

# Have agricultural advisory services become more inclusive and diversified since 2010?

## Evolution of a complex concept

Sources:

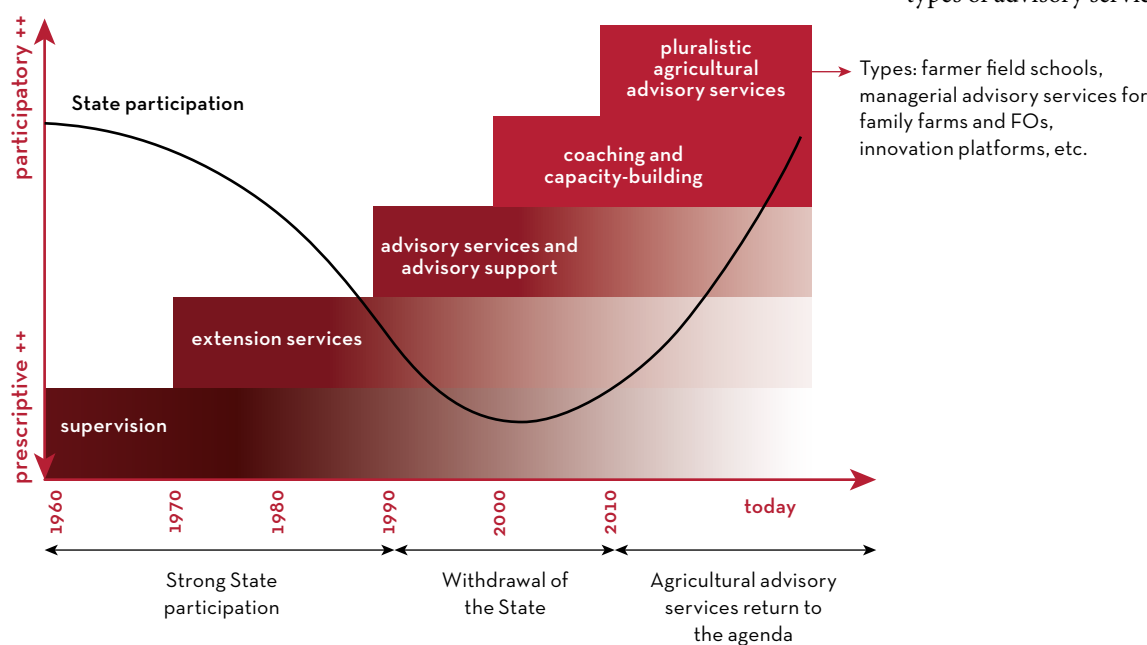
- AFD, *Guidance note – Reviving agricultural advisory and extension services in sub-Saharan Africa: for new policies in line with the realities in the field*, 2019 in French, 2022 in English.
- G. Faure, P. Dugué, G. Fongang, *Diversity of agricultural advisory services in West and Central Africa*, *Grain de sel* n°77, 2019.

The concept of agricultural advisory services is complex, so this definition attempts to take into account the many different types of agricultural advisory services working in synergy in order to strengthen one another.

“A set of approaches and schemes to support farms (crop, livestock and fish production; processing and marketing of products) and Farmer Organisations (FOs) in areas such as: production management (choice of techniques, organisation of work, etc.), financial management for farms and collective entities (FOs, cooperatives), management of resources within a particular territory (natural resources, financial resources, labour), and acquisition and honing of knowledge and know-how.”

Changes in the dominant approaches to advisory services that bear witness to changes in the vision of agriculture.

Since the 1960s, different terms have been used in Africa to refer to agricultural advisory services in a broad sense. Those terms witness changes in approach, from prescriptive oversight to more participatory approaches that are jointly developed with the beneficiaries. At country level, these types of advisory services generally co-exist.



**Types of beneficiaries:**  
various types of farmers and FOs

**Types of providers:**  
State, FOs, businesses consultants associations, NGOs, etc.

### Main types of advisory services

**Agricultural extension services:** Agricultural extension services consist in sharing the results of research and savoir-faire with farmers, and in helping farmers exploit a larger portion of the value chain (Hailn, 2012). Common synonym: technical advisory services.

**Advisory services for family farms (conseil à l'exploitation familiale, or "CEF"):** This approach strengthens the capacities of peasant farmers and their families so that they can pursue their activities, analyse their situation, plan ahead and make decisions, and assess their results. It takes into account the technical, economic, social, and (if possible) environmental aspects of their activities (Dugué et al., 2004). Common synonym: managerial advisory services (for farms).

**Organisational advisory services:** This approach targets collective organisations and may come in several forms (promotion of rural activity, support for community initiatives, support for collective innovation).

Farmers also need *other types of specialised advisory services*: legal advisory services, managerial advisory services for FOs, advisory services for the management of water, value chain advisory services, etc.

Functional literacy training is also an essential component that facilitates agricultural advisory services.

## New agricultural advisory actors: the case of Niger

Sources:  
 - *Synthèse nationale des diagnostics et des planifications régionales du conseil agricole*. Republic of the Niger, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, April 2019;  
 - Christophe Rigourd (IRAM associate consultant).

### A new balance between agricultural advisory schemes in the field in Niger

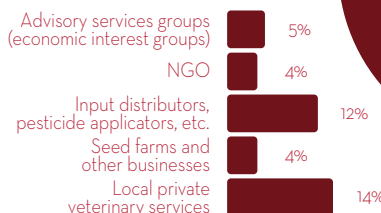
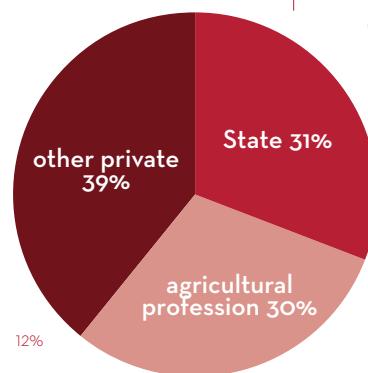
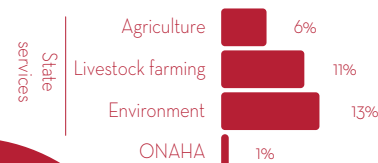
The State is no longer the major provider of agricultural advisory services; it is no more a sovereign function.

Note: The proportion of NGOs and certain actors (telephony) is probably underestimated.

### Two new figures account for most of the human resources for agricultural advisory schemes: the farmer trainer and the peasant-farmer relay.

In total, more than 10,000 people are involved in agricultural advisory schemes, which fully justifies the use of new information and communication technologies.

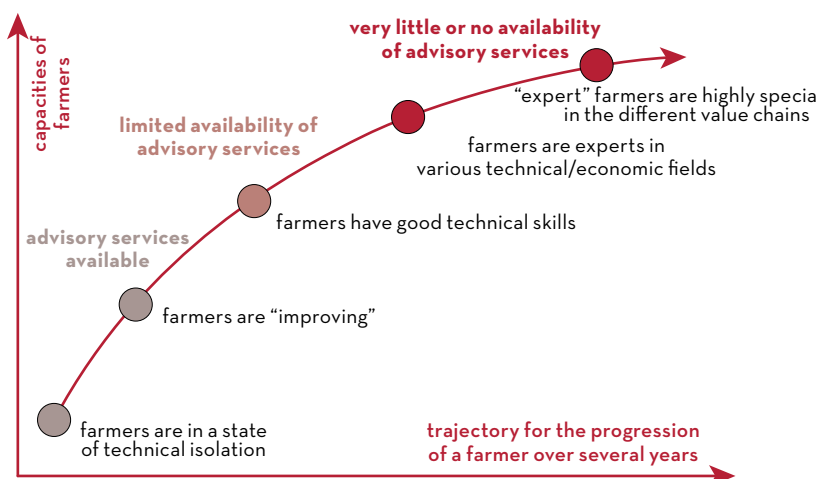
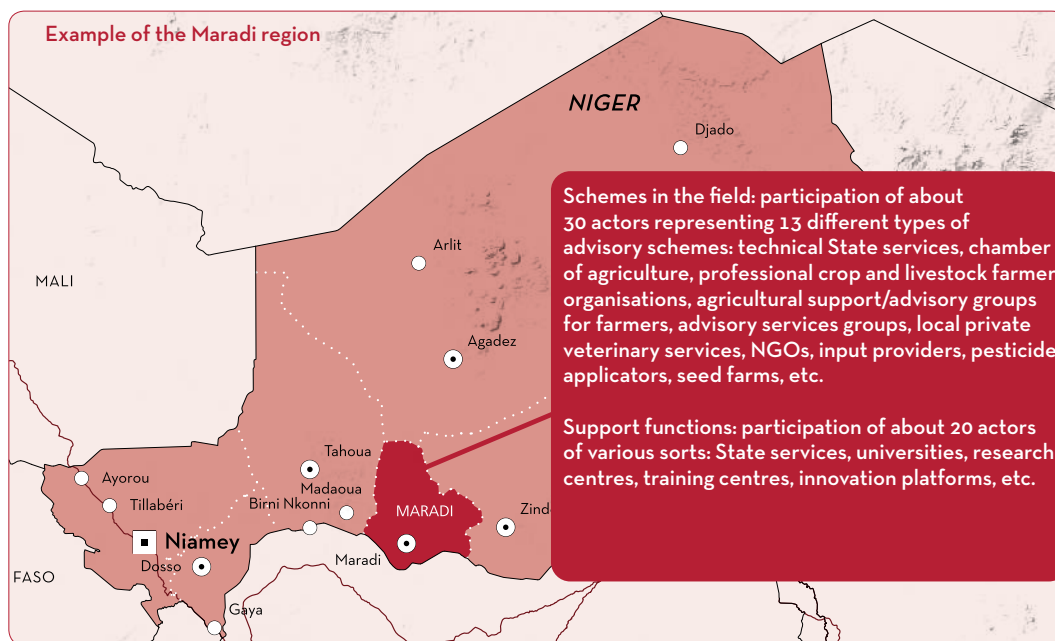
Note: These figures represent staff who are at least partially involved in agricultural advisory services.



**Type of advisory service:** functional literacy (cornerstone of advisory services), technical, economic, managerial, organisational, legal, etc.

**Approach:** technology transfer, technical assistance, support for "learning to learn", etc.

### A strong need to coordinate a very diverse range of advisory schemes in the field...



... where only basic advisory needs are sufficiently covered.

Notes:  
 - Not all advisory needs are represented (legal advisory services, etc.).  
 - A similar trajectory can be established for a farmers' organisation (FO), and for the different types of advisory services for FOs.  
 - Territorial coverage of agricultural advisory services may be very unequal depending on the zone (agro-pastoral, pastoral, facing specific environmental issues, etc.)