

Agroecological Transition of Food Systems in Africa



# Agroecology transition and adoption: Transforming agri-food systems

Emily Poppenborg Martin, JLU Giessen and Rik van den Bosch, ISRIC 6 May 2025 I Museum of Natural Sciences I Brussels









#### **Tools to facilitate the agroecology transition**

Comprehensive approaches to evaluate sustainability and navigate trade-offs, supporting informed and systemic agroecological transitions

#### E.g.,

- Monitoring of soils through a **Soil Information System** in support of decision-making and targeted interventions
- Monitoring the impact of practices using **indicator-based assessment frameworks** covering production, environmental, economic, social, and human dimensions







# What impacts of scaling agroecology?









### What impacts of scaling agroecology?









#### What impacts of scaling agroecology?





# Impacts of agroecological dissemination in the Sahel

Randomized Controlled Trial in 80 villages, 451 households





#### What impacts of scaling agroecology?





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#### What impacts of scaling agroecology?







# How to scale agroecology?



The ,snowball' progressive dissemination strategy # adopters Time





#### Scaling agroecology through dissemination & training

40+ dissemination events (2022-2024) 70 attendants/event

160+ villages received 7 new posters showcasing trial results

200+ farmers received SD cards with learning videos

5 new videos on SustainSahel's AF practices

7 tree nurseries implemented and >80'000 trees planted in collaboration with 3 NGOs

New agroforestry chapter in the African Organic Agriculture Training Manual 200+ farmers received illustrated brochure showcasing best AF practices

New training materials under production





Bienfaits des arbres et arbustes dans les champs Agroforesterie au Sahel





SustainSahel compte 17 partenaires de 9 pays, répartis sur les continents européen et africain.

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#### Scaling agroecology through dissemination & training

98 technology learning sites established

420 trainers trained in 25+ training events including extension staff

100+ farmer group trainings & field days reaching 6600+ farmers

9 Road Show events reached 2500+ farmers

7 radio shows, 9 TV shows (> 29 Mio people), online tutorials reached >13,000

2 apps for training and market aggregation online & 30,000 farmers registered.

**20 stakeholder meetings** of Multi Actor Communities of Practice in 5 countries.

7,400,000+ farmers reached; >14,000 farmers newly established push-pull





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#### Innovation uptake and practice change from the Transitional Lens







### How to scale agroecology?

#### System design in participatory research for integration with existing practices







# How to scale agroecology?



System design in participatory research for integration with existing practices

Living Labs: Open innovation ecosystems in real-life sites using iterative feedback processes throughout a lifecycle approach of an innovation to create inclusive and sustainable impact (EU Commission)

Engage with stakeholders (farmers, food processors, retailers, civil society organisations (CSOs), policymakers, local experts) to create & pilot innovative methods, technologies, practices and governance arrangements that contribute to a more sustainable, resilient and healthy food system for all





Healthy

















# How to scale agroecology?

System design in participatory research for integration with existing practices

#### **Results of Food System Lab actions**

- Improved production systems (aquaponics, vegetable shades, rhizobia)
- Innovative food products (plant-based protein pasta, fish sausages, fruity soy pancakes)
- New technologies (improved smoking oven, zero energy cooler)
- New governance structures along the value chains (cooperatives, associations)
- Capacity building (Food safety, business activities, sustainable production etc.)
- Visions for more sustainable food systems in a range of different African contexts
- Policy advice and guidelines









#### How to scale agroecology?

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Enabling environment in policy, communities and extension for value chain enhancement, support to investment and follow-

up

Conducive & consistent policies Education curricula Professional extension

Community adoption and value chains

Coordinated messaging

Individual dissemination

Individual farmers carry risks and costs of transition

Product aggregation Specialization Common asset & risk management Strategic partnerships























### How to scale agroecology?

#### Community-wide adoption model



#### ,Individual' dissemination model









#### Enabling environment in policy, communities and extension for value chain enhancement, support to investment and follow-







### How to scale agroecology?



The right mix of practices in the right place at the right time





















Proactive vs. Reactive Strategies



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Funded by the European Union Agroecology transition and adoption: **Transforming agri-food systems** 

#### How to scale agroecology?

#### The right mix of practices in the right place at the right time





#### Key messages

- 1. Technology uptake is non-linear and requires long-term follow-up and monitoring
- 2. Coordinated initiatives are necessary to avoid confusion of messaging
- 3. Integrated practice portfolios and effective business models support sustainable impact of scaling efforts
- 4. High opportunity costs of transition require an enabling environment and support for investment
- 5. Evidence for interest and **impact** of agroecology dissemination on farmer uptake
- 6. Tools, knowledge and techniques for **targeting key areas**, **monitoring impact** and **disseminating effectively** are developed in support of an agroecology transition



#### **Our location**

The UPSCALE project is implemented in 15 study regions across 5 East African countries through a multi-stakeholder approach that brings together 18 partners.











h2020upscale



@upscaleh2020



upscale-project



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**Researcher managed** 



Mother baby-trials in Ethiopia

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# How to scale agroecology?

#### System design for integration in existing practices







Mother baby-trials in Ethiopia

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#### HealthyFoodAfrica's FSL approach in practice

- Established based on existing actions, networks and priorities in relation to the local food system
- Run by a local partner, embedded in the local context
- Context, capacities, focus and topics varied significiantly beteween FSLs
- Supported by an iterative engagement process with science partners
- No joint model for multiactor engagement imposed, but rigorous process for supporting the action:
  - Creating a joint understanding, kick-off and continued consortium meetings
  - Devising a Roadmap, a Theory of Change and an implementaiton plan
  - Providing facilitating tools and guidelines
  - Dialogue and support throguhout the project







Mother baby-trials in Ethiopia

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# **Recommendations for Food System Lab projects**

- Integrated project design, in which task descriptions, budgets, roles and responsibilities are co-created and clearly assigned to each partner from the onset.
- Understanding and integrating the inherent different time horizons relevant to the project (science versus practice thinking).
- Monitoring and evaluation, both at project level and of the broader impact, needs to be planned and integrated as an inherent part of the project .
- Co-dependencies and conflicts of interest need to be recognized.

