



ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICA

# ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE 18 MONTHS

FROM 1 JAN 2021- 30 JUN 2022

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Please Note: This special annual report covers 18 months from 1 Jan 2021 to 30 June 2022, as AFSA has changed its financial year end from 31 December to 30 June. Future annual reports will align with the new year-end and cover 12-month periods from 1 July to 30 June.

## OUR IDENTITY

### Vision

Africa developed in harmony with nature, harnessing its traditional knowledge and systems, and her people controlling natural and other resources and related decisions.

### Mission

The core purpose of AFSA is to influence policies and promote African solutions for food sovereignty. AFSA will serve as a continental platform for consolidation of issues about food sovereignty and together marshal a single and louder voice on issues and tabling clear, workable solutions

### Principles

AFSA's principles define the kind of Alliance the members want to create and live up to. This list will grow and expand as the need arises. AFSA's binding principles are listed below:

1. Championing small African family farming/production systems based on agroecological and indigenous approaches that sustain food sovereignty and the livelihoods of communities.
2. Resisting industrialisation and commodification of African agriculture and food systems, land grabs, destruction of biodiversity and ecosystems, displacement of indigenous peoples, especially pastoral communities and hunter-gatherers, and the destruction of their livelihoods and cultures.
3. Emphasising African-driven solutions to African problems and a belief in the richness of our diversity.
4. Being a strong voice to shape policy on the continent in community rights, family farming, promotion of traditional knowledge, the environment and natural resource management.
5. Having an emphasis on Women and Youth as key players in food sovereignty.
6. Land ownership and control in the hands of communities.
7. Rejecting genetic engineering and the privatisation of living organisms.
8. Ensuring a clear understanding and continued analysis of the political dimension of agroecology and food sovereignty, communicating this clearly and having this inform the development of AFSA's strategies.
9. Working in synergy with all actors who empower what we as AFSA are doing.
10. Bringing farmers and other grassroots voices forward to speak about agroecology, food sovereignty and the work of AFSA.
11. Ensuring cross-learning and collaboration between members of AFSA.
12. Working to promote the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to control their natural resources.

## AFSA'S THEORY OF CHANGE

AFSA's Theory of Change recognises that engagement with the formal policymaking processes is an essential but insufficient condition for change. AFSA has identified the following components of a package of action that needs to happen to achieve our goals.

### **Evidence Collection**

AFSA develops a clear and well-backed-up-with-evidence narrative on seed, land, and agroecology. This will justify the call for a transition to agroecology

### **Raising Consumer & Public Awareness**

AFSA reaches out to African consumers to become much more active in the food sovereignty movement advocating for Farmer Managed Seed Systems, farmers' and citizens' rights to land, and the transition to agroecology

### **Policy Advocacy**

AFSA influences critical decision-makers among Africa's elite to endorse and promote agroecology.

AFSA demonstrates the benefits of agroecology to decision-makers by exposure to farmers' experience and views.

AFSA gains access to an increasing number of critical decision-makers amongst Africa's elite.

### **Building the Movement**

AFSA ensures the convergence of groups and networks within the Food Sovereignty movement.

The genuine farmers' voice for Food Sovereignty grows and becomes more cohesive across the continent.

AFSA will keep learning: to be more strategic, take up opportunities, and improve its capacity to run an effective continental network.

## REACH

The Alliance reaches over 200 million farmers, fishers, pastoralists, indigenous people, women, youth, faith-based groups, and consumers across 50 African countries.

Find out more about AFSA at [www.afsafrica.org](http://www.afsafrica.org)

Follow us on Twitter: @Afsafrica

Follow us on Instagram: @Afsafrica

Follow us on Facebook: AFSA

## CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

This report covers 18 months, from January 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, instead of the usual 12 months. This is because we have aligned our fiscal year with that of the host country, Uganda, which runs between July 1 and June 30. The period covered was, in many respects, characterized by similar challenges of the previous year brought about by COVID-19 and other global events. Many organizations are still struggling to recover fully, and AFSA is no exception. We owe our resilience to the commendable combined effort of the Board, the Secretariat and the Members. The Board met virtually numerous times and continued to provide strategic direction to the Secretariat and the network as a whole.



The reorganization of the Working Groups is already bearing fruit given the amount of work each has accomplished. The commitment of the leadership and of majority of the members of the Working Groups is an illustration that with robust functioning systems, organizations achieve their objectives seamlessly. There is room still for the Working Groups to identify areas where they can work together, including holding joint meetings, for maximum impact. The preparation for holding joint meetings is work in progress.

AFSA participated in a number of dialogues in a variety of global and local spaces. At the global level, a great opportunity arose where we initially thought that AFSA's input would be priceless. This was the United Nations Food Security Summit (UNFSS) held in September 2021. The process of organizing the Summit was flawed from the beginning when the civil society voices and input were ignored. The close working relationship between civil society and smallholder producers whose activities would be affected by the resolutions of this Summit counted for nothing, according to the organizers. After broad consultations, AFSA resolved to boycott the Summit in order to not damage our hard-earned reputation as the continental voice of the voiceless majority on matters food sovereignty. At the continental level AFSA, together with like-minded organizations and individuals, is closely working with the African Union to produce a home-grown African Food Policy that is developed from the bottom up with participation of the eventual consumers of the Policy. Despite some challenges, more work on this front still needs to be done going forward.

The stature, reputation and influence of AFSA are on the rise. We are now courageous enough to engage with the powerful owners of capital such as the USAID, the Rockefeller Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and their 'spoiled babies' such as the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) in respect of funding industrial agriculture which is poisoning us, our soils and our food. Industrial agriculture is also the driving force in the alienation of Africa's productive land to be used for the cultivation of non-food crops, and hence creating a landless class.

Despite AFSA's gradual but noticeable impact, there are still issues which require immediate attention. First, the majority of African governments still allocate meagre resources to the agricultural sector mainly to finance industrial agriculture inputs including chemical fertilizers, pesticides and genetically modified seeds. They are still undervaluing agroecology. Second, many governments are legalizing the adoption of GMOs and criminalizing the sale and exchange of seeds by farmers. Third, the alienation of land by corporates and the national elite for investment in industrial agriculture is rampant in many

countries, leading to the marginalization and further impoverishment of the poor. In order to address these issues, we must prioritize our proposed interventions and then strategize how to move forward in a focused and strategic manner. Together we can make a difference, and so I would like to appeal to AFSA members in each country not to work in isolation but in solidarity for effective influencing capacity. Members should continue to share their work through AFSA for cross-learning purposes. We need to continue working with our allies and partners and strive to identify other like-minded potential allies.

My message would be incomplete without mentioning the tragedies that struck us with the sudden deaths of some of our most committed and influential colleagues. What they stood for shall never die! We should always remember their families in our prayers.

Finally, allow me to thank our donors for their continued financial support, without which we would not have realized the milestones contained in this report.

To the esteemed members of AFSA: **Together we shall soar higher next year and beyond!**

**Chris Macoloo, Ph.D. (Cantab.), FCCS**

AFSA Board Chair & Regional Director for Africa at World Neighbors

## MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL COORDINATOR

Dear Friends,

In many ways, the year 2021/2022 was a watershed moment. It was a year when members' participation was at an all-time high. AFSA, as we always say, works with two hands. On the one hand, we fight against forces that seek to seize our land, seeds, forests, water, and other aspects of our lives. We fought against the regionalization of seed and biosafety regulations on this front.

On the other hand, we suggest solutions. The solutions are the result of our research and the research of others. We also rely on African citizens' experiences. We are pleased to see that the solution we are proposing, and which is central to our work, the transition to agroecology, is being widely and increasingly recognized. Governments, academic institutions, funders, faith-based institutions, businesses, and the larger civil society are all now accepting and implementing agroecology for a healthy and sustainable diet. The trend indicates that this will continue in the future. Let me leave you with five key accomplishments from 2021.



The progress on food policy for Africa that we began with the African Union has been very encouraging. The 23 countries that participated in the food system dialogue have done a great job of mobilizing actors in their countries. Some countries, such as Rwanda and Kenya, are considering a food policy. Regionally, food experts from all over Africa supported the initiative and helped improve the document that will guide policy development. We have also decided to start a campaign called my Food is African as part of the effort to work on food policy as well as educating the public on good food.

Agroecological entrepreneurship is another exciting initiative. Through this initiative, AFSA and its partners are investigating the question: How can we use market forces to transition to agroecology? Following a study of 17 African countries, AFSA convened a huge event in May 2022 for agroecological entrepreneurs and territorial market leaders. We are now organizing ourselves to implement the outcome of the conference.

Another critical area in which we have begun to work is tracking the money that flows to Africa in support of the green revolution agenda. On this front, we have written a letter to AGRA's funders urging them to defund it and increase their investment in agroecology. We have also begun case studies in two countries to better understand the scope of influence of these money flows.

Another project in which AFSA was involved is called Our Land Our Life. We are collaborating with faith-based institutions in Africa and Europe to influence the Africa-Europe agreement to include land ownership, agroecology, and civil society participation.

The Secretariat is growing; we now have 12 staff members and a very active board of directors. The four Working Groups are led by committed members and meet regularly to coordinate activities. Our funding has also increased, and we anticipate that the network will be much stronger as a result.

We hope to report much more progress to you in the coming months and years. Have a pleasant reading experience and stay healthy.

**Million Belay (PhD), AFSA General Coordinator**

## 2021/2 PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT

The context in which AFSA works saw a few developments during this period. We saw the takeover of the food systems discussion at the global level, for example the United Nations Food Systems Summit that clearly had industrial agriculture actors and supporters at the centre of its interests.

The other development is the official launch of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), aimed at boosting intra-Africa trade despite existing challenges. This created a new dynamic within African market systems, not yet fully explored.

On the other hand, AFSA has continued to gain more recognition in spaces relevant to our work this year, as evidenced by invitations to present AFSA policy positions on different platforms at both international and regional levels.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, AFSA continued implementing its strategy, focusing on the four working areas of climate change and agroecology, resilient seed systems and agroecology, land and agroecology, and citizens for sustainable food systems.

New projects in the year were: Consumption of resilient orphan crop products for healthier diets (CROPS4HD), Development of a farmer-managed seed system framework, both under the seed systems work area; Healthy soils and healthy food under the land work area, Disrupting narratives and financial flows of industrial agriculture under the communications work, and Strengthening territorial markets under the citizens for sustainable food systems work area.

All work areas were strengthened with national outreach or engagements; the HSHF project work was implemented in six African countries, 12 countries for the climate change work, 24 countries for the food policy work under the citizens work area, and up to 8 countries for the seed work. The financial flows work is being implemented in two African countries and at the global level. This has further expanded AFSA's reach and strengthened the food sovereignty movement at the national and grassroots level.

Advocacy has also been increased with more engagements with decision-makers at different levels. The Food Policy work has encouraged members to engage with their governments to develop the food policies they want. At the same time, the network has also continued to engage the African Union to take on board and adopt the African Food Policy agenda. The seed group has equally engaged with national governments and the African Union regarding the Seed trade and biotechnology policy harmonisation agenda. The land working group has also intensified its engagements with the African Union and the European Union on the African Union Land Governance Strategy and the EU AU agriculture agenda. The climate change group strengthened its advocacy with national governments, regional economic communities, and the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change.

Capacity building is a continuing need and activity for all working areas. Capacity building was conducted at different levels to recognise the dynamic context within which AFSA operates and the complexity of some of the issues. This was mainly through training (mostly virtual) delivered to members, such as Healthy Soil and Healthy Food, Genetically Modified Organisms, and climate policy and negotiation.



## CLIMATE CHANGE & AGROECOLOGY WORKING GROUP

### BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The climate change work aims to have agroecology recognised in policy spaces as an effective strategy for adaptation and mitigation in Africa. The goal hinges on research that has proved that agroecology is a viable solution to climate-related challenges within our food systems. At the same time, however, policy research has also shown that many African policies, plans, and strategies at the national and regional levels have not yet integrated agroecology.

### OBJECTIVES

From that background, the program is implementing a regional Agroecology for climate action campaign with the following objectives: 1) Civil society actors and citizens' capacity in agroecology and climate change enhanced, 2) Sustainable climate actions promoted, adopted by governments, and prioritised public financing, 3) Civil society and citizens actively engage in climate and food sovereignty related policy.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Agroecology is recognised as a vehicle for implementing national and regional climate change adaptation and mitigation policy frameworks.
2. Africa's citizens, policymakers, and climate action actors rallied to support Agroecology as a viable solution to climate change.
3. The capacity of AFSA members, partners, and communities is built on Agroecology and Climate Change issues.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

#### POLICY ADVOCACY

At the national level, more than 12 policy meetings were organised in the 12 African countries that undertook the climate action campaign in 2021, and position papers on climate change and agroecology were presented to policymakers. AFSA members also participated in meetings organised by policymakers on the revision of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), national and local government climate change policies and laws. From these engagements, decision-makers have gained an increased understanding of the contribution of agroecology towards climate change adaptation and mitigation. The policy engagements also cultivated working relationships between civil society actors and policymakers. In at least 6 of the 12 countries, joint climate change committees were formed or, where they already existed, the members were co-opted for future engagements. In some of the countries like Kenya, the campaign partners were also strongly engaged in developing local government climate change acts.

At the regional level, effective engagements were mainly hindered by the limitation in physical meetings especially in 2021; however, AFSA members also participated in some critical events and processes such as the Africa Climate Week organised by the government of Uganda at the end of

September 2021. In these, three side events on agroecology and climate change were organised and AFSA positions on climate change were shared with several stakeholders.

AFSA co-organised the Pre-SB56 KJWA meeting with the African Group of Negotiators in Naivasha, where the AFSA delegation presented the significance of Agroecology as the most viable solution to the climate crisis and to the failing industrial food systems, and also made some input to the draft African position and the KJWA document that was going to be discussed and negotiated upon during the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the subsidiary bodies in Bonn, Germany 3 months later. On top of the Pre-SB56 meeting, AFSA also co-organised the Climate Action on Land meeting with the African Group of Negotiators in Livingstone, Zambia.

At the International level, 6 members participated in COP 26 in Glasgow, Scotland. In this, they shared with key actors a joint statement on why agroecology should be at the forefront of climate change adaptation and mitigation. In June, 2022, a delegation of AFSA members participated in the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary bodies (SB56) meeting in Bonn, Germany. This came following AFSA's participation in the preparatory meeting for the subsidiary bodies in Naivasha, Kenya which was co-organised by the African Group of Negotiators in March 2022.

As a result of the consistent engagement with African negotiators, AFSA has established a good working relationship with the African Group of Negotiators and has closely engaged with them both at the national level and in regional and international engagements.

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#### MOBILISED THE BASE

The Agroecology for Climate Action (A4CA) Campaign partner countries organized at least one multi-stakeholder public awareness dialogue with civil society, youth, women, government leaders at local and national level to mobilize the base. Cameroon, Togo, Rwanda, Ghana, Uganda and Kenya have organized two dialogues each. Zimbabwe has only organized coordination meetings while Ethiopia, Zambia, Ghana, Nigeria and cote d' Ivoire have each organized one public dialogue.

More than four youth sensitisation campaigns were organised in Togo, Cameroon, Uganda, Zambia. Women-focused meetings were organised in Kenya and Ghana. From these, women-led and youth-led platforms were formed to ensure effective participation of the women in the agroecology for climate action campaign.

Mobilising the base was also done through developing and disseminating media materials such as posters and documentaries in Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia, Zimbabwe in the recent 2022 Agroecology for Climate Action campaign.

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#### POPULARISED THE CAMPAIGN AGENDA

Media engagements were held to popularise the campaign, sensitise, and rally citizens to amplify the campaign messages. Activities were press conferences, Television, and radio talk shows. These were organised in all climate action campaign countries. This led to increased coverage of agroecology in the media, especially at the national level. The campaign engaged social media to further the agroecology for climate action agenda. This was through social media campaigns, especially on Twitter and Facebook. In Kenya, the team produced and launched a climate change song to highlight the challenges of climate change and propose solutions. The climate change song is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICEpf-U76E8>

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## BUILT CAPACITY

Several trainings were organised on climate change policy, negotiations, and agroecology.

At the regional level, two capacity building and planning meetings were organized in December 2021 and March 2022 to update the campaign team and partners on international and regional climate processes. These would uplift the partner's ability to participate and influence climate policy making processes.

A continental youth training was also organised to build their capacity in climate policy spaces including the NDCs and NAPs and engaging in climate negotiations. At the national level, more than six training sessions were organised for civil society actors, journalists, for example, in Ethiopia, youth within different age groups, and women especially engaged in agriculture. In Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Senegal, training was organised for civil society actors.

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## BUILT PARTNERSHIPS

This has been cultivated with policymakers, the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), cultural leaders, climate activists, media, artists, and environmental organisations. In Togo, the campaign co-opted cultural leaders who are strong opinion leaders in their respective regions.

## LESSONS LEARNT

- One of the key lessons learnt is timely and consistent engagement with policymakers. Through consistent engagement, civil society has been able to get a foot into the door to present its positions to policymakers. However, access does not guarantee the adoption of the proposals.
- The need to strengthen youth activism on climate change is another lesson learnt. Their capacities need to be further strengthened to appreciate agroecology and climate change better for this to happen. With a majority population below 35 years of age, the voices of young Africans will inevitably get heard.

## CHALLENGES

- The capacity of members to effectively engage in climate change advocacy is still low. There's a need for robust training for members to fully grasp the concepts, technicalities, and processes, especially around climate negotiations. This will create a more efficient advocacy group for the agroecology for climate action campaign.
- The COVID 19 is the overarching challenge, with restrictions on physical meetings, collaborations, and gatherings at the regional and in-country levels. Prolonged near-lockdown measures in Zimbabwe and Uganda caused significant delays in implementing some activities. Some planned activities, such as training and strategy meetings, were not held physically at the regional level.
- Slow response to communications delayed implementation in some of the countries.
- COVID 19 presented several limitations to campaign activities such as physical meetings (youth meeting).
- Following up on members/partners is difficult and still a challenge. Member responses have been slower especially via email exchanges.
- Limited funds.

## 2022/3 OUTLOOK

The Climate Change and Agroecology working group met in Nairobi in December 2021 and later again in Nairobi after the Pre-SB56 meeting with the African Group of Negotiators in March 2022 and agreed on 3 strategic issues; Engagement with the Korinivia Joint Work on Agriculture, Global Goal on Adaption and Climate action on land. The activities of focus are;

- Advocacy for decision-makers to integrate agroecology into national, regional, and international climate change policies and strategies.
- Establish/strengthen national alliances and mobilise stakeholders around agroecology and climate change.
- Strengthen capacity building for the partners
- Strengthen networking among members
- Strengthen the role of women and youth in agroecology for climate action campaigns.
- Strengthen AFSA's engagement in regional and international climate change policy processes.
- Expand countries that are part of the A4CA Campaign
- Identify and strengthen relations with key policy actors in the national and regional climate change spaces.

## RESILIENT SEED SYSTEMS & AGROECOLOGY WORKING GROUP

### BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Farmers' seeds are the basis of agricultural production across Africa, yet they receive little or no support from African governments. Local seeds are reliable, available, and affordable, but the seed corporations want them outlawed. These seeds and the cultural systems and knowledge that underpin them are under threat from policies designed to benefit corporate interests while criminalising and vilifying farmer-managed seed systems. They are dismissed by policymakers as outdated practices, to be replaced by the so-called 'formal' seed system that promotes so-called 'improved' hybrid and genetically modified organisms (GMO) seeds supplied by commercial seed companies.

Seed is one of the four thematic areas of the AFSA strategic plan. This thematic area aims to strengthen regional platforms that support farmer-managed seed systems (FMSS) and influence seed policy and legislation. With government restrictions to curb the spread of the COVID pandemic, not much has been done, as people need to learn to work online. From 2021 experiences, the seed working group strategized accordingly for 2022 during its very first meeting of the year. The agreed work aims first to make the seed working group more vibrant, then use online tools to engage policy spaces for FMSS and campaign against GMOs.

Except for the GMO campaign, which has registered limited progress, other areas have seen exciting and encouraging achievements. Indeed, the group held a vibrant pan-African seed rally and will engage with the AUC on the harmonisation of seed policy guidelines.

### OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the Seed working group for 2021 are: 1) To reinvigorate the working group, 2) To engage in seed policy debates, 3) To campaign against GMOs in Africa

#### EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR THE YEAR

1. A vibrant seed working group that holds regular meetings and where members are engaged in implementing the group work plan
2. Regional FMSS platforms engaging in seed policy debates
3. FMSS recognised by policymakers as a solution to the food crisis
4. Public awareness raised about threats of GM cowpea on Africa's food systems

#### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

##### WORKING GROUP IS MORE VIBRANT

Frances Davies from ZAAB was elected as the working group coordinator during the first meeting in February 2021. Through emails and WhatsApp group (29 members, including FMSS proponents that are not necessarily members of AFSA), the group coordinated its various work during the year. More than nine meetings took place to strategize, share information, etc. This has created and strengthened relationships between members but also enabled members to know what is going on at ground levels (RECs and countries)

##### ENHANCED NARRATIVE ON FARMER MANAGED SEED SYSTEMS

Under the lead of ZAAB and in collaboration with A Growing Culture (AGC), the group organised a Seed Rally (May 23<sup>rd</sup> – June 12<sup>th</sup>). Members and allies from the diaspora contributed through debates, Twitter, Facebook, and songs to address various seed sovereignty issues. Enjoy the seed song here: [https://youtu.be/RsCoTnPI\\_yg](https://youtu.be/RsCoTnPI_yg)

The seed rally took advantage of 3 main inputs: a) a series of seed clips AFSA supported members to produce in 2020 for the virtual food system conference; b) a series of seed clips AFSA and ZAAB produced with A Growing Culture; c) a social media capacity building event organised for all AFSA members to strengthen their capacity on online campaigning. Globally the seed rally increased the FMSS narrative worldwide, especially when a few AFSA members had a session during the indigenous people's forum.

##### FARMER MANAGED SEED SYSTEM RECOGNISED BUT STILL UNDER THREAT

The group had a vibrant engagement with AUC on the '*Development of continental guidelines for the harmonisation of seed regulatory frameworks in Africa*' (AUC/DREA/C/036). During the consultative meeting with CSOs organised by AUC, AFSA members, under the leadership of ACB, were the main contributors. This was partly due to the dynamism of the seed working group that mobilised members and prepared themselves for the consultation. It's important to highlight that the AUC guidelines mentioned the Farmer Managed Seed System (FMSS) instead of the 'informal seed system'. This is a positive step in policy advocacy for FMSS. So far, there are no indication for its development. FMSS will remain a source of material for industrial seed system development.

##### DEVELOPED A SEED REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

AFSA has developed a regulatory framework for seed policy favourable to FMSS and biodiversity. Through its members BIBA, COPAGEN, COASP, RWA, and its ally ATP, AFSA organised 12 national validation workshops of the regulatory framework. Involved countries are Burkina Faso, Kenya, Tunisia, Senegal, eSwatini, Lesotho, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Members highly appreciate the regulatory framework. The consolidated regulatory framework is ready for broader dissemination.

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#### CONDUCTED SEED POLICY STUDIES

AFSA started the implementation of the Consumption of *Resilient Orphan Crop & Products for Healthier Diets* (CROPS4HD) project. The policy component of the project is about promoting FMSS as a solution for sustainable food systems. It's a continental project with Chad, Niger, and Tanzania as entry countries. AFSA conducted three seed policy studies that cover these countries and the regional economic commissions (RECs) they belong to. AFSA held a capacity building and planning workshop on seed legislation and advocacy for FMSS with national partners in all three countries. These partners are PEPAF from Chad, Raya Karkara from Niger and TABIO from Tanzania.

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#### SUPPORTING PEASANTS' SEED FAIR

On 15-17 March 2022, eight countries came together to celebrate the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the West African peasants' seed fair in Djimini (Southern Senegal). AFSA supported technically and financially to the success of the event. For the first time, a delegation from Chad (Central Africa) participated in a peasants-led regional event, bringing together more than 300 participants in a rural area. In addition to seed exchange from 23 exhibitors (stands), there were 11 side events, including the presentation of the AUC proposed seed trade legislation guidelines and the AFSA proposed FMSS framework. During a press conference and in the final statement of the event, participants called on the ECOWAS to consider the seed regulatory framework proposed by African CSOs and to double-check the relevance of the continental guidelines for the harmonization of seed regulatory frameworks in Africa (AUC/DREA/C/036) to better respond to African peasants need.

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#### A GROWING MOVEMENT FOR FMSS IN CHAD

Chad and central Africa are very rich in natural resources, including plant genetic resources. Like other regions of the continent, seed laws are established to promote the industrial seed system and threaten food sovereignty. Worst, most of the farmers and their organisations were not aware enough of the seed sovereignty struggle. In collaboration with Swissaid Chad, PEPAF (a platform born to monitor the decade of family farming) and CNCPRT (a member of PROPAC), AFSA organised 30 Chadian CSOs to stand as an FMSS platform. Part of their ongoing work is to influence the revision of the seed policy, which expires in 2020, and to scale up the narrative of FMSS by producing seed case studies. The platform is very dynamic and wants to connect to the West African Peasant Seed Committee for a single voice in Francophone Africa.

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#### ORGANISATION OF A PAN AFRICAN SEED GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE

AFSA, in partnership with the Rosa Luxembourg Stiff Tung, co-hosted a Pan-African Seed Governance Conference in June 2022 in Senegal, attended by 58 representatives of farmers' organizations,

academic researchers, civil society organizations, women and youth, donors, and agriculture ministries from 23 countries in Africa.

The conference's goal was to improve the understanding of the challenges of seed governance in Africa and build a cohesive and strong movement to promote farmer-managed seed systems as a guarantee of a true agroecological transition. The conference participants called on the African Union Commission (AUC) to improve the continental guidelines for the harmonization of seed regulatory frameworks in Africa (AUC/DREA/C/036), drawing on seed regulatory frameworks proposed by African CSOs to better respond to international instruments in favour of farmers' rights and the promotion of biodiversity.

## LESSONS LEARNT

- There is limited capacity to initiate the GMO campaign. Few members are working on GMOs, coupled with insufficient knowledge and information about GMOs. During the AUC consultation on continental biosafety guidelines, AFSA members could not contribute effectively.
- There is limited capacity on social media campaigning from most group members. Despite the capacity building on social media, it appears that members are not very skilled in campaigning on social media.
- The seed policy statements have an impact: the seed policy statement produced after the AUC meeting on seed seems to have stalled the validation process.
- There is a real demand from CSOs and FMSS platforms to have a movement that coordinates the work at the continental level.

## CHALLENGES

- The limited engagement of some members, especially during the online African seed rally
- Gaps in communication with AUC concerning drafting "*Continental Guidelines for Harmonizing Seed Regulatory Frameworks in Africa*". We missed maintaining the relationship.

## 2022/3 OUTLOOK

AFSA will pursue its seed 2020-2024 strategic goal of strengthening regional platforms supporting farmer-managed seed systems, influencing seed policy and legislation to support FMSS, and pursuing a campaign against GMOs.

For the FMSS work, the following key activities are planned:

- Build up a strong communication strategy emphasising the rights of FMSS to exist and the sacred nature of seeds.
- Hold regional virtual Workshops on regulatory policy process framework to strengthen FMSS regional platforms' capacity.
- Conduct regional seed research and seed case studies to inform advocacy for FMSS.
- Participate in official seed meetings.
- Popularise and disseminate the AFSA proposed FMSS regulatory framework and continue to improve it.
- Have a seat at the governing body of the Plant Treaty, Cartagena, and Nagoya protocols' governing bodies.
- Build capacity of AFSA members on GMOs.

- Set up a GMO watch Africa website/webpage.

## LAND & AGROECOLOGY WORKING GROUP

### BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Land is an essential asset for countries and households that depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Access to land is a crucial requirement for farming, and control over land is synonymous with wealth, status, and power. In a continent where almost 70% of the population depends on agriculture, there is a real need to secure inclusive and sustainable access, use and control of land. This vision of fair and inclusive land management faces various challenges, which AFSA is working to overcome.

Corporate and elite capture of African land and natural resources damages Africa's food systems, environment, soils, lands and water, biodiversity, nutrition, and health. Women and youth, already disadvantaged in land access and control, face the worst impacts of this new menace on their livelihoods.

Under pressure from civil society organisations, various international institutions and some African governments developed and promoted land governance frameworks and mechanisms. Despite the goal of bringing back communities' land rights, these land governance mechanisms seem to still give priority to large-scale land-based investments.

While smallholder farmers, pastoralists, artisanal fisherfolk and forest communities dominate the demographics of rural Africa, the policy spaces are crowded by external actors: philanthropists, businesses, multilateral and bilateral aid agencies. As a result, most countries across the continent have been induced – often by Northern initiatives based on private investment and public-private partnerships – to subsidise an external input-based, export oriented, commodity monocrop model of agricultural development, and to rely heavily on the transfer of land for timber, oil, gas, and mineral exploitation to generate foreign exchange, often without or despite environmental impact assessment.

### OBJECTIVES

The goal in this 2020-24 period is to empower member networks so that communities, particularly women, have a voice on land rights, innovations and investments related to agroecology.

Specific objectives for this period were: a) Building members' capacity; b) Campaigning for community land rights; c) Growing the Healthy Soil Healthy Food initiative; d) Promoting pastoralism

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR THE YEAR

1. Community land rights defenders have information, skills, and tools to connect, engage in land governance debates and critique land laws/policies at various levels
2. International, continental, and regional (RECs) platforms are targeted for land policy/law changes. Member networks, grassroots organisations, and partner CSOs can advocate by themselves.
3. Across the continent, people and institutions hear a positive narrative of community land use and management systems



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

### STRENGTHENED THE HEALTHY SOIL HEALTHY FOOD COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ACROSS EAST, WEST, AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

AFSA consolidated the Healthy Soil Healthy Food Initiative (HSHF), bringing together 15 centres in 10 countries to build a continental community of practice. The HSHF initiative is now active in Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. This year, AFSA, in collaboration with Seed & Knowledge Initiative, formed four subgroups to lead on different aspects of the work: Research, Learning & Sharing, Entrepreneurship & Commercialisation, and Curriculum Development & Training Materials. AFSA secured funding for six centres for four and a half years from 2021 to mid-2025. The six centres conducted baseline surveys and delivered TOT training to 125 farmer trainers on agroecological practices and training methods. Two of the centres provided training to 640 farmers. AFSA supported four of the centres with infrastructure improvements to build their capacity and secured two years funding for a project officer to coordinate the HSHF work.

### INFLUENCED THE AFRICAN UNION'S LAND GOVERNANCE STRATEGY

AFSA coordinated African civil society and faith-based organisations' input into AUC Draft Land Governance Strategy. This resulted in significant changes to the text of the document, including:

- Changing the Vision statement to include "sustainable land use."
- Changing the Context section to explain the deep African connection to land as a common good and challenging the notion of land as a factor of production/tradable commodity.
- Introduced a new section highlighting the damage done by chemical agriculture and promoting the benefits of Agroecological approaches.
- Strengthening the Guiding Principles by integrating Human Rights established through UNDROP, UNDRIP, CEDAW and ACHPR.
- Introduced free prior and informed consent for indigenous peoples.
- Strengthened the language of women's land rights to include 'ownership and control', not just 'access' to land.

The new strategy will serve as a guide to AU member states when developing national land policy and legislation.

### ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN TARGETING EU-AU SUMMIT

AFSA co-organised an advocacy campaign with the Our Land is Our Life platform (OLOL), aiming to influence the EU-AU Summit and Partnership Agreement to take on board African civil society concerns on land justice and the transition to agroecology. The campaign activities included:

- Press conference targeting the AU-EU Agriculture Ministers conference.
- Press conference targeting the AU-EU summit.
- Meeting with senior EU officials from EEAS, DG-AGRI, and DG INTPA on EU-AU Partnership.
- Meeting EU & AU parliamentarians
- Coordinating and publishing a declaration targeting joint EU-AU foreign ministers meeting.
- Co-organising a side event on Agroecology and Land Justice at the official Africa Europe Week preceding the AU-EU Summit.

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## LAUNCHED A 5-COUNTRY LAND JUSTICE ADVOCACY PROJECT

AFSA secured three years funding and launched a land justice advocacy project in five countries: Senegal, Mali, Togo, Ghana, and Cameroon. Achievements in 2021 included carrying out a national policy study in each country, which was aimed to inform joined-up national and regional strategy development; strategy meetings bringing together key national actors to plan advocacy campaigns; and supporting a sub-regional land policy advocacy meeting targeting ECOWAS.

The project also supported a participatory action research project in Nigeria aimed at gathering evidence-based data on the impacts and violations linked to SIAT Nigeria Limited (SNL) and PRESCO PLC industrial plantation operations to support lobby and advocacy work from local-national to regional and international level processes.

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## INFORMATION GENERATION & SHARING

In 2021, AFSA published a book titled Agroecology – Our Land is Our Life, a collection of ten land case studies from six countries that demonstrate the benefits of agroecology: bringing the soil back to life, conserving biodiversity, and leaving no one behind. AFSA members launched the book at the annual gathering in Nairobi. Download your free copy here: <https://afsafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/agroecology-our-land-is-our-life.pdf>

AFSA also developed a Land Messaging framework for land justice advocacy and supported ESAFF Uganda in presenting a paper on women's land rights at the biennial Africa Land Policy Conference.

## LESSONS LEARNT

The success of the AU Land Governance Strategy advocacy work showed that engaging in good faith with AU Commission policy development processes can be very productive and help build strategic collaborative partnerships.

A dynamic and robust working group chair and a good working relationship with the secretariat can increase the energy and commitment of the working group.

There is a need to build more partnerships, especially with RECs, and share the knowledge and learning from existing actions.

## CHALLENGES

Funding limitations meant we could not financially support all 14 HSHF centres or widen the land justice project beyond the five countries.

## 2022/3 OUTLOOK

The land working group will continue to focus on the three key activity areas below.

- Healthy Soil Healthy Food (HSHF) will continue to deliver agroecological training to trainers and farmers while developing advocacy materials to influence local authorities and national policymakers.
- Our Land is Our Life (OLOL) will focus on advocacy work with AU, EU, and the RECs, with advocacy messages on land justice and the transition to agroecology.

- The land rights advocacy work in West and Central Africa will strengthen land rights advocacy platforms in 5 countries.

Land working group members identified the following additional priorities for 2022/3:

- Increase knowledge on land grabs, e.g. assess/validate the perception that the Chinese are buying large tracts of land or are becoming the major land grabbers.
- Share the learning coming out of the land WG projects.
- Ensure sustainability of what we have done, e.g., the resources coming from outside.
- Continue to build links with faith-based organisations.
- Support and encourage LWG members to monitor the situation in their country, e.g., to monitor land laws, and raise awareness.
- Focus on women's land rights and pastoralists' land rights.
- Address land degradation and land & water poisoning.
- A Day of Celebration.

## CITIZENS & AGROECOLOGY WORKING GROUP

### BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

This was the second year of implementing the Citizen Working Group program in the current AFSA Strategic Plan (2020-2024). The group aims to influence policies and institutions to increase citizen access to agroecologically produced food in Africa for better health and quality of life.

The group strives to link the citizenry and producers by strengthening the consumer voice to demand nutritious and healthy food. Strengthening citizen movements to appreciate the concept of agroecology will boost demand for healthy, equitable, efficient, resilient, and culturally diverse food and agricultural systems and practices.

### OBJECTIVES

This workstream aims to have active citizens who participate in producing, distributing, and consuming healthy foods. The objectives are 1) to generate and disseminate knowledge on agroecology and the link to health, 2) to mobilise and scale up broad citizen support for small-scale producers and food systems in Africa based on agroecological principles, values and practices for health and well-being, 3) to influence African agriculture, food, and health policies to integrate the agroecology agenda as a path to good health.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. African citizens at the forefront of advocacy and popularising the narrative which recognises the benefits of agroecology in African food systems
2. Development of an African Food Policy
3. Development of a Barefoot Guide on Health Eating for all
4. Support for market-based initiatives
5. Raised awareness of the huge potential role of agroecology
6. Evidence of toxicity of current practices and why Agroecology is a valid alternative

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

### DEVELOPMENT OF AN AFRICAN FOOD POLICY

AFSA and the African Union (AU), in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) sub-regional office for Eastern Africa and the World Food Program's Africa office, have launched a four-year process to develop the first edition of an African food policy. As part of this process, AFSA commissioned a continental study whose main findings and recommendations were validated by a team of 35 African experts. In the same vein, AFSA signed memoranda of understanding with 23 member and non-member organisations to facilitate country policy analyses and multi-actor country dialogues. The country policy analyses and dialogues focused on bridging the different policy areas at different policy levels (AU, national, local), identifying priorities for reform, and bringing them under a single agenda. In 2021, this process resulted into production of 23 country reports that have been synthesised and consolidated to inform the development of a coherent, flexible, and fit-for-purpose African food policy.

### SUPPORTED AFRICAN AGROECOLOGICAL ENTERPRISES (AEES)

AFSA in collaboration with the Agroecology Fund (AEF) and with support from The 11th Hour Project commissioned a one-year collaborative research project aimed at analysing existing African agroecological enterprises (AEs) and their service providers to understand their role and relationship to agroecology movements and markets. Phase I generated over 21 knowledge products (reports, case studies and briefing papers); these are accessible through this link: <https://afsafrika.org/agroecological-entrepreneurs/>. Based on the review of research publications and feedback from public conversations over the research period (May 2020-June 2021), AFSA developed a three-year phase II proposal which coalesced around three broader but reinforcing intervention areas: territorial markets, stakeholders' convening, and policy advocacy. Findings and recommendations of phase I were presented in 10 high level international conferences, such as the Oxford real farming conference and the UN food systems summit and generated global debate and conversation on supporting African agroecological enterprises.

### COMMISSIONED TERRITORIAL MARKETS RESEARCH

Premised on recommendations from the AFSA 2020 biennial food system conference and the first phase of supporting the African agroecological project (AEs), territorial markets have been identified as an alternative pathway to support the spread of agroecology. AFSA played an overarching role by coordinating, connecting, and joining the diverse networks within the agroecology space to advance this agenda. To kickstart this work, AFSA, with funding from SwedBio, has commissioned research on the role of territorial markets in six countries (Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Senegal, Tunisia, Uganda, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe). The research products (report and policy brief) will be launched in 2022/3 to inform public debate and engagement.

### AFRICAN AGROECOLOGICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TERRITORIAL MARKETS CONVENING, MAY 2022

The Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), in collaboration with the 11th Hour Project, Agroecology Fund, Biovision Foundation, and the Transformational Investing in Food Systems (TIFS)

Initiative, organised a three-day unprecedented continental convening from 24th-26th May 2022 in Kampala, Uganda, to provide space for interested actors to strengthen support and investment towards agroecological enterprises, policies, and programs. The convening was organised under the theme, Advancing Agroecological Enterprises for Healthy Local Food Economies

The Convening attracted the participation of over 500 participants and delegates from over 30 countries, both present and participating remotely (online). The participants were from diverse sectors such as the public sector, donors and investors, civil society, agroecology entrepreneurs, farmers, the diplomatic community, academia, service providers, media and research. In addition, key government officials participated in the opening and closing of the event as they saw the economic importance of food production and distribution strategies that strengthen local resilience, decrease dependence on imports, and localize value creation. The Rt. Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, First Deputy Prime Minister of Uganda, officially opened the Convening and Hon. Kyakulaga Fred Bwino MP, Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), gave the closing remarks.

During the three days, participants engaged in action-oriented conversations as well as the creation of action plans which they presented to the entire group. Adding to the open space agenda, participants heard from an opening panel of two agro-ecopreneurs, a consumer group and one government official (three women and one man), engaged in three different field visits (two farms and one territorial market), and experienced an afternoon expo of agroecological entrepreneurs and service providers. The key findings and recommendations from the convening have informed the development of a three-year proposal (2023-2025) in taking forward the African quest to support agroecological entrepreneurs and markets in the transition to the consumption of healthy and culturally appropriate food and diet

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#### HEALTHY EATING CAMPAIGN/BAREFOOT GUIDES ON FOOD AND NUTRITION

AFSA published English and French versions of "Surviving COVID-19: The Neglected Remedy" – the first mini-Barefoot Guide in a new Agroecology Series. The guide has been adapted by several stakeholders worldwide, including CONABIO in Mexico, who translated it into Spanish. Some AFSA member countries, including Kenya and Uganda, have launched the guide to create awareness on the use of indigenous African food as a remedy for COVID-19 and how best people across Africa can deal with it, including, for example, institutions of learning and prisons. AFSA, through the citizens' working group, will continue to influence the launch of this guide in other countries, integrate the content into policies and institutions of government, and publish other series to influence public debate, programmes and policies on agroecology, food systems and nutrition. The guide is available at <https://afsafrica.org/surviving-covid-19-the-neglected-remedy/>

The team also commenced work on a full-length Barefoot Guide with the working title "Healthy soil, safe food and diverse diets: going forwards to our roots." The first draft of chapters is ready, and it is now in the long editing process. The selection of illustrators is underway. AFSA is looking to run a training of trainers' programme to help facilitators use the guide with community groups post-publication. AFSA is working with the Centre for Story-based Strategy to develop a healthy eating campaign narrative.

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#### FOOD SCANDALS DOCUMENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GRAIN

In a bid to create awareness among food consumers in Africa, AFSA, in partnership with GRAIN, embarked on a campaign to collect and document food scandals in Africa. The campaign was intended

to question claims of the industrial food perpetrators that the system could feed the world safely. Various claims of distributing food with chemicals and non-nutritious and hazardous to human life and the environment were recorded. A collection of 8 food scandals from African countries was recorded, illustrated, and published here: <https://afsafrica.org/big-food-in-africa-endangering-peoples-health/>

## PARTICIPATED IN STRATEGIC AND WORK GROUP MEETINGS

The group convened four quarterly review and planning meetings to build synergies, review, and plan for short-, mid-, and long-term intervention and strategy.

Group members also participated in over 68 strategic meetings at country, continental and international levels to influence policies, programming, and practice to promote citizens' access to agroecologically produced food in Africa for better health and quality of life. These meetings include UNFAO on territorial markets; monthly joint countries food policy meetings; monthly steering calls with WHH; monthly AAE Advisory Group and Guiding committee calls; the Global Alliance for the Future of Food input to the 2022 and Beyond strategy call to action; #5 on Investment; monthly advisory committee meetings on investing in food systems transformation; and monthly advocacy advisory group meeting to develop an East African Agroecology Accelerator (E3A) in Kenya and Uganda.

## LESSONS LEARNT

- Physical meetings help build on the group synergy, as in the case of the 2019 Entebbe meeting.
- Tapping on the energy of the group members helps to accomplish the group strategic objectives (you go where there are positive energies).
- Combining physical and virtual meetings is very helpful in realising the group's work.
- Branding, repackaging, consistent message, and telling our story help to create a positive and sustainable impression.
- Building strong networks and relationships with credible organisations like AU, FAO, farmer organisations and movements gives you legitimacy.
- Tapping into positive energies of members increase efficiency and accomplishment of tasks.

## CHALLENGES

- The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic disrupted all aspects of life, including physical meetings. In response, AFSA followed government and WHO guidelines and transitioned to virtual meetings and engagement processes
- Participation of group members remains a challenge. Not enough group members actively participated in meetings and engagements collectively and in their subgroups. Going forward, we need to increase membership of the group through mobilisation and recruitment of new members and ensure more active participation.
- The increased rebuttal by the industrial seed companies. To mitigate this, the group shall: (i) Rebrand our work (ii) Consistency in our message, documentation, and engagement.
- Delayed feedback and response from members
- Not enough synergy with other working groups (working in silos)
- Application of knowledge products and dissemination

## 2022/3 OUTLOOK

In 2022/3, the group will focus on five key intervention areas.

- Consolidate and deepen African food policy work (Mobilizing for African food policy)
- Launch and support MY Food is African Campaign
- Deepen and strengthen the Supporting African Agroecological Entrepreneurship and Territorial Markets Work
- Organize the 4th biennial food system conference to recognize the benefits of Agroecology in African food systems
- Commission numerous research studies (AAE policy, Congo Basin, AU -DARBE functionality) to generate knowledge to support advocacy campaigns work the quest to transition to agroecology
- Commission the development and launch of the full guide on nutrition
- Convene a continental agroecological youth summit on the African food systems and Agroecology, November 2022
- Convene a women's agroecology expo on African food systems
- Organise working group meetings
- Participate in strategic meetings at the country and regional level

In 2022/3, the citizen working group will explore closer synergy with other working groups, coordinate and link members at the country level, deepen and widen our interventions, positioning African citizens at the centre (with a special emphasis on women & youth). We will increase uptake and use of our knowledge products, provide capacity enhancement of our members at the country level, and embark on fundraising initiatives to help implement our plan in an agile and active way.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

AFSA took proactive steps in 2021 to strengthen its media outreach and external relations to effectively promote African social movements focusing on agroecology and food sovereignty. We hoped to significantly improve AFSA's communication efforts, which would result in increased visibility of the secretariat's, working groups', and members' activities. The overarching goal was for AFSA to become a credible knowledgeable and information and management hub for all African agroecology and food sovereignty movements. In this regard, the years 2021 and 2022 will be remembered as watershed moments in AFSA's communication efforts. We began the year by clarifying our communications strategic goals and putting the five-year communication strategy plan into action. This 18-month report outlines some of the key activities and accomplishments associated with each strategic goal.

### OBJECTIVES

AFSA's five-year strategic communications plan (2020-2024) outlined five strategic pillars to improve communication and public relations. These are: 1) Establish efficient and functional communication between AFSA and its members and partners; 2) Improve the quality and dissemination of timely storytelling of institutional news and success stories; 3) improve AFSA's media relations with African

and international media outlets and journalists; 4) increase AFSA's social media presence and influence and 5) Increase the visibility of AFSA working groups and promote AFSA's flagship initiatives.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

### COMMUNICATION WITH AFSA MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

One of the key communications initiatives we launched in 2020 was the new African media monitoring program, "AFSA Weekly Media Digest." The goal was to create a reliable platform for AFSA's members, supporters, and extended networks to share current and relevant information and news on agroecology and food sovereignty movements in Africa and worldwide. We launched a French-language version of the weekly media monitoring digest in 2021. The Francophone weekly media monitoring digest includes essential news and analysis from francophone African countries. This project has helped us communicate with our francophone members and better understand regional realities. We have disseminated over a thousand news pieces in both languages so far, and we have continuously followed the outlet's weekly timetable.

One of our main goals for the year 2022 was to publish a quarterly newsletter featuring AFSA members. Hence, we officially launched a new biweekly newsletter called THE VOICE OF AFSA to share the works and elevate the profiles of our esteemed members and the great leaders driving the transition to agroecology in Africa. To make our first newsletter more enticing, we decided to start with our board members. As a result, we've organized remote interviews with our board members to answer questions for the newsletter. We are currently sharing individual profiles using Mailchimp Newsletter which currently has a reach of over 3000 people. The future plan is to continue publishing the online version coupled with the print version of the compiled episodes.

AFSA secretariat also organized virtual training to improve the institutional communications capacity of member organisations and working group leaders and activists. AFSA provided members with the necessary training, such as virtual training in agroecology messaging, social media campaigns on agroecology, seed, and climate change, media spokesperson training, and narrative strategy-building training. We also worked with Land and Agroecology Working group members to consolidate key messaging contents for their advocacy and communication priorities.

### IMPROVED QUALITY AND TIMELINESS OF NEWS AND SUCCESS STORIES

As AFSA grows as Africa's most prominent civil society movement, 2021 will be a year to remember in terms of the quality and quantity of communication materials produced. We were able to significantly improve our internal graphics design ability by subscribing to online design tools such as Canva and Adobe Spark and upgrading our website and Mailchimp subscription. As a result, we effectively used various communication platforms to share and disseminate the most recent organizational news and information during this reporting period.

AFSA's website, social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram), AFSA's google group mailing list, Mail Chimp, and WhatsApp groups were the primary information sharing and dissemination channels. Major AFSA virtual events are promoted through timely and relevant press releases, official institutional position statements, digital book launching events, online digital campaigns, training webinars, conferences, collection of grassroots stories on topical issues and consolidating case studies on



agroecology. We distributed more than 30 press releases from 2021 to Mid 2022 on AFSA Position Statements, Major campaigns, Convening coverages, and book launches.

We currently have 3200 Mail Chimp subscribers and 1500 Google Groups mailing list members.

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## ENHANCED MEDIA RELATIONS

One of the highlights of AFSA's communication efforts in 2021 was a successful engagement with Pan African journalists and online and traditional media outlets, which remained to be one of the strong communication areas through mid-2022. We are now glad to state that we have established solid working ties with over 50 pan-African journalists that specialise in environmental and agricultural journalism.

AFSA provided a total of three high-level two-day virtual media capacity-building workshops on The Power of Narratives in African Agriculture for pan-African journalists. The topics were on Industrial Agriculture Narratives, False solutions to food security and climate change, and Digitalisation of African Agriculture. The training was delivered in English and French to journalists from anglophone and francophone African countries. More than 50 journalists from 35 African countries attended the trainings. AFSA carried out the training with the help of international partners, ETC-Group, and the Centre for Story-Based Strategy. The workshop's goal was to demystify the power of narratives and the role of media in shaping African agricultural policies. The workshop provided a forum for in-depth discussion and reflection on the dominant narratives and paradigms shaping Africa's farming and food systems focusing on the selected topics.

In 2021, AFSA collaborated with 24 African journalists to collect grassroots stories on seed and climate issues and published both stories in a book. AFSA collaborated with six African female professional photographers and photojournalists to create a visual narrative of COVID-19 in Africa and its effect on people's lives. With this work, AFSA has entered a new area to positively alter the image of agricultural and food reporting in Africa.

The journalists assisted in amplifying and publishing our official press releases on their websites, working stories about agroecology and food sovereignty, participating in virtual press conferences, and attending our official AFSA Annual General Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. We invited three of the best journalists to attend AFSA meetings to help them network with our members and partners for future work and proactive engagement. Four journalists were also invited to the largest AFSA convening on African Agroecology entrepreneurs' event in Kampala. The increased number of journalists in some of the major and big AFSA events has significantly elevated the media coverage of the events in many African countries. AFSA has been on the news cycle through the year 2021 and even more in 2022. Such an achievement worthy of mentioning here is the virtual press release we called on the AGRAF meeting in Kigali denouncing the failed green revolution agenda and exposing how AGRA failed to deliver on its own goals. The reporting got huge media coverage across Africa and globally.

In addition, in 2021, AFSA launched its first AFSA Africa agroecology award. The call for submissions for its inaugural edition was only open to members and affiliates, and best journalism in agroecology is one of seven categories chosen for 2021. The strategy has also enabled AFSA to reach out to more African journalists who cover environmental and agricultural issues, focusing on agroecology, sustainable farming, and food sovereignty.



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### PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA INCREASED

The enormous work done to increase AFSA's social media presence is without a doubt one of the most significant highlights of AFSA's communication endeavours for the years 2021 and 2022. We meticulously developed and implemented 12 social media campaigns in 2021. AFSA used international days to promote agroecology and African food sovereignty. Among those on the list are Earth Day, World Environment Day, World Biodiversity Day, International Seed Day, World Food Day, and World Soil Day.

In 2021, AFSA engaged in the international campaign against UNFSS, representing an African voice silenced by the summit, in addition to the social media campaign on major international days. AFSA formally boycotted the UNFSS conference, which was followed by a back-and-forth with Agnes Kalibata, the UN Secretary-Special General's Envoy to the 2021 Food Systems Summit.

Around August 2021, RALLY reviewed AFSA's digital presence and discovered significant progress, as indicated by a growth in the number of followers across all our social media channels. In one year, we increased our Twitter followers and tripled our Instagram followers. Twitter has 8,100 followers, while Facebook has 3,500 and Instagram has 3,250.

Another noteworthy initiative is AFSA's attempt to collaborate with professional digital influencers located in Kampala to improve the quality, quantity, and influence of our social media coverage of the key AFSA Convenings in 2021 and 2022. As a result, AFSA was able to launch a nationally trending social media campaign during our African Agroecology Entrepreneurs Convening in Kampala for the first time. For three days, the original hashtag #AAEC2022 trended on Twitter in Uganda.

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### ENHANCED THE VISIBILITY OF WORKING GROUPS AND FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

AFSA is Africa's largest civil society organisation, formed in response to the need to represent a unified Pan-African voice on agroecology and food sovereignty issues. AFSA gathers, curates, and synthesises key policy advocacy issues and sets major campaign agendas using the internal mechanism of AFSA's working groups. To that end, AFSA continued building its internal communication capacity to produce consistent and high-quality content about the topics the AFSA working groups cover and the people and organisations we represent.

In 2021, AFSA became more proactive than ever in dominating the media. Following the most brutal, racist, and inhumane death of Gorge Floyd by a white police officer in America, our General Coordinator published a worldwide trending post titled "Africa says I can't breathe too." Million and Bridget Mugabe also published an internationally popular piece on Scientific American urging Bill Gates to quit telling Africa what kind of agriculture it wants. A few members have also dominated the worldwide media platform by writing insightful op-eds and pieces that broaden the scope of African discourses about the food system that Africa desires.

AFSA officially boycotted the UNFSS and declined the invitation by Agnes Kalibata

AFSA wrote an official letter calling AGRA donors to boycott funding AGRA

AFSA, with the help of RALLY, developed messaging document for the land working group. The messaging document established clarity on the communication agenda of the land working group with detailed messaging

Finally, one of the key communication activities for the year 2022 was the launch of a big research project on Disrupting Financial Flows into Industrial Agriculture in two countries, Kenya and Mali. The project entails conducting rigorous research that exposes financial flows into industrial agriculture in Africa and their impact on local agricultural practices and social movements for social justice and a sustainable future. The study is expected to map out critical financial institutions, multilateral organisations, development agencies, research institutes and academics that are working behind the scenes to promote industrial agriculture and advance the green revolution agenda in Africa. SahelEco and BIBA Kenya are leading the research endeavour by hiring competent investigative journalists who are progressing well into finalizing the research work

## LESSONS LEARNT

Our social media initiatives have yielded three major takeaways:

- There is a vast and untapped opportunity to create a proactive youth-based social network of ecologically conscious, concerned, and informed Pan-Africans.
- With its large number of followers, social media is an excellent platform for reaching out to critical and influential policymakers and opinion leaders.
- Without a doubt, the future of advocacy and activism has shifted from mainstream to social media, and organisations like AFSA must develop a bold and permanent presence.

## CHALLENGES

- We began 2021 with the fortitude and optimism needed to deal with the fallout from the extraordinary disaster that occurred in 2020 because of the COVID 19 pandemic. The ongoing threat of the COVID-19 pandemic and its various variants compelled organisations to investigate new ways of communicating their messages online. AFSA is no different. The ongoing COVID-related challenges forced us to cancel plans to hold face-to-face meetings with media people and African journalists, engage in members capacity building meetings to enhance their institutional communication at the beginning of the year 2021.
- We knew we needed to refocus our efforts on increasing our social media participation, outreach, and influence right away. We hoped to strengthen our institutional social media communication

abilities and capabilities and engage in digital advocacy and activism. As a result, we learnt valuable lessons that will lay the groundwork for our future social media communication efforts.

## 2022/3 OUTLOOK

AFSA aspires to focus on the following activities and outcomes to fully realise our five-year strategic communication plan.

- Proactive and vibrant communication with member organisations to the effect of building their communication capacity needs
- Effectively communicate all AFSA events, publications, and contents and improve on producing common positions and statements that would elevate the pan-African voice for food sovereignty and agroecology.
- Continue providing timely and relevant information to our networks and media people to expand the horizon of knowledge and resist the narrative power and the push towards industrial agriculture in Africa.
- Establish a reliable and vibrant working relationship and synergy with pan-African journalists, broadcast and print media, and online digital influencers and activists.
- Significantly increase the number of followers on all our social media platforms and build the capacity for organising effective and impactful social media campaigns

## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

### BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) is a core component of AFSA and part of AFSA's efforts to remain an evidence-based advocacy membership network organisation in Africa. MEL is critical to fostering programmatic and operational excellence, promoting continuous improvement through tracking, analysing, documenting, and applying lessons learnt at the country, working group and continent levels, and sharing our reflections with various AFSA members.

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives monitoring, evaluation and learning include 1) Guide measurement of AFSA's outputs and outcomes, use of data for decision making, and assessing AFSA's contribution to influencing policy and advocacy agenda in Africa, 2) Guide on how different M&E tasks including collection, analysis, reporting and use of data by members will be operationalised, 3) Provide key performance indicators (KPIs) that will be tracked with their accompanying performance targets

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

#### COMPLETION OF BASELINE STUDY FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A baseline survey for AFSA strategic plan (2020-2024) commissioned in December 2020 was completed in 2021. It has provided a benchmark for measuring progress. A monitoring report has been generated

showing progress made for the second year, 2021, of implementing the strategic plan. This report has been used to feed into plans for 2022 during the AFSA strategy meetings held in December 2021.

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## END OF PROJECT EVALUATION FOR AGROECOLOGICAL ENTERPRISES

AFSA, in collaboration with the Agroecology Fund, implemented a collaborative action research project for an initial one-year period. Following the end of the project, an evaluation was conducted. The evaluation also sought ideas and proposals for the second phase of the project, and recommended the following:

1. Design a project that will consolidate the gains made during phase I and strengthen African Agroecological enterprises.
2. Look for ways to share relevant news and information in this sector via a newsletter on agroecological entrepreneurship, perhaps monthly so that this can be a sort of pre-convening convening.
3. The ideas from the research in phase one should be implemented but also carrying out further research as recommended from phase 1, for example, research on territorial markets
4. Explore citizen mobilisation and policy opportunities and formation of agroecology business associations to advocate for all necessary services.

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## DEVELOPMENT OF MEMBER DATABASE

During the year, an initiative was started to develop a database with up-to-date information about AFSA members. The database will help provide accurate information to support planning, coordination, capacity building, engagement and fundraising where applicable in the strive for transition to agroecology. The database provides information about the geographical reach of members, technical niche, office location, among others.



**1 Map of countries reached by AFSA members**

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## STAFF AND BOARD TRAINING

Training sessions were crafted from training needs assessment exercises that AFSA conducted for staff and Board members in the reporting period. Consultants delivered the training sessions staggered over three months (October – December 2021). The training was provided virtually for staff and physically for Board members to address specific capacity building needs and reinforce their performance.

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## VISIT TO MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

During the year, AFSA conducted a field visit to assess the performance of members and members of member organisations in 2020-2021 and establish the current monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity to guide future capacity building intervention and support. Organisations in six countries were

visited including Association Eco-Impact, JVE and RAPDA in Togo; GIE BioProtect in Burkina Faso; AJAC/We are the solution, CICODEV in Senegal; TABIO in Tanzania, RUCID in Uganda; World Neighbours, Rescope, ABN, BIOGI, and BIBA in Kenya.

## CENTRAL ONLINE FILING SYSTEM FOR THE SECRETARIAT

To improve the efficiency of sharing files and documents within the AFSA secretariat, an online system was created based on the Zoho cloud office suite. All AFSA staff were trained on how to use the system in March 2022. It is organized according to different thematic areas of work for the organization. It allows staff to have seamless access to shared documents, files, and folders among secretariate staff in real-time.

## CHALLENGES

- Delayed response by members to communications
- Limited budget for the development of management information system (MIS)

## 2022/3 OUTLOOK

- Performance monitoring and reporting
- Develop management information system (MIS)
- Follow up on the impact of staff and board training
- Finalise profiling and developing a database of AFSA members and their members
- Program performance review meetings
- Conduct organisational capacity assessment for member organisations
- Implement organisational capacity building plan for AFSA members

## INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### INCREASE IN STAFFING AND FUNDING

The year witnessed considerable growth to the institution. AFSA grew by bringing on board one new staff member, a project officer, Ms Awa Ndeye Gueye. Based in AFSA's Senegal office, Awa is working on the CROPS4HD project. Interviews and recruitment of another staff member Mr Charles Tumuhe were finalised in 2021, and he began work in 2022.

In terms of funding, AFSA's funding portfolio grew considerably compared to 2020, enabling us to further enhance the network's work.

### FORMAL OFFICE REGISTRATION IN SENEGAL

AFSA has also started registering the office in Senegal, which we expect to complete in 2022/3. It is hoped that with formal registration in Senegal, AFSA francophone office will be in a stronger position to support the membership in the region.

### IMPROVED CAPACITY

To strengthen the reporting capacity of members, the secretariat has started financial training for the membership. The virtual training focused on financial reporting and accountability and will continue in 2022/3.

AFSA has in this year made strides by expanding geographical coverage to the Congo basin, specifically in the following countries: Gabon, Central African Republic, and Republic of the Congo (Congo Brazzaville). These countries contributed to the process of developing an African Food Policy.

## CHALLENGES

- AFSA's work is expanding to more countries within the continent, creating a need for more funding to cover costs of interpretation for meetings and translation of documents.
- Communication at the network level has improved considerably; however, it still needs further improvement. Slow communication within the network also means late reporting and missed opportunities for advocacy. This is one of the issues discussed during the members' annual general meeting, with several recommendations made.
- COVID continued to be an overarching challenge, causing delays in implementing projects due to lockdown restrictions in many countries.

## A SAMPLE OF MEMBERS' HIGHLIGHTS

### PELUM ASSOCIATION

#### Agroecology Symposium

The PELUM Association successfully conducted this major activity in September 2021, bringing together farmers and practitioners from different regions in the region. Due to the Covid 19 restrictions in many countries, the symposium was held through a hybrid approach whereby some members participated physically while others participated virtually through Zoom. The host Country Chapter was PELUM Eswatini. A total of 10 Country Chapters took part in the symposium, namely PELUM Kenya, PELUM Zambia, PELUM Zimbabwe, PELUM Uganda, PELUM Tanzania, PELUM Ethiopia, PELUM Rwanda, PELUM Malawi, PELUM Lesotho and PELUM Eswatini.

As the host country, PELUM Eswatini managed to bring 14 farmers into the symposium physically. These farmers were coming from the four ecological zones of the country, displaying products of their best agroecology as promoted by the various Country Chapters in the region.

PELUM Tanzania also managed to bring on board five small-scale farmers who participated virtually. In total, the symposium was attended by 37 participants physically in Eswatini and 22 virtually through zoom, making a total of 59 participants. Various Country Chapters made different presentations on different topics related to best agroecology practices in the region, and it was indeed a wealth of experience sharing.





The presence of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Mr Jabulani Mabuza, graced the symposium. The Minister got a chance to interact closely with the farmers who had come to showcase their products in the symposium.



In his speech, the Minister emphasised his ministry's commitment to promoting sustainable food security practices in the country, especially now with the effects of the global climatic changes that have not spared African countries. As PELUM Association, we look forward to working closely with government ministries that promote best Agroecology practices in the region.

A representative from one of our donor partners, Bread for the World, also graced the occasion, who ensured that such activities are well-financed within PELUM RS.

#### FRIENDS OF THE EARTH AFRICA (FOEA)

##### **Women confront the effects of industrial land expansion**

Aggressive land grabbing and deforestation to expand agro-commodity plantations are causing a new wave of oppression and colonisation in Africa, with devastating impacts on people, including differentiated and aggravated consequences for women.

In the face of ongoing social, environmental and gender injustice in Africa, defending people's rights is crucial to dismantling corporate power and challenging the capitalist neoliberal model of industrial plantation expansion; women are organising against this system of oppression that undermines their rights. They are breaking the silence against violence, injustice, and other methods of oppression across the continent. They are putting food production and management of forests in the hands of the community, especially women, through a system of agroecology and community forest management as the solutions to biodiversity and forest conservation. Details are available in the video documentary on social media channels of Friends of the Earth: website and on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NI7cC1zK5Bg>

#### CITIZENS WORKING GROUP (JOHN WILSON)

A highlight of the year 2021 was the signing of the MoU between AFSA and RySS in Andhra Pradesh in India to work together for five years in a South-South partnership, and then later in the year, six sessions, each three hours long, during which RySS shared about their Community Natural Farming programme with participants all over the continent. We see much coming out of this partnership going forward.



## FECCIWA

NGO Déborah is active in training and mobilisation of young people, women, men, and religious leaders on social challenges, particularly health, environmental and human. It also works to implement development programmes in education and the environment and provides support to the most disadvantaged pupils and students to contribute to the improvement of the school retention rate in our country. In 2021, several activities were organised in the framework of the preservation of life and the environment.

**Celebration of the International Water Day:** a conference was attended by twenty people from various backgrounds and was moderated by the forester in charge of the commune of Dangbo, Benin. The participants were mostly young, who took the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of water and its usefulness for life and health and its current challenges. Trees were planted for this purpose.

**Celebration of the Arbor Day:** the day of the tree was celebrated by planting 93 tree seedlings at hospitals, the good Samaritan, and the protestant Methodist church of Hounsouko and Ayonoutanmè.

**Celebration of the church action week for food:** a week of action and prayer against hunger. Talks, radio broadcasts, prayers, and worship in temples, preaching, reforestation and the celebration of food were the highlights of this week. The aim was to sensitise the whole community on respect for food, nature and the food chain based on the liturgy and the World Council of Churches' "Food for Life" campaign. Events were broadcast on radio "Hosanna" of the Protestant Methodist Church of Benin, covered by the print daily newspaper "Benin Intelligent" and published on the newspaper website <https://www.beninintelligent.com>. Events are also available on an online television, Morid TV, and on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rksUMmx8FtM>

**Capacity building workshop on food sovereignty:** a workshop on reducing HIV and AIDS infection and strengthening food sovereignty, attended by the Protestant Methodist Church of Benin (EPMB), the Roman Catholic Church, the Evangelical Church of the Assemblies of God (EEAD), the Church of Cherubim and Seraphim, the African Methodist Church of Benin (EMAB), the Bible Church of the Holy Spirit (EBSE), the Evangelical Mission of Soul Winners (MEGA), the Bible Alliance of Benin (ABB), the NGO Déborah, and the WCC-EHAIA/Regional Office.

## NORTH AFRICAN FOOD SOVEREIGNTY NETWORK

The network attracted seven new member organisations in 2021 through our efforts to reach out to small-scale food producer movements in the region to develop political vision and build capacity for resistance.

We organised the following activities in 2021:

- Four video conferences:
  - The role of women in the struggle for food sovereignty
  - Agricultural and maritime policy in Morocco
  - Food sovereignty as an alternative to the destructive capitalist agricultural model
  - For a new global green deal to reform our food systems
- Campaign against the UN Food Systems Summit
- Organisation of the [second general assembly of NAFSN in Tunisia on 18 and 19 December 2021](#)

**Popular education** is one of the network's major concerns, to anchor the concept of food sovereignty and equip the activist vanguard with combative perspectives inspired by a popular alternative for small-scale food producers. The network's education activity includes documentary films, articles, studies and translations.

**Documentary films** are available, with English subtitles, on the Network's YouTube channel:

- [Corona Remedy](#)
- [Ouled Jaballah: one hand builds and the other resists](#)
- [Path to Sovereignty](#)

The Network's [siyada.org](http://siyada.org) website published articles in Arabic, French and English, along with studies on:

- [Total and reinforced dependence: how a trade agreement with the European Union destroys the Tunisian economy](#)
- [The Covid-19 crisis and the need to fight for food sovereignty in North Africa](#)

**International Solidarity:** The network opts for the consolidation of traditions of solidarity between peoples. To this end, it is in solidarity with several small farmers' movements around the world. We defend the causes of oppressed nations, including the Palestinian nation, victim of Israeli apartheid.



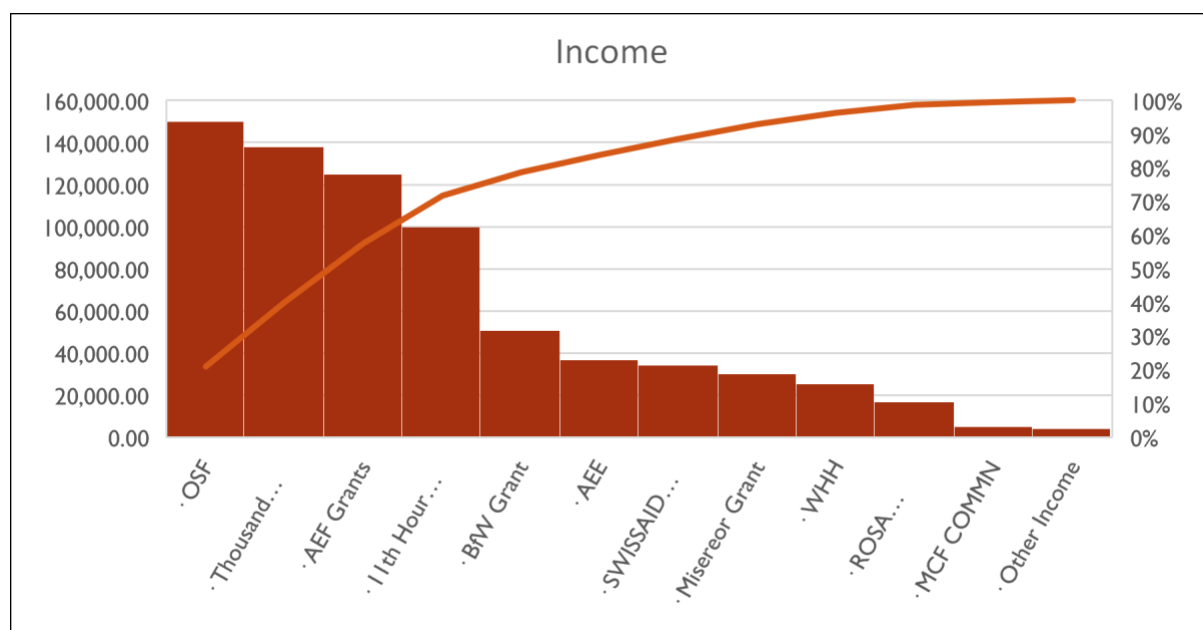
## FINANCIAL REPORT

This special annual report covers an 18 month period from 1 Jan 2021 to 30 June 2022, as AFSA has changed its financial year end from 31 December to 30 June. Future annual reports will align with the new year-end and cover 12 month periods from 1 July to 30 June.

The two financial reports below cover income and expenditure for a) Jan-June 2021 and b) July 2021-June 2022.

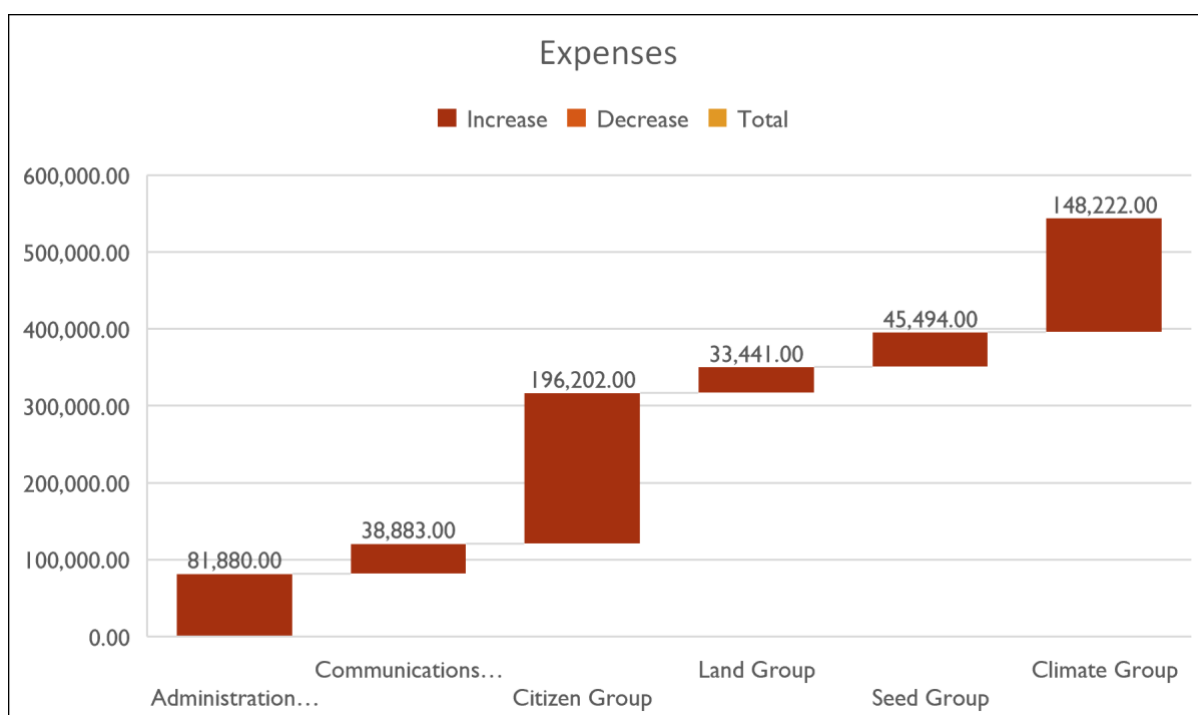
### INCOME JAN-JUNE 2021 (6 MONTHS)

INCOME	USD
Membership Fees	
Grants	711,894.00
Other income	3,898.00
Brought forward from 2020	398,152.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>1,113,944.00</b>



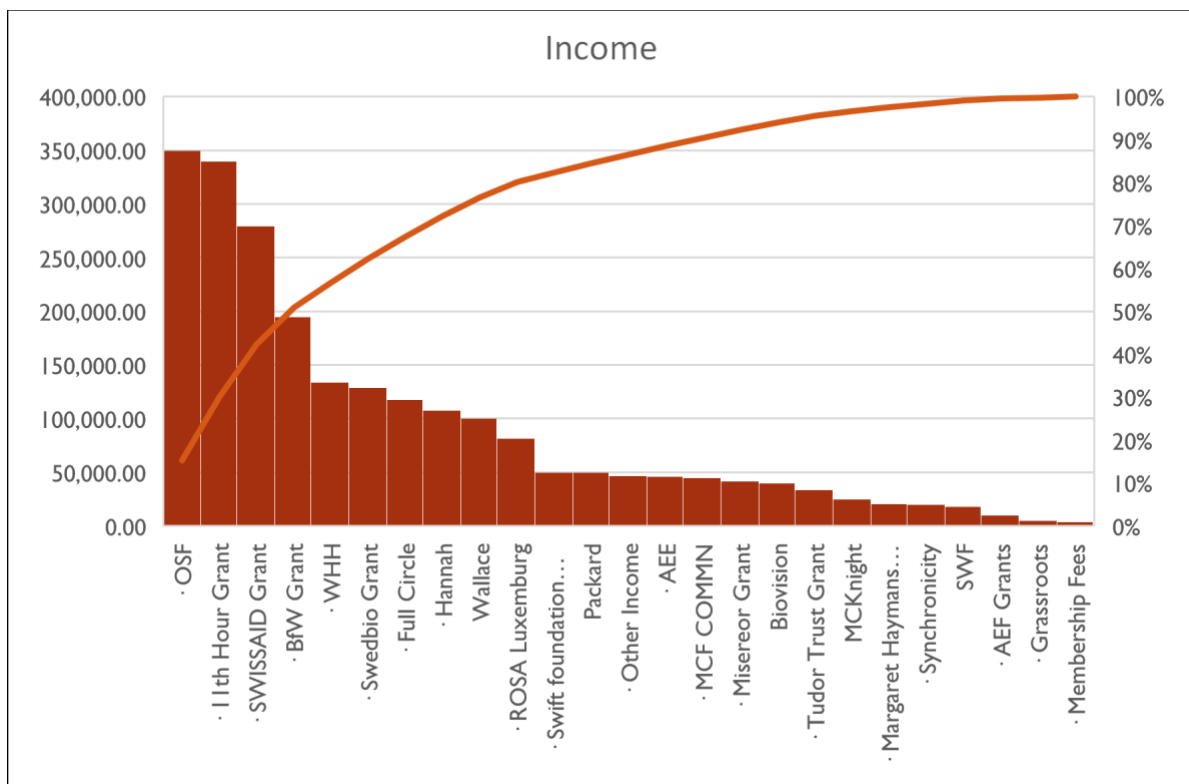
EXPENDITURE JAN-JUNE 2021 (6 MONTHS)

Expenses	USD
Administration Costs	81,880.00
Communications Group	38,883.00
Citizen Group	196,202.00
Land Group	33,441.00
Seed Group	45,494.00
Climate Group	148,222.00
Institutional development	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>544,122.00</b>



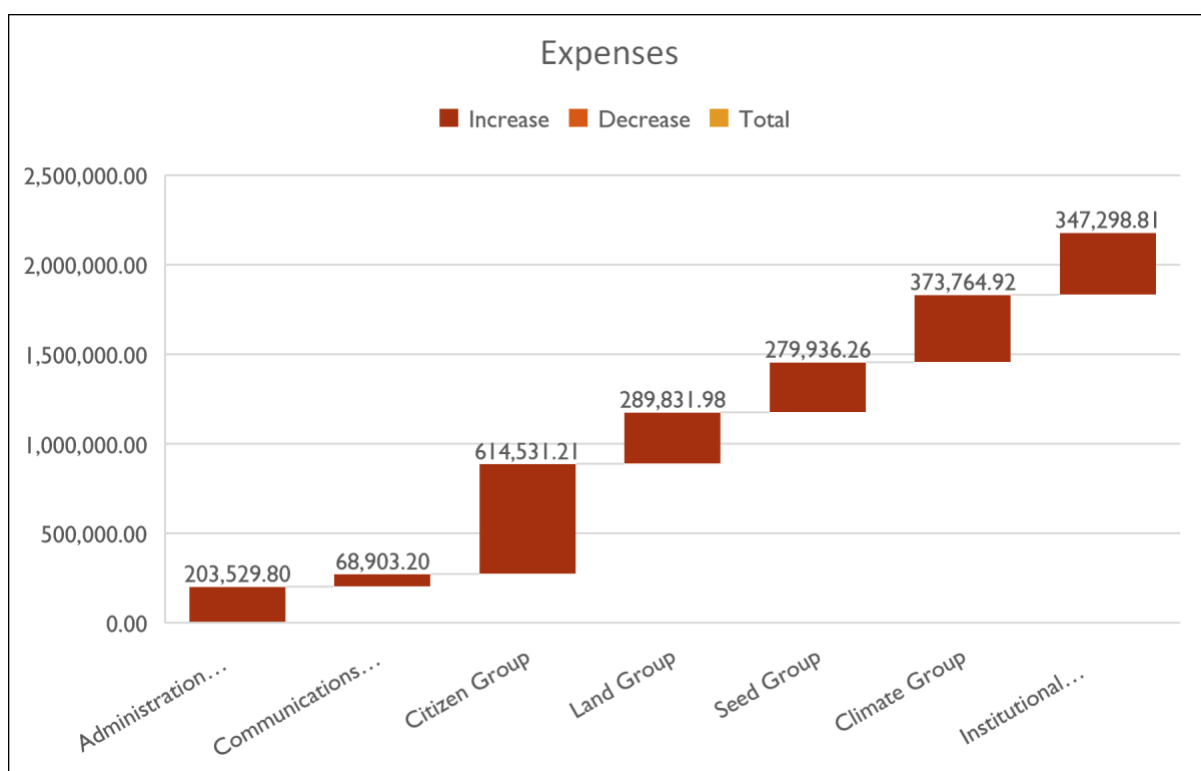
INCOME JULY 2021-JUNE 2022 (12 MONTHS)

INCOME	USD
Membership Fees	3,948.00
Grants	2,240,115.56
Other income	46,718.48
Brought forward from 2020	569,263.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,860,045.04</b>






EXPENDITURE JULY 2021-JUNE 2022 (12 MONTHS)





Expenses	USD
Administration Costs	203,529.80
Communications Group	68,903.20
Citizen Group	614,531.21
Land Group	289,831.98
Seed Group	279,936.26
Climate Group	373,764.92
Institutional development	347,298.81
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>2,177,796.18</b>



# OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

With many thanks to our dedicated board members.

 <p>Ali Aii Shatou IPACC Treasurer</p>	 <p>Dr. Chris Macoloo World Neighbors Chairperson</p>	 <p>Josephine Atangana PROPAC Secretary</p>
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 <p>Fasil Gebeyehu PhD ABN Board Member</p>	 <p>Mariama Sonko We are the Solution Board Member</p>	 <p>Fidele Houssou FECCIWA Board Member</p>	 <p>Jean Paul Sikeli COPAGEN Board Member</p>
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## FUNDING PARTNERS

With many thanks to our partners for their generous and continuing support.



## AFSA MEMBERS

