

The AgTrain logo features the text 'AgTrain' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'A' and 'T' are significantly larger than the other letters. The background of the logo is a semi-transparent white rectangle overlaid on a photograph of a lush green rice field with golden rice stalks in the foreground.

Agricultural Transformation by Innovation

Farmers Organizations' position in the development of sustainable agriculture practices in Burkina Faso

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Introduction: Sustainable agriculture

Sustainable Agriculture: aims to address the drawbacks of conventional agriculture by focusing on the maintenance of ecosystem services thereby enhancing the resilience of peasant farmers to shocks (Yuichiro, 2011).

Sustainable agriculture practices: Intercropping and poly-cultures; crop-livestock integration; biological management of pests, diseases and weeds; agro-forestry; composting (Pretty, 1997; Altieri, 2002; Francis et al, 2003; De Schutter, 2010).

Introduction: Sustainable agriculture; Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso: several sustainable practices have been promoted by many development actors in Burkina Faso in order to adapt to the increasing climatic variability and produce more food for the rural people.

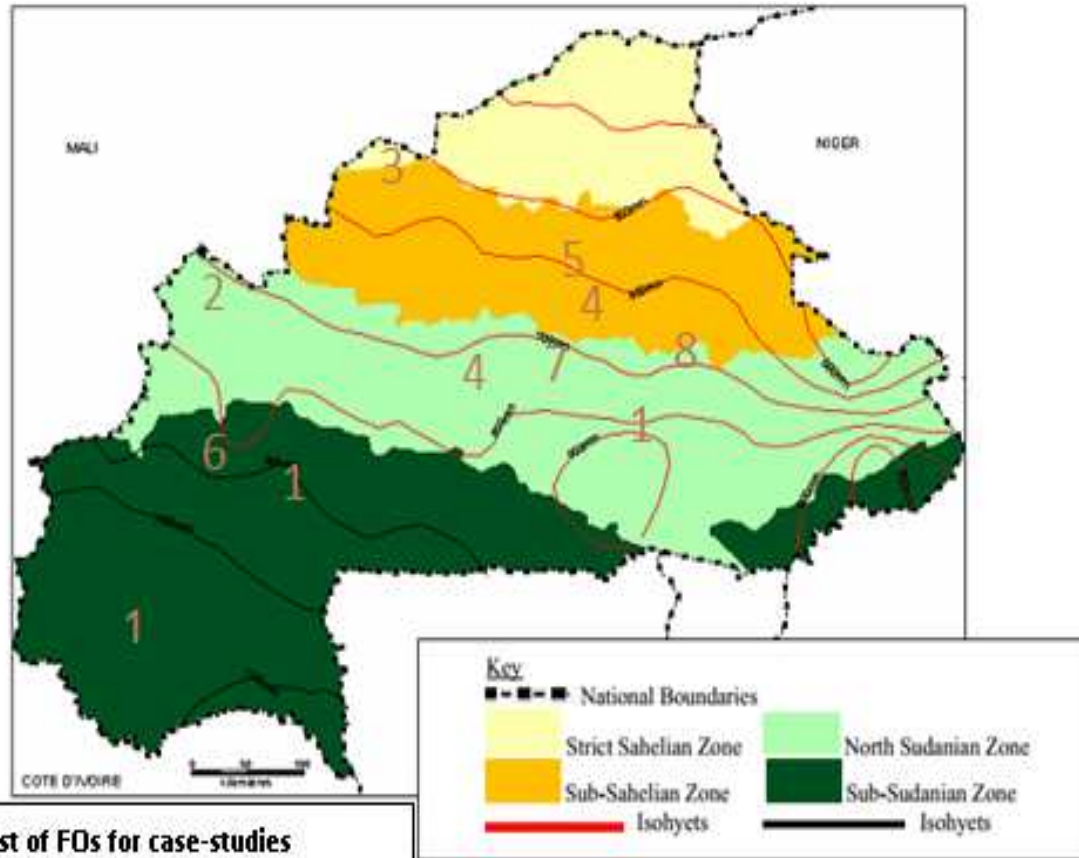
Farmers Organizations (FOs) are portrayed as key drivers in this due to their position as an intermediary organization between rural communities (farmers) and institutions (Mercoiret et al, 1997; Yang et al, 2014).

Methods

What is FOs?	Research design	Data collection methods
FOs cover a wide range of organizations: farmer groups; farmers' associations, farmers' federations, and unions; peasant confederations.	Exploratory case-study approach	Document analysis, observation, surveys and in-depth interviews with FOs' administrators, technicians, members-farmers and, externals actors (peasant leaders, civil servants in the ministry of agriculture and other resource persons).

Research highlight 1: Burkina Faso in brief

(Landlock country with two major agro-ecological zones, where agricultural production is dominated by cereals and cotton small-scale farming (less than 5 ha).



List of FOs for case-studies

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1: UNPCB | 4: FEPABE | 7: Bea-nere |
| 2: UGCPA | 5: Union niébé | 8: AIDMR |
| 3: FNGN | 6: Union <i>Signassigui</i> | |

Research highlight 2: Overview of FOs studied

FO	Overview	Farming system promoted
UNPCB: Cotton Organization	Created in 1998 by the cotton company for the development of cotton value chain: improving the productivity and marketing of cotton.	Cotton farming (in rotation with maize): conventional and organic.
UGCPA: Cereals organization in the West region	Created by local farmers in 1993, for the commercialization of cereals and Hibiscus of its members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cereals (maize, sorghum, millet); ▪ cowpeas; ▪ Organic farming: certified hisbiscus.
FNGN: Community development organization	Created in 1967, FNGN is the oldest FOs in west African region, from an endogenous dynamic: mainly for restoring degraded soils in the Northern region, but now active in the almost all regions in Burkina.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereals (maize, sorghum, millet); • Cowpeas; sesame; potatoes (45% of the production in Burkina); • Livestock: small ruminant.
FEPABE: Cereals, fruits and legumes organization	Created in 1997 by the cotton company with the main improving the productivity and marketing of cereals, fruits/vegetables organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereals (maize, sorghum, millet); • cowpeas; • Fruits and vegetable farming.

Research highlight 2: Overview of FOs studied

FO	Overview	Farming system promoted
Union Niébé	Created in 2003, for the development of cowpea (niébé) value chain in the center region (Sanmatenga) of Burkina.	Cowpea (niébé), peanuts and cereals (sorghum and millet intercrop with niébé).
Union Signassigui (FENOP)	Created in 2007, by a group of woman involved in rice farming in Bama subdivision (Hauts-Bassins region).	Rice farming.
Beo-nere	Created in 2013 from AGED (Association pour la Gestion de l'Environnement Durable), with the main objective of promoting organic vegetable farming in the center region of Burkina Faso.	Organic vegetables: cucumber, water melon, carrot and lettuce.
AIDMR: Community development organization	Created in 1993 by the creation of endogenous animators for the promotion agro-ecological techniques.	Cereals (sorghum and millet), vegetables and small ruminants.

Research highlight 3: FOs' position on sustainable agriculture practices

FOs	Framing of sustainable agriculture by FOs	Agronomic practices promoted	FOs' Position in practice
UNPCB: Organization	Cotton <i>Increasing the production and commercialization of cotton.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemicals inputs: fertilizers and pesticides; Compost and organic amendment; Organic pesticides: from neem (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>), and the commercial one. 	Minor position: The integration of agro-ecological principles concerns mainly the promotion of organic cotton (which is 6% of the total cultivated area).
UGCPA: organization in the West region	Cereals <i>More productive farming, less depending on external inputs with a fair use of pesticides (mainly for maize and cowpea-niébé).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemicals inputs (for maize and cowpeas farming): fertilizers and pesticides; Compost and organic amendment ; Agro-forestry: <i>Faidherbia</i>, sheanut. 	Average position: The integration of agro-ecological principles varies per type of crops promoted.
FNGN: development organization	Community <i>More productive farming, less depending on external inputs (mainly for potatoes, sesame, and tomatoes and cowpea).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemicals inputs for potatoes, tomatoes and cowpeas : fertilizers and pesticides; Compost and organic amendment: for both <i>zai</i> and normal system; Agro-forestry : <i>Faidherbia</i>. 	Average position: The integration of agro-ecological principles varies per type of crops promoted.
FEPABE: and organization	Cereals, fruits and legumes <i>More productive and competitive farming with a good market opportunity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemicals inputs for maize and cowpeas : fertilizers and pesticides); Compost and organic amendment ; Agro-forestry: <i>Faidherbia</i>, sheanut. 	Average position: The integration of agro-ecological principles varies per type of crops promoted.

Research highlight 3: FOs' position on sustainable agriculture practices

FOs	Framing of sustainable agriculture by FOs	Agronomic practices promoted	FOs' Position in practice
Union Niébé	<i>An agriculture that is less vulnerable to changes and pesticides with good market opportunity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemicals inputs : fertilizers and pesticides); Compost and organic amendment. 	<p>Average position: The integration of agro-ecological principles concerns the soil fertility management practices.</p>
Union (FENOP)	Signassigui <i>Increasing the production and commercialization of rice .</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemicals inputs for maize and cowpeas : fertilizers and pesticides); Organic pesticides: mainly for organic rice; Compost and organic amendment. 	<p>Average position: The integration of agro-ecological principles concerns mainly the organic rice farming (which is 10 % of the cultivated area).</p>
Beo-nere	<i>Agriculture that sustain the family without using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic pesticides; Compost and organic amendment. 	<p>Major position: The integration of agro-ecological principles covers all crops.</p>
AIDM: development organization	Community <i>Agriculture that employs agro-ecological principles to restore soil fertility.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic pesticides; Compost and organic amendment: for both <i>zai</i> and normal system; Reforestation: Neem, sheanut, <i>Faidherbia</i> 	<p>Major position: The integration of agro-ecological principles covers all crops.</p>

Conclusion

FOs' position on the sustainable practices varies according to their origin and geographical location:

- **Origin:** FOs with internal origins are much more involved in the sustainable practices as compared to those with the external origins;
- **Geographical location:** those in the north region (Sahelian areas), due the scarcity of productive resources (inputs) are more involved in sustainable agricultural practices.

This point to the need to look at the type of support services FOs provide to their members (farmers) in developing sustainable practices and how do farmers frame this concept?

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