agricultural activities, land grabbing linked to market monopoly, peasant agroecology can be seen as the alternative model promoted by peasant organisations in the Sub-Region. This term underlines that fundamental link between the way families, peasants and agroecological production are organised. We believe it provides a more balanced approach in terms of the relationship with the environment, and the emphasis it places on peasants' independence than the term family farming, although the latter is quite similar in meaning.

It is the term *peasant agroecology* that best represents the initiatives in this survey,

1 Comité français de solidarité internationale, Fondation de France et Réseau des Organisations paysannes et des producteurs agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, *Nourrir les villes, défi de l'agriculture familiale. Des innovations locales et paysannes en Afrique de l'Ouest,* Paris: CFSI et Fondation de France, 2014, pp. 3-10.

and we have therefore chosen to use it in this first mapping report. Peasant agroecology also includes the inherent hope of the possibility to adapt to the challenges of climate change. Agroecological techniques are more labour intensive; they are also more efficient than input-heavy industrial agriculture. Due to the innovative nature of these practices, they do however require in-depth support and technical advisory services. This mapping clearly identifies this need, as well as the need to train and professionalise the work of traditional peasants.

If it is to survive and thrive, peasant agroecology needs to be connected to markets. Urban markets will need to be conquered, and urban-rural linkages rebuilt. Local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers are an unlimited model for disseminating contract -based direct sales. Together with other forms of short distribution chains, they can provide an efficient tool for rebuilding these relationships. Consumer awareness has increased since the crisis of 2008, when food prices on the global market soared. The interest in agroecology in West Africa has developed. This is due to the increased awareness through the high number of health and safety food scandals and studies that link certain pathologies to poor diet as well as due to soil depletion. However for the moment, the consumption of agroecological produce at local level is linked essentially to the emerging upper middle classes and expatriate circles.

This mapping attempts to identify the challenges. The questions are what obstacles now need to be overcome to enable these growing markets, initiatives of direct sales and local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers to multiply? How can we strengthen these initiatives, mainstream these models of consumption, and build acceptance for peasant agriculture? Given the infrastructure challenges, what are the needs and expectations in terms of support for public policies at local national, regional and international levels? These challenges are common to the whole Sub-Region: how can we shift from a target market to a mass market for agroecologically produced local food?

There is no 'one size fits all' answer. It is therefore important to highlight the diversity and creativity of existing initiatives and formulas that exist in the various contexts, irrespective of whether or not they can be duplicated. Efforts are afoot to achieve higher volumes of local produce, and important initiatives, such as the support for production and commercialisation through group sales, peasants' markets or stalls in the more affluent urban neighbourhoods in Mali, Senegal and Benin are all currently increasing.

Other organisations are exploring new forms of producer-consumer partnerships such as the Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) that are being promoted by CNABio in Burkina Faso. These initiatives are growing rapidly, and new types of relationships are emerging; yet the transition is slow and fragile, mainly due to a lack of institutional support. There is no supportive political framework for

agroecology, and information, as well as awareness-raising campaigns and communication, are few and far between.

Nevertheless the actors involved in this study reported some occasional institutional support. In Burkina Faso, ECOWAS supports agroecology through the *Label bio* project. This good practice needs to be scaled up and mainstreamed at ECOWAS level, with mainstreaming of support for agroecology. ECOWAP+10 needs to provide strong political guidelines and uptake, and initiate a full, ambitious programme for training in peasant agroecology. This should be based on the model developed in Mali, where thousands of peasant-advisors will be trained in the years to come. Effective recognition by local and international decision-makers of the vital role of all these initiatives and the way in which they contribute to redrafting a social contract between producers and the societies that they feed is the way forward. The transition is underway. But it is in deep need of being supported if it is to impact the entire population in a non-discriminatory way.

INTRODUCTION

Illustration 2. Crédit photo: CFAPE Togo.

"Agroecology can feed the world", concluded Olivier De Schutter, the ex-Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food in his final report to the Secretary General of the United Nations in 2011. And we can therefore logically claim that agroecology can indeed feed Africa, on condition that all the elements of the transition to new production methods and consumption are taken into account. And while agricultural practice is often emphasized, the question of sales and producer-consumer relations is often overlooked.

This oversight has been strengthened by the recent recognition by several institutions of the term agroecology. For example, the French parliament used the term in agricultural policy voted on 13th October 2014. The meaning is however very restrictive and applies only to agronomy*: "Agroecological systems support the autonomy of farms and their contribution to their improved competitiveness by maintaining or increasing their profitability and improving the added value of produce as well as by reducing the use and consumption of energy, water, fertiliser and phyto-pharmaceutical and veterinary medicines, especially of antibiotics. These systems are based on the biological interactions and the use of ecosystem services and potential provided by natural resources, especially water, biodiversity, photosynthesis, soil and air by maintaining their ability to renew them both from a qualitative and a quantitative point of view. It contributes to mitigating and*

adapting to the impacts of climate change".[2]

However agroecology, a term first coined in the 1920s and '30s by the pioneers of organic agriculture, also implies, in the vast majority of its definitions, a social movement. To quote, among others, Pierre Rabhi from the *Terre et Humanisme* movement *"Agroecology is far more than just a simple agricultural alternative. It is linked to a deep-seated dimension of the respect for life itself, and re-situates human beings in terms of their responsibility towards all forms of life. It considers that the* ***respect for Mother Earth and food sovereignty*** *of peoples and their territory as the basic foundations* of any balanced and sustainable society. As a holistic approach, it inspires all aspects of social organisation: agriculture, education, health, economy, territorial planning…"[3]. These words show the emergence of both a spiritual and a social dimension. They are a far cry from the current definition by the French government, for whom, in the aforesaid reference, agroecology represents "**building production systems that are anchored in the functionalities provided by the ecosystems"**

At the opposite end of the spectrum to this purely agronomic vision, the forum that took place at the initiative of the IPC Agroecology working group in February 2015 in Mali, developed a vision of agroecology centred on food sovereignty. In this cultural, territorial and social approach, agroecology is a key building block of food sovereignty. And as the 2015 declaration states: "*Territories are a fundamental pillar of Agroecology. Peoples and communities have the right to maintain their own spiritual and material relationships to their lands. They are entitled to secure, develop, control, and reconstruct their customary social structures and to administer their lands and territories, including fishing grounds, both politically and socially. This implies the full recognition of their laws, traditions, customs, tenure systems, and institutions, and constitutes the recognition of the self-determination and autonomy of peoples."*[4]

We could also add the definition of the Nyéléni Declaration on Food Sovereignty, from 2007: *"Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy, culturally appropriate food that is produced in a sustainable manner that respects the environment as well as their right to define their own food and agricultural systems. It places food producers, distributors and consumers at the heart of food systems and policies as opposed to the demands of markets and transnational corporations".*

It is this agreement on the definition of agroecology, strongly linked to food

2 French National Assembly, « Law n° 2014-1170 of 13th October 2014 on the future of agriculture, food and forests, » *Journal Officiel de la République française,* n°0238, 14th October 2014, p. 16601 article 1 http://bit.ly/2gx6LLW (link valid 9th January 2018)

3 Pierre Rabhi quoted by Arnaud Diemer & Christel Marquat, *Regards croisés Nord-Sud sur le développement durable*, Louvain-la-Neuve : De Boeck, 2015, p. 150.

4http://www.foodsovereignty.org/forum-agroecology-nyeleni-2015-2/

sovereignty that is closest to the practice and beliefs of actors now engaging in local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers at global level. It corresponds to the vision of agroecology that the European movement of Community Supported Agriculture refers to in the Declaration adopted by the movement in 2016.[5] This characterisation of a vision of Local Solidarity Partnerships for Agroecology (LSPA) also unites many different initiatives in 12 countries on both shores of the Mediterranean.

Origin	Key ideas	Strategic objective for using the term	Reference text
Miguel Altieri	*"Application of the science of ecology to the study, conception and management of sustainable agro-ecosystems"* [6]. Diversity of production systems, biodiversity	Strengthen the resilience of vulnerable agricultural systems [7] Support peasant agroecology, meet the Sustainable Development Goals	Miguel Altieri's work Olivier De Schutter's report, 8th March 2011
French Ministry for Agriculture INRA	"Agroecology" or "agro-ecology": production systems that are based on the functionalities provided by **ecosystems**	Make the entire agriculture sector more sustainable by proposing a less constraining form than certified organic agriculture	2014 policy orientation law on agriculture
IPC	"Peasant agroecology" is aimed at producers' autonomy, strengthening peoples' food sovereignty and management of natural resources and the Commons	Build a movement that merges peasant agriculture and organic agriculture and avoiding the limitations of a purely technical approach and also emphasizing the social and political aspects. Incorporating ancestral techniques rather than certification	Nyéléni Declaration on Agroecology, March 2015
Mouvement Terre et Humanisme	Respect for Mother Earth, symbiosis between Humankind and nature	Consider farming in a wider philosophical approach to life, based on the search for symbiosis between Humankind and nature	Pierre Rabhi's work

The key questions are *"Why map what's out there?", "What needs are met by this study?"* The first is to identify existing initiatives in order to improve support for them. They are often quite recent, still fragile and by gaining deeper insight into their nature, it will help meet their needs more closely. Furthermore, mapping helps to provide them with greater visibility, which is still greatly needed. Secondly, it is important to understand the dynamics and challenges that are specific to the geographical area in question. Finally, mapping and listing them involves a phase of

5 Urgenci European Declaration of Community Supported Agriculture, Ostrava 2016 at the 3rd European Meeting of Community Supported Agriculture (http://urgenci.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/European-CSA-Declaration_final-1.pdf).

6 Miguel A. ALtieri, *Agroecology : the science of sustainable agriculture*, Boulder : Westview Press, 1995, quoted by Olivier De Schutter in A*groecology and the Right to Food*, Geneva, United Nations Human Rights Council, presented by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, 20th December 2010, p. 6.

7 Pierre Jacquemot, *Le dictonnaire encyclopédique du développement durable,* Paris : Editions Sciences Humaines, 2017, under *Agro-écologie.*

meeting the actors and listening to them; this is a *de facto* way of creating a network and identifying the common ground and guiding principles.

Methodology

This initial mapping was carried out to identify what already exists in terms of agroecological practice, and especially the cases of local partnerships between producers and consumers in this field. We hope that this will lead to experience sharing and strengthening of capacity building. The priorities of this report are to analyse the potential for developing these initiatives and improve producers' means and nutrition, as well as making this food more accessible to consumers, including lower-income groups. It is a beginning, an initial snapshot. We hope it will be further developed in the future.

We chose to focus on what Urgenci members called local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers in their first international Symposiums. These partnerships can be identified by fours key principles.

Firstly, the question of mutual commitments in a long-term perspective, and repeated actions rather than one-off purchasing In some countries these partnerships have been formalised by written contracts spanning a period that varies from 6 months to a full year.

Secondly, the concept of "local" has varied meanings, depending on the context. Local Solidarity Partnerships are always part of a larger movement to relocalise production. LSPs imply a strategy of territorial development, rebuilding the connection between agricultural production and the social, geographical environment.

The third key element is the concept of solidarity, first and foremost with the farmers, as LSPs often meet the criteria of the French name: "Association pour le maintien d'une Agriculture Paysanne", and the urgent need to protect and save family farming. Solidarity is a central value of these partnerships. It is also expressed within the groups of consumers and beyond.

The final characteristic is a balanced alliance in the relationship between producers and consumers. Neither should exert supremacy over the other.

The methodology initially agreed for this mapping project is based on Urgenci's experience in mapping in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin in 2015-2016. In both these cases, the mapping included an initial meeting. In the case of the European mapping, it enabled the "informers" (25 researchers in 22 different countries) to build a shared definition as one of the objectives and shared research

methodology[8]. For the mapping of the Mediterranean Basin, a questionnaire was initially developed to enable participants to share and provide clearer research results.[9]

The mapping project for West Africa was based on the existing local mentors and resources: the *Centre de Formation Agricole et de Production Écologique* (CFAPE-TOGO) is a historical pillar. It is also the IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) relay in the Sub-Region, as well as being a pioneer in short distribution chains and Community Supported Agriculture in Togo. The CFAPE has been distributing organic local boxes in Lomé, the capital city, since 2011. Simon Anoumou Todzro is the Director of this centre. He was trained in Germany and Switzerland as an organic farmer and became a member of Urgenci's International Committee at the last general assembly in China in November 2015.

The initial stage of this West African project was the meeting that took place in Kpalimé, in Togo in March 2017. It enabled initial exchange between the partners of 7 countries in the Sub-region to take place. These discussions were fully transcribed and are available in a report[10]. The initial preparation of participants for this meeting was uneven. It was therefore decided together with the organisation funding this work, *Brot für die Welt* as well as *IPES-Food*, with whom a partnership was subsequently developed during the project, to organise a Sub-regional series of country visits. The objective was to organise a collective group interview/focus group meeting of key actors in each country (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Senegal and Togo) and collect replies to the questionnaire.

The focus groups brought together the key actors from the main peasant organisations and organic agriculture networks involved in box schemes or direct sales' initiatives. These were generally producers and included some coordinators. In this second phase, each focus group included at least 20 participants. As well as the focus groups, there were several field trips in each country apart from Côte d'Ivoire. Each country visit lasted 2-3 days. The questionnaire was developed jointly with *Brot für die Welt* and *IPES-Food* as well as with the trio who carried out the country visits. The team consisted of Simon Todzro, Innocent Kofi Gbedoho, who works at the CFAPE, and finally Ibrahima Coulibaly from Mali who is the president of the CNOP (*Coordination Nationale des Organisations Paysannes*) in Mali and Vice-President of ROPPA, the West African network of peasant organisations. Most of the interviews and visits were taped and are freely available for consultation purposes

8 Peter Volz, Philipp Weckenbrock, Nicolas Cressot & Jocelyn Parot, *European Overview of Community Supported Agriculture*, Aubagne : Urgenci European Research Group, 2016.
9 Urgenci, *Local and Solidarity Based Partnerships between Producers and Consumers Mapping of LSPA initiatives in the Mediterranean Basin*, Aubagne : Urgenci, 2016, 64 p.
10 Urgenci, *Atelier régiojal sur la mise en place d'un réseau des Amap en Afrique de l'ouest*, Kpalimé, Togo, 14-15 mars 2017, 36p.

to any interested parties.

The participants in the focus groups were brought together by the local contacts that had been involved in the project since the meeting in Kpalimé. The actors involved in these groups were broadly the same in each of the countries. In those countries where there are already CSA-like structures, the actors involved in these groups were prioritised. The groups consisted of producers as well as other short distribution chain actors. In some cases, such as Burkina Faso where local organic agriculture is more developed, it was the local context that predominated and organic agriculture is more strongly represented in some of the interviews; in other cases it was the peasant organisations such as the CNOP in Mali (*Coordination nationale des organisations paysannes*). In the latter, it was peasant agriculture and food sovereignty that was more strongly represented.

The methodology used to analyse and present the data tries to identify the motivations and shared challenges that are shared throughout the Sub-Region and subsequently to present an analysis of the progress made and lessons learnt.

Crosscutting results

Before outlining the key outcomes of this survey on a country-by-country basis, it is worth underlining the key crosscutting results. A key shared but unexpected characteristic in spite of the different agricultural models and varied climatic conditions is that the term agroecology is not something that is widely understood in all the countries studied. It is probably in Mali, the country that has hosted several Nyéléni meetings (2007, 2015 and Nyéléni + 10 in 2017) that the concept of agroecology associated with that of food sovereignty has been most strongly appropriated. In the other countries, there is no unanimous agreement; the term seems to remain open to different interpretations, as in many other regions of the world, with the notable exception of Latin America. Obviously the kind of actors involved in the different countries visited could have influenced the overall understanding of the term.

The history of organic agriculture appears to be essentially linked to the export market and expatriate community. There is a genuinely dynamic and innovative culture of organic agriculture as demonstrated by the experimental use of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) in Burkina Faso. It is however a long chain culture linked to a relationship with consumers in the North. Local consumption of organic or agroecological produce is essentially linked to middle class practice, which in itself is one of the cross-cutting challenges in the region: how to shift from growing markets to mass markets. The issue in hand is essentially one of how to develop markets and their future. How would it be possible to shift to increased market volumes, as FONGS (*Fédération des ONG*) in Senegal is trying to do? And

especially how is possible to remove social barriers that are not necessarily linked to income level but rather to the level of education and culture?

As well as these crosscutting challenges, several shared principles emerged from the exchanges that took place. A clear hierarchy appears in these principles: the first and most important of these is the subject of health. This is followed by local economic development, with respect for the environment coming in third place.

Typology of the actors

The typology of the actors who were part of the focus groups during the field trips is characterised primarily by the collectives of women producers. These groups are often open to radical change to strengthen the autonomy of the producers. This is the case in Dakar in Senegal where the collectives of women producers created a new model of micro gardens, small sustainable urban market gardens that are supported by a training programme under the auspices of the Town Hall and international NGOs.

It is also important to emphasize the role of the "innovators", small-scale producers who are often young and open to experimenting, and who sometimes combine different agricultural practice (both conventional and organic or agroecological farming-…"out of curiosity", in order to "compare the two models". These actors are characterised by these hybrid practices.

As well as the above mentioned actors, we identified two major categories of organisations: on one hand, the NGOs or federations that bring together the producers using organic certification; and on the other, the peasant organisations such as the CNOP in Mali. The former often organised in local export value chains 20 or 30 years ago, and sometimes use only monoculture. Today they are also developing local value chains and have high hopes for the Participatory Guarantee Systems promoted by IFOAM (the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) to structure their value chains and try to build new approaches to organising and distributing produce. Their slogans are frequently linked to "food and health". The initiative developed by CNABio in Burkina Faso, with their new organic agriculture Charter is a good example of this. Over and above these actors, we identified two major categories of actors. The introduction of the BioPGS (BioSPG) label is definitely something that could be successfully scaled up. Whether or not it happens, will depend on the actors involved as well as on their ability to communicate with potential clients.

The approach of the peasant organisations is significantly different in nature; it is frequently focused on the autonomy of the actors and food sovereignty. Unlike PGS, there are mass trainings of producers, as this appears to these organisations to be the key lever of change. The entire collective needs to increase their skills, not only in terms of production techniques and planning, but also in terms of communication,

cooperation, organisation and experimentation and learning.

In this study, we present the situation in the various countries. We have attempted to understand the degree of awareness of agroecology, the numbers and characteristics of the local solidarity partnerships for agroecology, the extent to which the branch is structured and both challenges and opportunities that the actors themselves have identified. So what is the state of play in terms of transition to agroecology, in terms of both practice and also of markets?

1. CROSS-CUTTING RESULTS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR AGROECOLOGY AND LSPA IN WEST AFRICA

The questionnaire[11] included 34 questions. It is attached as an annex. The group's responses were given in the course of focus group collective interviews. Some replies were sufficiently homogenous to be summarised into chart form. In order to make it easier to read the 6 charts presented below, it is important to note that a marks system was used. Thus when several replies to a question were possible such as "what are the challenges facing agroecology in West Africa?" The replies are noted in hierarchical manner, 1 point was given per reply, the first reply got a number of points that is equal to the total number of possible answers, the second gets one point less.

This order was either determined explicitly by the interviewees, or was deduced from the contents of the questionnaire by the author of the report. A cross signifies that the proposed response was not mentioned, and the score here was therefore zero. By adding up the columns, the score is equal to the total number of replies. By adding up the total points, it is possible to deduce the hierarchy of the replies. Those that are most significant and that are most frequently mentioned score highest. It is important to note that these scores are often merely indicative and show trends without being precise enough to draw definitive conclusions. It cannot be considered at a full statistical report, but represents a certain representation.

Chart 1 - Main challenges facing agriculture in West Africa

	Climate change and challenge of changes to rainfall	Access to water	Access to seeds	Land (pressure on land and land-grabbing)	Rapid spread of urban sprawl	Improper use of chemical inputs	Conflicts between herders and farmers
Benin	6	5	4	3	3	X	X
Burkina Faso	6	5	4	3	2	X	X
Côte d'Ivoire	6	5	4	3	2	1	X
Ghana	6	X	5	4	X	X	X
Mali	6	5	X	5	4	X	X
Senegal	6	X	X	5	X	X	4
Togo	6	5	4	3	X	X	X
Total	42	25	21	26	11	1	4

The collective interviews appear to be unanimous in considering that climate change

11 It is available on Urgenci's website, https://urgenci.net.

and "challenge of changes to rainfall", a formulation that was developed in both Mali and Benin, but for opposite reasons, is the main challenge facing agriculture in West Africa. The second most important is access to the Commons: land, water and seeds. In third place only we find the rapid spread of urban sprawl as well as conflicts between herders and farmers (this was only mentioned in Mali). The fact that the "improper use of chemical inputs" was only mentioned once is difficult to interpret, as the theme of the preservation of the environment is otherwise very present in the other replies.

Table 2 - Key desirable criteria for successful agriculture

Country	Conservation of natural resources/ protection of ecosystem services	Social benefits (access to markets and profitable prices for producers)	Crop yield	Supports autonomy and food sovereignty
Benin	4	3	2	X
Burkina Faso	4	3	2	X
Côte d'Ivoire	4	3	2	X
Ghana	X	4	X	X
Mali	3	4	X	2
Senegal	4	2	3	1
Togo	4	2	X	X
Total	23	21	9	3

The question on the criteria that determine success in agriculture allows us to emphasise the perceived importance in the eyes of the peasants who were interviewed of "social benefits", that is to say essentially good prices and the guarantee of access to markets for these producers. It is also important to note that the conservation of natural resources came out on top in almost all of the groups. In Ghana, however, this reply was not mentioned at all. Crop yield was only mentioned in half the countries, and food sovereignty and autonomy were only significant in the replies from Mali and Senegal.

Table 3 – Motivation for practising agroecology

	Quality and nutritional value of food	Support peasant agroecology	Environmental protection	Quality of produce (stays fresh longer, taste)	Sustainability of the production system	Guaranteed sales	Lower production costs and productivity
Benin	7	6	5	4	2	1	3
Burkina Faso	7	6	5	4	2	1	3
Côte d'Ivoire	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Ghana	7	X	5	X	X	X	6
Mali	6	5	7	X	X	X	X
Senegal	5	X	6	X	X	X	7
Togo	X	X	6	X	5	4	7
Total	39	23	39	12	12	8	27

The above table shows the motivating factors ranked according to the actors themselves, in practising agroecology. There are few surprises here, and it is environmental protection that comes out on top, together with the health and nutritional aspects of the food produced. Depending on the country, either the reduced production costs ranked Senegal, Togo, Ghana) or maintaining peasant agriculture (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali). The quality of the produce, the guarantee of markets and sustainability of the production system were only mentioned in 3 out of the 7 countries studied. Perhaps this is indicative of the environmental criteria emphasized by the actors and their understanding of the concepts and principles of agroecology and the way they are subordinated to economic criteria?

From an ecological and environmental point of view, agroecology is perceived as supporting *"the protection of the environment and Commons, i.e. air, soil and water, even if the impacts are not instantly seen or felt. Furthermore, this kind of production is (supposed) to enable recycling and valorisation of a lot of organic household waste and manure, which is something that makes a big contribution to the surrounding environment".*

Another important reason is linked to the reduced costs involved. Conventional agriculture as practised with chemical inputs is very dependant on external inputs. Prices are determined by the international market; and there is no control at national level over price fluctuations. In the eyes of those interviewed, the uptake of agroecology provides a genuine opportunity to break from these constraints, as all the inputs that are needed are made on site or locally produced.

Generally speaking, the mobilisation of the West African actors is linked to their keen awareness of the major challenges facing peasant agroecology in the region: climate change, access to water and seeds, the problems of access to land, and rapid urban sprawl. Agroecology provides a positive and important response to these challenges. There are other reasons that motivate the choices made: health, the need to maintain family farms, the quality of the produce, the shelf life and taste, and the guarantee of markets to sell the produce.

The health and safety issue is a key one in the eyes of the consumers themselves. Thus in the focus group in Benin, the members of the Benin Community Supported Agriculture group were unanimous: they can only access some of the produce they need through the CSA. They have to buy the rest at the market, as the CSA doesn't produce a sufficient variety of fruit and vegetables as of now. The main reason for joining the CSA in Benin is nevertheless for health reasons. The following slogan explains how much of an effort the consumers are prepared to make: "Heath doesn't come with a price tag" is their collective reply.

It is relevant to note that the producers in the Sub-Region freely admit to mixing

agricultural practices and combining conventional agriculture with organic/agroecological farming. The objective is to test and compare the performance of the two approaches. Many conventional producers also use organic techniques for their own family's consumption and conventional for selling to the public.

Table 4 - Obstacles to transitioning to agroecology

Country	Technical reconversion	Lack of support	Product appearance	Issue of accessing organic inputs/ cost of capital	Longer production cycle	Involves more hard physical work
Benin	6	4	5	3	2	X
Burkina Faso	6	5	X	4	3	X
Côte d'Ivoire	X	5	X	x	X	6
Ghana	X	X	X	6	X	X
Mali	6	X	X	X	X	X
Senegal	X	1	X	X	X	X
Togo	6	4	5	43	2	1
TOTAL	24	19	10	16	7	7

The main challenge that was identified in transitioning to agroecology is clearly the lack of institutional support. The only grant support measure mentioned for Ghana is a State grant for the use of fertilisers. In Mali there is almost no State support; neither ECOWAS not the State of Mali really support this transition. There is no clear vision of Peasant Agroecology at ECOWAS and/or governmental level. There is however local support and some municipalities are interested in developing peasant agroecology at local level.

In Burkina Faso there is some state support for agroecology. There is still a crying need for this kind of support to be up-scaled at ECOWAS level. If it were to be integrated into the ECOWAP+10 regional plan, it would provide the much-needed impetus for peasant agroecology throughout the Sub-Region. This needs to be linked to both the up-scaling of peasant agroecology training schools such as the one in Sélingué (Nyéléni) and combined with consumer awareness-raising throughout the Sub-Region.

In all the group interviews, there is a general expression of regret that the decision-making process does not provide greater support for the transition actors. Policy is initially jointly determined together with the farmers' organisations and civil society in a "democratic showcase process", but they are practically excluded from the finalisation and implementation, which remain in the hands of the government and lobby groups that represent private sector interests and organisations that are supposed to represent the whole agricultural sector.

In Mali, we are well aware that if the peasant organisations are to play a real role,

they need to impact the balance of power through their actions and advocacy. Recent examples such as the land laws, that were influenced by the peasant organisations thanks to the pressure brought to bear on public authorities and mass mobilisations organised by the peasant agroecology movement through the CNOP have proved highly effective.

In Benin, the State is currently introducing an agricultural development plan to meet three key challenges: food security, increase in income and improved productivity and attractiveness of farming and the rural sector. This plan is called the Strategic Relaunch of the Agricultural Sector. It contains a series of key measures: supply of fertilisers, mechanisation; establishment of support structures to develop sectors, a fund, loans and specific insurance for agriculture.

This plan therefore appears to prioritise large-scale monoculture. It mainly involves projects to redesign large-scale water management. It also includes improved support for producers through recruiting extension services technicians, and there is a strong likelihood that there will be a strong industrial agriculture trend. This does however remain an interesting initiative. It could be strengthened by stronger relays at Sub-Regional level to support recognition for agroecology. ECOWAP+10 or the Detailed Programme for Development of African Agriculture (DPDAA) that was launched in Senegal in 2015 with a timeline of 2025 should be anchored in the initiatives that are heading in the right direction. It should promote more ambitious objectives to strengthen family farming and agroecology as a key means of meeting the major environmental and social challenges of the future.

The decision-making mechanism in all the countries studied is strongly hierarchical: State actors alone are responsible for decision-making in the framework of the big sub-regional organisations. Nevertheless some rural development plans include the participation of activist NGOs that promote the inclusion of agroecology. Their proposals however generally fall on deaf ears and are rarely taken into account.

The counterpart of this lack of support is the difficulty to support the technical reconversion of actors. In Ghana, the "*lack of qualified labour and the intense nature of human work needed for sustainable agriculture*" were mentioned in the focus groups. The transition to agroecology demands a high level of training, and is frequently followed by an initial drop in profits and yields, and a longer production cycle. Agroecology therefore requires too much personal investment. It implies putting the conservation of natural resources and social benefits above those of immediate profitability. Yet given the almost non-existence of institutional support, access to organic inputs is complicated. These challenges explain the fact that it is the better-off producers who initially opt for this model of production. These producers can afford to face the risks of agroecological production.

Table 5 - Factors of risk and loss in agroecology

Country	Pests and diseases	Availability and price of products to treat crops	Excess humidity	Access to markets	Conventional products more accessible as cheaper and subsidised	Seed quality	Insecurity of land tenure and land grabbing	Weeds	Traceability	High personal investment
Benin	5	4	3	2	1	X	X	X	X	X
Burkina Faso	4	X	X	X	X	3	1	5	2	X
Côte d'Ivoire	3	X	X	X	X	1	X	2	X	4
Ghana	X	X	X	5	4	X	X	X	X	X
Mali	X	X	X	X	5	X	X	X	X	X
Senegal	5	4	X	X	3	X	X	X	X	X
Togo	3	X	X	X	x	2	X	4	1	X
Total	19	8	3	7	13	6	1	11	3	4

One of the key factors of risk is the lack of qualified, motivated agricultural labour. This was emphasised in the focus group interviews in Burkina Faso. This group also insisted on the fact that all the major factors of risk were in various ways linked to the lack of training and motivation of the actors. The agricultural workers sometimes simply don't understand the relevance of some agroecological practice that appears to be demanding; weed control is time-consuming; pest and disease management imply greater agronomical knowledge than in conventional farming; the seed quality implies higher skill levels for those peasants involved in these processes.

The following solutions to these multiple challenges were formulated by the actors themselves: training and organisation of producers and structuring of the sector lead to strengthening of cooperation with the processors, planning crops and strengthening capacity for producers and experience sharing.

Training in agroecological practice is complicated by a lack of extension services for producers who decide to go down this road. Producers often have to train themselves on the job, look up the solutions on-line, or ask those few support structures that do exist for advice. It is however worth noting the recent publication in Burkina Faso of good agricultural practice, thanks to the technical Centre CNABio. Some NGOs are holding an increased number of training sessions and commented farm visits.

Amap-Bénin for example has participated in several training projects on organic agriculture as well as farm management, such as bookkeeping. In 2016 they were able to recruit 2 technicians to support growers and help them to keep their books and files up to date. They also train them to keep written records and notes. It is important to note that many small-scale peasant farmers in West Africa have no idea whatsoever of book-keeping and filing, and are often discriminated against because of this.

6 - Challenges to the development of agroecology

Country	Insufficient market demand	Competition with conventional agriculture	Lack of public policy support or favourable legislation	Lack of training for producers and processors	Lack of information, awareness and communication
Benin	5	4	3	X	X
Burkina Faso	X	X	5	X	4
Côte d'Ivoire	X	X	5	X	4
Ghana	5	X	X	X	X
Mali	X	X	X	5	X
Senegal	4	2	5	3	X
Togo	X	X	X	5	X
Total	14	6	18	13	8

Agroecology is currently developing in West Africa due to raised awareness brought on by the multiple health and safety scandals around food as well as certain studies that have linked some pathologies to bad nutrition as well as soil depletion. Nevertheless, the transition is a slow one as there is not enough institutional support. Agroecology does not have a favourable political support structure and information as well as awareness-raising campaigns and communication are too few and far between. However it is important to note that there is occasional institutional support, through the work of the actors themselves. In Burkina Faso, for example, ECOWAS supports agroecology through the *Organic Label* project (Label bio). The Africa-Europe platform also supports the activities of some producers.

The West African actors expressed regrets that the current agricultural policies do not provide them with enough support for their activities and fail to reach the overall objectives that were set. There is a considerable need for additional funding, access to markets, land for growing and storage, access to water resources, training, and for good water management policies at national, regional and local policy levels. The implementation of such policies depends on States and Sub-regional bodies. West African regional bodies are stakeholders in developing overall policy for the region, with State actors responsible for the implementation. And although civil society organisations are involved in the policy design, implementation and evaluation of the development of these policies, their point of view is only partially taken into consideration. Generally speaking, States' lack of

support for peasant agroecology is flagrant. The recognition that exists is not even enough to enable real and effective participation of peasant agroecology actors in the consultations around the development of ECOWAP+10 policy.

There are other constraints that are intrinsic to agroecology, such as the knowledge required to make the suitably adapted and functional tools that are needed. Access to natural products can also be limited: raw materials are not always readily available. But apart from the aspects listed above, the key element for farmers who decide to go down this road is that of access to markets. In order to understand the role of LSPAs from this point of view, we have decided to analyse things on a country-by-country basis.

2/ COUNTRY MAPPING ANALYSES

Chart 7: Summary of existing Local and Solidarity based Partnerships in West Africa.

Initiatives	Country	Type of agriculture	Number of producers	Number of consumer families	Average farm size	Type of contract
AMAP-BENIN	Benin	Organic	45	± 255	0,25 hectare	Written
Jardin de Marlène	Benin	Organic	1	20	0,5 hectare	Oral
JINUKUN	Benin	Organic	5 (at least)	40 (unconfirmed)	2 hectares	
Les volontaires de l'UAC(AVENTIS)	Benin	Organic	15	50 (unconfirmed)	1 hectare	None
Market gardeners from Atacora-Donga and Mono-Couffo	Benin	Organic	15	50 (unconfirmed)	-	None
BIOPROTECT CSA box scheme	Burkina-Faso	Organic	1500	200	0,25 ha	Written contract
BIO Beoneré CSA box scheme	Burkina-Faso	Organic	18	50 (unconfirmed)	2,5 ha	Written contract
GAS	Burkina-Faso	Agroecological	-	-	-	Oral contract
Bord champs	Burkina-Faso	Agroecological	-	-	-	Oral contract
Ferme au Potager	Burkina-Faso	Agroecological	6	20 (unconfirmed)	7 ha	Oral contract
Womens' market garders' groups of the North East (Nagabaré et Dinaoudi)	Côte d'Ivoire	Certified organic	25 women growers	20 (unconfirmed)	0,5 ha	Oral contract
Pfevisa supply groups	Côte d'Ivoire	Uncertified organic	30 processersworking with 50 producers	20 (unconfirmed)	0,5 ha	Oral contract
Légumes bio du père Syneguel	Côte d'Ivoire	Certified organic	1 producer	20 (unconfirmed)	0,5 ha	Oral contract
Yébé network	Côte d'Ivoire	Uncertified organic	5 producers (at least)	20 (uncertified)	2 ha (at least)	Oral contract
Le Potager	Côte d'Ivoire		1 producer	20 (unconfirmed)	0,5 ha	Oral contract
Ségou Association	Mali	Peasant agroecolo	60	100 (unconfirmed)	**0,25 ha/ market garden 80**	Oral contracts

		gy			**chickens/ year**	
Badalabougou Cooperatives	Mali	Peasant agroecology	14 (6 market gardeners 7 tree farmers 1 baker)	40 (unconfirmed)	**(Market gardening)**	Oral contracts
Sotuba Cooperative	Mali	Peasant agroecology	13 peasants	40 (unconfirmed)	**1 hectare**	Oral contracts
Weekly family boxes	Senegal	Sustainable farming aiming to become agroecology	80	50	?	No commitment
Promotion of food sovereignty through the showcasing of local resources	Senegal	Peasant agroecology	150		15à hectares (1 hectare per producer)	Written contracts
Support to secure access to land for intensification of agroecology of rural areas in Senegal	Senegal	Peasant agroecology	120		3 hectares	Oral
Amap-Togo	Togo	Certified organic	5 peasants (unconfirmed)	67 families	?	Oral contracts

Recapitulative chart by country

Country	Creation of the first initiative	Producers	Consumer families
Benin	2008	77	415
Burkina Faso	2013	1524	270
Côte d'Ivoire	2015	82	100
Mali	2015	87	180
Senegal	2014	120	50
Togo	2012	5	67

2.1 BENIN

Author: Amap-Bénin.

2.1.1 LSPA description

Local names: 1- Amap-Bénin; 2- Jardin de Marlène; 3- JINUKUN; 4- Les volontaires de l'UAC (AVENTIS); 5- Atacora-Donga and Mono-Couffo market gardeners.
Amap-Bénin: 45 producers and 255 consumer families; Jardin de Marlène: 1 producer, 20 consumer families; Les volontaires de l'UAC (AVENTIS): 15 producers, number of consumer families unknown(50?); Atacora-Donga and Mono-Couffo, market gardeners: 15 producers, number of consumer families unknown (50?).

2.1.2 Agricultural exports, the leading source of wealth in Benin

Benin is a thin strip of land in West Africa that covers 112,622 km^2. It runs for 700 km on a North-South axis, from the river Niger in the north, to the Atlantic Ocean in the South. The maximum width of the country is 324 km. There are just over 10 million inhabitants. Agriculture represents the main source of wealth for the country, and accounts for 32.7% of GDP on average. 75% of export earnings come from agriculture as well as 15% of State revenue. It also accounts for 70% of employment.

Arable land represents just 25% of the total landmass, and is 2.6 million hectares. 300,00 hectares can be irrigated. The number of farms is estimated at around 550,000, according to statistics that go back to 2008. Most of these are small or medium-sized family farms, and practice diversified farming, often including both animals and crops. The average size is estimated at 1.7 hectares, although 34% are less than one hectare. Only 5% of farms in the South, and 20% in the North are more than 4 hectares.

2.1.3 From "The first CSA in West Africa" to the Amap-Benin network: the history of the LSPAs in Benin

CSA (LSPs) originated in 2008 in Cotonou at the *"Ferme du Bien Être"*, founded by Edgar Déguénon, a young man from a farming family. It was supported by the French Embassy in Benin and the French agricultural training network in Benin. Edgar travelled to France to train in organic agriculture. Community Supported Agriculture (Amaps) was then starting to flourish in France. Edgar says: *"I had read up on the Amap model for more than two years before travelling to France for a 1-month period of training. While I was there, I visited several CSAs (Amap), and asked a lot of questions. I already had experience in the various aspects: I was a grower, harvester, and sold my own produce. This meant that I understood and knew about all the aspects involved in CSA".*

Initially the Amap was able to use 1.5 hectares of land made available by the State, just outside Cotonou. Amap-Benin started with just 8 families. Edgar explains: "*The first clients were friends, or members of clubs. They already knew what they were signing up for. The message spread by word of mouth, and other people became interested in joining. I soon had to train other producers to be able to meet the demand*".[12]

For Edgar Deguénon, the partnership is the backbone of CSA*: "Amaps are local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers. Nothing can be done on a unilateral basis (…). There are many parameters that partners need to discuss, such as the kind of produce that we can deliver, the distribution point, the cost, and how often to deliver… These are all part of the partnership agreement, and none of this can be decided unilaterally. To be successful, it involves a series of meetings: sometimes everything can be sorted out in a single meeting, sometimes not. It all depends. Even if things need to be fine-tuned afterwards, it is always the meeting with the consumers that allows this to be done. For example the price might need to be increased, as the inputs are expensive…etc…"*

The first key ingredient: follow the French Amap charter

Edgar Duguénon defends the position outlined in the 2003 French charter (revised in 2014). For example the contents of the box:

"In a CSA, not all crops are always successful. In our case, for example, tomatoes have been really tricky this season. (…). In this case we inform our members that there won't be any tomatoes for six or eight weeks. There is no question of buying in what we don't have and reselling it to our consumers. You distribute what you produce. If there is any produce that you haven't grown yourself in the weekly share, it means that it must come from someone who is also part of the CSA network". Amap-Bénin does however make some exceptions: "In very extreme cases, complementary produce can be added to the shares, but we need to be sure that it is certified organic" states Edgar*. "For one or two products out of 12-15 different varieties, this might be acceptable, but no more than that. We really showcase and support local produce".*

Produce comes from 3 districts in the South of Benin: Sémin Kpodzi, Ouidah and Toré. The food is delivered to the consumers on a rota basis. The Amap-Bénin structure is responsible for picking up the produce from the farms and taking it to the distribution points. Amap-Bénin is also trying to raise awareness on how the produce is packaged: the fabric bags that are provided allow minimal use of the black plastic bags that are still used at all local markets.

12 Presentation at the seminar in Kpalimé, March 2017.

The second key ingredient: financial transparency

Deciding on the price of the weekly share as practiced by Amap-Bénin is based on taking the overall production costs into account. All the externalities, such as inputs, travel from one place to another, transport of the produce as well as communication, bags and wrapping are all included in the costs. In order to cover the cost of equipment, the following calculation helps: *"If I am to deliver vegetables to five- or three-person families based on local eating habits, I would need this or that".*

"When we talk about 'solidarity partnerships', it's clear that everyone involved in the chain needs to be a winner. A farmer who owns his or her land needs to make a decent living, and needs to be able to provide the same guarantee for the farm labour. For example, in our case, nobody earns less than the legal minimum wage. Some workers are even 25% above this rate; and the best paid is currently earning double the legal minimum wage".

Edgar insists of the transparent way in which the share prices are decided, the working conditions and the farm's financial management: *"If the producer does the right work up-front, the consumers easily understand. For example, you can show them your books, and explain the price you are proposing they pay. This is what I presented in spread-sheet form at the first meetings. When people saw that, they were convinced, and signed up right away. I went home with over 30 000CFA's worth of subscriptions in my pocket. We dropped by to see them during the week with a contract. People read it and signed it".*

The third ingredient: flexible share formulas

Amap-Bénin offers a choice of three different kinds of box: a full share costs 9,500 CFA; a half-share is 5,000 CFA and there are also shares at 3,500 CFA and 2,500 CFA for people who are less well-off or who do not wish to receive the exotic vegetables.

Amap-Bénin uses the model of the French Amap Charter[13] in terms of advance funding, which provides a financial basis. Some members commit to this, and pay a six-month advance subscription; some even commit for a full year. In other cases it is 3 months or even one month. Some others prefer to take a trial share. When the shares are being prepared, there are always one or two spare bags. And although the basic principle is that the shares are dropped off at an agreed point where they can be picked up on specific days and at specific times, there can be special arrangements. If people are away, they can cancel their share during their absence, on condition that they have given advance warning. *"But if a member doesn't show*

13 Mouvement interrégional des Amap (Miramap) Charte des Amap , Association pour le Maintien d'une Agriculture Paysanne, March 2014 avaialble in pdf form in French on http://miramap.org/IMG/pdf/charte_des_amap_mars_2014-2.pdf

up, they lose that share. It's part of the contract", explains Edgar. Pick up days can be changed if there is a public holiday, and reminders and information is sent out by text messages or WhatsApp. The fact that the drop off-point is a shop also means that shares that have not been picked up can be kept fresh.

The fourth ingredient: the expatriate network

The first group of 18 consumers was created around the cooperation between Edgar and an agronomist he had worked with on many other projects, especially on training for producers. This French engineer mobilised his personal network to help find the first clients among his friends, clubs and people who already knew about CSA. These clients are all middle class. So some further efforts still need to be made to make the Amap more inclusive and guarantee access to nutritious local products for a greater number of people.

This initiative is not the only one in Benin. There are other approaches, such as collective local farmers' markets that are organised twice a week, as well as groups of family farmers who use peasant agroecology and are working to build trust with local urban consumers. All these LSPs operate without any connection with public institutions and without any official structure, but are supported by foreign NGOs or other international donors.

According to the participants in the focus group organised in Cotonou in Benin, the costs of organic production generally appear to be higher than those of conventional agriculture. However if we talk about true "peasant agriculture", where the farmer is independent in terms of inputs and seeds, or food linked to animal farming, the costs of organic farming become lower. The actors stated that their experience shows that the yields in organic agriculture are higher than in conventional farming when the right inputs are being used. The higher costs linked to organic inputs pays off over time, as the impacts are more sustainable.

Official organic third party certification (Ecocert) is recognised in Benin. Nevertheless Amap-Benin has chosen to use the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) that takes the pedagogical concept to a higher level, thanks to specifications and other certification tools.

Chart 9: Local Solidarity Partnerships for Agroecology in Benin

Initiatives	Type of agriculture	No of producers	No of consumer families	Average farm size	Type of contract
AMAP-BENIN	Organic	45	Approx 255	0,25 hectare	Written
Jardin de Marlène	Organic	1	20	0,5 hectare	Oral
JINUKUN	Organic	1 Association	40 (unconfirmed)	2 hectares	
Les volontaires de l'UAC (AVENTIS)	Organic	15	50 (unconfirmed)	1 hectare	None
Atacora-Donga and Mono-Couffo market gardeners	Organic	15	50 (unconfirmed)		None

2.2 BURKINA-FASO

Authors: Burkina Faso national organic agriculture council and Bioprotect.
Local actors: Bioprotect box scheme, solidarity purchasing scheme, Organic boxes, "Bord Champs" direct sales.

Illustration 3: Focus Group in Burkina Faso. Copyright: CFAPE Togo.

2.2.1 A predominantly agricultural country of essentially subsistence farming

Burkina Faso covers a surface area of 274,764 square kilometres and has a population of 19 million. The country is essentially rural and the main sectors are agriculture and herding; these activities account for 80-85% of all employment. This is essentially subsistence farming. But low agricultural yields, out-dated methods and climate change all contribute to the poverty and vulnerability of the population,

even though agriculture accounts for 40% of the country's GDP. Burkina Faso was listed as 185th out of 188 countries in terms of the UN Human Development Index in 2015. 41% of the land surface is dedicated to agriculture.

Organic agriculture was launched in Burkina Faso for export to France in 1984, by Tropex. The main organic production is cash crops such as sesame, cotton, soy and fruit. In 1995, 50% of global organic sesame production (S.42 white sesame) was being grown in Burkina Faso. Local production has increased fivefold since 1989.[14]

Organic production is concentrated in the West, in the Mouhoun area, as well as the East and the North. Organic production has long been aimed mainly at the export market, as well as higher CSP groups and expats. Thanks to the advocacy work and awareness-raising campaigns, this kind of production is gaining ground at local level.

2.2.2 Large-scale experience of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS)

Official organic certification is common Burkina Faso for export crops such as sesame, cotton, bissap (hibiscus sabdariffa) and shea butter. Official certification processes have been in place for over twenty years. The National Council for Organic Agriculture (CNABio) and its 42 member organisations constitutes the organic agriculture platform as well as the consultative space for all actors. Working jointly with IFOAM, CNABio has worked on developing national organic standards that are adapted to the national agricultural context. They were adopted in 2011. Several ministers, including the ministry for agriculture, validated these standards in 2013. The Burkina Faso organic standards promote the use of PGS for the internal market rather than third party certification.

CNABio responded to the increasing demand by initiating a lower cost certification model aimed at local and national consumption, based on PGS as practised in the international organic movement[15]. PGS is accessible to groups of individual producers. In the test period, 4 sites were certified in 2016 and 21 sites are involved in the current campaign. Successful certification means the BioPGS label may be used.

This test period began in July 2015 with 6 selected organisations that are members of CNABio. They represent 126 peasant market gardeners and cover a total of 16 hectares. PGS is articulated at three different levels: the local certification groups, the operator offices and the Central Certification committee.

There are several local control certification groups that have been created by

14 Pascale *Dulioust, La filière Sésame au Burkina Faso*, Angers, Ecole Supérieure d'Agriculture, 2009, pp. 21-24.

15Federica Varini « Testing PGS in Burkina Faso : the experience of CNABio » The global PGS Newsletter, January-February 2017, n°3, volume 7, p 4-5

peasants, processors and in theory, consumers, who jointly visit the production sites of the other local groups to evaluate the production methods. Based on the outcomes of the visit, the group shares its opinion with the operator's certification body. The body follows the activities of several control groups in a given region. This body is generally coordinated by an NGO that works with the farmers.

They also assemble the documentation that is required for the certification process. The body takes up cases that do not conform and transmits all the appropriate documentation to the Central Certification committee. This is part of CNABio, but is it is independent in its decision-making capacity. It is currently made up of 4 volunteers who have third party certification experience. These volunteers check that the documents provided are coherent and conform to the standards. They may also carry out follow-up visits and where appropriate give final approval for certification. CNABio plays an operational and strategic role as they support and facilitate the different groups.

2.2.4 LSPA in Burkina Faso: an embryonic movement

The concept of LSP is still embryonic in Burkina Faso. It is practiced by a small number of producers, and is aimed essentially at higher income groups and expatriates. It generally takes the form of boxes of vegetables delivered by the producer or a middle person to the client's home or office. Some consumers do however go to the farm to pick up their supplies.

The **Bioprotect box scheme** is a registered as a GIE, an economic interest group (Groupement d'intérêt économique). The box scheme began in 2014, based on a joint need expressed by consumers and agroecological producers. An awareness-raising campaign and product presentation was held at embassies and hotels. This initiative followed the promotion of researchers according to whom fruit and vegetables grown using conventional agriculture methods did not necessarily produce clean food from a microbiological or chemical point of view. The residual pesticides found in some vegetables that were meant to be eaten raw are well over the WHO recommended limits. The short distribution chain enables producers and consumers to be closer and cuts down on middlemen.

The Napoko (Loumila) farm **solidarity purchasing schemes** (GAS) were created in 2013 together with the Zero Kilometer restaurant based on the same farm. This restaurant was opened to use the farm produce to cook organic meals. Women from 10 villages organised to meet the demand for produce.

The third i**nitiative that was identified is the organic box scheme run by the** "La Saisonnière" association. Women farmers launched a direct sales initiative to free themselves from middlemen-women ('les revendeuses'). They did this by supplying boxes direct to clients.

A fourth initiative is called "the Béognère box scheme". This association was initially created to train market gardeners in agroecology. The association subsequently set up its own demonstration site where the produce is sold direct to consumers. The idea of direct sales came to fruition following Pierre Rabhi's visit. He is the founder of Terre et Humanisme.

All these initiatives share similar challenges. Some of these are linked to the difficult relationship with consumers. On one hand some consumers fail to recognise the organic quality of the produce; on the other, the high cost of the boxes excludes many consumers. A second set of challenges is linked to the lack of institutional support in trying to market the produce: the lack of interest in agronomic support for organic production of seeds and lack of support for the transition to agroecological methods. LSPA initiatives also seem to suffer from a lack of sectorial organisation. There are not enough sales outlets and insufficient cooperation between actors as well as lack of control of the production chain.

2.2.5 Successful marketing models for local agroecological produce

According to the participants in the focus group, the main outlets for agroecological producers apart from direct sales to consumers are restaurants, supermarkets, mutual services, schools, the army and export sales. The produce is in direct competition with imported fruit and vegetables that push down the prices on the open market. There are however small groups of committed consumers who consider it is better to buy direct from producers. This guarantees the quality of the produce, traceability and also saves time as well as creating cooperation between producers and consumers.

A workshop was organised by CNABio with all these actors in 2016. Below we quote from the report on what has already been achieved in terms of capitalisation of the promotion of peasant agroecology in West Africa: *"Most participants confirmed that one of the key factors of success was that of setting up sales' commissions within the structures. The professions of farming and either direct marketing or selling to a middleman require different skills. The fact of having a team or at least a dedicated person who is responsible for commercialising produce enabled structures to gain a better understanding of clients' expectations. These commissions have had a considerable impact on improving various aspects such as crop planning (availability of produce), hygiene, presentation of produce and also punctuality. Most structures that had a special sales entity confirmed increased sales. Furthermore, keeping sales' records and client data bases has helped adapt production to market needs".*[16]

Burkina Faso actors also noted that increased cooperation between actors enabled achieving a higher level of client satisfaction and ability to meet needs by

16 Capitalisation du programme de l'agriculture familiale en Afrique de l'ouest, voire CFSI, Fondation de France, *Nourrir les Villes, défi de l'agriculture familiale,* ibid.

minimising breakdowns in supplies. Finally, one of the current fashion trends in Ouagadougou is the "eco-local farmers market", where consumers can avail of a wide choice of produce in one and the same place.

2.2.6 Specific marketing challenges

The challenges identified as **limiting the possibility of satisfying clients** are: setting up fixed sales points without ensuring regular supplies; production that doesn't meet consumers' expectations; lack of production planning: use of inappropriate packaging (plastic bags). Lack of or insufficient communication was also identified as being an important hindrance. Failure to develop communication strategy, lack of skills and low level of education of sales' personnel are also limitations.

Another possibility to increase the market for agroecological produce is catering. Several restaurants and canteens have already expressed their interest in buying organic produce, but they have a high level of specifications in terms of on-going health and safety. To meet them implies cooperation between actors and it is necessary to increase the structure of the value chain.

2.3 CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Name of author: COPAGEN /Regional Focal Point
Local organisations: **l**es Maraîchers bio des groupements féminins du Nord-est (Organic market gardeners and womens' groups of the North East); PFEVISA suppliers; "organic vegetables"; "the "Bord-Champs".

2.3.1 Chart 10: LSPs in Côte d'Ivoire

Initiative	Participants	Farm size	Organisation	Contract
Les maraîchers bio des groupements féminins du Nord-Est	25 women farmers	0,5 ha	Womens' groups in Nagabaré and Dinaoudi	Oral contract
Groupes d'approvisionnement Pfevisa	30 processers working with 50 producers	0,5 ha	Association	Oral contract
Légumes bio du père Syneguel	1 producer	0,5 ha	Individual initiative	Oral contract
Yébé network	5 producers (at least)	2 ha (at least)	Producer network	Oral contract
Le Potager	1 producer	0,5 ha	Individual initiative	Oral contract

The women's groups of organic market gardeners of the North East.
These groups started their organic production in 2012, with the financial support of the Helen Keller International Foundation. The primary aim was to increase households' consumption of fruit and vegetables. The main objectives are to raise awareness, promote and sell produce on the local markets.

PFEVISA purchasing groups
The idea originated in encouraging middle-income citizens' access to high quality products. The growers' organic produce is collected from the platform and processed, then distributed in Abidjan.

Père Syneguel's organic vegetables
The founder of this project initially produced vegetables for his personal consumption. Given the increase in demand, he set up a sales' point near the Korhogo market where he sells his produce direct to consumers.

Other initiatives: *Réseau yébè*; *Le Potager*.

2.3.2 A picture of agriculture in Côte d'Ivoire

The population of Cote d'Ivoire was 22 million inhabitants in 2016, for 322.000 km2, and it is the main economy in French-speaking West Africa. The country is primarily agricultural, with both crops and livestock employing 80-85% of the population. But the low yields and issues of climate change mean that most of this population is poor and vulnerable, even if it contributes to 40% of the country's GDP. In 2015, only 41% of the landmass was dedicated to agriculture, with a production of 40,000 tons of vegetables.

Organic production is practised in the North East and North of Côte d'Ivoire. It is aimed at the export market or upper classes and expatriates. This is due to the high costs of certification. Organic agriculture was launched in 1994 in Côte d'Ivoire by the French company Equitable, a company that exported organic cashew nuts to France. The main organic crops in Côte d'Ivoire are cash crops (cashews, cocoa) and fruit (especially mangoes). Thanks to the advocacy and awareness-raising, this method of production has gained considerable traction even at local level. As a response to growing demand, the local actors consider it necessary to introduce certification that costs less for the domestic market, based on the model of Participatory Guarantee Systems.

2.3.3 LSPA in Côte d'Ivoire: marginal initiatives in an agricultural landscape dominated by the export market.

In the North of the country, Father Syneguel began growing vegetables for his personal consumption and health. But with increased demand he set up a sales outlet at the Korhogo market where he sells direct to consumers. In 2012 several market gardeners started a project supported by the Helen Keller International foundation aimed at improving the household consumption of vegetables.

Following several research projects in Cote d'Ivoire it was demonstrated that the residues of pesticides in certain vegetables such as cabbage, tomatoes and eggplant are above the WHO recommended residual thresholds. Based on these findings, consumers have become increasingly demanding about the quality of food that they buy. This was the context in which PFEvisa, a purchasing group, launched their initiative in 2015. It is a short distribution chain that allows healthy, clean produce to be sold to local consumers, and also increases income for local farmers. The objective is to meet consumers' needs in terms of healthy food at a time when the health and safety aspects of food have become a key preoccupation at country level.

The growing demand for organic, healthy food led to the need to establish a system of labelling that would reassure consumers. But given the high cost of third party certification (FLO, ECER especially for cocoa and mango), Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) appear to be gaining ground.

The concept of LSP is embryonic in Côte d'Ivoire. It is currently being developed by a small number of producers selling to middle class national consumers and expatriates. It takes the form of vegetable boxes that are delivered by the producer or a middleman to peoples' homes or office. In all cases, the producers are using agroecology, and contracts are verbal rather than written. About ten different structures (associations, GIE, private farms…) are involved. There are no official representative bodies for the moment, and no connection with any public institutions.

The agroecology movement in Côte d'Ivoire does not have reference texts. One of the priorities in coming years is to develop a charter and specifications at national level to strengthen the framework of cooperation between actors and disseminate and strengthen the existence of LSPs.

2.3.4 Outlets for agroecological production in Côte d'Ivoire

Actors have observed a drop in yields when shifting from conventional to agroecological agriculture. This is followed by a progressive increase in yields, once soil fertility has been restored. There is then a reduction in production costs once the farm has become autonomous in the production of their inputs. Viewed from a long-term perspective, the main advantage of agroecological produce is that the produce has much greater shelf life. This all translates into slightly higher prices compared with produce from conventional farming. Reducing loss also means crop planning, improving marketing, organising producers and supporting experience sharing on a farmer-to-farmer basis.

The main clients are private households, especially managers and middle-income groups who live in cities, organic restaurants, supermarkets, the expatriate community and export industry. The kind of outlet determines the crop planning of the farms. It is important to note that sales are often confirmed before production, which is a positive element. There is not necessarily any price increase per se, but a vacillating market evolution.

Agroecology is developing fast in Côte d'Ivoire, due to increased awareness caused by the development of certain chronic diseases and soil depletion. Unfortunately the national authorities or ECOWAS show no signs of supporting the movement. Just a few NGOs (HKI, ARK, COPAGEN) have been supporting the activities of some producers thanks to the projects that are funded by their respective partners. The first rural development plan included the participation of civil society organisations fighting for agroecology to be taken into consideration, but their proposals were not taken into account.

The consumers who took part in the focus group stated: "*Ideally we like to buy fruit and vegetables direct from producers. There is a guarantee of the quality and*

traceability of the produce; we save time, there is better cooperation in the sales and the relationship between producers and consumers is strengthened". The motivations mentioned by the Côte d'Ivoire participants for buying agroecological produce are survival, health and environmental protection.

2.4 GHANA

Name of the organisation that participated in the survey: ECASARD – *Ecumenical Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development*
Local name for LSPA: Organic Farmers' Market (OFM).

2.4.1 National context

There are 28 million inhabitants in Ghana, and the surface area is 13,600,000 hectares, approximately half of which is used for agriculture. Irrigated land represents a total of 221,000 hectares. Agriculture accounts for 44.7% of all employment, with the service sector accounting for 40.9% and industry 14.4% in 2014. The primary sector is crucial for the country's economy as it still represented 23% of the GDP in 2012. The sector has made the most in the intervening years of the high prices for its main export crops, such as cocoa, cassava, yams, bananas and maize. Palm oil, cotton and coconuts are also important crops. Ghana is a net importer of agricultural produce, especially ready-to-eat processed foods based on rice, wheat, sugar and frozen poultry.

2.4.2 Agroecology in Ghana: uncertified organic agriculture?

Agriculture in Ghana is predominantly characterised by small farms. Most are under 2 hectares, although there are some large rubber, palm oil, coconut plantations and to a lesser extent, rice, maize and pineapple crops. Traditional agriculture uses light tools such as hoes and machetes. Ploughs are still drawn by oxen in many areas. Agricultural productivity varies according to rainfall. The quality of soils also plays an important role in agricultural production. Most farms practice intercropping. Monoculture is limited to large-scale farms.

Traditional agriculture in Ghana can be considered organic by default, simply because the use of chemical inputs does not exist and because there is continual soil enrichment. There is an important distinction in Ghana between certified organic and organic production that is not certified. It is the latter that is considered as agroecology. In the case of organic farming that is relatively under-developed in Ghana, there are few certified farms; this is due to various obstacles.

An important factor of motivation to shift to certified organic farming, is the high level of demand by industrialised countries for organic produce. There are an

estimated 30,000 hectares of farmland that are certified organic. This sector is dominated by large export-oriented farms and funded by foreign investment; they are frequently managed by expatriates. Local business people working on small or medium sized organic farms are often funded by foreign investments and the produce aimed at export markets. The percentage of organic production for the domestic market is very low. This mainly explains why these products are not available on local markets. There is a higher demand for organic produce than offer, which implies a growth potential for the organic market.

Crop yields in organic farming generally varies according to the inputs used and the crop grown. However in the long term they are generally higher than yields from conventional agriculture. The cost of applying organic inputs is high compared with those of conventional farming and thus generates the risk of financial loss. Measures have however been introduced to support agroecology. Compost comes from the Accra Compost and Recycling Plant (ACARP), a composting and recycling unit based in the capital.

Several labels exist in Ghana: PPRSD for protecting plants and reduced phyto-sanitary treatment, local certification and green labels such as Smartcert for fruit and vegetables as well as labels of private certifying bodies working with specific products, such as UTZ for cocoa.

There are many examples of hybrid practice that mix conventional and organic practice. Some farmers use organic fertilisers and chemical pesticides. It is more common to find organic compost used on ploughed fields, whereas this is less the case in forestry. All this makes the conversion process more complex. The difference observed since agroforestry was introduced is the increase in soil microorganisms and improved yields. Although there has been a positive impact on producers' nutrition and food security, few of the poorer producers are taking up this kind of farming.

2.4.3 The key challenge of LSPs in Ghana: expand markets to increase sales

Agroecological produce remains limited to export markets or small stalls in the big shopping centres, where they are aimed at the upper classes. The key challenge identified in Ghana is this access to markets: if the market expresses the need, the producers will most certainly adapt to meet it. Another challenge is posed by imported fruit and vegetables; according to local actors "they are killing local markets and pushing prices downwards".

Policies are introduced to support organic agriculture. But what is needed to help the markets to develop are warehouses and improved road infrastructure. The Ministry for Food and Agriculture has developed an agroecological platform composed of civil society and donors. This support has allowed ECASARD to develop training as well as the Slow Food pilot project Marché de la Terre. Nevertheless

there is no specific legal structure for contractualised direct sales initiatives. Consumers rarely make any commitment. Certain initiatives propose weekly or fortnightly commitments to consumers or adopting a specific organic product.

2.5 MALI

The birthplace of peasant agroecology in West Africa

Author: Coordination Nationale des organisations paysannes du Mali (CNOP). Local designation: *« Soumahonron sugu»*, translates as "Healthy product market".

Illustration 4: Focus Group picture in Mali. Crédit photo: CFAPE – Togo.

2.5.1 National context

Mali covers 1,241,238 square kilometres, and is one of the biggest countries in West Africa. It is land-locked, but with two major rivers, the Senegal and the Niger crossing its land. Most of the population lives in the rural areas. The population density is highly variable, with as much as 90 people/square kilometre in the central Niger delta area to under 5/square kilometre in the Sahara region of the North.

Rice accounts for 17.7 % of household expenditure, far and away the highest. The combined household expenditure on rice, millets, sorghum, sugar and meat comes to 43.5% of the household budget. The figure is over 50% if maize and tea are included.

Organic certification in Mali covers mainly organic cotton and two export crops: mangoes and sesame.

All the participants in the focus group represented peasant agroecology initiatives.

Place	Number of producers	Farm size for production	Type of organisation	Contract, producer-consumer relationship
Ségou	60	0,25 ha/ market gardening 80 chickens/ an	Association	Oral contracts
Badalabougou	14: 6 market gardeners 7 tree farmers 1 baker	0,50ha/Market gardening	Cooperatives	Oral contracts
Sotuba	13 farmers	1 hectare	Cooperative	Oral contracts

2.5.2 LSPs in Mali: The priority is producer training!

The first local solidarity partnership developed some years ago through a small organisation about 15 kilometres from Bamako. Others developed in Balaboudougou, Sotuba and Ségou. However for the moment the main consumers are foreigners and some civil servants.

However if these initiatives are to become more widespread, it would first be necessary to resolve the issue of how to valorise produce and implement the transition to peasant agroecology. Since 2011, CNOP and its allies have been engaged in a major training process in peasant agroecology. Over 400 "mentor-trainers" have been trained. They are organised in 5 regional commissions and are working with over 10,000 peasants at local level. All of them are members of at least one local association. The training consists of 11 thematic modules and leads to concrete outcomes, including processing units and collective marketing of produce. A shop has been set up at the CNOP headquarters, as well as direct sales systems.

The training of peasant mentors that has taken place in the Nyéléni International agroecology training centre for peasants has led to a charter being written to cover the Peasant Agroecology Mentors. All those trained are signatories of this charter. The text clearly lays out the values and ethics of Peasant Agroecology. In April 2017 the Peasant Agroecology platform was born in Nyéléni, and over 30 associations validated the Manifesto of Peasant Agroecology. It is based on 7 pillars.

The Centre was created in 2004, for the first world Food Sovereignty Forum. In February 2015 it also hosted the International forum on Agroecology. In September 2017, the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Nyéléni Forum were celebrated there, with the marriage of food sovereignty and peasant agroecology.

2.5.3 The key characteristics of short distribution chains and direct sales in Mali

In Mali there are several different approaches to direct sales and local solidarity partnerships. Their characteristics are as follows:

- Collective weekly sales structures
- Peasants' groups that practice peasant agroecology or are in agroecological transition processes; some of these are structured
- Product diversity: vegetables, fruit, fish, chicken, processed produce, honey
- Informal sales' structures
- Consumer commitment exists, in some cases with advance payment, but all contracts are oral.

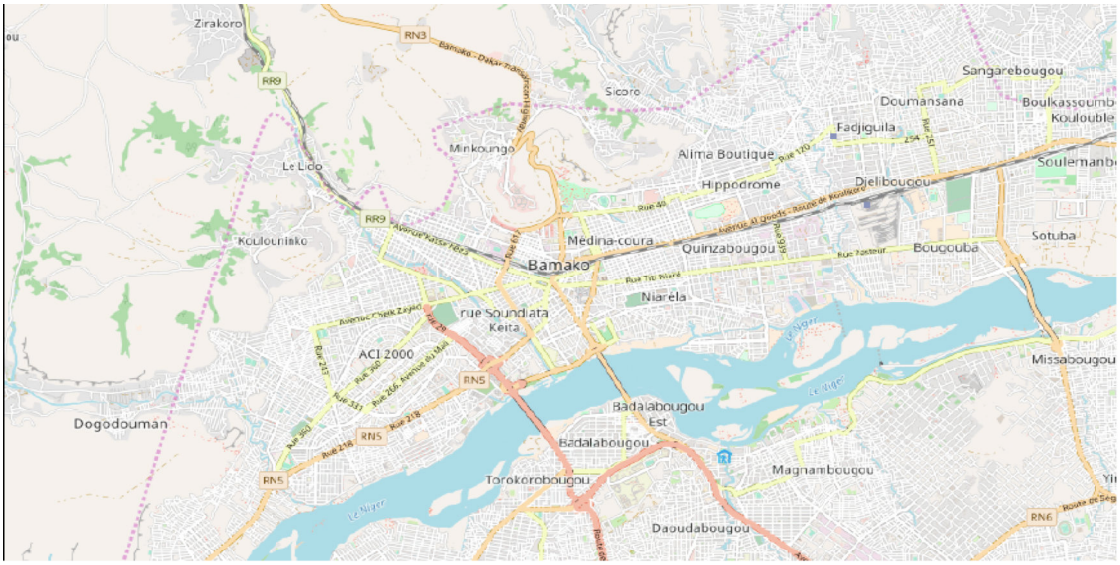

Illustration 5: Carte de Bamako, avec les quartiers de Badalabougou et Sotuba, Open Street Map.

2.5.3 Main LSPA experiences in Mali

The Badalabougou experience

This initiative springs from the creation of a union of market gardeners to fight for their right to re-establish themselves on the land. An area of 100 hectares dedicated to market gardening was set up in Samanko, 20 kilometres from Bamako. It is totally dedicated to agroecological production, and no chemical inputs at all are used. Over 300 market gardeners (136 of them are women) are working 0.25 hectares each. A sales outlet has also been established in Badalabougou for their produce. Potential consumers have been identified, essentially from among the expatriate community. The main challenges are the lack of communication on this project, the narrow market and regular access to water for irrigation.

The Sotuba experience

This initiative was launched by an expatriate who enabled a group of producers to come together and gave them access to a sales outlet where producers sell direct to consumers. The consumers, especially the foreigners can buy what they want by the kilo, but in exchange for this, they pay the producers in advance. Prices are set by the producers. There are regular mini-markets. The produce includes the following: fruit, vegetables, chickens, live fish and processed foods. The producers are based up to 20 kilometres from Bamako.

The Ségou experience

This experience was established by the farm-school in Benkadibougou. It consists of an annual training programme in agroecology for about 20 young people planning to set up as farmers. These youths produce food that is healthy and highly sought

after. In this framework includes poultry, using local breeds. This was thanks to the producers who are organised around Ségou. An order system with weekly deliveries on Wednesdays was also developed at the farm-school, as well as a delivery system at the Doni Blon (hotel training school), and direct sales at the Benkado farm. The main challenge is the lack of processed produce.

2.5.4 The challenge of "labelling" peasant agroecology produce for mainstream consumers

The number of peasant mentors as well as the number of peasants trained in peasant agroecology increases on a year-on-year basis. It is now important to organise this in terms of sales, and communicate on the qualities of the peasant agroecology produce, as well as to develop norms that are adapted to local and regional conditions. Once the sales points that differentiate increase in number and prices reflect the quality of the produce, the transition to peasant agroecology will become a widespread movement that will strengthen peasant agroecology and make it a source of employment and local dynamics.

Agroecological markets in Mali are still growing markets. They still need to be democratised. It is difficult to find these products at retail level, apart from some specific markets. It is therefore necessary to increase the number of sales' outlets for peasant agroecological produce. It is important to raise awareness that imported fruit and vegetables, particularly those from Morocco, have a negative impact on local production. Morocco's entry into the ECOWAS space is liable to aggravate this issue, as do the Free Trade Agreements that are in the pipeline.

Conventional agriculture requires a lot of capital and forces people to take up industrial production, which in turn pollutes the soil and leads to the vicious circle of indebtedness. Peasant agroecology, on the other hand requires a lot more work and therefore creates more jobs. Nevertheless the tools used need to be redesigned to make the work less backbreaking. Increased communication is also essential to raise awareness of "tastier"[17] local produce, the higher nutritional value of a diversified diet, as one of the risks is the failure to "label" them; this in turn leads to consumers considering them as identical to conventional products. For the moment the only real outlets are in a few target markets in the cities. Other segments need to be developed to access the rest of the population. The right to healthy, adequate food is fundamental for the development of every country.

2.5.5 The challenge of accessing the products needed for peasant agroecology

How is it possible to reduce losses and improve prices? By preparing and making affordable locally made natural inputs available to producers. For example, in the case of certain market garden seeds, the current situation involves buying

17 Collective interview in Mali : Bamako, 12th June 2017, with 17 members of the CNOP.

expensive seeds from shops and seed merchants; they do not have a high rate of germination and their quality is not guaranteed.

There is some hybrid practise between agroecological and conventional practice. But this is not satisfactory. It does take time to grow independently, so it is better to be equipped to reduce the work involved and create local units that sell agroecological inputs at affordable prices. This would solve the issue of the forced combination of the two agricultural approaches.

The transition to agroecology works thanks to on-going training and support by a network such as CNOP and cooperation that ensures certain products are available. It is important to be collectively organised so this can allow economic initiatives to be developed and disseminate good practice of coordinated peasant agroecology. *"No weeds are lost, they all go into the compost".* Paradoxically, this transition appears to be easier for older farmers than for young people who are used to chemical inputs that seem to make their work easier.

The first positive impact is on improved domestic consumption for families, as the produce is better and healthier. In terms of income, there is an important impact too. The demand far exceeds the supply. For example, conventionally grown beetroot sells for just 66 CFA/kilo, whereas those grown using peasant agroecology sell for 1,500 CFA/kilo

The thing that is still missing is the **visibility for peasant agroecology products**. We need to develop specific sales outlets and have good communication. A well-situated shop in Bamako could help develop short distribution chains and partnerships as well as providing a place for more regular exchange between producers and consumers.

According to actors in Mali, the criteria for success are the possibility to lead a dignified life from their work while also protecting natural resources, their health and jobs; to have a dynamic local economy where everyone can find employment. This implies creating processing and composting units, as well as making natural inputs and ensuring we have peasant seeds available for farmers to access.

2.6 SENEGAL

Author: Fédération des ONG du Sénégal (FONGS), Abdourahmane FAYE, President o f the Senegalese Network of rural actors for agricultural and rural training, FARSEN.

Local term used: *PPHF (Panier en Portion Hebdomadaire Familiale: local family box scheme).*

Illustration 6: Focus Group picture in Senegal. Copyright: CFAPE Togo.

2.6.1 Agriculture suffering from climate hazards

Senegal is situated at the extreme West of the African continent, and covers 196,712 square kilometres. There are approximately 15 million inhabitants, according to the 2016 census. The climate is tropical and characterised by the alternating of two seasons: a dry season from November to June, during which the Trade Winds and dry, hot Harmattan winds blow; and a rainy season from July to

October caused by the South-West monsoon winds.

Arable land in Senegal accounts for 3.8 million hectares, 20% of the landmass. The rural sector accounts for 60% of the active population and contributes to around 30% of the national economy. For the most part, agriculture means small-scale family farms. It is essentially based on rain-fed agriculture. In recent times, national agricultural produce has found it difficult to meet the country's needs. This period is also marked by a progressive fall in crop yields, increased difficulty in accessing everything needed to farm, a low level of appreciation for hydro-agricultural planning, excessive dependence on rain-fed crops and climate variations, and low return on export-oriented crops.

The National Development Plan includes an agricultural element called the national re-launching and acceleration of Senegalese agriculture (PRACAS). The Senegalese government's ambitious goal is that of food self-sufficiency and significant reduction in rural poverty by 2035. Unfortunately, path dependency appears to be at play here: the green revolution has left people marked, and local decision-makers do not sufficiently trust peasant agroecology to provide the solutions to the current food and agricultural challenges.

2.6.2 The first face of agroecology in Senegal: traditional agriculture short-circuited by middlemen

Agroecology is far from being sufficiently developed in Senegal. Genuine support would imply integrating it into national policy, mass training for farmers through national programmes and supporting peasant organisations in establishing training schools for agroecology. But designing and implementing such policies would mean far greater involvement of peasants in the decision-making processes. Senegalese producers believe "*neither developing the branch nor access to markets influence what we do. Our main motivation is how to adapt to climate change and sustainable soil management".*[18]

Senegalese farmers testify to the fact that **agroecological produce has a longer shelf life, including resistance to transport, storage and shelving.** At the market, unsold produce can be put up for sale again the following day without losing its appeal or freshness. This allows it to be sold at the same price for several days. The consumers who participated in the focus group confirmed this, and added that the taste was also better for longer, with no deterioration of appearance or consistency in fruit and vegetables.[19] In villages where there is no cold chain, agroecological produce can easily be dried or smoked without losing its natural flavour. It is increasingly sought after by clients in wealthier neighbourhoods and growing middle classes. These consumers are health-conscious and are prepared to

18 Collective interview in Senegal, 10th June 2017 with 18 participants at FONGS in Thiès.
19 Collective interview in Senegal, 10th June 2017 with 18 participants at FONGS in Thiès.

spend up to 40% more for their families' food than the price of conventional food on the market. They are especially aware that the act of buying in this way helps disadvantaged farmers and promotes another, more sustainable form of agriculture.

Most agroecological produce is however still sold on the same markets and at the same price as conventional produce*. "Nevertheless on the same markets, the quality of agroecological produce is recognised by the middlemen, who greatly prefer it to other produce, but are not prepared to pay more for it. We can see the same thing happening with the sellers at the traditional markets, who travel out into the rural areas to buy their supplies of agroecological produce, but only pay the same price for them. They sometimes even mix them with other products when they transport them"*[20]*,* said one of the participants in the focus group.

2.6.3 The other face of agroecology in Senegal: short distribution chains winning over urban markets

Some agroecological producers do manage to sell their produce to specialised, developed markets in partnership with NGOs and networks of processors and consumers. For example this is the case of the NGO Agrecol Afrique, who organise weekly markets to sell organic produce. The production process has to be certified by the NGO to participate in this market.

Another example is ENDAPronat who helped to set up the **Sell-Sellal cooperative** that has many market **garden sales points for fruit and vegetables.**[21] This cooperative implements many different strategic actions. The first is in terms of policy: following a market survey and experience sharing on the distribution of local rice, the cooperative has gained improved insight into how it can develop. The second action is advocacy. Sell-Sellal wants to influence the Seneglese authorities to act in favour of peasant agroecology. Their third strategic action is awareness raising: their aim is to raise awareness of at least 2,000 schoolchildren on the question of agroecology. The fourth is on access to markets: thanks to the FAO and the Dakar Town Hall, the Sell-Sellal cooperative has increased its visibility (communication and increased number of sales points) and has created 3 new sales outlets in Dakar, jointly with the mayors and town halls. By successfully expanding its market, Sell-Sellal has increased its sales margins and is progressively managing to operate without subsidies. It is also building progressive autonomy with the transfer of decision-making to the peasant organisations that are members.

20 Kpalimé meeting, confirmed by the collective interview in Senegal, 10th June 2017 with 18 participants at FONGS in Thiès.

21 This description is largely based on the project description contributed by ENDA : CFSI, Fondation de France*, Consolidation des circuits courts de légumes sains à Dakar*, Paris ; *Promotion de l'agriculture familiale en Afrique de l'Ouest*, project description 2015 ; CFSI Fondation de France, *Rapprocher les Dakarois des maraîchers*, Paris ; *Promotion de l'agriculture familiale en Afrique de l'Ouest*, project description, 2014.

FONGs (Senegalese federation of NGOs) **has successfully developed a new sales' strategy**. Their producers are organised in a federation and have set up a cooperative to target city dwellers who have good purchasing power. A sales' circuit has been set up. It consists of stalls that are set up in the wealthier neighbourhoods in the capital, managed by women who are members of the cooperative. Supplies arrive twice a week from the producer members; they are transported to the capital in a refrigerated truck. Clients sign up on a list for the next delivery. They pay on delivery of the produce. Producers are then paid after the produce has been delivered.

The system of local stalls in well-to-do neighbourhoods is highly successful, given the clients' enthusiasm and their positive perception of agroecology. But this success is not supported by a favourable national sales policy in the same way as that in place for major consumer items such as rice, onions or potatoes, where the markets are regulated by the State.

FONGS also organises an organic box scheme. This is essentially an agroecological transition project involving 50 small family farms of around 1.5-2 hectares organised as groups. This initiative is characterised by oral agreements between producers and consumers. There are specifications that define the production norms. And there is a rural extension services officer who supports the scheme. The term used in the specifications is "sustainable agriculture", which can be confusing. 50 family farms were selected to grow for this box scheme. The peasants were then trained on the specifications. A management committee was created. Its role is to follow the producers, the pick-up of produce and preparation of the boxes. The committee is also in charge of transport and delivery of the produce. A sociologist who was responsible for the CASH (Collective for purchasing weekly services) was recruited. It is she who facilitates relationships between producers and consumers.

UGPN is an association that is a member of FONGS. Since September 2014 they have been running a project called "**Weekly family box**". This project supplies families with boxes full of vegetables grown according to the principles of sustainable agriculture. The project is aimed at solving a daily issue faced by women farmers: that of the distance to markets, high cost and stress of transport, lack of time linked to their work and the uncontrolled price hikes linked to middlemen's activities.

The initiative includes 120 women processors and 80 family farms. The women processors were first trained in health and safety as well as quality norms. A consumer survey in the large cities was then carried out to gain a better understanding of their preferences in terms of vegetable oil and groundnut oil. Mentors ('ambassadors') who were the most trustworthy were identified for each zone to raise awareness of the importance of eating local produce (groundnut oil). A loan was set up to fund the purchasing of raw materials. Sales were then ready to

start. Sales are based on weekly distribution of packaged produce (placed in boxes) and delivered direct to clients in the different neighbourhoods of Dakar. The latter make up small purchasing groups; this is a considerable help in the marketing process. UGPN also plays a role in terms of raising awareness and informing clients by organising tasting session of produce at fairs.

2.6.4 Perspectives for developing agroecological practice in Senegal

There are various practical obstacles to the development of producer-consumer partnerships. Firstly, not many producers have the financial capacity. Secondly, direct sales are often paid by the kilo, without using scales. This does not build trust. Finally trust between producers and consumers is currently very low. This is also why the involvement of the big federations and peasant platforms has been necessary.

It is possible to scale up the activities that exist, but this would require some actions to be taken by public institutions. The State has no policy on agroecology; the research and dissemination structures have no programmes on agroecology; most consumers have no idea of the benefits of agroecological produce and are unaware of the stakes and challenges involved in developing agroecology.

Senegalese actors recognise agroecology through the Nyéléni declaration on Agroecology signed in 2015 in Mali[22]. They identify it not only with agricultural practice but also the principles of access for all to the Commons and desire to improve and share skills. Several indicators clearly point to the efforts made on this:
- UGPN's orientation towards agroecological transition;
- The process initiated by FONGS to develop an organic agriculture charter;
- The sustainable agriculture charter developed by FONGS;
- The ROPPA initiative to define a regional position for the national peasant organisation platforms on agroecology in West Africa.

The process that would enable family farms to convert to agroecology involves awareness raising of producers and consumers on the dangers for consumers of eating food that has been treated with chemical inputs; for producers' health working with them and for the soil in terms of depletion. The State needs to be involved at all these levels. Government grants should be given for the use of organic matter for composting, organic pesticides and natural inputs rather than subsidising chemical fertilisers as is currently the case. State subsidised biogas programmes should be developed and this should be integrated into the production systems. Another welcome support would be to integrate animal farming into the

22 International Forum on Agroecology, *Declaration of the International Forum on Agroecology*, Mali, 27th February 2015.

production system in order produce organic fertilisers and become independent.

Some initiatives, such as that of the CNCR for processing dung and turning it into pellets and the one for converting biodegradable waste into organic fertiliser should also be scaled up. It is important to explore other possibilities such as trees that provide natural fertilisation of soils and to train peasant farmers on organic treatments of various kinds.

Some of those who took part in the focus group in Senegal believe that organic pesticides are still too hard to find and too expensive, and that profits made on agroecological farming are similar to those from conventional or organic farming. In the case of cereals and leguminous crops, the overheads come to approximately the same. Furthermore, the difference in the quality of the produce is generally not reflected in the classical market prices. It is only once a market segment is specialised in agroecology or organic production that slightly higher prices are paid to the producers. In most public markets, the consumers are not in a position to distinguish organic produce from conventional, and it is not possible to develop any labelling process.

In order to reduce loss and waste and improve prices, it would be important to:

- Develop the production of organic fertilisers and pesticides by training people;
- Run awareness-raising campaigns for farmers;
- Label organic produce to mark the difference;
- At individual level, peasants need access to alternative treatment products. It is also important at collective level to strengthen the sustainable management of land and raise the awareness of all consumers about the dangers linked to pesticides.

FONGS is in the process of working on this awareness-raising and capacity strengthening to push all its member associations to progressively adopt agroecology. For the moment almost half of these associations are practicing sustainable agriculture, and aiming to convert to agroecology.

2.7 TOGO

Author: CFAPE-TOGO/CGPA-Bio

2.7.1 Information sheet on LSPs

Organic produce is nothing new in Togo and has existed for many years. The key characteristics of this initiative are the delivery of organic boxes to families and restaurants on an order-based system. There is no formal contract, sales are all direct and the system involves farms of an average size of 0.25 hectares.

AMAP-Togo was created in 2012. The initiator was a Franco-Chilean, Sébastien Alzerreca, better known as Zoul, who was the founder and manager of the ex-Mytro Nunya Cultural Centre. There are currently 67 member families. Most of these are expats. Several formulas exist: casual clients, different kinds of boxes at different prices, a system of special orders (Special boxes), and local boxes (for national members who eat mainly local vegetables). There are weekly deliveries every Wednesday. Some boxes are pre-paid, but this is not a systematic practice. Contracts are oral and not written.

Togo covers 56,785 km² with a current population of 7 million inhabitants. It is classified as one of the least developed countries. It is naturally divided into two climate zones: the South, with a longer rainy season (8 months compared with five) and the North. The South, with its dense forests is receiving les and less rainfall due to uncontrolled deforestation. This phenomenon is increasing and it is affecting agricultural yields. Togo's economy is largely based on agriculture: it represents 47.4% of the GDP, even though only 30% of the potentially arable land is under cultivation. Almost 80% of the population lives off the agricultural sector that is mainly made up of family farms; they are rarely bigger than 2 hectares. Even though it is still fashionable to use chemical inputs, not all producers are prepared to do so. Here and there it is possible to find *de facto* organic produce, although this is generally not certified.

2.7.2 The success of Amap-Togo and the failure of the organic farmers market

The CFAPE farm initiated a system of selling to the expatriate community in Kpalimé in 1992, together with other organic farms. They sell to people in Kpalimé as well as in Lomé, the capital. Expatriates were specifically targeted as they had a high level of awareness and because several of them were already members of this kind of initiative priori to moving to Togo. This means that they have a better understanding of why it is relevant to develop agroecological production and direct sales. These expatriates were among the first clients and helped to expand the

circle of clients by extending it to their friends and colleagues. This system based on orders worked well because most people agreed to pay a little more than for the same products produced by conventional farming.

In 2012, Zoul a World Social Forum activist arrived in Togo from Benin where he had frequented the organisers of AMAP-Bénin. During a conversation with one of our clients, he put forward the idea of an Amap (Community Supported Agriculture) to improve how produce was sold. This was how AMAP-Togo was born. There are currently 67 member families as well as occasional clients who sometimes place orders. Most of the subscribers are expatriates. But in order to open up to others, the Amap set up a monthly organic market in Lomé. A television programme was broadcast in advance to inform people in Lomé. The market created a broader consumer group, which in turn led to an increase in the number of boxes that were delivered. But there was a frequent issue with the fact that only some of the produce at the stalls was sold. And some produce got spoiled in transit, due to the bad condition of the roads. So the market was a mixed success, sometimes also due to the weather. The outcome was that it didn't always cover the farmers' costs. This led to the farmers becoming discouraged and most of them decided to end the adventure. However the delivery of the weekly organic boxes still works well, even if there is quite a high turn-over in clients linked to the fact that the expatriates frequently leave the country.

The following principles apply to the Local Solidarity Partnerships in Togo: there is cooperation and trust between producers and consumers; social relationships have been strengthened; the potential and local knowledge is valued; the profession of peasant farming is valued; the environment and biodiversity are protected.

The partnership model developed in Togo is based on consumers prepaying the boxes and on verbal contracts. Periodical visits to the producers' farms allow them to build long-term relationships of trust and mutual respect.

2.7.3 Perspectives for the future work of actors in Togo

The Togolese members of local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers hope to further strengthen the framework of working with other LSP actors in order to disseminate the concept more widely in Togo. There is a plan to create a CSA shop and develop more processing, as well as train peasant organisations in peasant agroecology. This also implies improving communication on the qualities of peasant agroecological production and developing specifications to showcase local produce. Togolese actors have started working towards organic certification using PGS (Participatory Guarantee Systems). Other areas of work are to raise awareness of family farmers on organic agriculture and roll out a strategy for advocacy to involve the State to support organic pesticides to make it easier for producers to use natural inputs rather than chemicals. This means training farmers on how to make these organic pesticides.

The participants in the focus group consider that the price paid for organic produce is 60% higher than for conventional produce. Reducing losses to bring prices down and maintain income levels requires certain things to be done. Firstly, organic produce must be easy to identify at the market, as consumers frequently fail to distinguish between organic and conventional produce. Agricultural production also needs to be better planned as must the marketing of produce. The branches also need to become more structured, organise the producers and enable experience-sharing. Finally, it is important to develop more processing for organic produce and develop storage facilities.

Those peasants who took part in the focus group said that they produced their own inputs, making their own compost and organic pesticides as well as saving their own seeds. They bought any remaining seeds they need and exchanged their seeds with other farmers. Information on agroecological practice circulates in different ways: from farmer to farmer (word of mouth), thanks to several NGOs that organise training sessions including the CFAPE, the CIPAPs GACUMA and GAVISA, as well as State extension training services such as ICAT and ITRA.

The primary motivation to become involved in the agroecological transition is to improve productivity and food security, as **agroecology is supposed to ultimately overcome the Hungry Gap**. Other motivations are the protection of human health of all consumers and of the environment and employment in rural areas. There is a full level of satisfaction, apart from that of guaranteed sales and the personal investment involved, which is very high.

The markets and target groups for agroecological producers are the following: families that subscribe to a CSA, restaurants, civil servants, specific stands at the open-air market.

Civil Society Organisations are not very involved in establishing, implementation and evaluation of the development policies. The smallest organisations are clearly ignored. Only those that are well-connected with the State are sometimes consulted. However in 2015, the government of Togo took a step in the right direction by organising the Agroecological Farming Forum in Mongo, in the north of the country. During this Forum, some producers were officially recognised as real agroecology actors in Togo, and awarded a prize.

Illustration 7: Anoumou Komi Todzro. Crédit photo: CFAPE – Togo.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMANDATIONS

Even within the group of those who identify with and support the concept of agroecology as defined in the Nyéléni Declaration of 2015, in most countries, the concept still needs to be promoted by those actors who claim to be part of the agroecology movement. The term remains open, and the actors often practice hybrid forms of production. This is the case in the example of hydroponics and fish farming in the *Multifunctional training centre for sustainable development of Rural women in Mali (Centre de formation multifonctionnel pour un développement durable*, *la Femme rurale)*. These methods are integrated into a strategy to strengthen their independence, their food sovereignty and diversification of their production. But the voices of those promoting agroecology are not unanimous on

the subject.

Urgenci also believes that agroecology is a powerful means of breaking the stranglehold of the international trade system on West Africa, where the EPAs (Economic Partnership Agreements) create a serious imbalance in the food markets. Working in direct value chains between producers and consumers and committing to one or several producers will ultimately enable the reconnection between producers and increasingly numerous urban inhabitants to be rebuilt. Adapted forms of urban and peri-urban agriculture, could enable people to access protein input to their diets. These adaptations also imply mass access of urban inhabitants to LSPA, ensuring that prices are accessible, but preserving the specificity of LSPA: regular, contractualised, long-term relations between producers and consumers.

This also ties in closely with the work carried out in the framework of "*Connecting Smallholders to Markets*". Urgenci made many active contributions to the Committee on Food Security on this subject, as well as inputting into the book collectively written by members of the Civil Society Mechanism[23] to enable this policy to be successfully implemented. We need to use this legal framework, even if it is not binding.

This survey should also be considered in the regional African context of the Convergence movement "Land, Water and Seeds", with a second caravan that is planned for 2018. LSPAs need to be considered as a social movement, whose efforts need to be planned collectively in the Sub-Region, around the food sovereignty movement, agroecology and solidarity economy as an alternative to the dominant economic model.

This initial mapping was carried out to identify existing agroecological practice, especially in terms of existing local partnerships between producers and consumers in this field. The aim is to then proceed to experience-sharing and capacity-building. The priority of this study is the right to local, agroecological food and improving the means of producers while simultaneously making this food accessible to consumers, including those with lower incomes. This mapping is just a beginning, a first picture of what we hope will continue to develop in the future.

The real cross-cutting issue that runs through the West African agroecology landscape is the transition from fast-developing target markets to mainstream markets that are accessible to all people. In an attempt to capitalise following a major programme that supported family farming in West Africa, the French

23 Committee on World Food Security, *Connecting Smallholders to Markets*, Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 2015, 8 p; Civil Society Mechanism for the Committee on Food Security, C*onnecting Smallholders to Markets: an Analytical Guide,* Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2015, 46 pp. http://bit.ly/2CB8MeY

Committee for International Solidarity wrote: *"The niche markets (produce with Fair Trade or organic labels, protected designation of origin, short supply chains and other markets that include a relatively limited number of consumers) improve the living conditions of family farmers. They may also support "better" food in cities in terms of both quality and diversity by creating a lever effect for the development of family farming as well as for the supply of urban markets: better paid sales encourage producers to continue making an effort in terms of improving the quality and the quantities of their produce; redirecting production aimed at the export markets or improving the quality towards local markets makes these products more available in terms of quantity for urban consumers. The current development of middle classes provides a new dimension to these niche markets: they were originally aimed at well-to-do consumers (national elites and expatriates…), but they now have a much broader market"*[24]

Several initiatives like the women's collectives that are organised in co-operatives or the micro-gardens in Dakar[25] are attempting to meet this challenge of access to these markets. To a large extent, the answers lie in the hands of the women actors: they are creative and have many of the solutions! But they need access to means. All too often, although they are the majority of agricultural workers and farmers, they are under-represented in strategic decision-making at all levels.[26]

States should recognise agroecology in all countries, and research needs to become a specific orientation in this field. A medium-term objective should be the creation of department for agroecology in all Ministries of Agriculture; as well as the introduction of agroecology as a subject in school curriculae. Another area that should be mainstreamed is that of awareness-raising in the field of education. A European project on education on local sustainable food, EAThink, enabled multiple activities in schools on this subject. Schools are where social classes mix, and are an important social lever for promoting awareness on agroecology.[27]

State and institutional support for agroecology in the Sub-Region is essential and ideally should intrinsically follow the recommendations of the 7 pillars of the Nyéléni

24 Comité français de solidarité internationale, Fondation de France, *Afrique de l'Ouest: nourrir les villes par l'agriculture familiale locale. Valoriser les expériences de terrain*, Paris: CFSI, Fondation de France, 2012, p. 33.

25 Giuseppe De Santis, Les systèmes alimentaires alternatifs. Un recueil d'études de cas et de recommandations de Chypre, France, Italie, Lituanie, du Sénégal et du Royaume Uni, Aubagne, Kernel editions 2014 pp. 71-73.

26 Louis Malassis, *Ils vous nourriront tous, les paysans du monde si…*, Paris: CIRAD-INRA, p. 45.

27 The EAThink blog, part of an educational project on sustainable local food provides much insight into the variety of pedagogical activities that can be undertaken on this theme. The Ouahigya school in Burkina Faso made major contributions. http://eathink2015.org/fr/category/blog-fr/

Declaration on Peasant Agroecology. Ideally the following recommendations should be implemented. They are of 3 kinds:

1. **Recommendations to States:** guarantee that all the necessary means for actors that enable peasant agroecology to scale up, are actively put in place. This implies ensuring support for:

   1.1 Guaranteed land tenure for communities and family farms, green belts and other dedicated agricultural zones;

   1.2 Natural cultivated and breeding to guarantee agro-biodiversity and local food and seed systems;

   1.3 Access to funding for necessary investments;

   1.4 The different initiatives: designated peasant agroecology territories, cooperatives/agroecological economic units including local cooperatives that produce agroecological inputs;

   1.5 Access to adapted equipment and tools for agricultural production;

   1.6 Network building, experience-sharing and training for the different actors at national and Sub-Regional level, including peasant organisations, producers (both men and women) research allies, State services.

2. Recommendations to the movement

2.1 Raise consumer awareness and training for producers are the absolute priorities for the survival and scaling up of these initiatives;

2.2 Guarantee farmer-to-farmer training and experience-sharing of good practice; strengthen the formal and informal training centres and support the building of a network of training centres. Training should specifically focus on women and youth;

2.3 Establish and disseminate collective implementation of Participatory Guarantee Systems at national and sub-regional level for peasant agroecology production and produce as a real alternative to third party certification. The condition for this is official recognition.

3. Recommendations on markets

3.1 Showcase and make peasant agroecology and its healthy, nutritious local produce visible at local, national and Sub-Regional level;

3.2 Encourage local solidarity partnerships that include a peasant

agroecology dynamic of local economic development for territories, including at educational level;

3.3 Create clearly identified peasant agroecology markets;

3.4 Include agroecological produce in public procurement policy;

3.5 Review the Economic Partnership Agreements that contribute to market deregulation.

Agroecology is one of the key means of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (in particular SDGs 2, 11, 12 and 13). It is a key level for achieving Sustainable Food Systems.

Clear follow-up actions to this mapping and implementation of the recommendations are all the more urgent as the transition appears to be accelerating. The recent guide published a consortium of Civil Society organisations testifies to this (Transnational Institute, FIAN, Terra Nova)[28]. It is addressed to decision-makers and calls for public policy to take the links between solidarity economy, food sovereignty, agroecology and re-territorialisation of food systems into account. This is a configuration that Urgenci has always defended and it is probably the key to achieving deep underlying change to the current food system. A recent example is the project carried out by the Mouvement Alliance Paysanne du Togo (Mapto) that was supported by CCFD-Terre Solidaire where over 600 "peer trainers" were trained in agroecological practice. The theme of the recent and successful FAO 2nd International Symposium on Agroecology[29] was that of "Scaling up Agroecology". The CSO statement and the summary by the Symposium Chair clearly show that the transition is underway and the question of producer-consumer relations will continue as a central theme.

28 Sylvia Kay, Emily Mattheisen, Paola De Meo & Ana Laragues Faus, *Public Policies for Food Sovereignty, Heidelberg : Hand on the Land/ TNI/FIAN/Terra Nova (*Think pieces series Food for Thought 1), 2018, 12 pp.

29The webpage for the Second Internaitonal Symposium on Agroecology can be visited at this address : Fao.org/about/meetings/second-international-agroecology-symposium/en ; the Agroecology Scaling up Initiative is available at the following address : http://www.fao.org/3/I9049EN/i9049en.pdf ; The statement signed by Civil Society Organizations is available there : https://viacampesina.org/en/declaration-at-the-ii-international-symposium-on-agroecology/

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Simon Todzro and Ibrahima Coulibaly undertook the long journeys full of surprises to all the countries, and met with the various focus groups. They jointly presented the results of this survey. Céline Perodeaud presented the analysis carried out by IPES-Food, based on elements of the collective interviews of the Focus Groups carried out in the various countries.

Judith Hitchman, who had launched the study in Kpalimé also participated in the restitution, adding some reflections.

Jocelyn Parot spent many weeks working on the analysis and structure of writing this report, delving into the recordings and the other material available. He has successfully linked it to the many other documents listed in the biography.

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COLLECTIVE INTERVIEWS (FOCUS GROUPS) AND FIELD VISITS

- Mali Focus group: Bamako 12th June 2017, 17 participants, all members of CNOP;
- Benin Focus group: Gapké, Ouidah, 22nd June 2017, 21 participants;
- Burkina Faso Focus group: Ouagadougou, 14th June 2017, 14 participants, all members of CNABio;
- Ghana Focus group: Accra, 19th June 2017, 12 participants members of the Rural Women's Work Centre and ECASARD;
- Senegal Focus group: Thiès 10th June 2017, 18 participants, all members of FONGS;
- Togo Focus group: Lomé 24th June 11 participants.

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Rebuilding the broken relationship between producers and consumers: mapping and recommendations of local solidarity partnerships in West Africa.

Local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers are an unlimited model for disseminating contract -based direct sales. Together with other forms of short distribution chains, they can provide an efficient tool for rebuilding these relationships. Consumer awareness has increased since the crisis of 2008, when food prices on the global market soared. The interest in agroecology in West Africa has developed. This is due to the increased awareness through the high number of health and safety food scandals and studies that link certain pathologies to poor diet as well as due to soil depletion. However for the moment, the consumption of agroecological produce at local level is linked essentially to the emerging upper middle classes and expatriate circles.

This mapping attempts to identify the challenges: what obstacles now need to be overcome to enable these growing markets, initiatives of direct sales and local solidarity partnerships between producers and consumers to multiply? How can we strengthen these initiatives, mainstream these models of consumption, and build acceptance for peasant agriculture? Given the infrastructure challenges, what are the needs and expectations in terms of support for public policies at local national, regional and international levels? These challenges are common to the whole Sub- Region: how can we shift from a target market to a mass market for agroecologically produced local food?