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The Growing Role of the Private Sector in Agricultural and Food Policy in Africa

Context, forms and issues

Inter-réseaux
Développement rural

SOS FAIM

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Inter-réseaux Développement rural

http://www.inter-reseaux.org

Inter-réseaux Développement rural is a forum that facilitates discussion and debate on issues concerning agricultural and rural development in Africa. It brings together a diverse network of African and European stakeholders (farmer organisations, NGOs, researchers, experts, technical and financial partners, decision-makers) who are involved in addressing those issues. Inter-réseaux aims to facilitate access to information and encourage discussion by allowing stakeholders to share their ideas and experiences. Inter-réseaux is supported financially by Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

AFD AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

http://www.bureau-issala.com

Bureau Issala offers consulting services to institutions in developing countries, NGOs and aid agencies. Its expertise is in agriculture, food security and international trade. It encourages actors in the public sector and civil-society organisations to work together to reform policies and institutions.

SOS FAIM

https://www.sosfaim.be

SOS Faim Belgique is a Belgian NGO that specialises in development. It has been combating hunger and poverty in rural Africa and Latin America since 1964. It aims to build the capacities of farmers in the South so that they can become drivers of their own development. It also aims to raise awareness and mobilise communities in the North in order to influence policies that have an impact on hunger and poverty in developing countries. SOS Faim Belgique is supported financially by the Directorate-General of Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Belgium).

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Introduction

In the past, multinational companies were kept at a distance from public policy. Now, they are often seen by African leaders and donors as key partners when it comes to designing and implementing such policies. What brought about that paradigm shift? How much influence does the "private sector" now have in guiding policies to combat food insecurity? What issues do these new alliances raise? Those are the main points addressed in this jointly written note, which is the result of much collective thinking and marks a milestone in Inter-réseaux's work on this topic.

The "private sector" is becoming a privileged partner for agricultural and food policies, without any real debate of the issue.

THE NEED TO TRANSFORM AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

The transformation of agricultural systems in Africa to ensure food security on the African continent has become critical in the wake of the 2007–08 food crisis. Efforts have been made to revive the agricultural sector, which had been progressively neglected since the 1980s. Many initiatives targeting food and nutrition security were launched. While most of the national, regional and global initiatives aim to boost production in Africa, there are many challenges that must be overcome in order to reach that objective. The transformation of agricultural systems needs to considerably boost agricultural production, while also providing healthy and nutritious food for a fast-growing population, sustainably preserving natural resources, offering jobs and a decent income for the tens of millions of young people entering the job market each year—and it must do so amid rising tensions over access to natural resources and climate change.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS A PARTNER FOR THOSE TRANSFORMATIONS

International corporations, philanthropic foundations and the financial sector (banks, investment funds, etc.) are offering solutions to overcome those challenges through their involvement in the real economy and public policy. Policy decision-makers are actually encouraging actors from the private sector to get involved: because of their ability to invest and innovate, they are seen as key partners in the transformation of agricultural systems in Africa. The "private sector" is no longer seen as just a technical operator but is becoming a privileged partner when it comes to funding, designing and implementing agricultural and food policies, without any real debate of the issue or consideration of the risks underlying the path leading to development.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES POSED BY THIS PARADIGM

A dominant vision is therefore spreading, making private investment and the "modernisation" of agricultural systems in Africa (based on intensification of production) drivers of agricultural development and of the fight against hunger in Africa. Debate on sustainable agricultural development models is stifled, though controversies are taking shape.

In this document, we examine the factors contributing to the growing influence of private actors in agricultural and food policies in Africa, and study the desire of national and international public actors to attract private investment for African farming. We then analyse how large private actors are involved in agricultural and food governance in Africa. Next, we reflect on how those changes are affecting the path leading to the transformation of agricultural systems in Africa. And, finally, we discuss which methods of governance should be promoted to ensure the management of common goods.

Preamble

DEFINING THE "PRIVATE SECTOR"

The term "private sector" covers a wide range of entities "from farmer organisations, co-operatives and SMEs, to the largest international corporations. This also includes private financial institutions, industry and trade associations and consortia that represent private-sector interests" (FAO)[1]. The use of such a broad term may lead one to believe that the private sector covers a uniform field of players. In reality, those players sometimes have opposing interests and different impacts, and therefore cannot be involved in development in the exact same way. Public authorities and development partners often fail to take sufficient account of that diversity [Concord 2017[2]]. That ambiguity has given rise to multiple debates on which actors should or should not be allowed to intervene and provide aid, and on the most efficient ways to achieve food and nutrition security.

There are many criteria for defining and differentiating between actors in the private sphere (see table below). Other criteria may also be used to differentiate between private actors, such as compliance with standards and certifications, adherence to corporate social responsibility and distribution of added value.

Different types of private-sector actors

CRITERIA	TYPES OF PRIVATE ACTORS
Status	« formal « informal
Ownership of capital	« sole proprietorship « partnership « joint-stock company « cooperative
Purpose or corporate objective	« private profits « collective, shared or reinvested profits *(cooperative, mutual fund, economic interest grouping, company in the social and solidarity economy, association)* « profits shared between private and public *(semi-public company)*
Position within the sector, or nature of the activity	« upstream suppliers « agricultural producers « downstream sector « services sector (finance, insurance, consulting) « multi-segment
Territorial scope	« national « international
Target market	« national market « regional market « international market
Size (based on revenue or number of employees)	« micro-business « small or medium-sized company « large company

The term "private sector" is used in this document to account for the ambiguity when it comes to calling on the "private sector" to support development, and supporting the development of the "private sector".

While small-scale producers produce 80% of Africa's food supply and account for 90% of total investment in agriculture, the commitment of the private sector to agricultural development often refers to international corporations [Concord, 2017].

Within what framework was this document produced?

This document marks a milestone for Inter-réseaux's work on the private sector. It is part of a thematic cycle on the role of private actors in African agriculture, coordinated by the network's members and partners. Several other documents have been produced as part of this cycle:

- Work on agricultural growth poles that gave rise to a bulletin de veille (BDV no. 316, July 2017 (in French)) and a food sovereignty brief (no. 24, December 2016);
- A bulletin de veille: BDV no. 343, October 2018 (in French): Le Secteur privé – Implication dans la gouvernance alimentaire et nutritionnelle;
- Food sovereignty brief no. 27, December 2018: What roles should the private sector play in agricultural and food policy in Africa?;
- Four digital data-visualisation tools (in French), which are featured in this note and appear throughout the text;
- A series of articles published in Défi *Sud by* SOS Faim Belgique, which also present Inter-réseaux's work on this topic:
  Le secteur privé sauvera-t-il l'agriculture africaine ? (2017);
  Qui contrôle la privatisation de l'agriculture africaine ? (2018)

Inter-réseaux will continue to reflect and work on this topic, particularly with a bulletin de veille on the private sector's role in funding African agriculture and case studies on partnerships between companies and producer organisations.

Observing the private sector's role in the process of creating agricultural and food policies.

APPROACH

When it comes to food and nutrition security in Africa, the private sector is involved at many different levels and plays a key role, in particular, in structuring sectors. This document does not cover all of the ways the private sector is involved. Rather, it focuses on the private sector's role in the process of creating agricultural and food policies.

Likewise, this document does not cover all types of private actors. It addresses only the strategies of the largest ones (mainly international corporations). There are several reasons for this. First, when it comes to influencing policy at regional—or international—level, a company's size and territorial scope are clearly very important. Especially since there appears to be more and more concentration in the agrifood sector, which has given rise to an "agro-industrial complex"[3] consisting of a handful of players with enormous normative power at global level.

In addition, our approach does not allow for the identification of smaller players or for the analysis of the role played more locally by certain private players in policy implementation or the negotiation strategies of companies with local authorities and communities, for instance. This document is based on a literature review, with input from researchers and players working on the topic in question. For the most part, the resources that were consulted addressed the involvement of actors at international and regional levels, not the interaction between players at more local levels.

This document is a first step and will therefore need to be discussed and built on in order to reveal other ways private actors are involved in food and nutrition security, particularly the strategies of smaller actors. To do so, field studies will need to be conducted or, at the very least, further work will need to be performed. It might be interesting to analyse the interaction between players at national levels, for example.

2

How did the private sector become so involved in efforts to prevent hunger?

This section provides background information to explain the growing involvement of the "private sector" in agricultural and food policy in Africa, as well as the elements of discourse that accompany the process. Although this is not a new phenomenon, the combination of several recent factors has contributed to its more rapid expansion.

The 2007-2008 crisis and its consequences

Africa appears to be capable of making an important contribution to global food security.

The 2007–08 food crisis placed food and nutrition security (FNS) at the top of the African and international agenda. The many initiatives that were subsequently launched focused on the "production" aspect of FNS. To that end, the international private sector was called on to fund and modernise agricultural systems in Africa in order to boost agricultural production.

GROWING NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES TO ENSURE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN AFRICA

The timeline on the previous pages shows the main initiatives that have been launched since the early 2000s to address food and nutrition security.

Those initiatives focus especially on Africa, for a number of reasons. Not only does Africa have particularly high food insecurity, it also has high population growth. That growth poses big challenges in terms of food demand, jobs and income distribution. Agricultural systems in Africa are also particularly affected by the degradation of natural resources, and yields are low. Lastly, there is a big gap between what public authorities want to accomplish on the one hand, and actual institutional, human and financial capacities on the other [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 13[4]], which has opened the door to aid operators, who played an important role in launching the post-2008 initiatives.

Despite those challenges, Africa is also seen as having enormous growth potential in a global context that is perceived as worrying. Many forecasts on agriculture[5] and food conducted by international institutions within the context of the food crisis highlight the risk of shortages owing to a combination of factors: population growth, weak prospects for boosting yields and productivity in OECD countries and in Asia, change in the food structure with high growth in the need for animal proteins, saturation of space and competition for land and water resources, impact of climate change on agricultural performance, etc. [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 16]. Against that backdrop, Africa appears to be capable of making an important long-term contribution to global food security thanks to its substantial resources (land, water, labour, etc.), which are believed to be underexploited.

See the online interactive timeline (in French): http://bit.ly/frisebds27

The growing number of initiatives for food

+ Multi-stakeholder platforms and initiatives
⊙ International summits and commitments

WORLD

2000
⊙ **Millennium Development Goals (MDG)**
Goal #1: reduce poverty and hunger

2002
+ **Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)**
Mobilisation of public-private partnerships to combat malnutrition

2003
+ **Food fortification initiative (FFI)**
Promotion of the production, sale and use of fortified foods

2009
+ **New Vision for Agriculture**
Project launched at the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in Davos

+ **Reform of Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**
Grants participant status to civil society, private sector and foundations

⊙ **Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP)**
Initiative of the G20 summit in Pittsburgh – pledge of $35 million/country on average for African countries

⊙ **G8 summit in L'Aquila**
Pledge of 20 billion over three years to combat hunger

⊙ **Feed the Future (FTF)**
Obama initiative – pledge of 2.7 billion over three years

2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009

AFRICA

2003
⊙ **Maputo Declaration**
African countries pledge to allocate over 10% of state budgetary resources to agriculture

2004
⊙ **Conference on hunger in Africa**
United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan calls for a Green Revolution in Africa

2005
Yara
Multinational specialising in fertilizer launches its Africa programme and a foundation for the Green Revolution in Africa

2006
+ **Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)**
Created by the Gates and Rockefeller foundations to boost productivity through new technologies (seeds, inputs)

⊙ **Abuja Declaration**
African heads of state lift customs duties on fertilizers

See the online interactive timeline (in French):
http://bit.ly/frisebds27

and nutrition security

Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)
International platform for discussing policies and funding projects to combat hunger and malnutrition

Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA)
Promotion of local solutions for adapting to climate change

Feed the Future (FTF)
800 million extra, including 100 for GAFSP .

G20 summit in Cannes
Coordination of agricultural markets, risk management and implementation of emergency reserve, action plan against price volatility

Zero Hunger Challenge
Initiative launched by the United Nations to eradicate hunger and malnutrition

Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
Adoption of policy framework for food security and nutrition during prolonged crises

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)
Goal #2: eliminate hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable farming

G7 at Schloss Elmau
Commitments to end hunger for 600 million people by 2030

Third International Conference on Financing for Development
Official development assistance must become a driver for private investment

One Planet Summit
The Gates Foundation pledges to invest $300 million in agricultural research in African and East Asian countries weakened by climate change

EU External Investment Plan (EIP)
Stimulate investment in Africa

2010 — 2011 — 2012 — 2013 — 2014 — 2015 — 2016 — 2017 — 2018 — 2019

Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR)
Initiative to build the resilience of countries in West Africa and the Sahel

New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (NASAN)
promote private investment in ten different countries

Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA)
Advocacy and action platform for the development of the region's seed sector

Malabo Declaration
African governments pledge to create a political and institutional environment that encourages private investment in agriculture and agro-industries

Grow Africa
Launched by the African Union, NEPAD and the WEF, and co-chaired by Yara, to boost private investment in agriculture

African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF)
Launched by Yara and AGRA – platform bringing together high-level leaders to discuss and define concrete plans for achieving a Green Revolution in Africa

SOURCES: Websites of the stakeholders in question, J.-C. Dagorn, C. Jamart, M. Jorand and P. Pascal 2017 p.20-21[6], Inter-réseaux 2016, Food sovereignty brief no. 21[7]

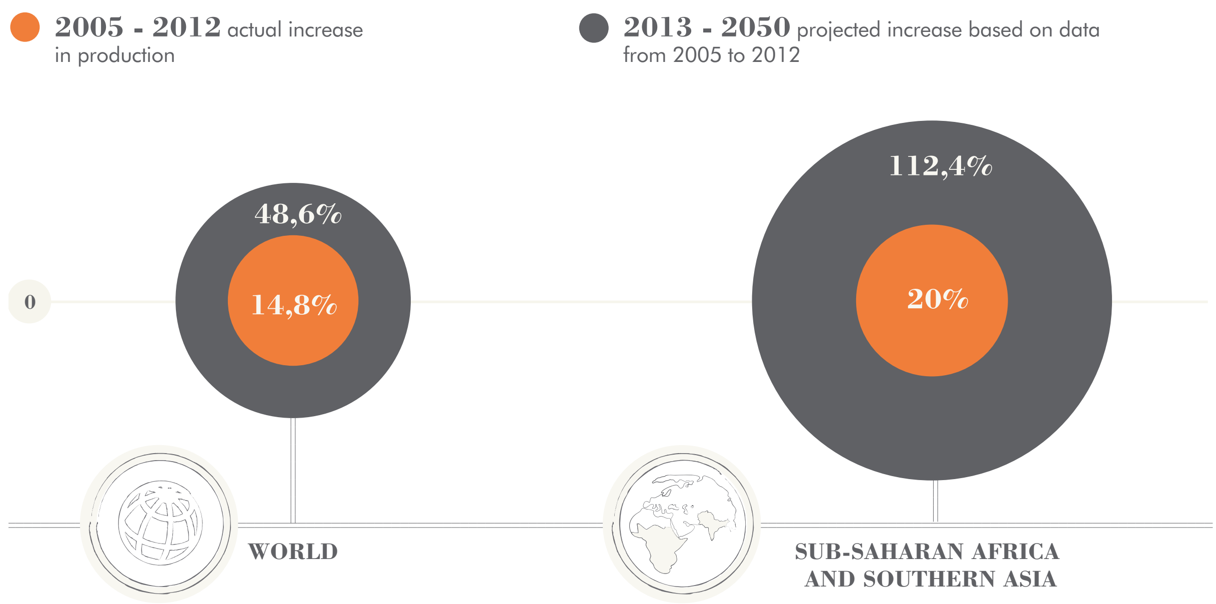
THOSE INITIATIVES ALL HAVE THE SAME UNDERLYING OBJECTIVE: BOOST PRODUCTION TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY

The "production" aspect of food and nutrition security has been particularly emphasised since the return of FNS to the African and international agenda. The 2007–08 crisis brutally called into question the approach that had dominated since the 1980s and which consisted in associating food security with the liberalisation of markets and agricultural trade. Liberalisation was supposed to optimise the allocation of resources and provide the global population with access to more affordable food [Fouilleux et al., 2017[8]]. But when the 2007–08 crisis struck, certain emerging countries, Arab countries and African countries that imported more basic foodstuffs than they exported faced shortages because it was impossible to stock up on international markets. They faced "hunger riots", which posed serious risks for those in power [Issala, Inter- réseaux, 2017, p.16].

After having neglected the agricultural sector, most African governments (as well as financial backers and the United Nations) reacted with policies to increase supply by rapidly boosting productivity and making improvements to the land (mainly for irrigated rice). Several African countries rolled out "agricultural stimulus plans" with ambitious objectives to boost production for certain key foods, and even to become self-sufficient [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p.16]. Most of the initiatives that were launched at regional and international level also aimed to boost agricultural production in order to combat hunger. For instance, the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition* (Nasan) launched in 2012, seeks to boost agricultural productivity and reduce the risk of food insecurity through private investment and innovation. The Zero Hunger Challenge, launched that same year by then United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, also seeks to boost productivity.

* Note: Initiatives with an asterisk are defined in the index p.60

Increase in agricultural production deemed necessary by 2050



SOURCE SOS Faim Belgique, 2017 - from FAO[9]

Thus, in many of the post-2008 initiatives, food and nutrition security was mainly addressed from the perspective of agricultural production with a technical or agronomical approach emphasising agricultural improvements, inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides) and agricultural extension services (particularly for technical aspects) [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p.17]. "Nutritional" aspects were also taken into account through initiatives such as Scaling Up Nutrition*, even though they received less support from African governments. It wasn't until later and with greater difficulty that the economic and social aspects of food and nutrition security were addressed, through initiatives focusing on social protection, resilience and the creation of food-security reserves [Inter-réseaux, 2013 [10]].

As we will see below, the growing involvement of certain multinational firms in formulating agricultural and food policies certainly helps explain the importance of "production" and "nutrition" in the post-2008 initiatives [11].

CALLING ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO "MODERNISE" AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

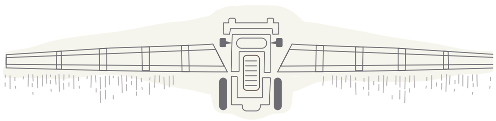
Most national decision-makers clearly believe that family farming will not be able to ensure the continent's food and nutrition security. International companies, on the other hand, would be capable of mobilising the know-how, technologies and production factors needed to boost farming productivity in Africa. Stimulus plans are opening the door for new actors to get involved (entrepreneurs, businessmen, politicians, international investors, etc.), who are expected to help revolutionise farming. These changes are facilitated by the fact that the agricultural sector, after having been long overlooked by the economic, entrepreneurial and/or urban elite, is once again becoming attractive. Those "new players" have capital and advantageous land deals, particularly in areas that have been newly developed for irrigation. Agricultural production is no longer seen as an activity based on know-how and part of a multifunctional vision (job, environment, biodiversity, land improvement and use, social fabric, etc.). It is now seen as a mine of resources to "rationally" exploit, which marks a fundamental change [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p.17].

Other players (farmer organisations, NGOs, some researchers), however, say that the only way to achieve objectives relating to food and nutrition security is by promoting and securing family farms. They point out that those family farms produce most of the food on the continent and invest the most in agriculture. Those who promote family farming also argue that it provides a lot more jobs than capitalist systems [12]

Divergent policy orientations stem from those different visions of the transformation of agricultural systems. There are of course many "in-betweens", and the visions are not always so black-and-white, but the table below provides an overview of the debate.

International institutions and donor countries use doublespeak when referring to food security and agricultural development. The desire to support small producers often coexists with the promotion of investment from multinational corporations [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p.11].

Positions of agribusiness and family-farming proponents on different topics



TOPIC	AGRIBUSINESS VISION	FAMILY-FARMING VISION
Transformation of agricultural systems	« Access to inputs, mechanisation, development of infrastructure, improved seeds and genetic modification, market-led production, central role of the processing industry.	« Access to financial services, diversification and securing of production systems, promotion of agroecology and autonomy of farms, farmer status and social protection.
Promotion of value chains	« Aggregation, supply agreements, standardisation of production and compliance with specifications decided by downstream companies; transport corridors.	« Fair contracts, support for players who are informally involved in agrifood processing; « Priority for local and regional markets.
Improvement of the regulatory environment	« Liberalisation of the land market, liberalisation of the inputs market, protection for new varieties of plants, alignment of standards with the international system; tax exemption and securing of investments.	« Recognition and securing of customary land rights; « Producers' status; regulation of domestic market, border protection; adapting standards to local markets.
Strengthening resilience	« Development of irrigation, ability to adapt to changes in market demand.	« Social protection, support for small farmers, small-scale irrigation and conservation of water and soil, strengthening of advisory-services organisations and economic organisations, etc.
Nutrition	« Food fortification, limited use of inputs and control of toxic residues.	« Diversification of production, quality of food, economic status of women, conservation of products, etc.
Investment from the private sector	« Requires a favourable business environment, « Public funding must be used as a means of leveraging private investment.	« Recognition of the importance of investments made by family farms; « Promotion of financial services adapted to family farms; « Importance of public funding.

SOURCE: Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p 24-25

The African market: a new El Dorado for multinationals?

AFRICA, A PROMISING MARKET…

Africa offers new growth opportunities for multinational corporations because of several different factors. Many African countries have experienced high economic growth since the early 2000s (much higher than in OECD countries, with some even on a par with China). Population growth (and therefore potential growth in demand) and the emergence of upper-middle classes with new consumption habits have made Africa a key opportunity for agribusiness.

Moreover, potential productivity gains for African farming are high because of the continent's natural resources (raw materials, mining, oil) and available production factors (unused arable land, potential for irrigation, possible improvement of yields, abundant labour supply, etc.). Social and political factors are also feeding the optimism: the youth, who are seen as being capable of innovating and adapting, have an important role in the demographic structure of the African countries, and significant progress is being made in terms of governance [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 17].

Lastly, if Africa appears to be a "new El Dorado" for agribusiness, it may be because of stagnating demand in Western and Asian countries as a result of: the levelling-off of yields and the saturation of cultivated land; the proliferation of environmental standards and standards on residues in food products; and increasing awareness of the negative impacts of chemicalisation in agriculture and the development of more environmentally friendly production alternatives [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 18].

…THAT IS ATTRACTING INTERNATIONAL FIRMS

Historically, agrifood multinationals have tended to remain on the sidelines of the African market, which they saw as too risky and offering little in the way of opportunities. While they were involved in the marketing of certain products such as rubber, cotton, coffee, cacao and bananas, they were not very involved in production or in the rest of the value chain (inputs, processing, distribution) [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 17-18].

Over the past few years, however, many multinationals in the agrifood sector have started investing in Africa. Danone, for instance, generated turnover of 15 billion euros in Africa in 2015, with roughly 10,000 employees throughout its different subsidiaries on the continent. The group has invested massively on the continent by acquiring a 67% share in Centrale Laitière (Moroccan leader in dairy products), by acquiring Fan Milk (leader in drinks and frozen dairy products in West Africa) and by buying a stake in the Kenyan company Brookside Dairy in 2015[13]. Private investors have been in West Africa for a long time, but their influence has been growing in recent years, particularly in middle-income countries (this is less true for the least advanced countries). In Ivory Coast, private investment in agriculture is much higher than public spending in agriculture. In Ghana, it is close to the level of public spending[14] [Ribier, Gabas, 2016[15]].

This investment strategy offers companies a big market with big growth potential. Investing with producers can also be a way for them to secure their supply of raw materials [Aubert, 2019].

Private investment: clarifying the reality of the situation

Though multinationals say that they want to become more engaged in Africa, the reality of their investments sometimes needs to be clarified. Several studies have shown that there is a gap between what those companies announce and what they actually invest. In Tanzania, for instance, foreign investment in land is said to be less than what is stated in international reports, because of the high number of projects that fail during the negotiation stage [Schlimmer, 2018[16]]. Likewise, the objective of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (Nasan)* to promote private investment in the agricultural sector has not been achieved in Senegal. The participation of private partners in this initiative seems to be declining:

The level of investment has been decreasing over time…

134,75 **million dollars** in 2013-2014

22,29 **million dollars** in 2015-2016

and several investment commitments were abandoned (15 letters of intent were suspended).

There are several reasons for the sharp drop in the level of commitments from private partners. While many private partners are behind in implementing their projects, it is possible that some companies may have achieved some of their commitments without having informed NASAN.

The proportion of companies submitting their follow-up questionnaires has also fallen considerably:

89% in 2013-2014 **52%** in 2014-2015 **39%** in 2015-2016

The selection of companies might also help explain companies' declining interest in NASAN: some may have planned their activities opportunistically in response to NASAN only to pursue them with little determination. Several observers therefore believe that many of the commitments made under NASAN were unrealistic [Gagné, 2017[17]]

Beyond those reservations, overall investment by international companies in Africa is difficult to quantify. There is little empirical data, and several reports highlight the lack of transparency regarding the investments actually made by private actors [Gagné, 2017 ; Jamart, Jorand, Pascal, 2014[18]].

To see the online series of infographics on private investment, go to: http://bit.ly/financementbds27

The growing gap between low public resources and high investment needs

On average, 3.3 trillion dollars of investment per year are needed to achieve the SDGs at global level.

Although the 2007–08 crisis underlined the urgent need to reinvest in agriculture and gave rise to several financial commitments by African governments and their partners, those governments and partners are struggling to mobilise the necessary funds. In 2003, African governments met in Maputo and agreed to allocate over 10% of their budgetary resources to agriculture. By 2013, fewer than 10 countries had achieved that objective [ECOWAP 2025 Strategic Policy Framework, ECOWAS, 2016].

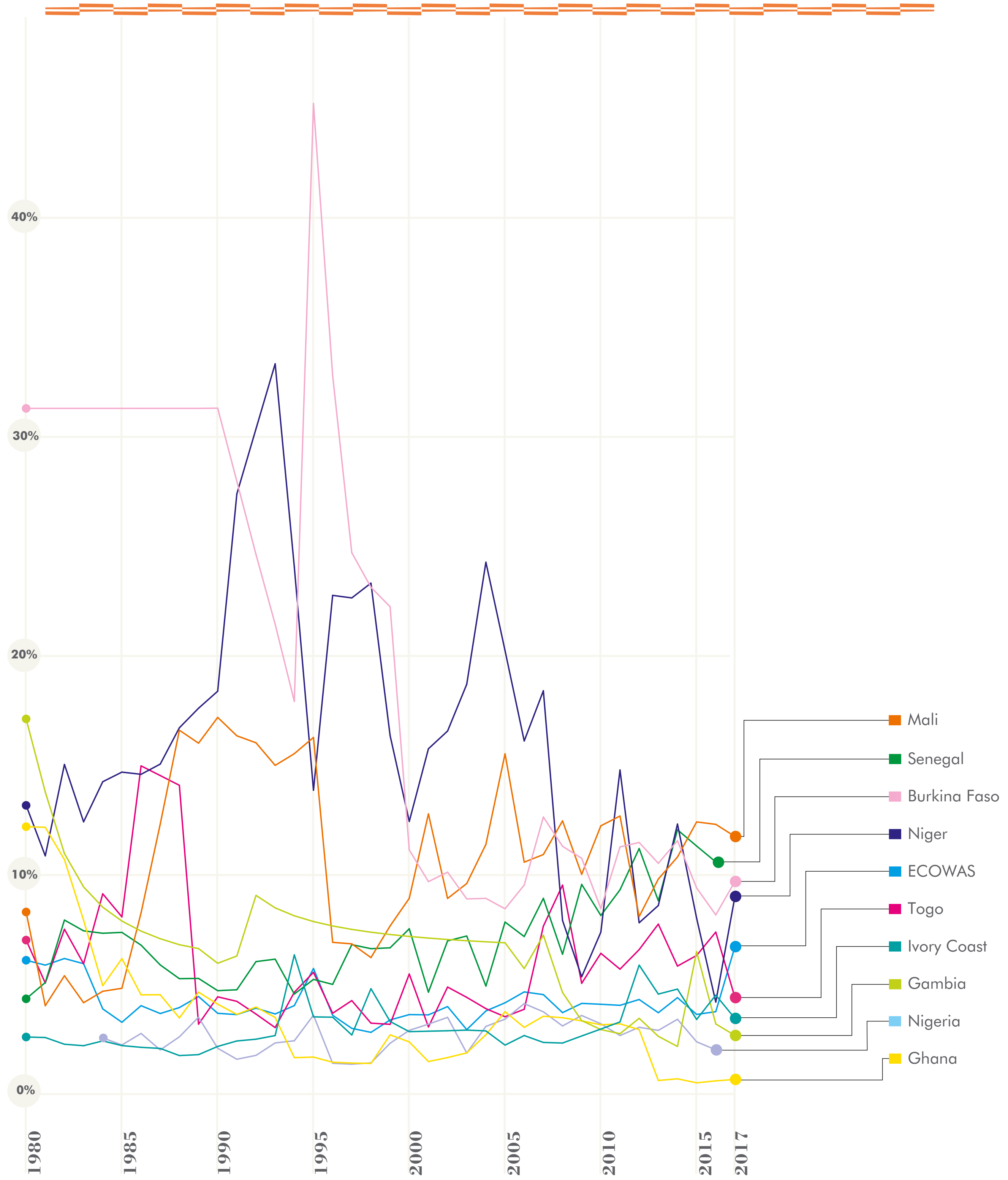
In 2015, ReSAKSS estimated that average public spending allocated to the agricultural sector in ECOWAS countries was 3.8%, with high disparities between the different countries [see figure on p. 20]. Sahel countries allocated a much larger share, but that contribution was mainly through official development assistance. The three big agricultural countries in the region (Nigeria, Ghana and Ivory Coast), which alone account for roughly 80% of agricultural production, allocate well under 5% of their budget to agriculture. But looking at the figures in relative terms hides the fact that public budgets have increased sharply in recent years. Agricultural budgets have generally increased in absolute terms, but the proportion of public spending allocated to agricultural budgets has rarely increased—often it has stagnated, and sometimes it has even decreased.

In 2014, African heads of state and government admitted that they were having trouble meeting the Maputo Commitment and oriented their respective states towards funding agriculture through public-private partnerships. In the Malabo Declaration, they undertook to *"create and enhance necessary appropriate policy and institutional conditions and support systems for facilitation of private investment in agriculture, agribusiness and agro-industries."* [Malabo Declaration].

The sustainable development goals (SDG) bring to light the same gap between investment needs and difficulties mobilising funding. Estimates show that, on average, investments of 3.3 to 4.5 trillion dollars a year will be necessary to achieve the SDGs at global level. At current levels of public and private investment in sectors linked to the SDGs (1.4 trillion dollars a year), the funding deficit in developing countries could reach 2.5 trillion dollars a year over the period 2015–2030 [CNUCED, 2016 [19]].

The political and normative character of those estimates must nevertheless be highlighted. They vary greatly depending on the assumptions and models used. The table on page 21 summarises the different estimates for Africa's funding needs in connection with the SDGs.

Share of public spending allocated to the agricultural sector in ECOWAS member countries



SOURCE: ReSAKSS 2019 [20]

Estimates of Africa's funding needs in connection with the SDGs

SOURCE	ESTIMATED AMOUNT PER YEAR	TARGET AREA
International Energy Agency (2012)	25 billion dollars	Amount needed to achieve universal access to modern energy services by 2030
World Bank (2012)	18 billion dollars	Cost of adapting to climate change
UNCTAD (2014)	210 billion dollars	Amount needed for basic infrastructure, food security, health, education and climate-change mitigation
Chinzana et al. (2015)	1 200 billion dollars	Additional investment needed to achieve Goal #1
Schmidt-Traub (2015)	Between 614 and 638 billion dollars	Incremental funding needs in connection with the SDGs
World Bank (2015a)	93 billion dollars	Amount needed for infrastructure

SOURCE: UNCTAD, 2016. p.13

In this context where the funding deficit is emphasised, the international community is looking more and more to attract and mobilise private funding for development policies.

3

Mobilising private actors to fund agriculture

Since the 2000s, the international community has been "calling" on the "private sector" for a number of context-related reasons:

- the desire to support the emergence of an agricultural sector based on commercial farming;
- a lucrative "Green Revolution" model requiring the mobilisation of large amounts of capital;
- motivations linked to the limits of public funding, whether from African countries or official development assistance.

Creating an enabling environment for the private sector

In concrete terms, that "call" was made through the adoption of policies that aim to create a favourable political and regulatory environment for business and encourage investment in large infrastructure (roads, energy, land improvement and irrigation). That is the case, for instance, with the growth poles that have been set up in Africa in recent years. Those growth poles consist in public-private partnerships that aim to attract investment to areas with high-potential farmland. Infrastructure is built to support the production and marketing of agricultural raw materials, and the growth poles are subject to attractive tax, land and customs regulations. Since the early 2010s, agricultural growth poles have expanded in Africa at the instigation of international partners (World Bank, African Development Bank) and have become pillars of agricultural investment programmes in certain African countries [Inter-réseaux 2017, BDS no.24 [21]].

Though the term "private sector" is rarely defined in those initiatives, it is multinationals that tend to be targeted by those policies and regulations that encourage investment. So, there is a risk of unfair competition between economic players and private investors who enjoy special tax measures, and producers (especially family producers) who do not [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017]. Small producers nevertheless account for 90% of total investment in agriculture [FAO, 2012 [22]].

Some countries are changing their laws. In October 2018, Burkina Faso adopted a law introducing an investment code for agriculture, forestry, pastoralism, fisheries and wildlife to help improve the business climate in the agricultural sector by granting tax and customs advantages to private investors [Burkina Faso Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources. March 2017] [23].

The World Bank encourages legislative changes that aim to create an enabling environment for the private sector through the Doing Business index (created in 2002) and the Enabling the Business of Agriculture index (created in 2013). Those indices rank countries based on the regulations applicable to companies and the related transaction costs for investors. Countries rank better if they cut taxes and if they speed up and streamline procedures for importing chemical fertilizers, selling industrial seeds and exporting agricultural products. Those indices, which are regularly criticised by civil society, also propose reforms to improve the agricultural business environment. They incite African governments to compete with one another in order to improve the "business climate" by relaxing regulations and tax laws for agriculture [24].

Promoting public-private partnerships

The mobilisation of private actors is part of a larger trend. Several regional initiatives have been launched in recent years (see diagram below) to encourage private investment in the agricultural sector through the creation of public-private partnerships.

Encouraging private investment in the agricultural sector through public-private partnerships

2010

New Vision for Agriculture*

Launched in 2010 at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos.

This is an action plan that promotes a market-based approach to sustainably boost productivity in the agricultural sector, particularly through the creation of public-private partnerships.

LAUNCHED

Grow Africa*

Founded in 2011 by the WEF, African Union Commission and New Partnership for Africa's Development Agency.

2011

This is a regional platform that aims to create partnerships between African governments and the private sector through commitments for private investment supporting the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and national strategies for agricultural growth.

LAUNCHED

New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition*(NASAN)

Officially launched by the G8 in 2012. Its creation was promoted in particular by Grow Africa and supported by NEPAD, the African Union and the WEF.

2012

NASAN believes that accelerating contributions of private capital will help develop the agricultural sector and improve food security and nutrition, through partnerships between companies and the leaders of ten African countries.

SOURCE: Binet, 2014[25]

Transformation of official development assistance

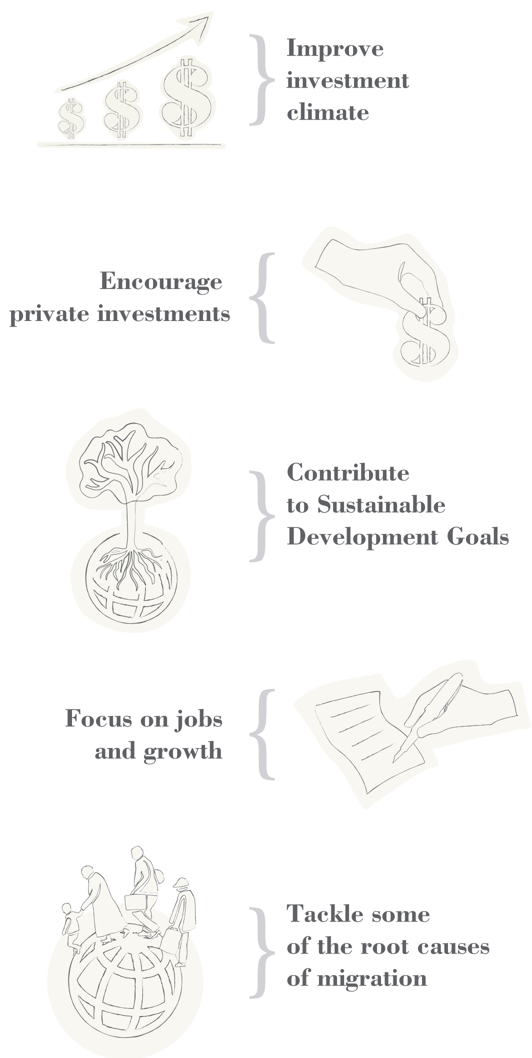
USING AID TO LEVERAGE PRIVATE INVESTMENT

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in July 2015, concluded that it was time for a big change in the approach to official development assistance in order to meet future funding needs. Previously used to fund public goods and services, official development assistance should instead seek to have more of a "catalytic" or "leverage" effect on private funding in order to mobilise savings and financial assets worldwide[26].

The External Investment Plan (EIP), adopted by the European Union in 2017, is a good example of that change: *"Through the EIP, the EU will support its partner countries in their efforts to meet the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030. [...] The EIP will help to address this funding gap by working through partnerships and funding innovative ways to mobilise public and private investments. [...] The EIP sets out a coherent and integrated framework to improve investment in Africa and the European neighbourhood [...]. With the EIP, the EU will go beyond 'traditional' development aid based on grants and instead use innovative financial products such as risk sharing guarantees instruments and the blending of grants and loans to ensure that investments have a major development impact. At the same time, it will encourage an enabling investment climate and business environment, including through promotion of structured dialogue with the private sector."*

SOURCE: European Commission, Your guide to the EU External Investment Plan (Release No 1, November 2017)

Objectives of the EU's External Investment Plan



SOURCE: European Commission, 2017

FUNDING INSTRUMENTS ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY COMPLEX AND HYBRID

All of this focus on the leverage effect has caused development-funding instruments to become increasingly complex and hybrid. For example, public resources (national or from financial backers) are placed in guarantee funds that are used to secure loans granted by financial institutions. Investment funds bring together private players (international financial groups such as Danone and Bank of Africa) and public investors (Proparco, African Development Bank, European Investment Bank, governments, etc.), and help companies raise additional funds by borrowing from commercial banks. The traditional distinction between official development assistance and private funding has therefore been blurred. [Gabas, Ribier, Vernières, 2017 [27]].

The use of public funds as a means of leverage assumes that those funds are capable of attracting and orienting private funds. But it ignores the inevitable differences between the various players involved in development when it comes to their interests and values. The negotiation of objectives "necessarily leads public authorities to compromises that call into question some of their policy choices and, consequently, their sovereignty" [Gabas, Ribier, Vernières, 2017]. There is a risk of creating a windfall effect for private investors: companies may receive advantages from the government (tax, regulatory, land) and from financial backers (additional funding, installation of infrastructure), even though they would have agreed to invest anyway. Beyond the potential windfall effect from measures taken to attract private funds, focusing on the leverage effect may have consequences on the structure of the funding recipients [Gabas, Ribier, Vernières, 2017].

CONSEQUENCES FOR BENEFICIARIES AND AGRICULTURAL-DEVELOPMENT MODELS

The proliferation of funding instruments combining public and private funds does not, for the time being, seem capable of orienting funding towards inclusive development of farming in Africa that can meet the challenges of productivity in the sector while addressing key issues such as job creation, adapting to climate change and combating poverty and inequality. Investment funds encourage capital-intensive economic models that offer little in the way of employment. Plus, most agricultural financialisation instruments tend to target large structures, while formal financial services are difficult for smaller producers to access. Those instruments therefore contribute to the concentration and polarisation of agriculture [Gabas, Ribier, Vernières, 2017].

It is estimated that only 10% of producers in Africa have access to credit—generally those in cash-crop sectors where the products sold can be used as collateral to obtain loans. Microfinance institutions have grown rapidly in recent decades but are not able to meet the needs of most producers. Especially since the integration of new players (such as financial operators, investors and bankers) seeking financial performance has led to a concentration of investment in the microfinance sector [Doligez, 2017 [28]] with greater focus on customers in urban areas. But there are many experiences where the private sector is involved in funding agriculture, particularly through "advances for crops" guaranteed on the products sold by the producer. Those funding models are based either directly on payment deadlines corresponding to the production cycle, or on trilateral agreements between the supplier, the producer and a financial institution [Inter-réseaux, Grain de sel no. 63-66, 2015 [29]].

African institutions encourage calling on the "private sector"

African institutions have an important role in this interplay between actors, where the private sector is positioned as a partner in development. The first Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), initiated by NEPAD in 2003 with support from the FAO, had three main characteristics: an essentially technical approach, a focus on investment and a focus on public spending allocated by governments to agriculture. The second generation was encouraged by the African Union Conference and Malabo Declaration in 2014. It is much more ambitious and, more importantly, places an emphasis on policy reforms [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p.21].

The implementation strategy and roadmap to achieve the 2025 vision on CAADP focuses on "commercial orientation with a deliberate effort to nurture the domestic private sector." But the following clarification is very important: "Closely aligned with economic sustainability, in most cases the private sector will be an important implementation partner, often taking the lead. Although special effort will be made to nurture and support the domestic private sector, the enormity of the task at hand demands that all levels of the private sector—from fledgling domestic businesses to long-established multinationals—will need to be pro-actively engaged as partners" [CAADP[30]].

> **"The private sector will be an important implementation partner for agricultural development programmes in Africa, often taking the lead."**
>
> CAADP

4

Companies and foundations now play a key role in policy-making for agriculture and food

In this context, multinationals and foundations are playing a growing role in the creation of public policies for agriculture and food. That role can be seen in a number of different ways, particularly through the creation of multiple platforms and forums that are highly interconnected. This section aims to identify the ways in which those actors from the private sector are involved, both in the real economy and in the development of policies.

Practices aiming to reconcile private interests and the management of public goods?

THE SUCCESS OF NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

The growing involvement of the private sector in public policy is part of a larger trend to apply a private-sector management approach to public affairs, which is blurring the boundaries between public and private management styles. The idea of "new public management" appeared in England with the rise of neoliberal policies in the 1980s. It consists in applying the management methods of the private sector to the public sector in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency. It is therefore implicitly based on the conviction that methods from the business world are more efficient.

New public management has introduced a management style based on results, segmentation of the implementation of public policies through autonomous managerial unities, externalisation of certain public-service missions and the implementation of public-private partnerships [Amar, Berthier, 2007[31]]. In January 2018, for instance, Ivory Coast founded Aderiz (agency for the development of the rice sector), a state-run agency whose administrative and financial management is modelled on the private sector. Aderiz's status is supposed to give it "flexibility and greater power" to implement the national strategy for the development of rice production[32].

The methods of new public management have spread to many different countries and to a growing range of public policies. They have been relayed by international organisations, particularly the World Bank and the OECD. Financial backers have also helped spread these methods through development aid. [Naudet, 2012[33]].

THE DEVELOPMENT OF "CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY"

As civil society and public opinion express their growing anger at corporate responsibility in environmental degradation, climate change, the pillaging of resources and the concentration of wealth, companies are investing more and more in initiatives referred to as "corporate social responsibility" (CSR). CSR refers to the willingness of companies to account for social and environmental issues in their commercial activities and in their relations with stakeholders [European Commission, 2001]. Corporate sponsorship and development cooperation are presented as initiatives that "serve the common good", allowing companies to alleviate the negative externalities of their business activity. As food markets in wealthy countries become saturated, the commitment of international companies to "modernise African agriculture" and "combat hunger" is a strategic way for them to improve their image [Binet, 2014].

While it is difficult to determine whether a company's actions qualify as responsible, the development of international texts has provided a normative framework for the concept of CSR. The Global Compact, launched in 2000 by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, encourages companies to commit to respecting human rights, protecting the environment and combating corruption. The ISO 26000 standard was adopted in 2010 and defines social responsibility as an organisation's ability to control the impacts of its own decisions and activities on society and on the environment. In France, the law of 2001 on new economic regulations requires companies with over 500 employees and turnover greater than 100 million euros to report on their social and environmental performance.

But the concept of CSR is called into question by some civil-society organisations and cer-tain researchers[34]. They criticise, in particular, the fact that agri-food companies are left to their own devices when it comes to ensuring public health and respecting human rights. The voluntary commitments made by companies may discourage and dissuade the introduction of binding regulations and risk making it impossible to hold companies accountable for their actions. At Nestlé's annual general meeting in 2010, the company's CEO said "[...] tying corporations up in regulatory straightjackets is unnecessary when companies such as Nestlé already have sound principles and core values."[35]

REGULATION THROUGH PRIVATE STANDARDS

Private standards (defined by entities that are independent of the public authorities) are becoming more and more common and have established themselves as a powerful tool for regulating production and trade. Those non-mandatory standards, which are often defined outside official forums, are a new way of regulating production processes. They focus in particular on issues such as food safety and sustainability. While private standards were initially introduced by representatives of civil society (e.g. fair trade), their recent expansion is more due to large agrifood companies and distribution. They respond to growing demand from consumers (particularly for sustainable products) and go hand-in-hand with those companies' CSR strategies. This new form of regulation intends to make up for the lack of global governance and is often supported by international organisations (World Bank, FAO) [Barjolle et al., 2016[36]].

Private standards are used by large companies to consolidate their position in supply chains. They are rarely favourable for the most vulnerable producers. Small producers who are unable to afford the cost of certification risk being excluded from markets [ITC, 2011[37]].

COMPANIES SERVING THE "COMMON GOOD"?

These signs of commitment to serving the public good go beyond limiting a company's potentially negative social and environmental impacts. Corporate responsibility no longer lies in philanthropic initiatives beyond the bounds of the market, but in the very performance of a company's business activity [Binet, 2014]. Private companies have shown that the pursuit of profit and the production of global public goods can go hand-in-hand. The supposed reconciliation between "common goods" and private interests can be seen in many different sectors such as health, climate and education. When it comes to food security and climate change, it is used in particular with regard to inputs. For instance, intensification is promoted by companies that produce fertilizers as a means of limiting the constant expansion of cultivated land and the resulting deforestation, loss of biodiversity, climate change, etc. The same goes for certified seeds, which are presented by certain companies as one of the best ways to boost productivity sustainably, by limiting the expansion of cultivated land and the use of certain inputs[38].

Some agro-industry multinationals now say they are dedicated to combating hunger, poverty and climate change. Yara's objective is to be the "world leader in sustainable agriculture in order to support green growth and sustainable development" [Yara website].

It is important to note, however, the many different approaches taken by international companies. While for some, "serving the common good" denotes a communication strategy that sometimes seems totally disconnected from actual practices, others focus on their links with supply chains and local farms. One cannot assimilate the strategies of Monsanto, Yara, Syngenta, Danone and Cargill in terms of CSR. Even within a single group, the strategy is not always entirely unequivocal [Blein, 2017[39]]. The Syngenta foundation states that its objective is to improve the living conditions of "pre-commercial farmers, or small farmers in developing countries", while the company Syngenta targets large and medium-sized farms [Syngenta, 2014[40]]. A more in-depth analysis of the strategies and practices of companies and their foundations would be needed in order to distinguish between communication strategy and actual changes to practices.

TOWARDS JOINT PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC POLICIES

With a strong interest in providing public goods (health, education, food security, preservation of natural resources, fight against poverty), which is usually handled by public institutions, companies and the foundations that they are directly or indirectly associated with acquire a certain "legitimacy" to jointly produce collective standards, public policies and regulations in the name of a common or shared interest.

The dairy industry: committed to strengthening the milk sector in West Africa?

The Danish company Arla is the third largest dairy co-op in the world. Its strategy over the past several years has been to develop new markets outside the European Union. It exports milk powder to West Africa and is setting up nutritional projects and projects for drinking water there as part of its corporate social responsibility.

Starting in the mid-2010s, the company announced a change in its strategy. In 2014, it joined the Milky Way to Development initiative, funded by Danish Cooperation and coordinated by the NGO Care Denmark. The alliance includes Cirad (French research centre), RBM (livestock-farmer organisation in West Africa), Danish Agriculture and Food Council (which represents the Danish agriculture and food industry) and Copenhagen Business School (one of the largest business schools in Europe). The alliance states that its objective is to find "win-win solutions" for the dairy sector in Europe and in West Africa. For instance, investment from multinationals in dairy industries in West Africa through joint-ventures could in theory make it possible to strengthen the local industrial fabric and boost the incomes of livestock farmers, while encouraging the collection of local milk. The alliance is in direct contact with regional organisations in West Africa (ECOWAS, UEMOA) and is playing an important role in the creation (in progress) of a regional offensive to promote local milk in West Africa.

Other dairy multinationals (Agrial, Arla Foods, Danone Ecosystems Fund, Friesland Campina, Glanbia and Sodiaal) are participating in the meetings of the task force that is coordinating the creation of this regional policy for milk alongside representatives from regional economic communities, international and technical-cooperation institutions and representatives from socio-professional organisations as well as from mini and large national dairies.

SOURCES: Care website[41]; Arla, 2016[42]; Minutes from the meetings of the Milk Offensive task force

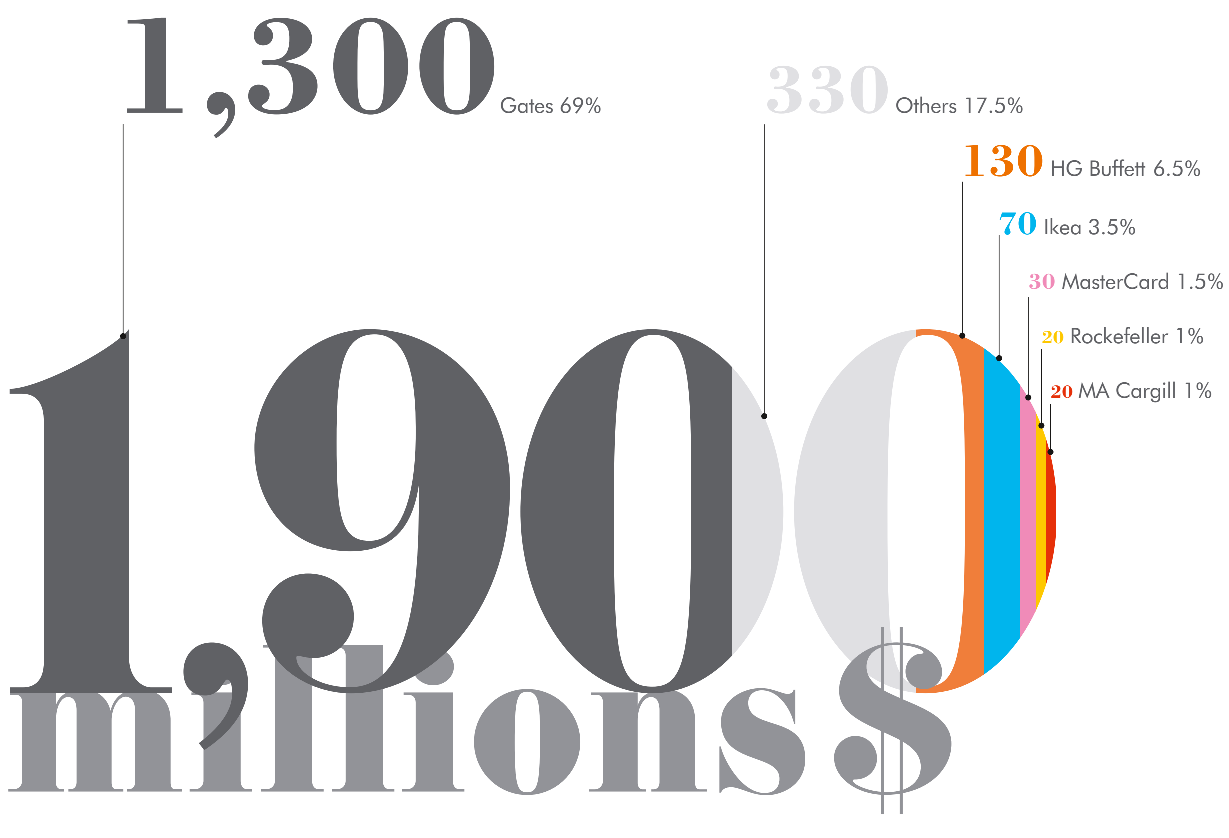
The role of foundations

GROWING ECONOMIC INFLUENCE

Foundations have become major players in agricultural development and food-security initiatives in Africa. Historically, the Rockefeller Foundation was the most influential in Africa's agricultural sector. Between 1999 and 2009, it spent 150 million dollars to replicate the Green Revolution in Africa. Its strategy was based on four pillars: funding agricultural research (improved seeds, fertilizers, biotechnology); offering training for farmers and shopkeepers to teach them how to use and distribute seeds; developing industries that support the promotion of agricultural systems that depend on inputs through public-private partnerships; and setting up governing bodies with political leaders, experts and private players to promote a joint vision of agricultural development [Stevenson, 2014[43]].

In 2006, the Rockefeller Foundation teamed up with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to create the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa* (AGRA). The Gates Foundation gave an initial grant of 100 million dollars, and the Rockefeller Foundation contributed 50 million, to set up this "public charity" that aims to reduce hunger and poverty in Africa through agricultural development [Dano, 2007[44]].

Commitments from philanthropic foundations in the agricultural sector 2013–15 2013-15 (in millions of $)



SOURCE: OECD, 2 018[45]

Since then, the Gates Foundation has invested a lot in agriculture. In 2007, it gave over half a billion dollars for agricultural projects and maintained funding at around that level [Grain, 2014[46]]. For comparison, spending by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) for the period 2006–07 did not exceed 1.8 billion[47].

Between 2013 and 2015, philanthropic foundations gave 1.9 billion dollars for agricultural development, of which 1.3 billion (roughly 70% of total) was for Africa. Just like in the health sector, the Gates Foundation is by far the foundation that invests the most in the agricultural sector, contributing 1.3 billion dollars between 2013 and 2015 (roughly 70% of total) [OECD, 2018].

The Gates Foundation is by far the foundation that invests the most in the agricultural sector.

A KEY ROLE IN RESEARCH

Philanthropic foundations are particularly involved in agricultural research, contributing a total of 7,700 million dollars between 2013 and 2015. The Gates Foundation alone invested roughly 690 million dollars in agricultural research during that period [OCDE, 2018].

Research funded by foundations—including Gates, Syngenta and the African agricultural technology foundation* – focuses first and foremost on agricultural inputs, particularly seeds (hybrid and GMO). The table on page 34 lists some of the contributions that the Gates Foundation has made to projects in the biotechnologies[48] sector in Africa [Swanby, H., 2015 from BMGF, 2012[49]].

Agricultural research receives very little funding from public authorities in Africa, so those foundations that are helping fund research programmes have a particularly big influence.

Grants from the Gates Foundation in the biotechnologies sector 2007–2012

ORGANISATION
AMOUNT (US$)
PURPOSE

2007

Michigan State University
1,498,485 $
To undertake a consultation, design and training process to develop an African Biosafety Centre of Expertise

2008

African Agricultural Technology Foundation
39,149,859 $
To develop drought-tolerant maize for small farmers in Africa

International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
323,113 $
To develop effective safety and regulatory systems in the field of modern biotechnology

Donald Danforth Plant Science Centre
5,345,895 $
To support the creation of a biosafety resource support network for the Grand Challenge #9 projects

2009

AfricaBio
270,170 $
To identify the most effective means of raising public awareness of biotechnology issues in Africa south of the Sahara

Michigan State University
13,294,412 $
To create a centre in Africa that provides support for African regulators

Harvard University
1,474,392 $
To promote the benefits of science and technology for African agriculture and endorse an independent expert report issued by the African High-Level Panel on Biotechnology

2010

African Agricultural Technology Foundation
200,000 $
To support conferences that enhance knowledge-sharing and awareness related to biotechnology

Donald Danforth Plant Science Centre
8,257,560 $
To support the development of high-iron, protein and –provitamin A cassava for Kenya and Nigeria

2011

African Agricultural Technology Foundation
56,001,491 $
To increase the availability and accessibility of more resilient and higher-yielding seed varieties of important food crops in Africa south of the Sahara

Donald Danforth Plant Science Centre
5,548,750 $
To support work on mosaic- and brown streak–resistant cassava

2012

African Agricultural Technology Foundation
45,696.202 $
To develop and distribute improved maize hybrids for Africa that are drought tolerant, insect resistant and higher yielding

African Agricultural Technology Foundation
3,149,015 $
To enhance knowledge-sharing and awareness on agricultural biotechnology

African Agricultural Technology Foundation
4,200,000 $
To support conferences that enhance knowledge-sharing and awareness related to biotechnology

International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
6,328,737 $
To develop effective safety and regulatory systems in the field of modern biotechnology

Donald Danforth Plant Science Centre
329,150 $
To support a conference that is part of a triennial series of global meetings on cassava

Purdue University
1,000,000 $
To develop a genetic and genomic resource that will assist sorghum researchers

SOURCE: Swanby, 2015

GROWING INFLUENCE ON POLICY

Foundations have been playing a growing role in recent years in policy-making and consensus-building in terms of food and nutrition security. Those foundations are involved at several different levels. On the one hand, they engage directly in advocacy work by participating in international negotiations that lead to the enactment of standards (in areas such as trade, biodiversity, and plant-protection and genetic resources). The Syngenta Foundation, for instance, is a member of the World Economic Forum* and a partner of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition*. The Rockefeller Foundation also provided financial support to the 2006 Africa Fertilizer Summit in Abuja, Nigeria, during which 40 national governments agreed to lift customs duties on fertilizers [Dano, 2007].

On the other hand, they fund (and even help spearhead) different initiatives that will play a major role in the formulation and implementation of public policies. In 2006, the Rockefeller and Gates foundations created the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa* (AGRA), an alliance which is now also funded by other foundations (such as Mastercard), private companies (such as Yara) and international organisations, as well as bilateral and multilateral development banks and agencies [Site d'AGRA [50]].

AGRA has a real impact on farmers and policies in Africa. It has funded projects in some ten African countries, focusing in particular on the development and marketing of hybrid seeds at affordable prices for small producers. Between 2007 and 2016, it developed 562 different seed varieties and produced 602,734 megatons of seeds [AGRA, 2016 [51]].

Those AGRA-supported projects were intended to reduce poverty and hunger in Africa, mainly by improving agricultural yields. As is the case for most NGOs, the projects must also provide "real evidence" to show that certain development options work and should be taken into consideration in public policies in order to bring about a change in scale. In an interview published in November 2017, AGRA's regional head for West Africa said: *"over the next five years, we have decided to focus on 11 countries [...] with the idea that if in three or four years we can show what can be achieved, it may spread. We will have understood the models and partnerships to put in place in order to bring about a change in scale for the rest of the 15 ECOWAS countries"* [Fadel NDiame, 2017 [52]].

Projects supported by foundations must provide "real evidence" to show that certain development options work.

AGRA is directly involved in the formulation and revision of agricultural policies and regulations in Africa. It acts through "policy action nodes" that bring together experts and "stakeholders" to act at national level in specific areas such as seeds, access to markets and land. In Ghana, for instance, Seed Policy Action Node drafted revisions to national seed policy that were submitted to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. In Tanzania, Land Policy Action Node for land was involved in the revision of the Village Land Act and laws governing land titles at district level; it works with district officials on guidelines for drafting decrees. [Grain, 2014; AGRA, 2013 [53]]. In Mozambique, Market Policy Action Node drew the Warehouse Receipt System legislation, which was submitted to the Ministerial Council [AGRA, 2013 [54]].

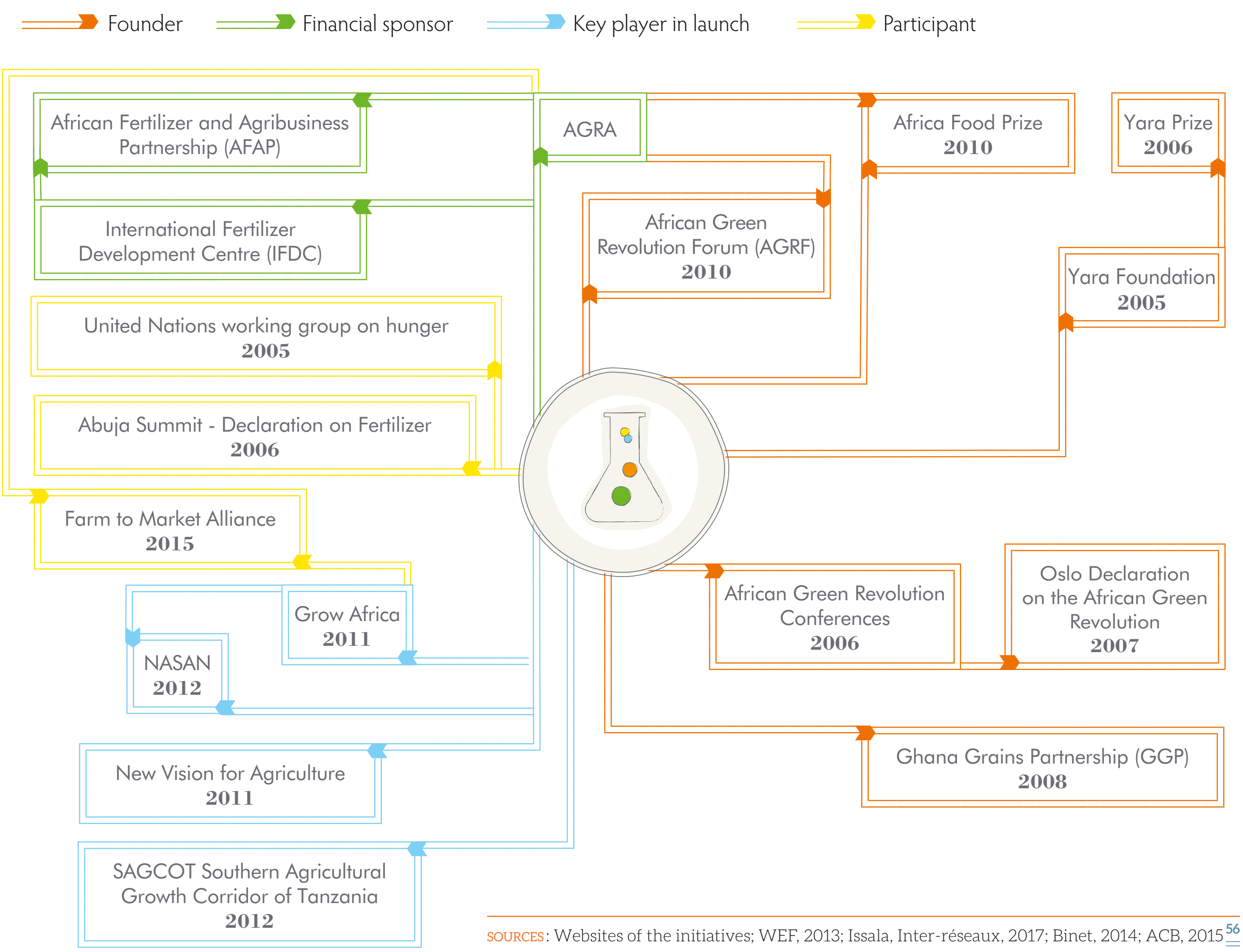
The role of multinational firms in policymaking

PROACTIVE MULTINATIONALS: THE EXAMPLE OF YARA

Multinationals are also playing an increasingly greater role in the production of public policies, more or less directly. The Norwegian company Yara International, the world's largest producer and seller of fertilizers[55], is a prime example.

In 2004, Koffi Annan called for a Green Revolution in Africa, and the Norwegian company responded by launching its Africa Programme. It then participated–with Monsanto, Unilever and the Rockefeller Foundation—in the task force on hunger set up by the secretary-general of the United Nations as part of the Millennium Goals. It organised the African Green Revolution Conference in 2006, after which heads of state from the African Union adopted the Abuja Declaration on Fertilizer for the African Green Revolution.

Yara's influence in various agricultural and food initiatives in Africa



SOURCES: Websites of the initiatives; WEF, 2013; Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017; Binet, 2014; ACB, 2015[56]

In that declaration, they agreed to increase the use of fertilizers sixfold by 2015[57] , by implementing "*appropriate measures such as tax incentives, (...) immediate elimination of taxes and tariffs on fertilizers (...) and the creation of purchasing and distribution centres through strategic partnerships between the public and private sectors*".

Yara also played an active role in promoting the concept of "agricultural growth corridors" at the private-sector forum that was held as a side event during the United Nations General Assembly in 2008. The idea is to build infrastructure to attract investment and facilitate the development of commercial agriculture in order to boost the agricultural sector, particularly by opening up and connecting high-potential agricultural zones with ports. Yara offered to set up a programme for agricultural corridors in Mozambique and Tanzania [Binet, 2014].

The idea of agricultural corridors was once again discussed at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in 2009. With support from several multinationals (such as Yara, Bayer, Cargill, Monsanto, Nestlé, Syngenta and Unilever), the idea was taken into account as part of the New Vision for Agriculture* project launched that same year. The agricultural-growth-corridor model was identified as an instrument for agricultural and economic development to attract private investment in the agricultural sector and for projects supporting small farmers, resulting in higher income for them and improving food security. In 2010, Yara was also received by the United Nations General Assembly during the review of the Millennium Development Goals, and the company promoted its concept of growth corridors before the member states [Inter-réseaux, 2013, Food sovereignty brief no.10[58]].

Yara also funds, promotes and participates in a series of alliances and events that play an important role in food-security governance in Africa see diagram on page p.36.

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) faces competition from many initiatives dedicated to food security.

PROLIFERATION OF FORUMS FOR FNS GOVERNANCE

The FAO's Committee on World Food Security* (CFS) was reformed in 2009 to allow for more inclusive and participatory governance and greater harmonisation of food-security policies at global level [McKeon, 2018[59]]. In addition to the 130 committee members (United Nations member states), the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) and Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) were created to represent civil society and private companies, respectively. A high-level panel of experts was also created to provide scientific expertise.

But that governance forum is circumvented and subject to competition from a growing number of initiatives that are part of a hybrid and fragmented system of global governance for food and nutrition security.

The 2007–08 crises resulted in the revival of "club diplomacy" on the part of the G8 and G20 countries [Mond'Alim 2030, 2017[60]].

The G8 countries met in L'Aquila in 2009 and agreed to mobilise 20 billion dollars over a three-year period for food security, but were not present at the FAO summit held that same year[61]. Likewise, it was the G20 agriculture ministers who launched the action plan on food-price volatility and agriculture in 2011. While those bodies have the advantage of being able to negotiate more easily than institutions such as the FAO, the circumvention of multilateralism and the legitimacy of a small group of countries making decisions on behalf of everyone raise questions [Mond'Alim 2030, 2017].

The private sector also set up forums for discussion and thinking about issues relating to food and agriculture within various coalitions such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum [Jorand, 2017[62]]. In 2009, seventeen multinational companies[63] at the World Economic Forum launched the New Vision for Agriculture*, a programme of initiatives that encourages a market-based approach to sustainably boost productivity in the agricultural sector. Large companies within the Forum affirmed their ambition to "shape the future of food security and agriculture"[64].

EMERGENCE AND CONSOLIDATION OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS

Since the 2000s, there has been an emergence and consolidation of a whole series of multi-stakeholder platforms for food and nutrition security:

Proliferation of multi-stakeholder platforms

2002	Gain » Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition*
2003	FFI » Food Fortification Initiative*
2006	AGRA
2008	Reform of CFS
2009	New Vision
2010	SUN » Scaling Up Nutrition* AGRF » African Green Revolution Forum*
2011	Grow Africa*
2012	NASAN » New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition* AFAP » African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership*
2013	N4G » Nutrition for Growth
2014	GACSA » Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture*
2015	ASIWA » Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa*
⋮	

SOURCE: Aubert, 2019

Multi-stakeholder platforms are supposed to allow for greater efficiency, more inclusive participation in governance and greater mobilisation of funding.

All of those alliances and initiatives tend to share many similarities. They bring together: governments and/or regional institutions (such as the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and ECOWAS in West Africa); companies, research centres and/or universities; and producer organisations. They include financial sponsors (foundations, aid agencies) and the beneficiaries of that financial support (producer organisations, governments, NGOs, research centres) [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p.27].

The emergence of those multi-stakeholder platforms is sometimes presented as a response to the slowness and cumbersomeness of multilateralism. Based on a "voluntary" approach, they are supposed to be more efficient and practical while expanding participation in public policy-making to include a greater diversity of players and mobilising more funding [Aubert, 2019].

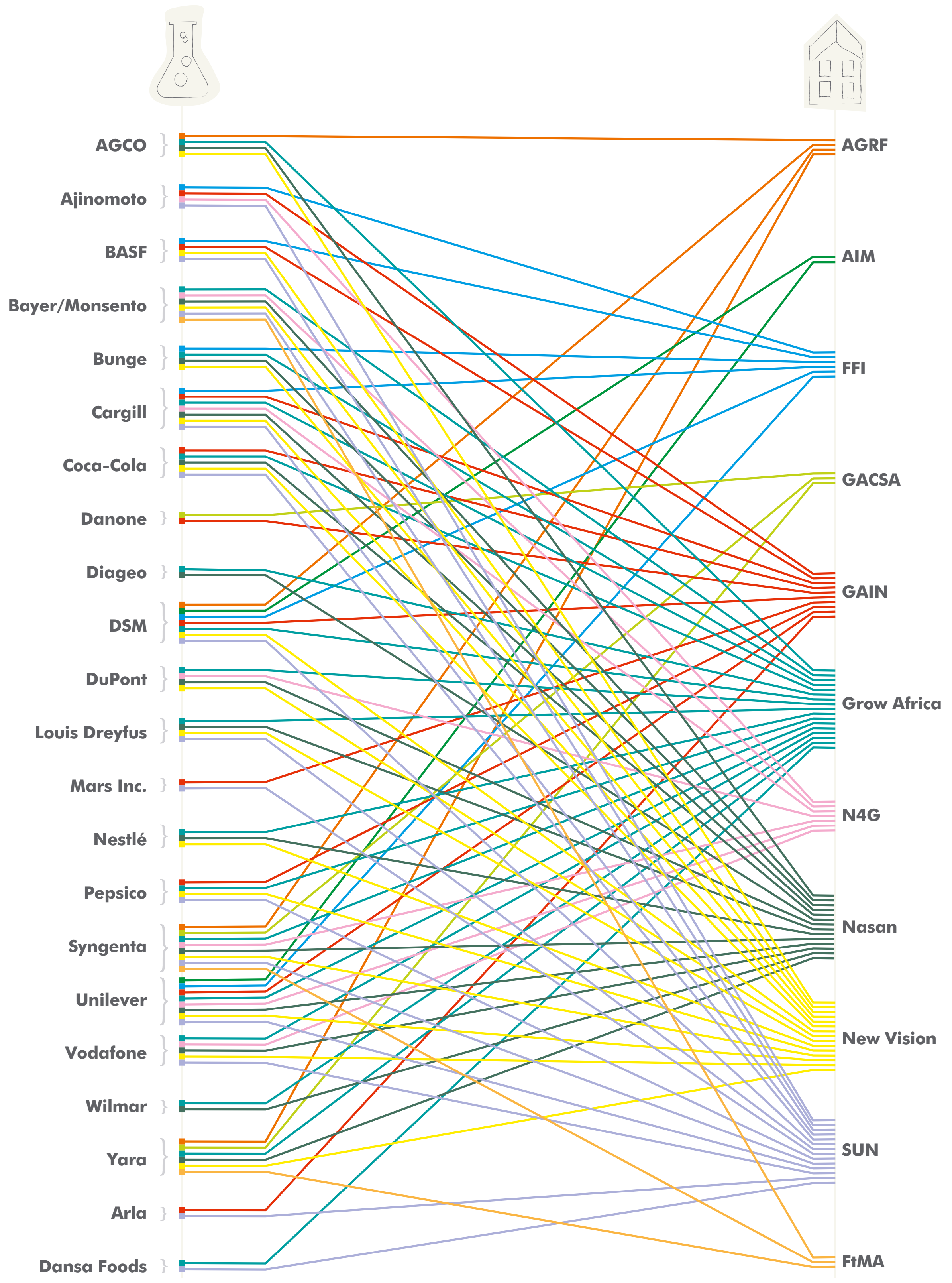
Some writers, however, are critical of the haziness surrounding the decision-making methods within those platforms, which bring together players with unequal influence. For most platforms, such as Scaling Up Nutrition* (SUN) and Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition* (GAIN), the different categories of participants are grouped together in the same space with no distinguishing of roles, responsibilities or interests promoted, and with no consideration for power imbalances. Within the reformed CFS, however, the rules of participation for each type of player are formally defined. Governments have decision-making power and the responsibility that goes with it. The other participants are grouped into clearly separate categories. The CSM, PSM and high-level panel of experts ensure the effective participation of the different players in debates [McKeon, 2018].

STRONG PRESENCE OF MULTINATIONAL FIRMS WITHIN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORMS

The "private sector" involved in multi-stakeholder platforms often consists of large companies that are the leaders in their respective lines of business. As shown in the diagram on page 40, multinationals are particularly well-represented within those alliances [Aubert, 2019].

See the online interactive diagram (in French) at: http://bit.ly/alliancebds27

Involvement of multinationals in multi-stakeholder platforms



SOURCE: Aubert, 2019

The presence of national companies within multi-stakeholder platforms is limited.

Although the role of local companies in the economic development of countries is often showcased by those initiatives, national companies have a relatively limited presence within multi-stakeholder platforms. For the 2012–13 commitments provided for within the framework of NASAN* in 10 African countries, 119 projects were backed by multinational companies, foreign capital or subsidiaries of international companies, while only 94 projects were backed by companies founded in Africa [Pascal, Jorand, Jamart, 2014].

The breakdown of projects between national companies and multinational companies varies depending on the country. In Benin, it is mainly national companies that are involved (22 local companies, 2 international companies). Benin is also one of the countries that has accepted projects run by producer organisations. In Ivory Coast, however, NASAN members are mainly foreign investors (8 local companies, 19 international companies) [Pascal, Jorand, Jamart, 2014]. The decline of the domestic private sector, as a result of the civil war, may partially explain the strong presence of multinationals [Gagné, 2017]. The imbalance sometimes also becomes greater when the projects are implemented. In Burkina Faso, in 2014, no national company was able to provide the announced funding because of difficulties accessing credit [Pascal, Jorand, Jamart, 2014].

A handful of multinational companies are therefore behind the increase in the number of initiatives. Concentration in the agrifood sector gives extremely large influence to a small number of large multinational firms [see page 43]. They often play a major role in setting up those platforms. Yara, for instance, teamed up with Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa* (AGRA) to create the African Green Revolution Forum* (AGRF), which brings together each year African and world leaders as well as representatives from the private sector. The forum is prepared by working groups focusing on different topics, made up of representatives of international organisations, multinational firms and foundations. It is therefore an important hub of influence for players in the private sector. In 2016, Yara and the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership* (AFAP) presided over the working group on inputs, in which the company Syngenta (which produces seeds and plant-protection products) and the Moroccan group OCP (which exports phosphate fertilizers) also participated [AGRF website[65]].

EFFECTIVE CHANNELS FOR INFLUENCING POLICY

Multi-stakeholder platforms are playing a growing role in producing consensus and policies for food and nutrition security. Within forums initiated and led by the private sector, new concepts are spread and commitments are formulated that are then taken up by national and regional institutions. For example, the investment plans for accelerating the Green Revolution in Africa were drawn up within the African Green Revolution Forum*. According to the news release from Nairobi, the 2016 forum brought together "more than 1,500 delegates from 40 countries [...], a diverse range of influential change agents from across the African agriculture landscape and around the world" and concluded with commitments in terms of policy, strategy and funding of over 30 billion dollars.

New Vision for Agriculture*, Grow Africa* and New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition* also had an impact on the policies implemented in Africa, such as "growth corridors". After those initiatives, two growth-corridor projects were developed in southern Africa and helped inspire other similar trends throughout the rest of the continent. The corridors are mentioned as one of the pillars of the continent's industrialisation plan, implemented by the African Development Bank and NEPAD. Likewise, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), run by those two organisations and the African Union Commission, has made the development of transport corridors a major focus of its work. At sub-regional level in West Africa too, growth corridors are a key component in strategies for economic integration [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017].

The influence of the Committee on World Food Security (CSA)*, on the other hand, appears to be "losing speed". At least, that is the opinion expressed by some writers who say that the strength of the CSA* is threatened by a combination of factors: governments do not want to be held responsible; large companies have become involved in the PSM, resulting in the elimination of smaller private players from countries in the South; proposals for transversal categories such as "farmers" are arising, thus ignoring the differences in interests between the agribusiness companies and small family farmers [McKeon, 2018[66]]. Some players also prevent important issues such as trade agreements [Eklin, Kate, et al, 2014[67]] and agroecology [McKeon, 2018] from being put on the agenda.

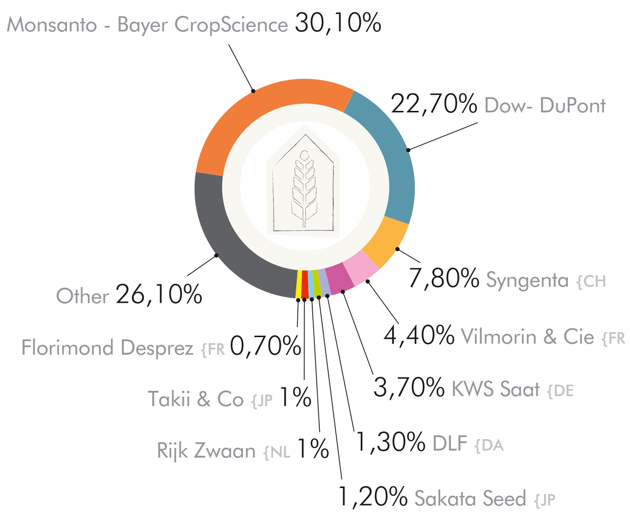
Concentration in the supply and trade sector for agricultural products

There has been considerable concentration in the agrifood sector over the past 40 years thanks to greater liberalisation of markets for inputs and agricultural and food products. The agrochemical sector (pesticides and fertilizers) is extremely concentrated, especially since the three mega-mergers between Bayer and Monsanto (June 2018), ChemChina and Syngenta (2017) and Dow and DuPont (2016)[68]. The agrochemical multinationals have also entered the seeds sector in order to take advantage of synergies between inputs and seeds, particularly GMOs. The sector for international companies selling commodities and products of first-stage processing is also highly concentrated, particularly for grains. The agrifood and distribution sectors are also becoming more concentrated (most of the 472 biggest international brands are owned by 10 large groups), but more small and medium-sized companies exist alongside large multinationals [Mond'Alim, 2017, p.138].

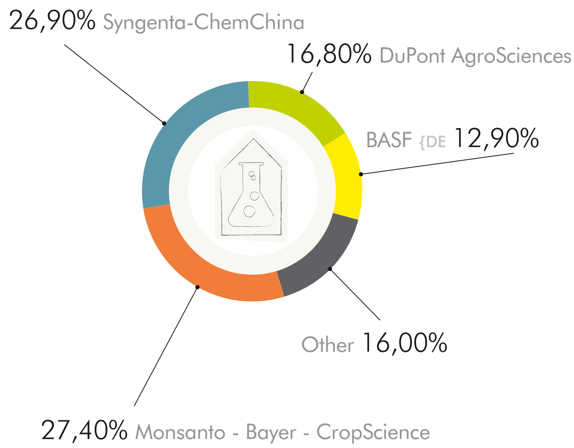
The figures below give an overview of the influence exerted by a small number of companies producing and marketing inputs (fertilizers, seeds, pesticides) and companies selling agricultural and food products.

Concentration in the global agrifood sector

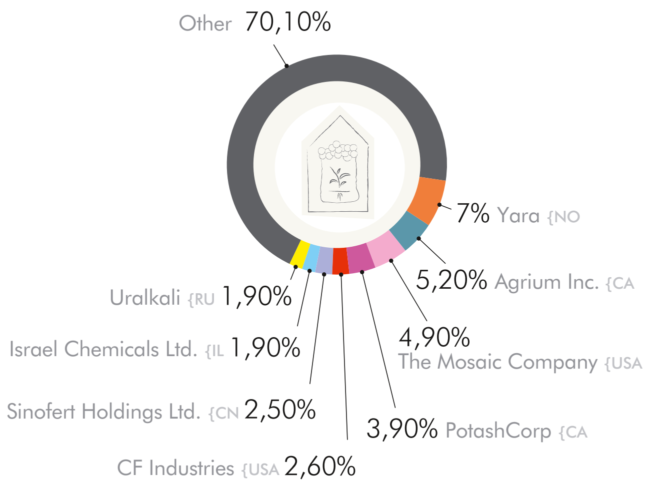
THE 10 BIGGEST SEED COMPANIES*



THE 4 BIGGEST PESTICIDE COMPANIES*

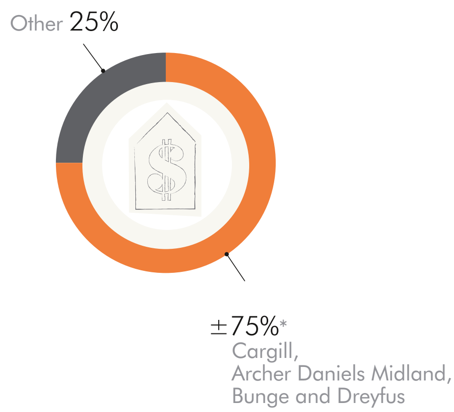


THE 8 BIGGEST FERTILIZER MULTINATIONALS*



THE 4 BIGGEST MULTINATIONAL COMMODITY TRADERS**

GRAINS AND OLEAGINOUS CROPS



*This is an estimate. Because of the complexity and lack of transparency of these companies, particularly those that are not listed on a stock exchange, it is impossible to know their actual market share.

* SOURCE : Groupe ETC, IPES-Food, 2018[69]

** SOURCE : Public Eye, 2014[70]

Strong interconnection between initiatives and alliances

While the increasing number of platforms, alliances, partnerships, etc. is fragmenting FNS governance, the strong interconnection between the actors involved and the replication of those initiatives at different levels ensures the spreading of consensus.

The strong interconnection between actors makes it difficult to read their strategies.

HIGHLY CONNECTED ACTORS

Beyond a shared vision of agricultural development (which will be addressed in Section 5), there are close ties between those different players. Those ties can be seen at different levels: funding, relations with institutions, leaders involved in governance.

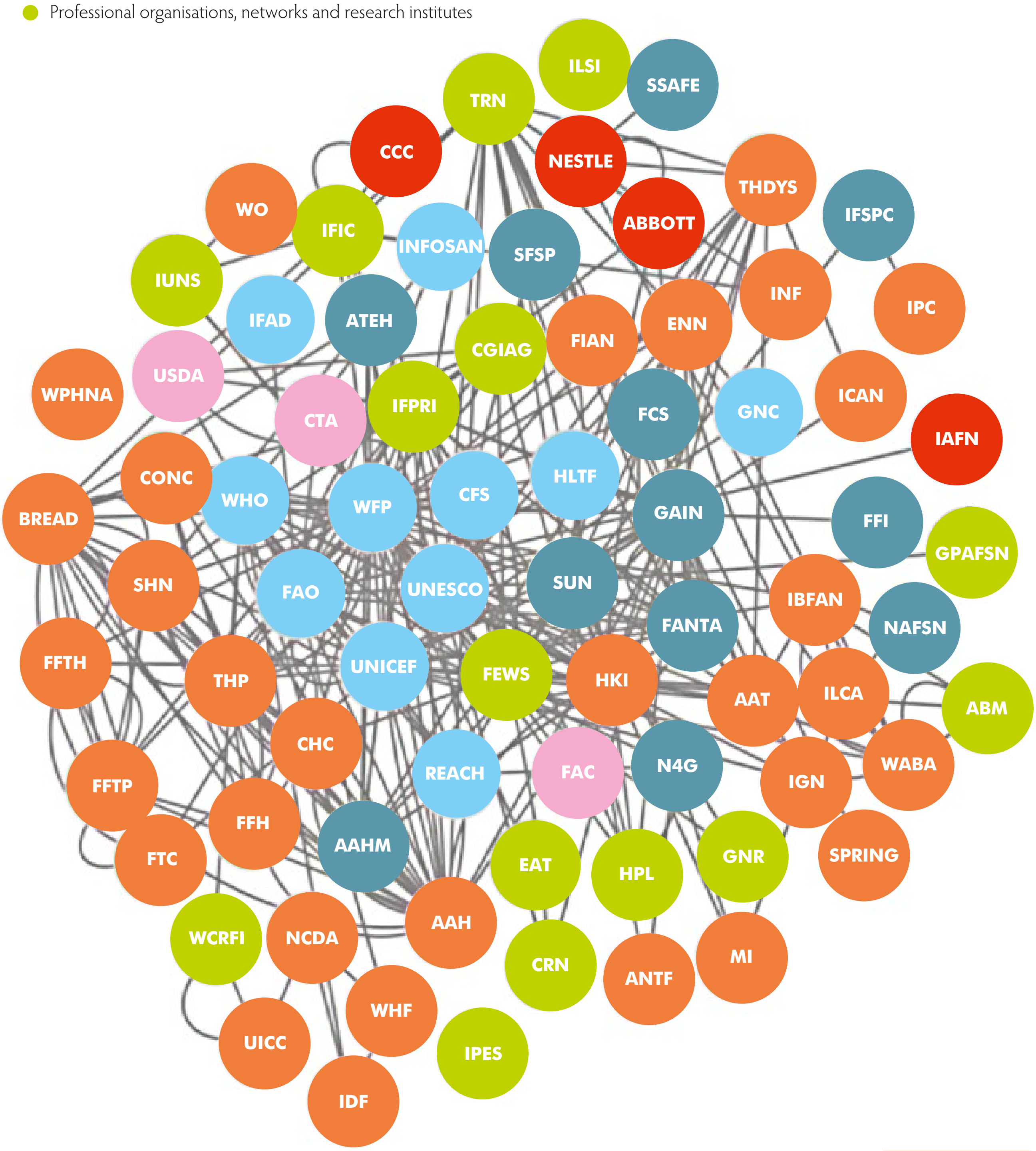
For instance, the Grow Africa* partnership was launched jointly by the African Union, NEPAD and the World Economic Forum. Yara International co-presides Grow Africa, which played an important role in setting up NASAN (launched by G8 in 2012) and which produces the Grow Africa-NASAN joint annual report. The report presents the implementation of the cooperation frameworks and letters of intent of the private sector and assesses the advancement of public-policy reforms that are intended to create an enabling environment for business and private investment. The report is submitted to and approved by the African Union's Specialised Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (Council of Ministers) [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 22].

Several of the players involved in promoting agricultural growth corridors are also helping implement NASAN. Likewise, a portion of the investments planned as part of NASAN are allocated to agricultural growth corridors in certain countries (e.g. Tanzania). Evidently, NASAN and agricultural-growth-corridor policies are reinforcing one another [Paul, Steinbrecher, 2013].[71] In addition to the Grow Africa initiative and CAADP, other programmes in Africa focus on the development of growth corridors.

The United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) mapped the network of nutrition actors to show the number and diversity of agencies, initiatives, funds and intersectoral platforms that are connected to each another in many different ways. Their close interconnection makes it difficult to read the actor strategies (see diagram on p.45).

Network map of global nutrition actors, by institutional type

- United Nations system
- Civil society and NGO
- National governments and plurilateral organisations
- Private industries
- Public-private partnerships and multi-stakeholder initiatives
- Professional organisations, networks and research institutes

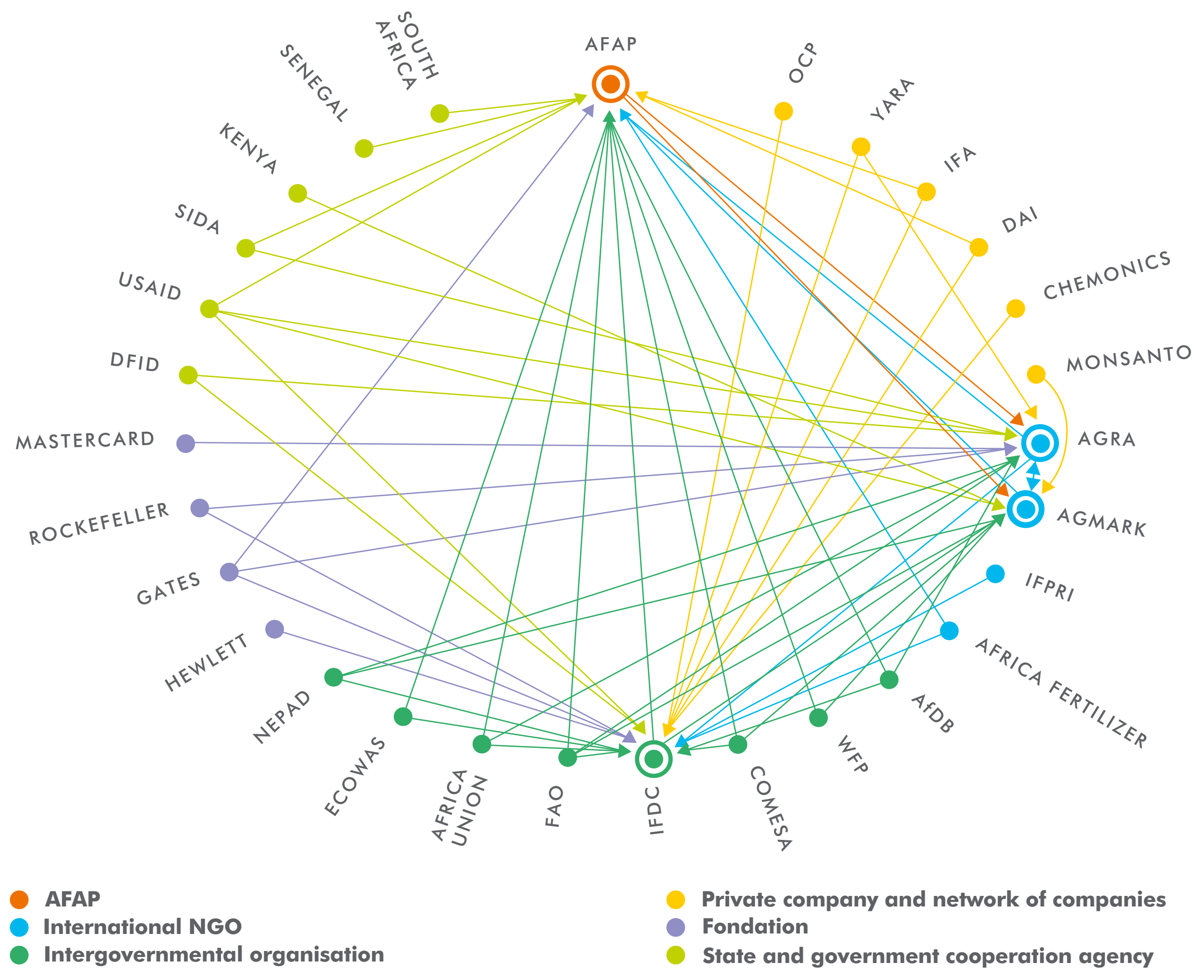


SOURCE: UNSCN, 2017[72]

The interconnection of players is particularly strong for the more "technical" platforms, such as those dedicated to fertilizers and seeds. For fertilizers, Yara is once again a good example. The Norwegian company helps fund the organisation International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC), based in the United States, and is in charge of promoting the use of fertilizers. That international organisation, which is supported by Dutch Cooperation and USAID, is developing the MIR+ programme in West Africa as part of ECOWAS's regional agricultural investment plan (PRIA). Yara is also indirectly involved in the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership—which was created with initial funding of 25 million dollars from the AGRA Foundation—and is supported by NEPAD, IFDC, the African Development Bank and the Agricultural Market Development Trust (AGMARK). IFDC, AFAP and USAID are ECOWAS's main partners in leading the West Africa Fertilizer Stakeholders Forum.

Use the online tool (in French) to explore how the different stakeholders are interconnected around AFAP: http://bit.ly/afapbds27

AFAP, a multi-stakeholder platform for developing a regional fertilizers market



SOURCES: Websites of AFAP, IFDC, AGRF; African Centre for Biosafety, 2015; Issala, 2017[73]

The replication of the initiatives at different levels ensures harmonisation of policy decisions and investments.

Ties also exist between certain multinationals and large philanthropic foundations. While the Gates Foundation funds AGRA (which promotes access to seeds and genetic improvement of crops) and agricultural research centres (particularly in the field of biotechnology), its founder Bill Gates is a shareholder in the seed company Monsanto and in the raw-materials company Cargill [Binet, 2014]. Robert Horsh, director of the Gates Foundation's Agricultural Development Programme, was formerly a manager at Monsanto [McKeon, 2014]. For some, those connections between philanthropic foundations and agrifood multinationals can give rise to suspicions as to the real motivations of philanthropic investments, which may seem like a strategy for conquering new markets over the long term.

CONNECTIONS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

Adapting multi-stakeholder platforms to different levels (international, continental, regional, national) ensures harmonisation at all levels of policy decisions and investments, and allows international firms to exert their influence up to national level. The Alliance focusing on seeds is a perfect example of harmonised, complementary articulation between those four levels. Seed companies are particularly involved in the enactment of international standards (UPOV 1991 and International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA; FAO 2009); Codex Alimentarius (FAO, WHO). They have ties with the continental level through the agency in charge of implementing the African Union's Seed Programme (AfricaSeeds). They support and participate in the Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA).

That alliance aims to "build a sustainable, inclusive and effective platform for engaging in advocacy work and taking action on key national and regional issues relating to the development of the seed sector in order to boost production, distribution and the use of certified seeds in West Africa" [Note de présentation d'ASIWA, 2014][74]. It brings together:

- regional institutions (ECOWAS, UEMOA, Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), Hub Rural);
- research (CORAF, CGIAR);
- foundations (Syngenta, AGRA);
- seed companies (AFSTA);
- international organisations (FAO);
- farmer organisations (ROPPA); and
- the financial partner USAID.

Lastly, companies and the foundations that are more or less directly linked to them are involved in regional regulatory reforms: definition and implementation of ECOWAS's regional seed regulations through WASP, coordinated by CORAF and funded by USAID [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 29-29].

Use the online interactive tool (in French) to learn more about ASIWA:
http://bit.ly/asiwabds27

5

What are the consequences on agricultural-development models?

The trends and initiatives presented in this document are fairly recent, so it is difficult at this time to assess their impact on food and nutrition security and on family farming, especially since they give rise to very heated discussion.

And yet, it should be pointed out that there is a lack of debate on the agricultural-development model. The evolution of agricultural and food governance –with a proliferation of hybrid initiatives where international firms are particularly influential– has resulted in the spreading of a common vision of the agricultural-modernisation approach. Given the many different issues at stake when it comes to transforming agricultural systems in Africa, that common vision should be discussed.

A common vision for a second Green Revolution

Many of the initiatives involving the private sector that were launched after the 2007–08 crisis share the same vision of how to develop agriculture and combat hunger in Africa. The interconnection of different actors at different levels ensures the spreading of that apparent consensus. That vision is based on a "Green Revolution" model that involves intensifying production through mechanisation, artificialisation of production processes and varietal research to boost yields. That vision also believes that public-private partnerships and the creation of an enabling environment for private investment will help promote the development of agriculture in Africa [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p. 37].

That development model predates the 2007–08 crisis, which has probably done more to accelerate and reinforce certain trends than to disrupt them. In 2004, Koffi Annan, then secretary-general of the United Nations, called for a Green Revolution in Africa. Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa* (AGRA) was launched in 2006 with support from the Gates and Rockefeller foundations. AGRA has played a major role in defining guidelines for agricultural and food policies since the late 2000s [Binet, N. 2014].

The context, vision for development and interaction between players are far from being a new phenomenon. Jean-Philippe Peemans, professor at the University of Louvain, wrote an article that was published in *Défis Sud* on the history of the "Green Revolution" policies implemented in the 1960s and 1970s. He says that those policies became more common starting in the late 1960s, when the modernisation discourse "*became alarmist, predicting that the world was heading towards famine because of the inability of traditional farming communities to meet growing demand for food as a result of population growth, industrialisation and urbanisation*". He explains that the system promoted by the World Bank was inspired by the Green Revolution of the 1940s and 1950s in Mexico: "*After the weakening of the revolutionary movement, a 'modernising' group took power in the single party and shifted the focus to supporting a modernised agricultural sector [...]. That policy was put in place in the 1940s with support from large foundations such as Ford and Rockefeller. That led to the emergence of a category of medium-sized farms based on the implementation of irrigation, improved seeds and chemical fertilizers heavily subsidised by the Mexican government. [...] That green-revolution model was encouraged by international organisations (World Bank, FAO) at the end of the 1960s, with the cooperation of large Western agro-industrial firms, and was introduced in countries that were considered at the time to be at risk of famine, especially India and Pakistan*".

That ideology is still a mobilising force, but has evolved towards the idea of a "second Green Revolution" to overcome challenges such as climate change, scarcity of natural resources and demographic pressure. Technology must therefore help meet demand while limiting negative impacts on the environment through varietal improvement and the use of information and communications technologies.

A technical approach to agricultural development that is taking over the policy debate

Structural-adjustment policies negotiated by African governments with international financial institutions in the 1980s and 1990s profoundly reduced the government's scope of intervention in the agricultural sector. Since the early 2000s, several countries—particularly in the Sahel—have been challenging those liberal policies and getting involved again in agriculture (agricultural orientation laws in Senegal and Mali, rural-development strategies in Niger and Burkina Faso). The adoption of UEMOA's agricultural policy and the ECOWAP agricultural policy (ECOWAS) are part of that movement, as is the defining of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) within the framework of NEPAD for the African continent.

The 2007–08 food crisis sped up the process and caused it to spread to all countries. Farmer organisations took advantage of the context of the above-mentioned laws governing agricultural policy to impose a debate on the agricultural model. Those farmer organisations highlighted the ability of family farms to meet the many challenges that African countries face and stressed the importance of protecting markets to secure investment and remunerate producers who face competition from abroad. At regional level, discussions focused on the question of family farms and how to modernise them. Likewise, there was discussion about the role of public policies when it comes to land and to organising and managing markets (particularly the degree of protection desirable along the borders of ECOWAS).

The approach developed by the African Union, however, eliminated all questions entailing options and policy choices, in favour of a strictly technical vision of the transformation of the agricultural sector. The "four pillars" of CAADP (sustainable land management, improvement of rural infrastructure, increase in food supply, agricultural research) are a testament to that.

The food shock in 2008 reinforced that technical vision. By putting agriculture and the security of their food supply back at the centre of their policies, African countries restored an interventionist approach to agricultural production and took their inspiration largely from the first-generation Green Revolution. But unlike the first-generation Green Revolution, those countries implicitly accepted a dual approach to African farming. While they do not reject family farming (because of its social importance), most governments do not trust family farms to be able to boost production enough to supply a fast-growing population in a context of rapid urbanisation. "New actors", "growth poles", "agribusiness"—these are seen as the vehicles for agricultural modernity.

The reconfiguration of the governance of food and nutrition security, under the effect of the growing role played by private players (large companies and foundations), has resulted in the spreading of a technical approach that is depoliticising the debate on the agricultural-development model. The multitude of platforms and alliances are segmenting the issues concerning food and nutrition security by creating technical objectives to meet (e.g. boost private investment in the agricultural sector, increase the use of certified seeds, develop food fortification, etc.) without discussing the policy issues that preside over the technical options. The great paradox is the lack of public debate on the agricultural-development models that should be promoted. A number of new issues are taken into consideration (such as adapting to climate change), but without fundamentally questioning the paths leading to the transformation and modernisation of agricultural systems.

It is therefore interesting to note that at a time when more and more people are becoming aware of the negative consequences of intensification models based on the artificialisation of production techniques, such techniques are being promoted as a solution to Africa's agricultural and food issues.

Africa has been facing climate change for decades. Farmers and their partners have been working for some forty years to secure their production, reduce the impact of climate on water and soil, etc. All of those initiatives, which are often relatively inexpensive and based on savoir-faire accumulated over a long period of time, are largely ignored in favour of concepts such as Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA), which is promoted internationally by firms and certain aid agencies such as USAID. But many studies show that agroecology offers a real alternative to the conventional Green Revolution, particularly with regard to the environment, productivity and socio-economic inclusion[75].

Issues underlying the private sector's involvement in agricultural development

While most national, regional and global initiatives launched since the 2000s aim to give a big boost to production in Africa, there are many hurdles to overcome in order to achieve that objective. The idea is to make sectors more competitive, while overcoming unprecedented environmental and social challenges. For many, the transformation of agricultural systems needs to boost agricultural production while also supplying healthy and nutritious foods to a fast-growing population, sustainably preserving natural resources and offering jobs and a decent income to the tens of millions of young people entering the job market each year—and it needs to do all of that despite rising tensions over access to natural resources and climate change.

International players from the private sector are shaping development trends through their involvement in funding and modernising agricultural systems in Africa. We will now address a few of the issues that need to be taken into consideration when discussing the dynamics and initiatives presented in this note.

A RISK OF REDUCING THE NUMBER OF JOBS IN AGRICULTURE?

Modernisation and intensification models for agriculture, which generally serve as a reference and are largely promoted by the above-mentioned initiatives, often lead to an increase in the size of farms, a reduction in the number of jobs as a result of mechanisation (improved productivity) and therefore a sharp drop in rural employment.

Employment, however, is a key issue for the continent. In West Africa, for instance, roughly six million young people enter the job market each year. Given the proportion of rural population versus total population in most West African countries, that figure alone reveals the importance of the jobs component of agricultural-modernisation models. As of 2025, the urban population will likely surpass the rural population. That increase in the number of consumers versus the number of producers is an important driver of agricultural transformation and higher agricultural income. But despite the slight reduction in its rate of growth, the rural population will continue to rise. The population of rural West Africa will likely reach 300 million by 2050, versus 200 million today.

The paths leading to the modernisation of family farming and the number of decent jobs offered are major issues.

Given the critical importance of employment when it comes to ensuring the socio-economic inclusion of young people and the cohesion of societies, the debate focuses not only on the number of decent jobs (with respect to working conditions and remuneration) in agricultural production models, but also on the number of jobs in the sectors upstream and downstream of agricultural production. In that regard, promoting efficient value chains (with strong ties to consumer markets and to the differentiation/segmentation of demand, and based on networks of modern artisanal companies) is essential when it comes to offering jobs to women and young people and providing an outlet for the excess of agricultural labour. This debate has not been developed much in Africa, and once again a certain fascination with models based on mass-processing industries tends to constitute the only vision for the future.

In Europe, that transition occurred within a context of high demand for industrial labour, and then for labour in the services sector. While it is clear that the agricultural sector in Africa will not be able to absorb all of the demand for jobs, given the rapid population growth, it is just as clear that the other economic sectors will not be able to absorb an excess of labour accentuated by a transformation model based on agribusiness either.

Therefore, aspects such as the paths leading to the modernisation of family farming and the number of decent jobs offered are highly important.

A RISK OF WIDENING DISPARITIES BETWEEN FARMING HOUSEHOLDS?

Income is an issue that is closely linked to employment, and just as important. Data on agricultural income is among the least-available data in Africa. But surveys conducted by a group of NGOs profiling the finances of rural households[76], and *bilans simplifiés* from certain farmer organisations (Apess, Fongs/Senegal), show low income pretty much across the board and gaping disparities in income between the different household categories.

The figure below shows a summarised version of the profiles of those rural households in 85 relatively homogeneous zones in the Sahel and in the Sahel/Sudanese and Sudanese/Sahel zones. Within each zone, households are divided into four groups from the poorest to the "wealthiest". The profiles are grouped by predominant production system: pastoral, agropastoral, rainfed agriculture in dry zones and rainfed agriculture in wetter zones (900–1,200mm/year).

BILANS SIMPLIFIÉS

The *bilan simplifié* is a tool for observing and analysing the socio-economic situation of family farms. It consists in collecting information about the family and farm (number of persons, workers and non-workers, surface area, equipment, livestock, etc.) and calculating for a given campaign the gross income (sales + self-consumption + donations), production costs and family expenses. All members of the family are interviewed, and the results are provided to the family.

Means of production and income for rural households in the Sahel

SOURCE: Save the Children/Issala, not yet published

Agricultural policies in West Africa rarely address the issue of differentiation between households, and consequently between family farms. Farmer organisations themselves are hesitant to differentiate their approaches and proposals depending on the characteristics of the farms.

According to some analyses, the guiding principles of the Green Revolution—both first and second generation—that serve as the basis for most of the above-mentioned initiatives risk widening the disparities between agricultural households, with farmers who are able to access technological innovations on the one hand, and those who will be even more marginalised on the other[77].

A RISK OF HAVING TOO NARROW A VISION OF MALNUTRITION?

Malnutrition is caused by a combination of different factors: insufficient access to food, insufficient care provided for women and children, insufficient hygiene and inadequate health services. Reducing malnutrition cannot solely depend on taking nutrition into account in agricultural-development policies, even though they have their role to play (quality and nutritional value of foods, food-safety practices in processing, storage conditions and preservation of food products, etc.). It depends on an approach involving the reform of numerous public policies (maternal, reproductive and child healthcare; education; access to potable water and purification, etc.). The status of women is a question that is also at the heart of the sustainable progress that can be made with regard to malnutrition among women and children.

Agriculture is not the only solution, but it is nevertheless indispensable–particularly as part of rural-development strategies addressing infrastructure and access to basic social services. Surveys show that diversifying self-consumed production and developing family gardens are key components of the link between agriculture and nutrition at household level.

Sadly, those aspects tend not to be included in the agricultural-transformation policies promoted by big players in the private sector. Through technical platforms such as SUN* and GAIN*, players in the private sector promote technical approaches and the "medicalisation" of nutrition (promotion of enriched foods and micronutrients). Those approaches risk dissociating nutrition from its social, economic, political and cultural causes.[78]

RISKS LINKED TO CONTRACT FARMING?

Among the ways in which the private sector is involved, contract farming is a model that is actively promoted at the moment. It involves producers and a private company whereby:

- the producers want to secure outlets,
- the buyer wants to secure supply.

Certain analyses confirm several cases where small farmers increased their productivity in contract-farming systems with industries. That is not to say, however, that small producers do not face other difficulties in those systems. Agricultural contracts between small farmers and large farms give rise to new financial and commercial obligations that are often not in line with the capacities of the producers. That is the case with lending, where volume and repayment terms create big risks for small producers and significantly change the way farms are run. Also, in current contract-farming systems, small producers are entirely dependent on large agricultural companies in terms of production techniques. Cultivation techniques are transferred for the most part using a top-down approach, from large farms to small producers in the form of "technical packages". As a result, farmer innovation is sharply reduced [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p 59-60].

The involvement of the private sector through contract-based systems should therefore include a series of requirements:

- securing outlets, with purchasing contracts based on risk-sharing (quality, quantity, market price, etc.) so that the producer does not bear all the risk;
- securing access to funding at competitive rates;
- ensuring real environmental and social responsibility;
- preserving the decision-making independence of producers and avoiding a relationship of irreversible dependency with the buyer.

RISKS CONCERNING LAND DISTRIBUTION

Preserving access to production resources, particularly land for small producers, is also an important issue. While *LandMatrix's* monitoring of land-grabbing already shows that the phenomenon is losing some steam, the arrival of large investors is a cause for concern. Critics raise the following points:

- risk of exclusion and displacement of local producers as the victims of land expropriation;
- changes to land-tenure systems (customary rights no longer recognised) and creation of a veritable property market or granting of emphyteutic leases;
- risks of "gradual" restructuring of land in favour of companies and through the "failures" of producers: non-repayment of credit, non-compliance with specifications [Issala, Inter-réseaux, 2017, p.38].

The high pressure on land at the moment as a result of high population density and the need for cultivatable land call for adequate procedures to secure land.

The involvement of the private sector through contract-based systems must include a series of requirements.

6

Conclusion: what governance for guaranteeing common goods?

How can the above-mentioned issues be better supported in the public debate, and what can be done to create the right conditions for more democratic decision-making?

What role for national and regional institutions?

The increase in the number of continental and international initiatives discussed in the previous sections raises several important questions.

On the one hand, they challenge the legitimacy of the processes for drawing up policies based on dialogue, consultation and negotiation between the government, professional organisations, the private sector and civil society, favouring instead a highly technical top-down approach. They attract leaders' attention, centred on the mobilisation of resources, to the detriment of the slow and steady implementation of the policy options that they have decided on. They contradict the idea of alignment with local policy choices, a principle on which a certain consensus had been founded.

The race to come up with incentives to attract the "private sector" places governments in a contradiction between the need to sharply reduce taxes on agricultural and agrifood business, and the need to build up their budgetary resources and in particular resources allocated to the agricultural sector (compliance with the Maputo Commitment). With agriculture being the main source of economic growth for many African countries, it is difficult to imagine near tax exemption for the sector without further weakening the government and its ability to exercise its regulatory powers and provide funding for sector-specific policies and social protection—at a time when transitioning towards taxation of household income is a sensitive issue.

Lastly, because of the conditionalities imposed (private investment conditional upon policy reforms negotiated at national level to create an "enabling business climate"), those initiatives weaken the processes for the regional integration of economies and of agricultural and food trade, and the processes for the harmonisation of national policies at regional level. They even incentivise governments to compete with one another in order to attract foreign private investment, particularly by offering advantages through the investment code, tax measures and deals, etc.

A NEED FOR REGULATION

The shifting of decision-making centres towards platforms and alliances of players with extremely diverse interests and influence makes the role of public authorities as regulators and defenders of the general interest all the more important. Private actors, who represent a financial resource that is considered to be precious, have an approach that is in theory different from that of a community or government, whose primary objective should be the social and economic well-being of the people. The government can serve as a safeguard against the excesses of private actors and make companies remain transparent. But the private sector is playing a major role in guiding national policies in contexts where African national and regional institutions are fragile, human and financial resources are insufficient and institutions in charge of writing laws (parliaments) are limited in their capacity to act. That joint production of policies and regulations faces no counterbalancing forces and offers little transparency, especially since the provisions tend to be highly technical. Big players in the private sector (companies and foundations) support governments and institutions by developing technical and legal consulting. Faced with that technical expertise, public institutions are unarmed. The crisis affecting public funding for research in Africa and throughout the world, as well as partnerships between companies, foundations, certain financial sponsors and research institutes, deprive Africa of independent scientific production that could serve as a counterweight. The ability of public institutions to fulfil their role as regulators defending the general interest is called into question.

How to ensure governance that is truly inclusive?

The private sector has an important role to play in the transformation of agricultural systems. But it is the public decision-makers in Africa, including in dialogue with international actors, who are responsible vis-à-vis their citizens and future generations for making the public choices that will serve as the basis for that transformation.

It is up to the public institutions, in charge of supporting decisions for the proper management of public goods and the general interest of the citizens, to implement regulations that will guarantee them. But in recent years, companies and corporate foundations seem to have established themselves as designers, co-producers and evaluators of public policies, without there being any real regulation of that role.

Given the financial power and influence (through communication and advocacy) of large international companies and their ability to persuade public decision-makers, it may seem necessary to implement tools to monitor and regulate that influence. In more concrete terms, it may be interesting to implement—at the level of public institutions, research institutes and civil-society organisations—permanent and in-depth monitoring of the strategies of companies, foundations, regional institutions and African governments, and financial sponsors at the four levels of governance (international, continental, regional, national). Tools aiming to ensure greater transparency and accountability at all of those levels also seem essential. In that regard, the National Agricultural Investment Programmes (PNIA) may be interesting. They are coordination frameworks for ensuring the consistency of all investments in the agricultural sector, whether of public or private origin, and for analysing them.

Then, with the development of multi-stakeholder platforms, there should be reflection on the organisational methods allowing for a truly inclusive governance serving the common good. That reflection should focus on how to integrate the private sector in a more representative manner.

Today, in international and continental policy initiatives, the voice of the private sector is almost exclusively carried by the biggest multinational firms. And yet, agrifood sectors are structured throughout the continent, and national and regional private companies for inputs, processing, production and distribution should be able to be represented within those bodies.

Lastly, it seems fundamental to think about the ways each of the groups of actors represented in those multi-stakeholder bodies can defend their interests. Most often in multi-stakeholder platforms, such as Scaling Up Nutrition* (SUN) and Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition* (GAIN), the different categories of participants are grouped together in the same space with no distinction as to roles, responsibilities or interests promoted, and without concern for power imbalances [McKeon, 2018]. And yet, those bodies bring together actors with extremely unequal capacities of influence. While they can foster a better mutual understanding, the risk is that they reproduce the existing power imbalances by further strengthening the position of the most influential actors. Many reports recommend recognising the imbalances in power relations and finding ways to fix them. Faced with companies that are particularly well-equipped for making themselves heard, most writers agree on the need to strengthen the structural and advocacy capacities of farmer organisations and civil society in Africa [HLPE, 2018[79]; Concord, 2017]. Certain groups of NGOs believe that the private sector should be able to participate only in multi-stakeholder platforms dedicated to the implementation of policies already decided and not in those dedicated to policy decision-making [Concord, 2017].

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Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

Launched in 2002 as part of a special session of the United Nations General Assembly on children (UNGASS II), GAIN is an international foundation based in Switzerland that is dedicated to combating malnutrition. It establishes public-private partnerships to offer financial and technical support in order to provide better food for people who are at the greatest risk of suffering from malnutrition. GAIN is particularly involved in the creation of global platforms such as SUN Business Network and Amsterdam Initiative against Malnutrition (AIM). Its financial sponsors include the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the Gates Foundation, USAID and UKAID.

Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA)

Launched as part of the UN's Climate Summit in September 2014, GACSA is a multi-stakeholder platform comprising 130 stakeholders (governments, private sector, international organisations, civil society and research centres) to improve food and nutrition security worldwide in response to climate change. It aims to develop knowledge, boost public and private investment and promote a favourable environment for climate-smart agriculture. It organises the GACSA Forum each year.

Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR)

AGIR is a multi-stakeholder platform that was launched in December 2012 in Ouagadougou and that is supported and funded by the European Union. It aims to foster synergies and coherence in resilience initiatives in the 17 countries of West Africa and the Sahel. Placed under the political and technical leadership of ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS, the Alliance is based on existing platforms and networks, particularly the Food Crises Prevention Network (RPCA). Building on the "zero hunger" objective within the next 20 years, the Alliance is a policy tool for channelling the efforts of regional and international stakeholders towards a common results framework. Five years after the launch of AGIR, ten countries have adopted and begun implementing their "national resilience priorities" (NRP-AGIR).

Alliance for Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA)

Launched in 2015, this multi-stakeholder platform engages in advocacy work and is involved in the development of the seed sector in order to boost production, distribution and use of certified seeds in West Africa. It comprises regional institutions (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, Hub Rural), research centres (CORAF, CGIAR*), foundations (Syngenta, AGRA*), seed companies (AFSTA: Africa Seed Trade Association), international organisations (FAO), farmer organisations (ROPPA) and financial sponsors (USAID).

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

AGRA was inspired by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan's call for a purely African "Green Revolution" to boost the productivity of small farmers while protecting the environment. It was founded in 2006 thanks to a partnership between the Rockefeller Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. AGRA now has more donors, including governments, international organisations, cooperation agencies, foundations and companies.

Committee on World Food Security (CSA)

CSA was launched in 1974 as an intergovernmental committee, hosted by the FAO, with the objective of monitoring the implementation of the commitments made during the first World Food Conference in 1974. The 2009 reform made it a multi-stakeholder platform that issues policy recommendations concerning food security and nutrition. In addition to the 130 committee members (who are member states of the United Nations), members of civil society, the private sector, foundations and other international organisations have obtained participant status. Specific mechanisms (civil-society mechanism (CSM) and private-sector mechanism (PSM) provide a framework for the work and the representation of civil-society actors and companies. A high-level panel of experts was also put in place in 2009 to provide scientific expertise.

Feed the Future (FTF)

Launched in 2010 by the Obama administration, the Feed the Future initiative is a five-year strategy that was drawn up by 11 US agencies, after consulting with many stakeholders, to combat hunger and food insecurity worldwide. Its objectives are to promote the growth of the agricultural sector, boost food production and improve nutrition, particularly for vulnerable groups (women and children). That strategy takes the form of investments from the US government in agriculture and nutrition at global level, and strategic partnerships with the private sector. FTF has already helped create roughly 5,000 public-private partnerships and helped raise over 830 million in private investment.

African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF)

Founded in 2010 by Yara and AGRA, AGRF brings together each year policy decision-makers, business leaders, agricultural producers, experts and financial institutions to draw up concrete action plans for the Green Revolution in Africa. The Forum focuses its efforts on promoting investments and policy support measures to boost productivity and income for African farmers in a way that is environmentally sustainable. The 2016 forum brought together more than 1,500 delegates from 40 countries and concluded with an investment plan of over 30 billion dollars. It is supported by international organisations such as IFAD and AFDB.

World Economic Forum (WEF)

Founded in 1971, WEF is a not-for-profit organisation based in Geneva with 1,000-member companies. It organises an annual meeting in Davos each year, bringing together the heads of the member companies, political leaders and journalists to discuss global issues and define global, regional and sector-specific action plans. WEF organises other international summits and publishes a number of reports. It has observer status with the Unites Nations Economic and Social Council. It launched the New Vision for Agriculture* initiative and founded Grow Africa*.

African Agricultural Technological Foundation (AATF)

Founded in 2003 in Washington by the Rockefeller Foundation, AATF aims to facilitate the transfer of commercially protected agricultural technologies to farmers through the creation of public-private partnerships. It carries out projects such as Cowpea Improvement (which aims to fight against the insect pest Maruca vitrata by using GMOs) and WEMA (which aims to develop varieties of corn that are more resistant to drought). The Rockefeller, Syngenta and Howard G. Buffett foundations and the company PepsiCo help fund its operations along with USAID, UKAID and the Feed the Future* initiative.

Grow Africa

Founded in 2011 by WEF*, the African Union Commission and NEPAD, with Yara playing a key role, Grow Africa is a regional partnership platform comprising over 200 companies and the governments of 12 different countries. It aims to create partnerships between African governments and the private sector by drawing up investment plans in support of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and national strategies for agricultural growth. Grow Africa has supported the implementation of over 1.5 billion dollars of investment and over 10 billion of investment commitments.

Food Fortification Initiative (FFI)

Founded in 2002 at the instigation of Emory University (United States), Nutrition International (Canada) and the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), FFI is an international public-private partnership that aims to improve health by enriching industrial grain products. Its members include representatives of the WHO, CDC foundation, GAIN*, Cargill, Emory University and UNICEF.

Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)

Launched in 2010, the SUN initiative is a multi-stakeholder platform that mobilises 59 governments, companies, donors, researchers, United Nations members and civil society as part of a group effort to combat malnutrition. It comprises five networks (countries, private sector, civil society, development partners and United Nations) whose main objective is to encourage action at country level. The movement is led by a strategic group appointed by the UN secretary-general and comprising representatives of the five networks. SUN is funded by the Gates Foundation, Canada, the EU, France, Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (NASAN)

Launched by the G8 in 2012, NASAN is a partnership that brings together G8 members (except France, which withdrew in February 2018), the governments of 10 African countries (including Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal in West Africa), over 200 national and international companies, international organisations (including NEPAD, AFDB, the World Bank, AGRA*, CGIAR*, SUN*) and African farmer organisations. It aims to improve food security and nutrition in sub-Saharan Africa by speeding up the contribution of private capital to develop the agricultural sector in Africa. It is co-presided by the African Union, WEF* and the United States. Its implementation was driven by Grow Africa* at the request of WEF*, with support from Yara.

New Vision for Agriculture

This action plan was launched in 2010 during the annual meeting of WEF*, in Davos by the community of multinationals (including Cargill, DuPont, Monsanto, Unilever, Syngenta and Yara). It promotes a market-based approach to sustainably increase productivity in the agricultural sector. In concrete terms, the initiative consists in the implementation of large public-private partnerships (particularly with the launch of Grow Africa*).

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