

Ouagadougou Declaration

Francophone West African Workshop on Approaches to Farmer-Led Research (12–14 May 2015, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso)

We – representatives of five countries in West Africa, of producer organisations, national and international research institutions, national and international development organisations, technical and financial partners – met on 12–14 May 2015 prior to the West Africa Farmer Innovation Fair (French acronym: FIPAO). The workshop was co-organised by PROLINNOVA¹ / PROFEIS², Misereor partners in West Africa, AgriProFocus West Africa, the Collaborative Crop Research Program (CCRP) of the McKnight Foundation in West Africa, the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) in West Africa and the partners of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The workshop had three objectives:

1. to draw lessons on approaches to farmer-led research in the context of agricultural development in francophone West Africa;
2. to formulate recommendations for the future in terms of research methodologies, their application and dissemination of results;
3. to set up and reinforce networking with a view to putting family farms and their needs (constraints and opportunities) at the centre of agricultural research in development in francophone West Africa.

At the end of the workshop, the participants formulated the following recommendations:

Governments (decision-makers)

- Institutionalise research by and with men and women farmers within the national and subnational agricultural strategies and policies, while recognising the importance and value of local innovation
- Assure access to national funds for research by and with men and women farmers to support smallholder farmer innovation
- Set up a national support fund for research by and with men and women farmers, where such a fund does not already exist
- Provide space for representation of smallholder farmers in the governing bodies of research institutions.

Formal researchers

- Consider men and women farmers as innovators and legitimate partners in agricultural research and no longer simply as recipients of the results

¹Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resource management (www.prolinnova.net)

²Promoting Farmer Experimentation and Innovation in the Sahel

- Strengthen researchers' capacities in approaches to farmer-led research, with a view to changing attitudes and behaviour in favour of collaboration with farming communities.

Technical and financial partners

- Engage, as much as possible over a long term, in supporting initiatives in participatory innovation development (PID)
- Facilitate access of smallholder farmer organisations, formal researchers and trainers to funding for farmer-led research.

Smallholder farmer organisations

- Promote approaches to research led by men and women farmers within all smallholder farmer organisations in the subregion
- Strengthen the capacity of smallholder farmer organisations in advocacy with decision-makers
- Assure a strong representation of smallholder farmer organisations in advocacy in favour of institutionalising farmer-led research approaches.
- Contribute to a support fund for smallholder farmer innovation by mobilising financial resources generated through agricultural activities.

Made in Ouagadougou, 14 May 2015

Organisations

AGRIFAM (Agriculture familiale et Sécurité alimentaire) Bénin / WECARD (West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development)
 Agrinovia
 AMSP (Association Minim Song Panga)
 AOPP (Association des Organisations Professionnels Paysannes)
 APF (AgriProFocus) Bénin
 Ashoka
 BEDE/ORAD-Bénin (Laboratoire hors murs pour la biodiversité cultivée)
 CCAFS (Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security) West Africa
 CESAO (Centre d'Études et d'Expérimentations Économiques et Sociales de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)
 Diobass Burkina
 FARA (Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa) / PAEPARD (Platform for African–European Partnership in Agricultural Research for Development)
 Farming Systems Ecology, Wageningen University, Netherlands
 FiBL (Research Institute on Organic Agriculture) / Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation
 Groundswell International
 IER (Institut d'Économie Rurale) Mali
 IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)
 LADYD/UAC (Laboratoire des Dynamiques Sociales et du Développement, University of Abomey-Calavi, Bénin)
 McKnight Foundation
 Misereor
 Mooriben
 PROFEIS Mali ADAF (Association pour le développement des activités de production et de formation)
 PROFEIS Sénégal Agrecol Afrique
 PROLINNOVA/PROFEIS
 REPAOC (Réseau des Plateformes d'ONG d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre)
 University of Abomey-Calavi, Bénin