

## **SELF MANAGED LIVESTOCK MARKET: THE BENINESE EXAMPLE<sup>1</sup> - BREEDERS FROM UDOPER<sup>2</sup> -**

**Country:** Benin

**Institutions involved:** French cooperation (project PPAB), French NGO (Afdi: Agriculteurs français et développement international), and then EU and other projects.

### **Brief summary:**

In north Benin, the breeders from UDOPER organisation increased significantly cattle selling, breeders incomes, and local development thank to the changes and services that they did promote both at the livestock market level (rules and organisation), and at the breeders' organisation level.

The self-managed markets they promoted are an authentic instrument at the service for the professional organisation of breeders that foster livestock and for the local development. This illustrates that a win-win strategy between producers and traders/intermediaries is possible and that for producers, “to sell better” does not necessarily mean “to get rid of traders and intermediaries”.

Some of the activities being carried out at these markets are: increasing the producers' income while safeguarding the interests of other key actors, facilitating the balance between supply and demand, bringing more transparency to transactions and offering livestock related services. They also contribute to improve market access to products and could serve as an inspiration for other development actors.

Many factors have contributed towards this result: the strong local dynamic, external supports, the step by step structuration of the market, that has been linked with step by step breeders organisation.

### **Question 1: What are the general settings and arrangements for MOAAS?**

**1.1 What does Agencie hope to achieve by contributing to agricultural advisory services and how does this relate to Agency's overall goals?**

#### **French cooperation**

The general objectives are:

- to reinforce capacities in order farmers to act in a professional way
- to improve production, productivity and competitiveness of farmers
- to increase farmers incomes, especially family farmers
- to improve management of natural resources

To reach those objectives, the method is:

- to support farmers organisations
- to support public services
- to support private sector and service providers (NGO, consultancy, private veterinarians, inputs providers and advisory services in technico-economics management).

#### **The Project PPAB (Projet de professionnalisation de l'agriculture au Bénin)**

The objective of the Project was to strengthen farmer's capacities and strengthen the links between farmer's organisations (FO) and the other existing services and structures.

The method consisted into accompany FO to define and to reach their own objectives.

<sup>1</sup> Self-managed livestock markets: the beninese example. – SOS Faim, Framing dynamics n°10, July 2006. - 8 p.  
[http://www.sosfaim.org/pdf/fr/dp/Dynam10\\_FR\\_03.pdf](http://www.sosfaim.org/pdf/fr/dp/Dynam10_FR_03.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Union départementale des organisations professionnelles d'éleveurs de ruminants du Borgou et de l'Alibori : Cattle breeders organisation at departmental level.

## **UDOPER**

The first objective was to sell the cattle easier and to increase cattle breeders incomes.

Then the o

bjectiv turned into reach better general condition of life for the community (young, women...). Finally the objective became more political: breeders to be able to built proposals, to participate to policy construction, and to promote cattle breeders interest at national level.

### **1.2 What is the context of the intervention in terms of policy, economic and framework conditions etc.?**

The Project PPAB/AFDI in Benin offered several services dedicated to accompain farmers in their dinamic. Among those farmers, the breeders in the north Benin got also support by the Project.

Indeed, the Project decided to work with/support breeders of north of Benin because cattle production always received less support than agriculture, and the north of Benin is far away from the main towns in the south, what do not help to get subsidies, even from government.

### **1.3 What are the general constraints for farmers to connect to markets?**

The traditional livestock market is not efficient:

- no transparency: the traders/middlemen stand between the sellers (breeders) and the buyers; they dicide the prices;
- the breeders and the buyers do not know the effective prices of cattel;
- few transactions take place;
- no satisfaction from both sides, sellers (low incomes) and buyers;
- many conflicts, many problems of rob.

### **1.4 Who provides the agricultural advisory services and how do they operate?**

- **Public system:** since the structural adjustmentf from IMF in the 80's, the public system is much poorer. Few extension services exists: animal husbandry public services and sanitary services that did exist at regional level<sup>3</sup> stopped in 2005.
- **Privates providers:** veterinary, cattle food and medicine providers, plenty of NGO.
- **Many Projects:** with problem of short term intervention without global coherence.
- **Cattle breederss organisations:** organisations are created by the projetct for cattle activities, without perennial structure (organisation exists only for the activities of the Project).

## **Question 2: Who are the clients of MOAAS?**

### **2.1 How many and what types of farmers use the services?**

In the North of Benin, most of the cattle breeders are in the UDOPER structure at departmental level (created in 2001), and local level (650 GPER created in 2000; and 227 women Groups -GPFER).

Types of cattel breeders:

- sedentary callte breeders;
- and some breeders practice short transhumance.

### **2.2 Do the actual clients correspond with the types of farmers the service intends to work with?**

Yes

### **2.3 How are the clients involved in markets?**

Cattle are the main production in this remote dry area of the north Benin.

Before, middlemen used to come in the village to buy animal to individual cattel breaders. Now, the cattle breeders come to sell their animals on the local market.

### **2.4 What motivates farmers to use agricultural advisory services?**

Cattel breeders are interested in:

- better selling price for their cattel ;
- better access to services;

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<sup>3</sup> CARDER - Centre d'appui régionaux au développement rural.

- better life in community, improved local development.
- Breeders do not want to be marginalized regarding other farmers.

## **2.6 How are the clients formulating their demand for services?**

### **Demand to Project PPAB**

Few leaders from breeders groups built among themselves, step by step, a new livestock market organisation.

They asked only to PPAB supports to formalise practically this organisation: supports to infrastructures, supports to management and organisation.

Other services did exist before but they were not used by breeders. Improving the organisation among breeders themselves (UDOPER organisation) allowed them to negotiate and to access to previous existing local services provided by the public and private providers (e.g. links with research or Carder in order to improve pasture system). Within the better organisation among themselves, they were able to build demand of existing services and to build demand of new services.

## **2.7 How are the clients organised?**

Breeders are organised among themselves at several level: the UDOPER organisation at departmental level; UCOPER at communal level; and 650 local groupments (GPER), and feminine Groupments (227 GPFER).

Breeders are also organised at the level of the self managed livestock: they do have strong relationships with traders and butchers.

## **2.8 Which insights and lessons can be learnt from the client involvement e.g. good practices, obstacles, pitfalls?**

The fact to be organised within breeders organisation (UDOPER, UCOPER, GPER) permit to breeders to think the kinds of services they needed and their access.

## **Question 3: What approaches and methods are used for agricultural advisory services?**

### **3.1 What kind of services do agricultural advisory services deliver?**

#### **PPAB**

- accompany demand building, initiatives;
- looking for/ giving information, advice to organisation, access to expertises and analyses (some made by cattle breeders themselves);
- facilitating breeders meeting, travels in the country and abroad, to allow to cattle breeders to see and analyse different local and foreign situations (market, buyers, trading systems from local market to national main markets,...);
- helping to get funds from diversified sources/cooperations;
- helping to work in network with different local and external resources/services (research, extension, NGO, universities, ministries, cooperations,...).

#### **UDOPER**

- organisation of market, information, transparency;
- facilitated access to inputs;
- facilitated access to veterinary treatments;
- linking cattle breeders with different stakeholders/advice services providers.

### **3.2 How are the services financed?**

- Market: self financed (except infrastructures: by external funds);
- UDOPER organisation: members cotisation;
- access to inputs/veterinary medicines/treatments: paid in the price of products sold to farmer;
- trainings: most with external funds.

### **3.3 How are the service providers trained?**

At cattle breeders organisation level, with support of external programs (PPAB, SNV,...).

### **3.4 How do the agricultural advisory services providers and the clients relate to each other?**

The cattle breeders organisation is sufficiently structured and numerous and became a focus point and all the activities/providers work with tem. It became much easier now for advisory providers.

### **3.5 How are innovations in agricultural advisory services being upscaled?**

- to have first actions with positive results;
- to be able to make it known;
- inform systematically and step by step about the results all the other actors (politic, technics, NGO, traditional authorities,... that can in return help to go forward/have their support;
- networking.

### **3.6 Which insights and lessons can be learnt from the approach and methods, e.g., good practices, obstacles, pitfalls?**

Need of time.

To take in account local dynamics, use what exist at local level (different services) and reinforce them.

Necessity farmers to participate to analyses

## **Question 4: What are the outcomes and impacts of agricultural advisory services?**

### **4.1 How are agricultural advisory services helping farmers to deal with market constraints?**

Advices permit to cattle breeders to obtain a more concurrent market functioning: direct relation buyer/seller: new market organisation, with new functions for different actors, with respect/implication/ agreement of local administration and traditional authorities (even if some of the cattle breeders leaders had to resist to police and go to jail for short time).

### **4.2 What are the outcomes/impacts of agricultural advisory services?**

- better commercialisation of cattle: transparency on market, faster transactions, increase of cattle breeders income;
- better rob control, less conflict between farmers/cattle breeders;
- better sanitary situation/animal;
- centralised information;
- capacity of testing innovation;
- job creation;
- supply of veterinary products;
- integration of women to economic process: training, credits, organisations.

### **4.3 Are there side-effects or unexpected outcomes of agricultural advisory services?**

Cattle breeders organisation at regional level

Local development (alphabétisation, development of women activities, local and communitary infrastructures, credits).

### **4.4. Which insights and lessons can be learnt from the impact, e.g., good practices, obstacles, pitfalls?**

#### **Basic Principles**

According to the leaders, clear conclusions and assumptions can be drawn from the success of Udoper and the self-managed livestock markets:

- the necessary democratic and transparent management of the resources and markets;
- the bottom-up solidarity of the organisation (and its accompanying support);
- the indispensable involvement and respect of all the actors concerned;
- the involvement of governmental services, district authorities, NGOs and private companies with a partnership spirit.

This will be a long-term experience (it started in the 70's), since it is based on a willingness to learn, to get organised and to train new leaders among the breeders.

#### **Different ways to improve market access**

Striking a balance between supply and demand, making transactions more transparent and offering market services are some of the activities carried out in self-managed markets that improve the flow of products and remuneration of producers, increasing the physical and financial volume of commercial activities and fostering local development.

#### **A win-win situation is possible**

To conclude, the key to success lies in improving the breeders' income while safeguarding the interests of other actors in the sector. The breeders' strategy has involved all relevant actors, leading to a relatively fast success. It changed well-established economic and social operating patterns that were commonly accepted.

### **Question 5: What is the role of development cooperation and other key stakeholders?**

#### **5.1 What are the roles and functions of development agencies in agricultural advisory services?**

Facilitator, relay, reinforce local dynamics.

#### **5.2 What are the roles and functions of the government (local and national)?**

- at local level, breeders were in conflict against the Administration, and the Administration admitted and supported the self-managed market;
- improved relations with public technical services;
- recognition of breeders organisation as stakeholders (« Co-gestion » of vaccination campaign);
- research services ;
- Financial contribution to local development: Infrastructure (dam, water holes...).

#### **5.4 What are the implications of these roles and functions?**

#### **5.5 Which insights and lessons can be learnt from the arrangement of roles, e.g., good practices, obstacles, pitfalls?**

Improved relations with many projects:

- Projet d'Appui au Développement de l'Élevage Bovin (PADEB) ;
- Projet d'Appui à la Diversification des Systèmes d'Exploitation (PADSE) ;
- Programme de Professionnalisation de l'Agriculture du Bénin / MAE-AFDI ;
- Others : GTZ, Danida, SNV...

#### **Relations with others producers organisations/privates**

- Common decisions on land use (farmers/ breeders);
- Regular exchanges of information;
- Contracts with private Society (Société des Huileries du Bénin) for animal feeding buying;
- Collaboration with Phanavet (private Society).

#### **5.5 Which insights and lessons can be learnt from the arrangement of roles, e.g., good practices, obstacles, pitfalls?**

Stakeholders must take in account local dynamic, existing organisation.

### **Question 6: What linkages exist between agricultural advisory services and other types of services?**

Strong and very important.