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“Can agroecological farming feed the world?
Farmers’ and academia’s views”

Agroecology in Burkina Faso, reconciling adaptation to production conditions and need for quality diets

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Abstract

In Burkina Faso, a large proportion of the rural population relies on agriculture. However, the country faces major challenges, including food security and the preservation of natural resources in a context of continued population growth and climate change. In this context, where production conditions are harsh and continuously deteriorating, agroecology is emerging and is presented as an alternative to the conventional agricultural practices whose effects are increasingly proving to be unsustainable. However, can Burkina Faso rely on agroecology to meet the challenge of food security? In this study, we opted for a quantitative approach through inventory forms addressed to the different agroecology actors, complemented by semi-directive interviews in order to identify the actors, their promoted agroecological practices, describe their roles and their synergies in the promotion of agroecology in Burkina Faso. The results highlight, firstly, a diversity of actors, whose actions for the promotion of agroecology are equally varied, and secondly, a wide range of promoted agroecological practices and techniques. Some of them are proven either scientifically (technical sheets) or build on through local experience. Secondly, funding, membership, technical support and research are windows to observe a networking of agroecology actors (synergies) which is a prerequisite for the effectiveness of actors in the production. Agroecology has a great potential for developing safe food systems and contributing to poverty alleviation in Burkina Faso. However, the sector already suffers from ills such as the issue of leadership, the lack of financial resources and the weak capacities of the actors that limit the development of agroecology. In addition, dissemination and adoption of agroecological practices are not widely accepted and promoted actions are oriented to cash production for the privileged equitable market (organic label) and not production for common people.

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