

Agroecology in Action

AFSA
ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICA

Stories from the continent

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FREE ISSUE

STORIES
COMING UP



Empowering farming communities agroecology training: through the success story of RUCID.

FROM THE
EDITOR

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, journalism is becoming a powerful tool for transformation, redefining what the public knows and what they believe is possible for their food systems. This story follows an initiative by CNPAF-RDC to train 20 agricultural journalists who are now reclaiming the airwaves, newspaper features, and TV screens for agroecology, food sovereignty, and cultural heritage.

What sets this story apart is that it goes far beyond simple reporting. It demonstrates the power of well-informed, well-equipped journalists to reshape national narratives, shifting away from corporate-driven myths and toward solutions grounded in local communities. These storytellers are more than observers; they are catalysts. They connect urban audiences with rural farmers, hold corporations accountable, and inspire citizens to rethink what they eat, how it is produced, and who truly controls the system.

As part of AFSA's My Food is African story series, this article underscores the role played by the media, not just a mirror of society, but rather a lever for change.

Send your comment(s) to:
abbot.ntwali@afsafrica.org

Warmly,

Abbot

DRC: Media put Agroecology at the Center of the Conversation

In 2024, a new wave of media professionals in the Democratic Republic of Congo picked up their pens and microphones not just to cover the news, but to help transform the nation's food systems.

Through an initiative of the Comité national pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture familiale en RDC (CNPAF-RDC), 20 members of the Association des journalistes agricoles congolais (AJAC) (Congolese Association of Agricultural Journalists) were trained and empowered to become strong voices for agroecology and food sovereignty. Their mission: to tell stories that highlight farmers, traditional food cultures, climate resilience, and the urgent need to move away from industrialized food systems. Already, their reporting is making its mark in newspapers, on the airwaves, and on television across the country.

SHIFTING THE
NARRATIVE

For decades, the conversation about food in DRC was dominated by corporate messages promoting processed products, industrial farming, and imported seeds as the only path to food security. Meanwhile, the stories of smallholder farmers, traditional diets, and agroecological innovation were pushed to the margins, thus remaining largely invisible. CNPAF-RDC decided to change that by investing in those who shape public opinion: The Journalists.

In 2024, the organization launched a specialized training program for 20 journalists. Through workshops, field visits, and collaborative reporting, participants gained a deeper understanding of the principles of agroecology, the importance of local and traditional foods, and the socio-political roots of food sovereignty.

It wasn't just theory. Journalists learned to ask tougher questions, investigate systemic issues, and amplify community voices. They were equipped with resources, data sheets, and real-life case studies to sharpen their reporting.

"Before the training, I thought food was only about hunger," said one participating journalist. "Now I understand it's about justice, culture, climate, and control. And that's a story worth telling."

A GROWING BODY OF
AGROECOLOGICAL



STORIES

Equipped with knowledge and passion, the journalists began producing a wide variety of content that is reshaping the national conversation in powerful ways.

On radio, hosts now air weekly community programs where farmers call in to share their experiences with composting, seed-saving, and cultivating local crops. On television, reporters are producing short documentaries that celebrate local and traditional recipes as well as agroecological practices, showing how they foster both good nutrition and sustainability.

In newspapers, readers now encounter investigative articles on food industry lobbying, pesticide misuse, and the urgent need for legislation to protect local food systems.

One of the highlights was the broadcast by a Kinshasa radio station of a live debate on food sovereignty, featuring a farmer, a nutritionist and a student activist. The program sparked a lively community response, and the station pledged to make it a regular feature.

"We're reaching people who had never heard the word 'agroecology' before," said one journalist. "Now they're calling us to ask how they can grow their own food or support local producers."

COUNTERING
CORPORATE
INFLUENCE

One of the most powerful impacts of this initiative has been its ability to challenge corporate-driven narratives

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conveyed by food industry players.

In a country where aggressive marketing of ultra-processed foods heavily shapes diets—especially among young urban populations, the role of agricultural journalists in delivering accurate, culturally rooted, and health-conscious messages is crucial.

With CNPAF-RDC's support, journalists are now better equipped to challenge greenwashing, investigate food safety risks, and spotlight community-led solutions. They have debunked misleading GMO campaigns, exposed the dangers of chemical-intensive agriculture, and pushed back against the myths that traditional and local foods are



“backward”. Together, their voices are questioning the status quo and offering a compelling alternative grounded in community, ecology, and sovereignty.

MOBILIZING CITIZENS THROUGH MEDIA

These journalists are doing more than informing, they are inspiring action. Their broadcasts have encouraged listeners to start home vegetable gardens, join local farming cooperatives, and back policies that protect traditional and local foods. They are building bridges between rural farmers and urban consumers, bringing grassroots realities into urban conversations.

CNPAF-RDC’s media engagement has also created a platform for public accountability. Citizens are now better informed about food policies and feel more empowered to engage with leaders, ask questions and demand changes that affect what they eat.

“This is not just about telling stories, it’s about building a movement,” said CNPAF-RDC spokesperson. “When journalists speak the language of food sovereignty, they amplify the people’s voice.”

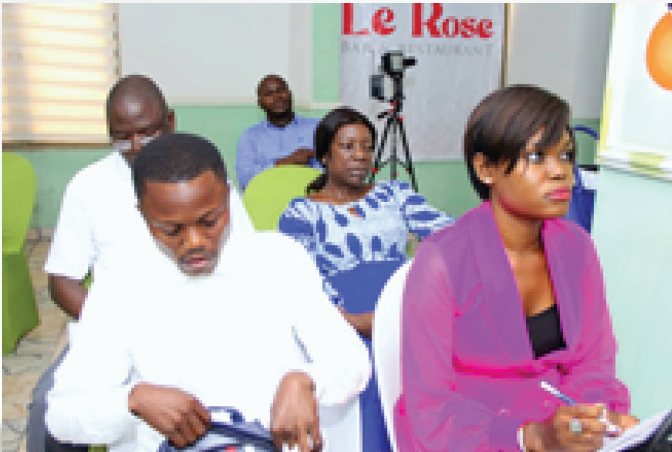
LOOKING AHEAD

Building on this momentum, CNPAF-RDC plans to expand the initiative by creating a national agroecology media network, developing reporting toolkits on food systems, and mentoring young journalists interested in reporting on food systems, and offer mentoring

to young journalists interested in environmental, agricultural and healthy food stories. Local media outlets are also exploring more long-term agroecology programming, from documentaries to podcasts and youth-focused segments.

For now, the transformation is already underway, on the airwaves, in newsrooms, and in the minds of citizens rethinking what they eat, where it comes from, and who controls it.

In a country where the fight for food sovereignty is as much about narratives as it is about policy, these 20 journalists don’t just cover the movement, they are part of it. Through every article, publication, broadcast, and interview, they are helping plant the seeds of a DRC that is more informed about its food, more self-reliant, and more just through the lens of agroecology.



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