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**BUILDING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
IN THE SAHEL AND WEST AFRICA**

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Introduction

- Food security and food sovereignty are concepts currently widely used in the Sahel and West Africa by political decision-makers and rural development actors.
- Food security replaced food self-sufficiency in 1996, which was the credo of the 1960s, during the phase of nation-state construction.
- Its precise outline and dimensions were defined during the World Food Summit in Rome in 1996.

Introduction (continued)

- For a little over two decades the notion of food sovereignty has entered the public debate concerning food both at the national and international level.
- Food sovereignty is presented by its promoters as an “alternative to neo-liberal policies”.
- It is based on family and peasant farms developing diversified and ecological production systems, refusing external dependence.

Introduction (continuation and end)

- It appears as a point of support for public decision-makers and professional organizations to reclaim leadership in the definition and orientation of agricultural and food policies.
- Over time, this notion has gained interest to become a centerpiece in the formulation of national and regional agricultural policies.

1. Some key ideas from the White Paper by SEM Pierre Jacquemot

- HE Pierre Jacquemot published a White Paper in July 2022 entitled: **FROM SECURITY TO FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICA. Megatrends, driving forces, levers for action**
- **Megatrends:**
 - Food insecurity threatens a quarter of Africans
 - Malnutrition, the sneaky disease
 - Pejorative climatic circumstances
 - Limited availability of new land

1. Some key ideas from the White Paper by SEM Pierre Jacquemot (continued)

- **Megatrends (continued and end):**
 - Degraded soils for half of the cultivated areas
 - Strong land constraints
 - Low yields and considerable post-harvest losses
 - Risks of depletion of fishery resources
 - Exacerbated farmer-breeder tensions
 - Chronic underfunding

1. Some key ideas from the White Paper by SEM Pierre Jacquemot (continued)

- **Pathways to agricultural and food sovereignty: ten levers for action :**
 - Supporting the transition of the peasant economy
 - Focus on reasoned ecological intensification
 - Develop livestock sectors
 - Promote approaches in terms of territorialized agri-food systems
 - Promote local consumption

1. Some key ideas from the White Paper by SEM Pierre Jacquemot (continuation and end)

- **Pathways to agricultural and food sovereignty: ten levers for action :**
 - Building adapted credit systems
 - Managing the instability of food markets
 - Protect selectively
 - Bet on the region
 - Finally establish overall consistency
- We confirm the relevance of these megatrends and these ten levers of action
- In our capacity as panelist, we make our contribution to the reflection

2. Concepts of food security and food sovereignty

- **1996:** Holding of the World Food Summit in Rome which gives the following definition of food security: “ **food security exists when all human beings have, at all times, physical and economic access to sufficient, healthy and healthy food. nutritious, allowing them to meet their energy needs and dietary preferences to lead a healthy and active life .**
- Food security highlights four dimensions: the **availability** of food, **the accessibility** of households and individuals to food, the functioning and **stability** of markets, and **the use** of food (nutritional and health dimension).

2. Concepts of food security and food sovereignty (continued)

- **1996: Appearance of the concept of food sovereignty promoted by the Via Campesina peasant movement , which designates food sovereignty as the right of a population, a region or a country to define their agricultural and food policy, without price dumping towards third countries.**

2. Concepts of food security and food sovereignty (continued)

- In 2001, Via Campesina clarified its definition of food sovereignty: “**food sovereignty is the right of people to define their own policies regarding food and agriculture, to protect and regulate production and domestic agricultural trade in order to achieve their sustainable development goals, to determine the extent to which they want to be self-sufficient and to limit the dumping of products on their markets .**”

2. Concepts of food security and food sovereignty (continued)

Food sovereignty involves:

- Priority to production by peasant and family farms of foodstuffs for domestic and local markets
- Providing a fair price to farmers for their produce, to protect domestic markets from low-priced dumped imports
- Guaranteed access to land, water, forests, fishing grounds and other resources
- Promoting the role of women in food production and their equitable access to productive resources
- Community control of productive resources versus corporate acquisition of land, water, genetics and other resources

2. Concepts of food security and food sovereignty (continuation and end)

- Sovereignty encompasses the notion of food security, but goes much further. This is a political definition, which implies the right of States and their populations to choose not only what they consume, but also what they produce, and how they produce it.
- Food sovereignty also includes:
 - the importance of social and environmental conditions of food production
 - the equitable distribution of the means of production between farmers
 - the involvement of populations in the choice of production.

3. Food sovereignty in regional agricultural policies

Food sovereignty is an objective included in regional agricultural policies in the Sahel and West Africa:

- The strategic framework for sustainable food security in the fight against poverty (CSSA) at the CILSS level and implemented in the Sahelian countries (2000);
- The UEMOA Agricultural Policy (PAU) at the level of the eight countries of the franc zone (2001);
- The ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP) adopted by the 15 West African countries members of the regional institution (2005).

3. Food sovereignty in regional agricultural policies (continued)

- Overall objective of the CSSA: *" ensure access to all Sahelians, at all times, to the foods necessary to lead a healthy and active life by 2015 "*
- Overall objective of the PAU: *" contribute in a sustainable manner to meeting the food needs of the population, to the economic and social development of Member States and to the reduction of poverty "*
- General objective of ECOWAP: *" to contribute in a sustainable manner to meeting the food needs of the population, to economic and social development and to the eradication of poverty in the Member States, as well as to the reduction of inequalities between territories, zones and countries "*.

3. Food sovereignty in regional agricultural policies (continued)

- Although the notion of food sovereignty is not explicitly expressed in these policies, several priorities taken into account in particular in the specific objectives come close to the elements which are the basis of food sovereignty.

3. Food sovereignty in regional agricultural policies (continuation and end)

- But ECOWAP+10 takes up the notion of food sovereignty more explicitly:
- The ECOWAP+10 Strategic Orientation Framework for 2025 has the general objective of “ *contributing in a sustainable manner to meeting the food and nutritional needs of the population, to economic and social development and to reducing poverty. poverty in Member States, as well as inequalities between territories, zones and countries* ” (general objective of ECOWAP).
- The vision of the ECOWAP+10 Strategic Orientation Framework for 2025 is expressed as follows: “ ***a modern and competitive agro-silvo-pastoral and fisheries sector, inclusive and sustainable, guaranteeing decent jobs , food and nutritional security and food sovereignty*** ”.

4. Food sovereignty in agricultural policies in Burkina Faso

Food sovereignty figures prominently in Law No. 070-2015/CNT of October 22, 2015 establishing the agro-sylvo-pastoral, fisheries and wildlife orientation law in Burkina Faso

This law defines food sovereignty as: “ **the right of the Burkinabè State to freely define its choices and policies in food matters** ”.

4. Food sovereignty in the agricultural policies of Burkina Faso (continuation and end)

Law No. 070-2015/CNT on the agro-sylvo-pastoral, fisheries and wildlife orientation law in Burkina Faso in its article 6 specifies that:

- **“The State exercises food sovereignty by autonomously determining its national food and nutritional policy and by providing itself with the capacity and means to meet the food and nutritional needs of society.**
- **To this end, in collaboration with other actors, in the fields of agriculture, fishing, food and forest management, it determines policies that are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally adapted to its own needs. .**

5. To move towards food sovereignty in the Sahel and West Africa

- Reaffirmation of **political will** in favor of food sovereignty: food sovereignty must be enshrined in the Constitution of each country and appear explicitly in public and agricultural policies
- **Transformation of African agriculture** : intensification, improvement of productivity, development of product processing with a view to improving the response capacity of regional agriculture to growth and diversification of food demand
- Taking **protective measures** against imports of competitive food products

5. To move towards food sovereignty in the Sahel and West Africa (continuation and end)

- **Support for family farming** that preserves traditional food products, while contributing to a healthy and balanced diet, the conservation of global agricultural biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources
- **Promotion of agroecology** which improves the resilience and sustainability of food systems and moves towards the realization of the right to food

Conclusion

- Since 1996, under the leadership of Via Campesina , food sovereignty has entered the public debate at the international and national level and presents itself as the expression of a strong demand for reappropriation of public choices in terms of agricultural and food policies, through public actors, socio-professional organizations and civil society.
- Over time, the notion of food sovereignty has gained interest among professional agricultural organizations and West African policy makers in the search for sustainable solutions to the issue of food and nutritional insecurity.
- Despite everything, it has not yet exhausted the fundamental question of access to food for all poor populations, urban and rural.
- For it to be operational, it still needs to be supported by strong political will.



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