



Workshop at the Africa-Europe Civil Society Conference

WORLD FOOD DAY
16 OCTOBER 2020



CIDSE
together for global justice

actalliance eu

 FIAN
INTERNATIONAL
ZAMBIA



CICODEV
Africa

AFSA
ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICA



Co-funded by the
European Union



Program

Bishop Sithembele, SECAM is Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar

Busisiwe Mgangxela, Eastern Cape Agroecology Farmers Association

Kone Massa, CGLTE-OA (Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles in West Africa)

Nina Moeller, Coventry University Center for Agroecology, Water & Resilience

- Social Responsibility of the Faith Communities
- Role of Women in Rural Development: Agroecology, Food and Nutrition Security.
- Land grab and Mechanisms for Monitoring and Holding to Account activities of EU investments (UNDROP and ETO)
- Finance for Agroecology: Under which conditions can finance work for agroecological transitions

Webinar Recording:

https://cidse.sharepoint.com/:v/g/EbyASgT-x9tJrp9f-ThXI4IBH5IjGzjGEg-wzqnT1c2_g?e=eBAJsj

See also interview by Euractiv: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/africa/interview/theres-still-time-to-change-eu-africa-agenda-say-activists/>

Webinar programme: <https://afsafrica.org/our-land-is-our-life/>

Policy Declaration October 2020: <https://afsafrica.org/african-civil-society-declaration-on-the-african-european-union-partnership/>

Webinar by the ‘Our Land is Our Life platform’, at the VENRO hosted Africa-Europe Civil Society Conference, Berlin, Online, 16 October 2020.

Organisers: AFSA (Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa). SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar). AEFJN (Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network). CGLTE-OA (Convergence globale des luttes pour la terre et l'eau-Afrique de l'Ouest). RWA (Rural Women's Assembly). CICODEV (Institut panafricain pour la Citoyenneté, les Consommateurs et le Développement). ACT Alliance-EU (Action by Churches Together). CIDSE – International family of Catholic social justice organisations.

Compilation of workshop documentation: Brussels. Berlin. Accra. December 2020
By Emmanuel Yap, CIDSE. Karin Ulmer, ACT Alliance EU. Michael Farrelly, AFSA.

Published by: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), Email: afsa@afsafrica.org • Website: www.afsafrica.org



This webinar was made possible with the financial support of the European Union. The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of the organisers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

Welcome Message



Dr Million Belay

General Coordinator - Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA)

Million has been working for over two decades on intergenerational learning of bio-cultural diversity, sustainable agriculture, local communities' rights to seed and food sovereignty and forest issues. He has a PhD in environmental learning and is a member of the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food).

When spiders unite, they tie a lion. Who are the spiders, and who are the lions? The spiders are the CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) and FBOs (Faith-based Organisations) represented by you and here with us. The lions are the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) political muscular business agenda. How can we join hands together to tie the lion?

Land is a very critical issue. You can produce anything; you can increase anything but not the size of our land. It is a finite resource, and everybody wants a piece of it, and the value of land always increases, everywhere you go. And when countries are challenged, due to so many reasons – food, energy, water – speculations arise on the future of the land, and increased demand on certain raw commodities and subsidies for carbon storage, all of which drive land degradation and acquisition.

But I'm not leaving you with negative stories, because many positive things are happening. The adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, the Land Rights Act of Liberia, the Global Land Indicator initiative for monitoring land use governance. The increasing union between faith-based and African civil society organisations is very important. And increasingly the recognition to protect land rights defenders, the recognition of the impact of climate change; all these are positive developments we should consider as resources for future strategy.



Opening Address



Bishop Sithembele Sipuka

Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM)

Bishop Sithembele Sipuka is Bishop of Mthatha Diocese in South Africa and first President of SECAM. He is also President of the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) of SECAM).

The Pope has never ceased to inspire humanity with his encyclicals and the latest of them, *Fratelli Tutti* (on fraternity and social friendship) provides a point of departure for my brief input in our conversation today. In the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis calls humanity to *a new vision of fraternity and social friendship that will not remain at the level of words*. He underlines that we must build *a community of belonging and solidarity* (*Fratelli Tutti*, 36). The hunger for human solidarity is in the heart of everyone, and it constantly seeks an opportunity to be given a face and an expression. This latest encyclical of the Holy Father's gives an elaborate expression to that famous South African saying that is often quoted but less understood, "*Umntu ngumntu ngabantu*" which means as human beings we are characterised by a universal connectivity and intuition to care and to share. Therefore, I see in this VENRO workshop a face and an expression of the deep hunger in the heart of every man, woman or child to connect and to cooperate for a better life and a better world.

It was the same quest to express this human solidarity that brought together SECAM, CIDSE, AEFJN and non-faith based CSOs in Kenya to a *Pan African Conference on Land Grabbing and Just Governance* in 2015. That conference gave birth to the informal platform "*Our Land is Our Life*" that has continued to provide a space for ongoing engagements for the actors crystallising in a shared vision of Africa and the protection of her resources. In my opinion, the coming together of Faith and non-Faith based actors to support African communities suffering from the stealing of their livelihoods and destruction of their environment is a cutting-edge advocacy approach that must be supported by all people of goodwill.

As actors of *Our Land is Our Life* platform, we must continue to draw our inspiration from that famous Ethiopian proverb that says, "When spiders unite their webs, they tie a lion." The proverb captures vividly Africa's method of dislodging the elephant in the room that works against our human solidarity and fraternity.

From our Christian faith perspective and in particular the Catholic Social doctrine, people - especially those on the margins of society - and their environment are central to our social engagements. The Church should give voice to the ordinary people so that regional and national policies are informed

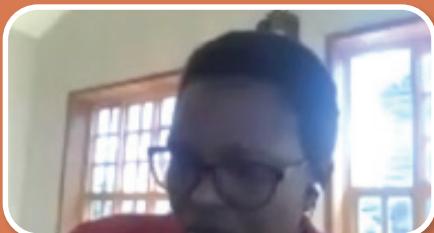
by the experience, the needs and sustainable use of the land. This integral connection between local communities and land, or rather the lack of it (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 49) will be explored further by the next two speakers after me, Busisiwe Mgangxela and Massa Kone (two farmers, a woman and a man).

Without wanting to pre-empt what our next speakers will say on this theme of the land, let me briefly indicate the implication of our platform's name: *OUR LAND IS OUR LIFE*. The implication of this saying that we have coined is that land is an integral part of who we are. It is something that ties Africans across generations. The land we live in and which also sustains us is something that we inherited from our forefathers and foremothers. And the land is also something that we leave behind for the generations after us, so it is a precious commodity to be preserved. It does not belong to one generation of people to be exploited as one particular generation may wish to. It is the heritage that binds us together across generations. The concept of private land is foreign in Africa; Africans speak instead of the land of our fathers given to us in custody for our children.

In his attempt to explain who God is to the Athenians in Act 17:23, Paul says that God is the one "in whom we live and move and have our being." In an extended and allegorical way, for Africans, the same is true for the land. From it we have our food without which we cannot survive. From its vegetation we get medicines and herbs that cure us. From our inherited ways of working the land our identity is given and shaped. And from the type of insects and animals that the vegetation and the environment attract the land provides us with the company of other species to enhance our life as it happened to Adam when the animal world was created. We are intimately related to the land, and without it, as when we are without God, we lose not only our physical life support but also the sense of who we are.

Therefore, the relationship with the land is not only about production; hence, some ways of doing agriculture, even as they purport to be more productive, are not acceptable if they do not have this unitive aspect between the land and the people. As people of Faith, *Laudato Si'* has underlined integral ecology (*Laudato Si'*, Chapter 4) for us as a blueprint of our relationship with mother earth. It is in this vein that we call for and encourage agroecological transition in Africa. Agroecology is not only in alignment with the principles and vision of integral ecology but, more importantly, it resonates with the philosophy of *Ubuntu* that is at the core of African communalism.

Today's event provides a space for civil society actors to meet and exchange views, with an ambition of interaction and participation to hear communities' voices. We hope that this exchange will feed into the EU-Africa partnership's discussion. While the EU-Africa summit has been postponed, the conversation is not, and I wish us all a fruitful conversation.





Busisiwe Mgangxela

Eastern Cape Agroecology Farmers' Association

Busisiwe is a small-scale agroecological farmer and seed sovereignty activist from Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

How we contribute and increase agrobiodiversity through our work

Our Eastern Cape Province statistics, reflecting about 7 million people living below the poverty line which could be made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, about 300,000 hectares of land lying fallow, and limited or no resources to support agroecological farmers led to the formation of ECAFA (Eastern Cape Agroecology Farmers Association) in March 2020 during level 5 lockdown using WhatsApp platform. Organic farmers have long been operating in our province with no formal records as they have been doing it in silos. The formation of ECAFA meant to organise farmers from the ground up to increase awareness, change farmers' mindset towards a food system that takes care of the environment, and improves resilience and sustainability for generations to come.

ECAFA has an operating memorandum of understanding and partnership with our Provincial Agricultural Research Centre (Dohne) with the mandate of the provincial political head of agriculture, Honourable MEC Nomakhosazana Meth to advance and embrace agroecology in the province. As a start of the partnership, two demonstration sites have been earmarked as pilot projects, one in East London in an agroecological farmer's land that will service farmers around it and the second one in Mthatha, 300km from the first one, in a Government site that already has the relevant infrastructure to service farmers around it.

We continue networking, collaborating and campaigning with civil society organisations and stakeholders that deal with food systems embracing ecology, nature and human rights such as ACB, SAOSO, RWA, PGSSA, Biowatch, The Movement in Africa, IBLN (Imvotho Bubomi Learning Network), AESA, COPAC, Climate Justice Charter Movement, Food Tank SA, Right to Know and others.

Presently there are discussions on seed audits in the move to rescue indigenous seeds by RWA. AESA also is in talks to campaign for agrochemicals that are causing problems in human beings, animals and the environment. There are ongoing suggestions in AESA to embark on educating communities on the global ecological crises through watch parties on different topics using different strategies.

The kind of seed laws we suggest supporting agroecology and women farmers in Africa:

- Seed is life. Who owns the seed owns the land.
- We need seed laws that embrace a bottom-up approach that considers indigenous, traditional and cultural knowledge.
- Seed laws that look at improving local seeds' resilience and sustainability for generations to come, not genetically modified and gene drives.
- A ground-up approach that freely allows peer to peer exchange.
- Seed laws for Africa should take a community of practice approach – family seed banks, community seed banks.
- Seed laws should reconnect food, nature and human rights to food.
- Farmers and members were assisted in getting to public hearings to give their voice on the seed bills the Plant Improvement (PL) and Plant Breeder's Rights (PBR) Bills.
- Our provincial parliament was approached for cooperation in advertising and extending public hearing dates to include many people.
- Our province rejected the bill and seed activists, of which I am one, went to national parliament on the day COP was to sit for the two bills (October 2018), unfortunately, the bills were approved by parliament due to the problematic and skewed voting system, signed into law in March 2019 by the President.
- The role of the smallholder farmer in the new PIA (seed law) was left in limbo, potentially unregulated but also unrecognised.

Seed is life. Our land is our life. Let us unite in networking advocating and collaborating. When spiders unite their webs, they tie a lion.





Massa Kone

CGLTE West Africa

Massa KONE is a lawyer by training, a farmer by profession. He is the Secretary-General of UACDDD/NO-VOX www.uacddd.org, Spokesperson for the Malian Convergence against Land Grabbing (CMAT) www.cmatmali.org, Spokesperson for the Global Convergence for the Struggle for Land, Water and Farmers' Seeds (CGLTE-AO) www.africaconvergence.net www.caravaneterreeau.info

Land, Water and Peasant Farmers' Seeds: Mobilisation of Communities Against Land Grabbing

Context

- Land, water, and peasant seeds are common goods on which peace, stability, and even community development depend.
- Over the last decades, these three matters have been the object of speculation by elites, who have designed laws facilitating their sale to large companies, multinationals, economic operators and even states.
- Thousands or even millions of hectares of arable forest land are being destroyed by their abusive exploitation and taken away from the legitimate communities that have protected them since the dawn of time and who live there in symbiosis.
- The consequences of the sale of these common goods in private property are catastrophic: thousands of villages have disappeared through forced evictions, arbitrary arrests and even deaths, caused by militias in complicity with our governments. This has led to civil wars and armed militias everywhere and is very badly exploited by the multinationals.

Actions

- Given these reasons, we grassroots movements, progressive NGOs, have converged to protect these three assets from predators and keep them

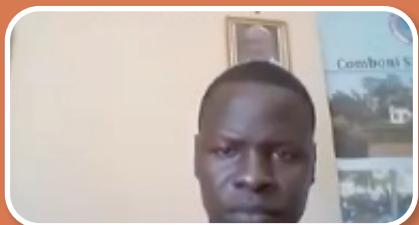
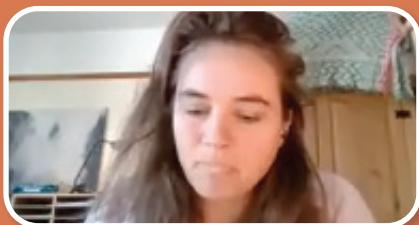
in the common good for stability, development and peace. To this end, significant actions have been undertaken throughout the 15 ECOWAS countries plus Mauritania, which are members of the GCLTE OA.

- Caravans are organised every two years from 2016 to the present day, the third edition of which will take place in February and March 2021. It crosses five countries and brings our Green Booklet advocacy document to the authorities. Activities decided by communities affected by one of the three subjects (Land, Water and Farmers' Seeds) are organised with recommendations or declarations submitted to the authorities on the spot for social justice for the victims.
- Forums are organised in partnership with other international or regional structures for a global movement against social injustice and for sustainable and inclusive development.
- People's summits are organised as a counterpoint to the France-Africa summit in January 2017 in Bamako, Mali and the EU-AU summit in November 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire with a single objective of advocating with African people, international human rights organisations and politicians on EU-AU partnership relations for inclusive governance and responsible partnership, respectful of human rights and dignity and an equitable sharing of income.

Successes

These actions have enabled:

- Broad sharing of information on natural resource grabbing (land, water, seeds, mines, forests).
- A West African and international inter-community cohesion.
- The strengthening of social dialogue between communities and authorities.
- A convergence of ideas and action between the various major organisations for the defence of rights and the protection of natural resources, partnerships with faith-based organisations, and a single overall advocacy document for ECOWAS and AU policies.
- A major mobilisation campaign for protecting and defending the three subjects of land, water, and seeds in their social function as a common good.





Nina Isabella
Moeller

**Centre for Agroecology,
Water and Resilience,
Coventry University**

Nina is currently Associate Professor for Political Ecology and People's Knowledge at the Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience at Coventry University, England. She has worked in Latin America and Europe as a consultant to indigenous federations, NGOs and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation

Finance for Agroecology

The argument which I am going to make here today is straightforward, and not going to be surprising to any of you:

1. Humanity is facing multiple, interconnected crises which result from socially and ecologically destructive modes of production and consumption.
2. Agroecology has the potential to restore, regenerate and enhance the socio-ecological systems upon which life depends, allowing us to address these crises at their roots.
3. Aid, development assistance and other investments need to be channelled away from petrochemical and carbon-heavy food systems, towards agroecology. Otherwise, it will continue to be undermined where it is being practiced and prevented from taking hold elsewhere.

Let me quickly present some evidence that underlines that urgent action is needed to shift funding priorities and investment realities.

Despite an increasing recognition and a plethora of international reports, organisations and platforms pointing to agroecology as a crucial part of the solution, there are indications that actual, financial support for an agroecological transition remains meagre, for example, see a 2018 UK study, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, money coming into Kenya. CIDSE and the Centre for Agroecology Water and Resilience at Coventry University, at which I work, are collaborating to answer the question 'how finance can be made to work for agroecology' - and one of the breakout sessions later will explore this in more detail. As part of our work, we have recently concluded a study that analyses funding made available by the European Union in partnership with the United Nations' Rome-based agencies and funding channelled via the Green Climate Fund.

Why have we chosen these channels of funding? The Rome-based agencies - the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme - hold mandates on food and agriculture, are important institutions in the setting of priorities regarding global food security and are moreover all partners in the 'Scaling-up Agroecology' initiative launched in 2018. The Green Climate Fund is an operating entity of the United Nations' Climate Change Convention's financial mechanism. It is the world's largest fund dedicated to supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation in developing countries, including in their agricultural sectors. Our analysis results are aligned with the other studies and underline the necessity of shifting both international development assistance and climate finance towards an agroecological transition and away from supporting an agricultural sector that is geared towards large, petrochemical dependent agribusiness. So, the financial contribution of the EU-FAO, EU-IFAD, and EU-WFP partnerships and the financial contribution of the Green Climate Fund, toward agroecological transformation of food and farming systems is minimal.

Our analysis makes use of Gliessman's five levels of food system change, and we consider projects adopting efficiency-oriented approaches such as sustainable intensification (level 1) to represent conventional agricultural approaches. Efficiency improvements are of integral concern to conventional agriculture and cannot be said to contribute to an agroecological transformation. Projects at level 2, focussing on substituting environmentally harmful inputs with ecological alternatives or practices, are considered an intermediary step away from conventional agriculture towards transformative agroecological change, with projects at Levels 3 or above fully contributing to transformative agroecology.

Gliessman's five levels of food system change

Level 1: Increasing the efficiency of industrial and conventional practices to reduce the use and consumption of costly, scarce, or environmentally damaging inputs (resulting in, for example, reduced use of off-farm inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides, water, and energy; reduced waste; improved yields).

Level 2: Substituting alternative practices for industrial/conventional inputs and practices (e.g., replacing synthetic fertilisers with compost; using alternative pest-control; organic farming systems).

Level 3: Redesigning the agroecosystem so that it functions based on a new set of ecological processes (e.g., complex crop rotations and polycultures; integration of production systems into surrounding ecosystems; landscape-based approaches; ecosystem-based adaptation; biodiversity-oriented interventions).

Level 4: Re-establishing a more direct connection between those who grow our food and those who consume it (e.g., short food chains and webs; Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) schemes; re-localisation of food systems and markets within same territories).

Level 5: Building a new global food system, based on equity, participation, democracy, and justice, which is not only sustainable but helps restore and protect earth's life support systems.

With only 2.7% of all disbursements from the EU budget to the Rome-based agencies between 2016 and 2018 flowing towards approaches aiming to substitute harmful agricultural inputs and practices with more environmentally sound ones (level 2), and no funds at all flowing towards transformative agroecology (level 3), there is much scope for boosting financial support for agroecology at the EU level.

With 10.6% of all agriculturally relevant investments of the Green Climate Fund flowing towards transformative agroecology (level 3), and another 10.1% flowing towards intermediate, input substitution approaches (level 2), almost 80% remain in support of conventional agriculture and sustainable intensification. A firm focus on agroecology in the GCF's sector guidance currently being developed, however, could increase the number of agroecological projects being proposed and funded.

Let me conclude with a last thought: To be supportive of an agroecological transition, an increase of funding per se would need to be backed by certain changes to the mode in which funding was made available to agroecology, especially with a view to supporting smallholder farmers and peasants' associations, who still feed the majority of the world, in their self-directed initiatives on the ground.

There is no doubt that agroecology runs counter to the interests of big agribusiness – its focus is firmly on democratising the food system and creating vibrant local, regional and global food economies that focus on health and nutrition for all and dignity of labour before profit. It works to undermine the monopoly of the few and empowers farmers to participate in the creation of a food system that enhances ecological systems and enriches the human habitat. This 'democratising' dimension of agroecology necessitates careful reflection on which funding modalities (public, private, blending, grants, loans, guarantees?) are best pursued in its support.

Some studies demonstrate that public-private partnerships and blending finance mechanisms are not efficient ways to finance smallholder agriculture. It is also far from clear that large grants are a solution. Instead, what would probably be much more helpful is a divestment in industrial agriculture and corporate food systems, a cessation of public funds in support of large agribusiness.

Panel Discussion

Moderated by Karin Ulmer, ACT Alliance EU

Question to Bishop Sepuka: When you talk about the shared vision of Laudato Si' on integral ecology, do you see this as an opportunity to build common ground for different groups in Africa, to be presented as a vision to policymakers?

Bishop Sepuka: Indeed, because for example, we come from different backgrounds to this workshop, but we share the same view about integral ecology.

Question to all speakers: The diversity of actors coming to talk about this is very encouraging; many of you are preoccupied with land, seeds and ecology. How to motivate others to join the (platform) space? What lessons and approaches to build communities can be kept when COVID will be behind us?

Answer: WhatsApp, Facebook, Zoom, Teams, all helped to liaise and connect easily. We need to look at the environment and continue using digital technology to gather.

Question to Massa Kone: If we think about the relation between speculation and monoculture, would you support a call for divestment, a call for less investment and (thus) less monoculture, which would allow freeing the land?

Massa Kone: Yes, we need divestment of these speculative investments which are mostly into monoculture. There is an urgent need to protect the environment. Business interests do not match with our concern for food sovereignty. These monocultures need chemicals which are degrading the ecosystem, for example widespread chemical pollution in the rivers. So, we need to accompany farmers' movements in challenging these threats to land rights and the environment.

Question to Nina Moeller: What kind of development approaches are you proposing?

Nina Moeller: We need to create a more just and ecological food system. We need to be clear that what keeps happening is large scale agribusiness that favours businesses over people.

In conclusion, how to bring those positions to decision-makers?

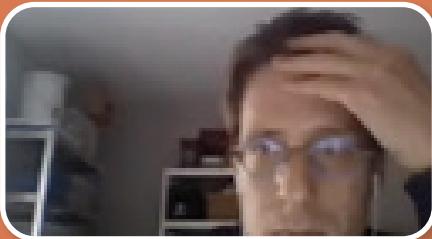
Start working within CSO communities and understand the importance of interconnectedness of seeds, land and water. Share the ambitions of agroecology as a transformative approach and communicate them to policymakers.

How to emphasise the link of the presentation to the EU-AU relationship?

Massa Kone: Since the counter event we organised during the France-Africa Summit in Bamako, Mali, in 2017, we are speaking about the importance of natural resources. The relationship only allows for businesses to come and take advantage of the natural resources. To make the relationship more equal is important. There is a need for laws that will protect the livelihoods of communities, like the UN binding treaty on business and human rights.

Nina Moeller: We need radical change, because of the way our current system is causing climate change. We need equity and rural development, nutrient food that come from healthy soil. We need networking and collaboration in civil society, as well as fair collaborative partnerships.

Bishop Sepuka: We need to trust ourselves to engage in lobbying; we have a vast network that spans across the continents. Those partners, in the EU or in America could assist in lobbying their governments so that the funds are directed towards these agroecological methods. Nina presented a disturbing revelation on the distribution of funds, so we need to continue to lobby. People in Europe need us to engage at advocacy level, so we all should make use of our connections as leverage.



Breakout Session: The Role of Women in Rural Development, Agroecology, Food and Nutrition Security

Facilitated by PELUM Kenya

Recommendations were made regarding AU-EU Partnership on gender-sensitive programming, land rights and agricultural policies and practices, social protection and health care, and climate change and its effects on agroecology.

On gender-sensitive programming, participants recommend that the partnership should explore and encourage gender-sensitive programming which will ensure that there are adequate and inclusive social protection programmes in the rural areas; that gender-sensitive social protection strategies are put in place to enhance integration with economic development programmes in rural areas; that nutritional aspects are integrated into rural development, livelihoods and agroecology programmes and projects; ensure intergenerational and gender justice.

Recommendations on land rights and agricultural policies and practices are to ensure coordinated and targeted campaigns and advocacy by AU-EU Civil Society and Faith-Based Organisations that will ensure women land rights are enshrined in both written and unwritten laws and practices. This will help to minimise displacement of women and reduce other discriminatory practices improving production; to improve access and utilisation of land improving agroecology practices; to enhance control of farm produce improving food and nutritional security at household level; to improve on land and property ownership enhancing power-relations in the rural areas improving the socio-economic status of women. To improve land reform agenda enhancing access to factors of production (the rights to conserve indigenous seeds). Creation of legal migration routes to address land rights and other injustices.

Recommendations on social protection and health care system: The AU-EU partnership should work closely to ensure the existence of policy frameworks to mitigate the impacts of pandemics with a focus on the following: Functioning social protection and health care systems; Established gender approach in addressing key policy issues towards the functionality of food and agriculture systems in the rural areas as a priority; Broad socio-economic response framework should be put in place to build the resilience of small scale farmers for an appropriate response to pandemics and disasters.

On climate change and its effects on agroecology, the recommendations are for Africa, and Europe collaboration and partnership should ensure mutual benefit. The key focus should be on Radical climate change adaptation and mitigation measures; Supportive agroecology policies; Re-distributive economic policies to support wealth creation in the rural areas.

Breakout session: Land Grabs and Mechanism for Monitoring and Holding to Account EU investments (UNDROP and ETOs)

Facilitated by FIAN Zambia (case of ZAMPALM)

EU-based banks' loans funding palm oil plantation in Zambia pollute rivers, decrease biodiversity, and cause human rights violations. Forty-five small-scale producer households in Kanchibya district, Muchinga province in Zambia, in 2008, and their families were forcibly displaced from their community lands to clear the area for a palm oil plantation, operated by Zampalm company, a subsidiary of Zambeef company. In 2013, Zambeef boosted the plantation through a loan from two EU-based development banks, i.e., the German DEG and Dutch FMO.

Over the years, the palm oil production located on wetlands has caused biodiversity loss and critically contaminated the local river, shrinking fish resources and polluting a crucial drinking water source for local people. Moreover, the activities have led to numerous human rights violations, particularly the Right to Food and Nutrition (see FIAN publication here: [Link](#)). Concrete advocacy, at the national, European and international levels, to demand accountability from the Zambian Government as well as German and Dutch governments for the resultant environmental destruction and human rights violations.

Extraterritorial Obligations: In international human rights law, the term extraterritorial obligations is now used to describe obligations related to the 'acts and omissions of a State, within or beyond its territory, that have effects on the enjoyment of human rights outside of that State's territory'.

UNDROP - The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) is a Human Rights instrument adopted on 17 December 2018. This human rights instrument addresses the claims of various rural grassroots movements. It is designed to face the rural world's challenges, including small scale farmers, pastoralists, fishers, rural women, landless, nomadic peoples, rural workers, indigenous peoples, and other local communities who depend on nature for their livelihoods. The UNDROP is a guiding point on ensuring support to peasant agriculture, as the real means to feed the world in a healthy nutritious way and build sustainable territorial food systems. On this premise, peasant movements and their supporters also consider the UNDROP a vital tool for the realisation of the Right to Food and Nutrition (RtFN).

Recommendations are that Africa and Europe collaboration and partnership should ensure mutual benefit. The key focus should be on ensuring European Investments in Africa do not abuse human rights; the need to ensure the primacy of Human Rights over Trade; ensuring that corporate social responsibility does not substitute international human rights obligations of EU/AU States.

Campaigns and advocacy by AU and EU civil society and faith-based organisations that will ensure peasants and other people working in rural areas secure their right to food and nutrition: To advocate for both EU and AU countries to respect and protect the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas as contained in the UNDROP; To advocate for African and European States to uphold provisions of the UNDROP; African and European civil society organisations need to strengthen their partnerships so that they are able to monitor violations and exchange information.

Breakout session: Finance for Development

Facilitated by CIDSE and Coventry University

During this session, Faris Ahmed and Colin Anderson presented the first research findings focusing on identifying conditions under which finance can support agroecological transitions. They highlighted both opportunities and challenges on which participants were invited to react.

Among the things that came out of these interesting exchanges was that regardless of how and how much finance would support agroecology, this would need to be done in parallel with a system level shift. The risk would be otherwise to have agroecology as an island in the middle of a sea of industrial and conventional agriculture. This raised the question of establishing an enabling environment for agroecology. Participants identified several ideas on how to strengthen financial support for agroecology, among others: fostering agroecology as a climate solution, and a push for States' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to include agroecology in European and African countries. The need for "recipient" countries to have agroecology in their national policies has also been highlighted because that's always what funders refer to. See research published: Analysing funding flows to agroecology.

Breakout session: Social Responsibilities of Faith Communities

Facilitated by AEFJN

How can the Faith communities in both North and South synergise to promote agroecology and overcome its challenges towards a more sustainable food system? The plenary session highlighted a shared African vision between the Church and Civil Society for sustainable food systems by promoting the transition to agroecology. To realise this vision, speakers equally highlighted the urgency of securing small scale farmers', pastoralists', fishers' access and control/rights to land, water and seeds and in particular women's right to land; the key challenges and threats to agroecological transition as well as the current gaps in supporting/financing agroecology.

The breakout session recognised the value of the Christian faith's social dimension, impelling Christian communities to be true stewards of God's creation. We, therefore, demonstrate our stewardship by taking active roles in the transition to agroecology. Using the scrambler method, the participants wrote out the specific actions they will undertake to promote agroecological transitions in their faith communities.

In summary, suggestions are awareness workshop sessions in local Christian communities dwelling on the intrinsic connection between Christian faith and agroecological transitions. Encourage and support women and youth to undertake greenhouse farming to transition to agroecology. Faith communities are school proprietors, and the use of schools to teach and promote agroecology is an opportunity that must not be missed. Lobby pastors of faith communities to include agroecological transitions in their programme of community animation and volunteering service. Promote agroecology in the Formation Centre for Christian Community Leaders (CENAFC- Centre d'éducation nutritionnelle d'accueil et de formation communautaire de Dangbo, Bénin) with the slogan 'Sauvegardons la terre par l'agroécologie'.

Promote agroecology in communities of nuns and women interfaith groups. Collaborate with civil society (e.g. Friends of the Earth Nigeria) to accompany communities resisting the use of their land for palm plantations. Build synergy and support groups with similar collaborations in Ghana, Nigeria, and Ivory Coast by sharing experiences and best practices, e.g., hold zoom meetings twice a year. Encourage and support Christian communities to take a more active part in the West African Caravan for the Global Convergence for the Struggle for Land, Water and Farmers' Seeds.

Conclusion

Million Belay, AFSA

We have started from our heart with Bishop Sipuka, who has touched our heart, talked about land as our source of food, identity, medicine, heritage, and international responsibility. The powerful African concept Ubuntu, about collective humanity – I am because you are. A person is a person through other people, confirming through actions and thoughts which are collective - avoiding activities that harm other people. I am because you are. It is a very powerful concept, starting the whole session from our heart, from our spiritual space.

Busisiwe brought seeds to our discussion centre and the seed audit initiative, which sounds fantastic; you have to know what you have to really protect it. A second aspect is the networking and range of institutions you are working with, which is weaving relations, and this is what agroecology is about, the third point. We cannot protect our land, our seed, our water if we are not connected. And this weaving and networking are very critical because it is bringing academia and practitioners together to share.

Massa has shown us where the real struggle is and what is happening with our land. And who is really disturbing that relationship between us and our land. He outlined the challenges and provided some solutions. The dialogue at the community level, which is the first step to mobilise your locality. We have to fight, have to advocate, and go out on the street and stop when things are going wrong. He also talked about engaging the regional communities, the governments and the African Union and the number of meetings they organised.

Nina came and dropped the bomb. We talk about agroecology but how much support is coming to agroecology from the Green Climate Fund, the Rome-based big organisations of IFAD and FAO. Only 2.7 per cent is going to agroecology, and this is quite shocking. And to what kind of agroecology is this going? Is this supporting the social movements that Bishop Sipuka is talking about, or the businesses, maybe not? From the Green Climate Fund, 80 per cent goes to industrial agriculture. From the Rome-based initiatives, 97.3 per cent goes to industrial agriculture. The majority of that money is going against what Bishop Sipuka is saying. It is polluting our land, our agriculture and our civic culture. The bigger question is how is that linked to the AU-EU initiative, what are the linkages? Who sets the agenda on seeds, on investment, the agenda around our land and our water? As Massa said, where does support come from? You have seen the four AU-EU agenda items: green transition, digital transition, economic growth and jobs, migration and mobility, and peace and governance.

Nothing on the transformation of our food systems. This is disgraceful. We need to bring change from civil society and churches and social movements and EU civil society, they all have to come together. We need to lobby our governments. And an important statement to conclude is that the majority of funds for agroecology comes from our own farmers, they are the ones who are funding agroecology. This is important to know. Thanks for your participation.



List of registered participant organisations

- ACCORD AFRIQUE.
- ACOD.
- ACSA.
- ACT Alliance EU.
- ADDAD Ivory Coast.
- ADDE.
- AEFJN Madrid.
- AEFJN-African Faith and Justice Network.
- AFJIN Kenya.
- AFJIN Nigeria Antenna.
- AFRIKAGRUPPERNA.
- AFSA.
- AGED-TOGO.
- AGIAMONDO-Misereor.
- Alternatives Durables pour le Développement (ADD).
- Alulo Consulting.
- ARG Communauté de Famienkro Ivory Coast.
- ASAPSU.
- Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya - Justice and Peace Commission.
- Brot für die Welt.
- CAD Mali.
- Caritas Ghana.
- Caritas Ivory Coast.
- Caritas Lira Diocese.
- Caritas Sierra Leone.
- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace under Episcopal Conference of Malawi.
- Catholic Justice and Peace Commission.
- CAWR.
- CGLTE West Africa.
- CIDSE.
- Clergy.
- Comboni Samaritans of Gulu.
- Congregation of the Holy Spirit Province of Brazil.
- Congregation of the Missionaries of Mariannhill.
- COPAGEN.
- Daughters of Mary and Joseph.
- ECAFA.
- Enda Pronat.
- FEC - Fundação Fé e Cooperação.
- Federación de Comités de Solidaridad con África negra-UMOYA.
- Fellowship of Christian Councils in Benin - FECCIWA Benin.
- FFC.
- FIAN International.
- FIAN Zambia.
- FOMWAG.
- Forum Social Sénégalais.
- GAAED – RéNAAT.
- GES.
- Global Citizen.
- HEKS-EPER.
- HUNDEE-Oromo Grassroots Development Initiative.
- Innovative Relief and Development Solutions.
- International Young Nature Friends.
- Isithembiso Multipurpose Organisation NPO.
- JVE International.
- JVE Senegal.
- KASA Germany.
- KU Leuven.
- Land for Life-NMJD.
- MACUA.
- Mahmiya Consulting.
- MAREDES.
- Masilime.
- Mcebo Unlimited Wealth (Pty) Ltd.
- Misereor.
- Muslim Women in Teaching Ghana.
- Naverntech.
- Nicheunity.
- Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Anambra State Nigeria.
- NoVox.
- ONG TJC.
- Organisation Nationale des Droits de l'Homme (ONDH).
- Oxfam International.
- Pain pour le prochain. Andrew Banda.
- Partnership for Rural Women Development-P4RWD.
- PELUM Association of Africa.
- PGS SA.
- PGS.
- PN CGLTE-OA Guinee.
- RECOWA CERAO.
- RECOWA, SAFCEI - Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute
- RVT.
- RWA.
- Sabtu.
- SECAM.
- Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles Ireland.
- Slow Food.
- Society of the Sacred Heart.
- South African Organic Sector Organisation-SAOSO.
- Synergie Paysanne (SYNPA).
- Synergy Alliance.
- Tanzania Natural Resource Forum.
- The Funky Farmer.
- Triskuel.
- Trócaire.
- UMOYA.
- UNAC.
- VENRO.
- Walter Sisulu University.
- Weltfriedensdienst e.V.
- Women Interfaith Council.
- Yetiho.

Workshop by Our Land is Our Life platform.

Workshop report published by:
Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA)
Email: afsa@afsafrica.org • Website: www.afsafrica.org