Urbanisation Shapes the Vulnerability of Farmers in the Decentralised Benin

**INTRODUCTION**

- Benin Republic has started the decentralization since 2003 inviting local collectivities to the exercise of democracy and governance at the basis.
- The resulted urbanisation process in the district of Banikoara (main cotton production area of Benin and one of the biggest producers of different food crops) is pointed out to be responsible for the exacerbation of the existing land access problems.

**Objective**

- Study carried out in the district of Banikoara (Fig 1); Purposive sampling applied in four villages; 60 respondents supplied empirical data; Participatory workshop organised at the end of fieldworks; Sensitivity Matrix and Vulnerability Profile of farmers realised; Exposure and impact indexes calculated.

**METHODOLOGY**

- Five major climate risks with highly sensitive impact indexes affect agricultural production: drought (73 %), floods (66 %), fires (60 %), lack of rainfall (60 %) and high winds (46 %); and three resources having high exposure indexes are most damaged: soil (76 %), water (68 %) and vegetation (64 %)/Fig 3.

**RESULTS**

- The geographical remoteness of farms by preventing local farmers from cultivating more land. 85 % of farmers move to and fro between 10 km to perform farm works, 12 % commute daily over 45 km to reach their farms and only 3 % live on or closely to their farms (Fig 2).

- Three categories of vulnerable farmers: the “Waterist Farmers” (Agri-BF) shivered up in valley bottoms and most vulnerable to floods regardless of their residence, the “Nearist Farmers” most vulnerable to droughts (Agri-CP) and finally the “Farist Farmers” (Agri-CE) most vulnerable to wildfires (Fig 4).

**Conclusion & Outlook**

This vulnerability is likely to affect the national economy which is dependent on agriculture and especially on Banikoara produced cotton. These findings should be used to reframe both environmental and agricultural policies in the context of climate change.