

Community adaptation strategies for increasing resilience of homegardens – case study from Southern Burkina Faso

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Introduction
Agriculture remains the backbone for the economies of many countries and plays a critical role in feeding the world's most vulnerable people. In Burkina Faso, 32% of the Gross Domestic Product comes from the Agricultural sector and the sector also employs 92% of the population. Home gardens are common in most tropical countries and they play a vital role in supporting households in many diverse ways such as provision of food, fuelwood, building materials, cooking utensils, fodder for livestock, and cash income among others. As a semi-arid country, food production depends largely on rainfall which in most cases is not predictable.

Problem statement
Agricultural production is already affected by factors such as loss of fertility, land fragmentation etc. Additionally, crises, mostly climate change related have made it more difficult for most farming systems to remain resilient especially among the most vulnerable people. Adaptation measures are thus necessary to improve resilience of rural small holder farmers.

Objective
To assess community adaptation strategies for improving resilience of rural small holder agricultural systems to crises

Methodology

Data collection Tools

1. Rapid Rural Appraisal
2. Key informant interviews (10)
3. Personal observation
4. Focus Group Discussion (5)
5. Household interviews (80)

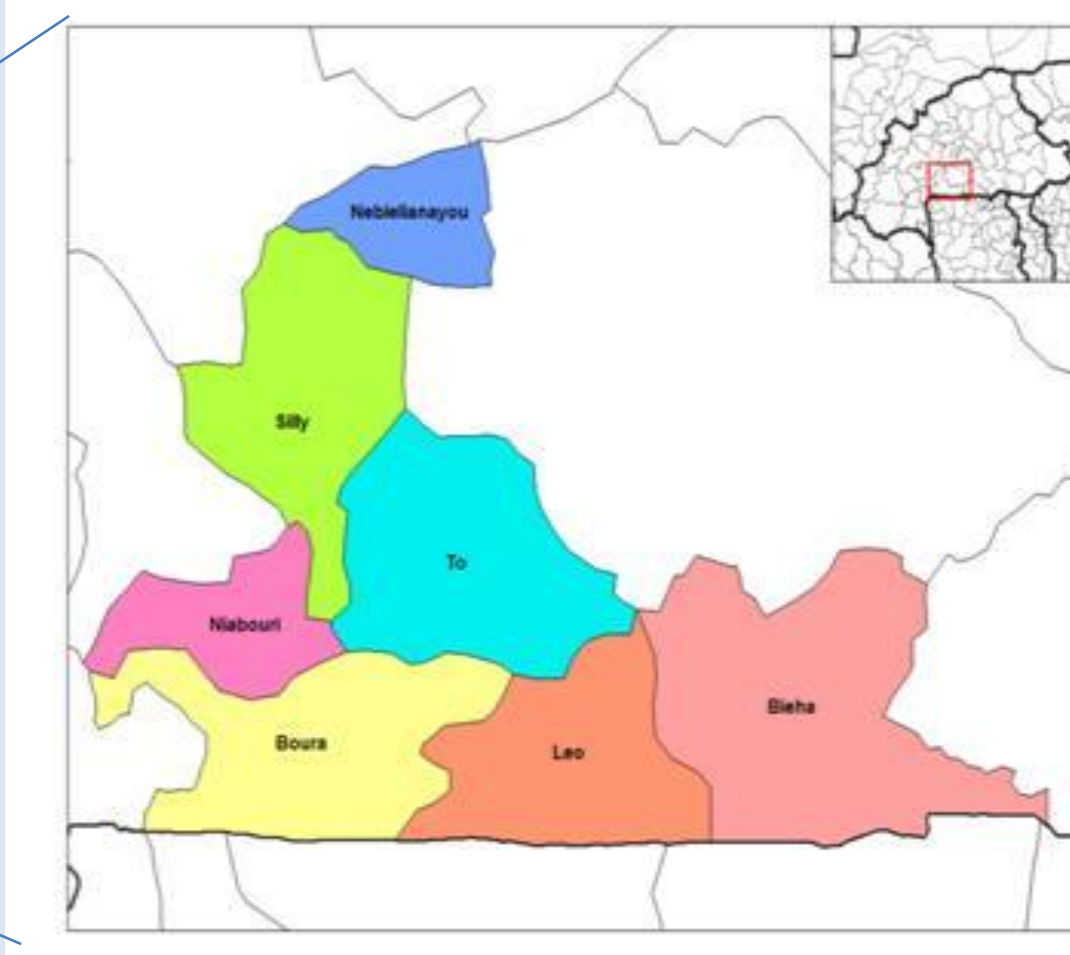
Study site

The study was conducted in Bieha Department in South West Burkina Faso from March to May 2011. The Bieha district was purposively selected for the study. Farming and animal keeping are the most important activities of the people. The population of the department stood at 25,634 in 2006 with a density of 14.6 inhabitants per sqkm.

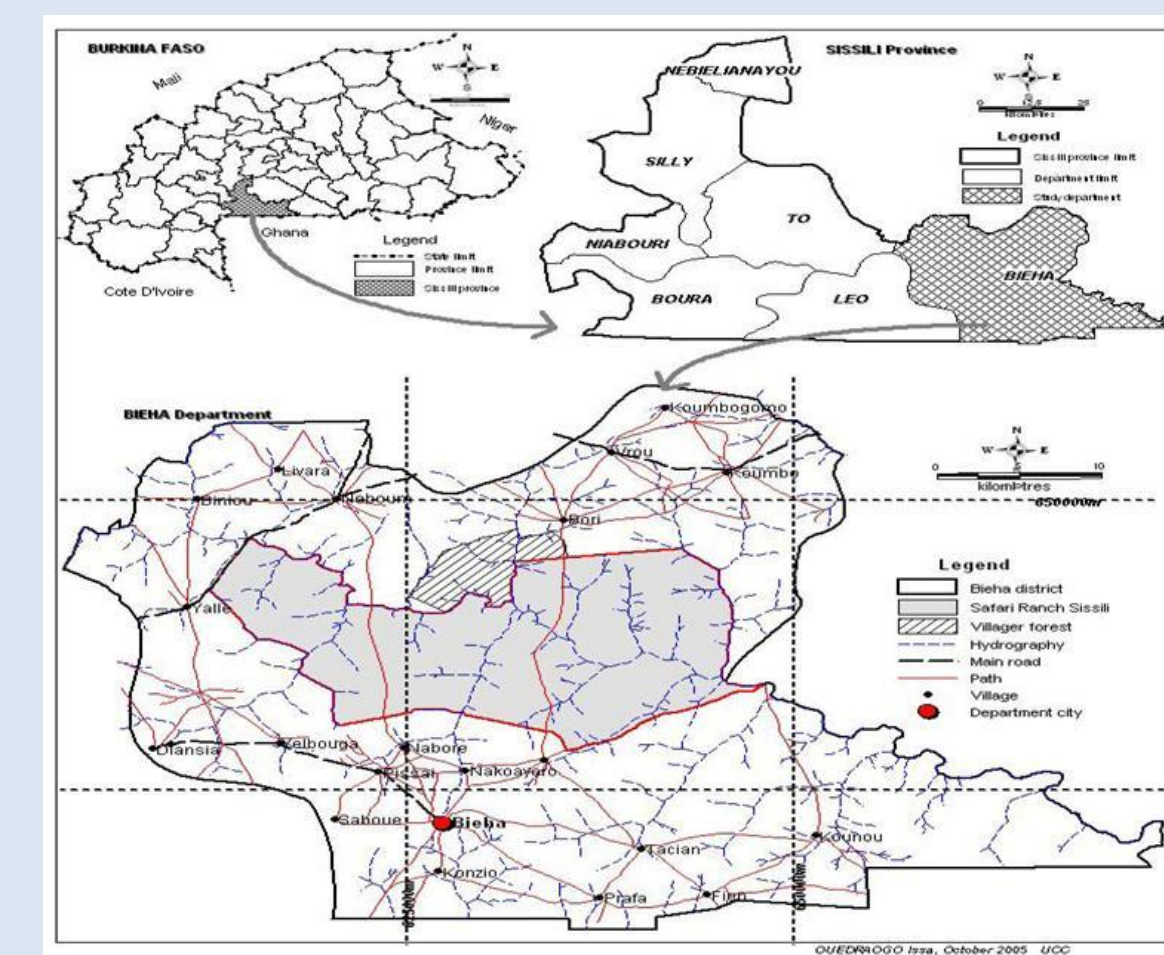
Map of Burkina Faso



Map of Leo province

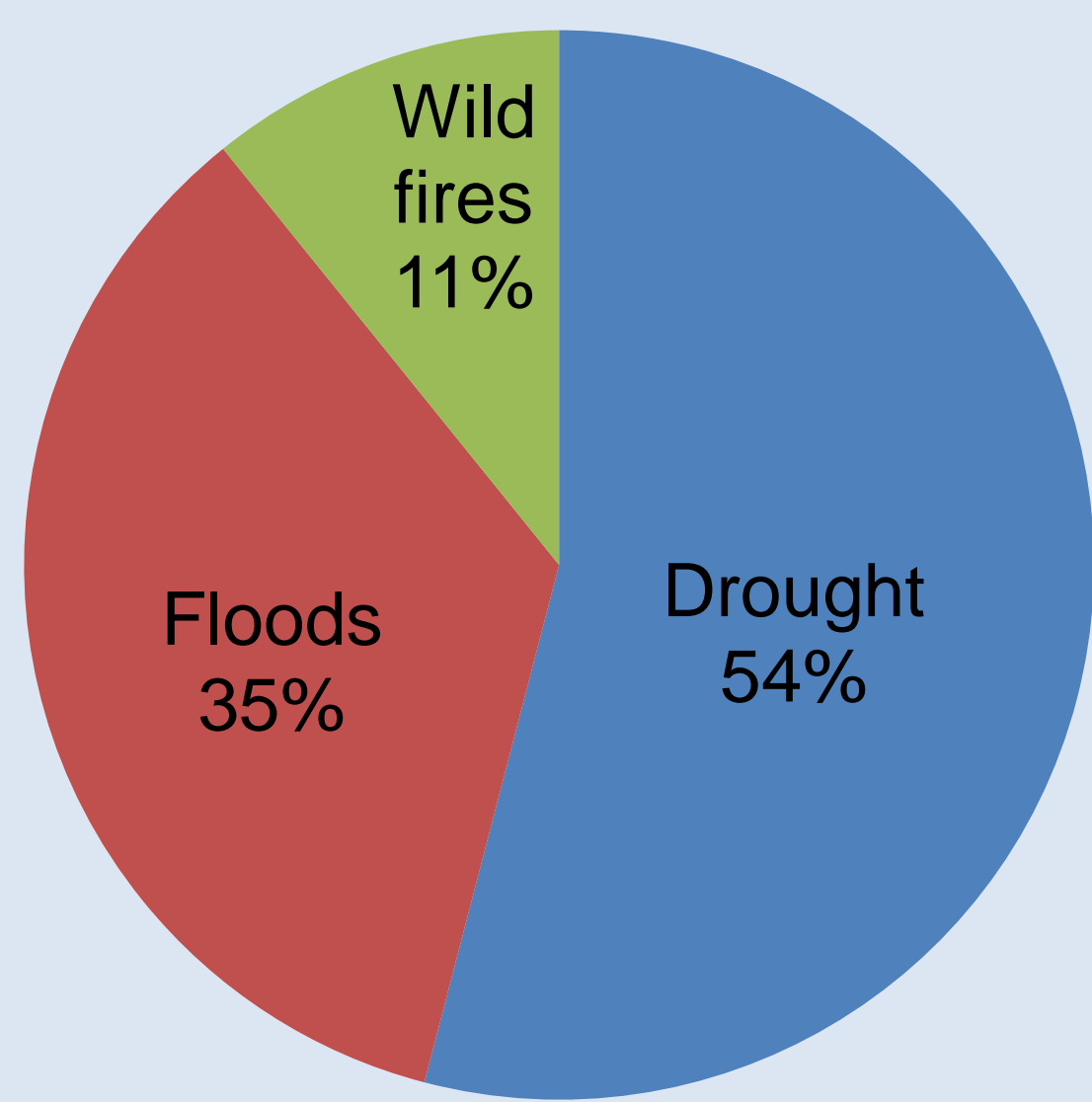


Map of Bieha District



Results

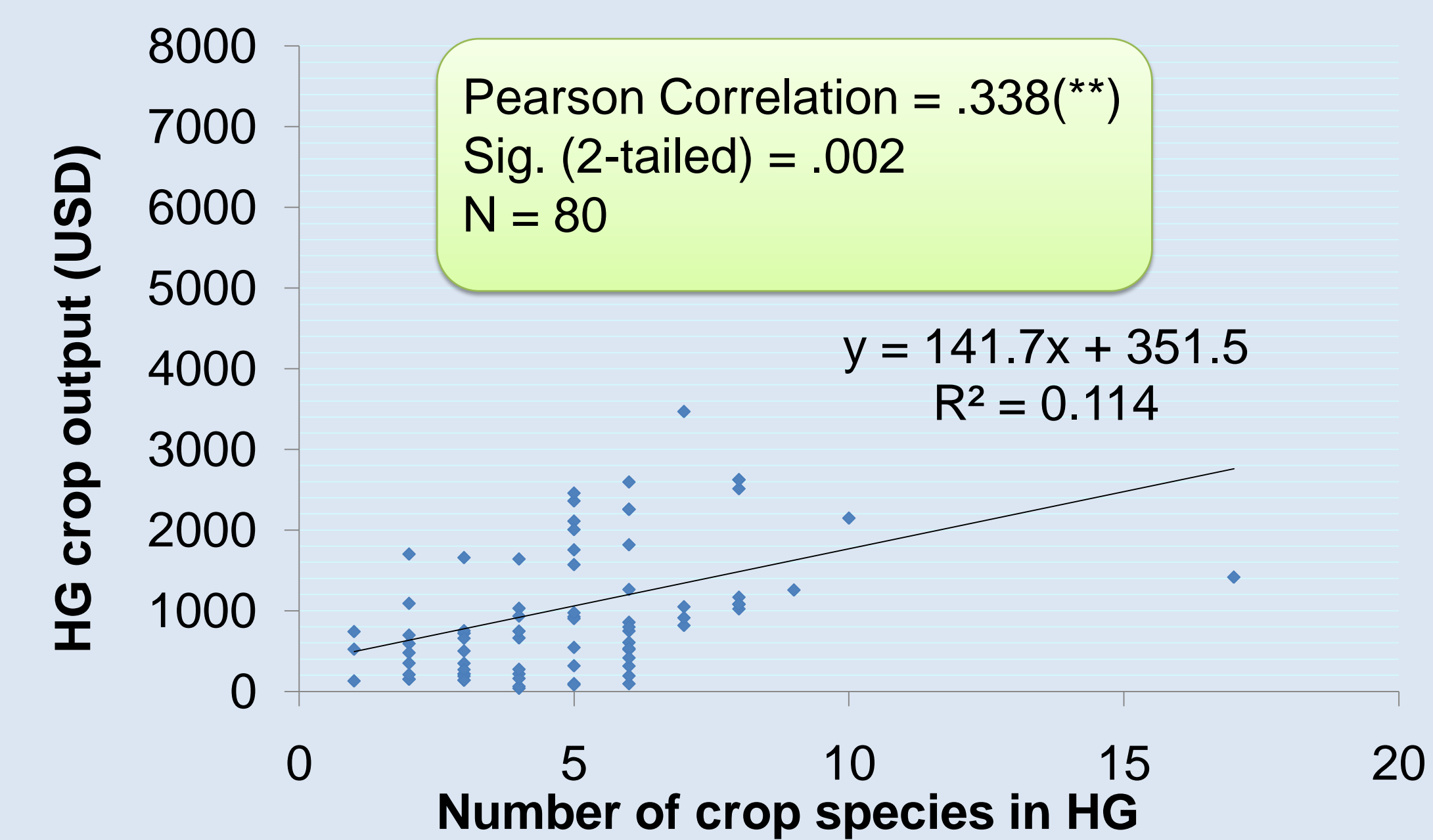
% of respondents affected



Farmer suggestions to improve Resilience

Individual farmer responses	Members of farmer associations
Improving soil fertility	Improving market prices especially stability
Irrigation farming	Irrigation farming
Loan facilities for farming	More support in terms of loans
Training in alternative income generation activities	
Education in best practices of farming and animal husbandary	
Joining farmer associations	

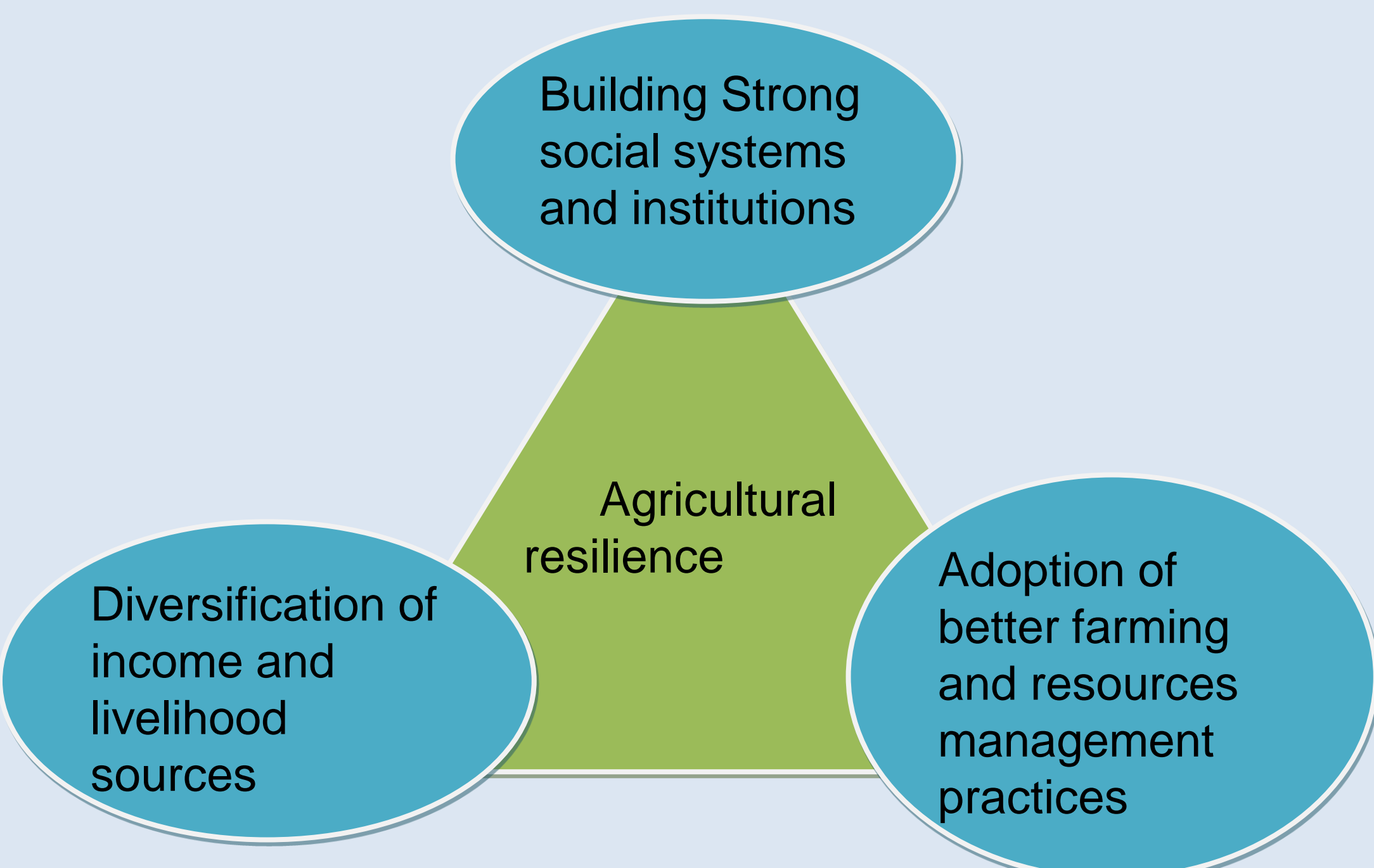
Relationship between home garden crop value and no of crop species



Households were categorised as small, medium and commercial based on the size of their homegarden. All respondents mentioned droughts, floods, and bushfires as their most common crises while fluctuating market prices and unpredictable rainfall patterns were mentioned as minor problems.



Triangle of agricultural resilience



Conclusion

- Rural farmers know the crises they face and have their own mechanisms to ameliorate the impact
- Capacity building and education are paramount in assisting to improve resilience capacities of rural farmers
- It is recommended that farmers form associations to help improve their livelihoods
- Microcredit schemes for farmers could be a way to help improve resilience

References

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