PROFEL/PROFAV INITIATIVE - FOCUS ON TOOLS

Day 1 – Plenary 1 – 2.15 pm – “presentation of PROFEL survey analysis”
Day 2 – Plenary 3 - 9.15 am - « lessons learnt from PROFEL, newsletter »

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I. INTRODUCTION
First of all, let me deeply thank the organizers of this workshop, and especially FAO and GLOBALHORT, who gave me the opportunity to represent the CIRAD here and to speak in two sessions during this week.

I used to work jointly with FAO, WHO and GLOBALHORT on their initiative for promoting fruit and vegetables for health. I was especially involved in the follow ups of the French-speaking countries of Africa workshop (PROFEL), which was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in 2007.

Because it is important to have an operational and concrete view, I would like, during this PROFAV workshop, to underline two important tools which have been or could be mobilized at different steps of the PROFEL/PROFAV initiative.

1. The first is the survey, that you received with your invitation and that will be the subject of the two following presentations (Remi Kahane’s one and mine)

2. The second is a newsletter that we implemented after the PROFEL workshop.

Unfortunately, at this time, in a limited edition, this newsletter will be the subject of a second presentation, tomorrow morning.

II. COMMON APPROACH OF THE TOOLS

The tools are logically following the PROFAV/PROFEL approach, in accordance with its main lines. In other words, both survey and newsletter are addressing to actors of different sectors: the aim is to put them together and to promote a transdisciplinary and an integrated approach, along the value chain based on added values of Fruit and Vegetables. Indeed, their possible added-values could be considered at different levels, with regard to:

- Nutrition and Health: this added-value was mentioned in lots of presentations considering nutrients, minerals, fibers. F&V have a role to play in the diversified and healthy diet.
- Environment: diversified horticultural crops systems; agro-ecological practices; agroforestry; conservation agriculture. Some of us will see, during the field trip, that the A to Z company is dealing with environmental issues through sustainable alternatives to chemicals for horticulture crops
- Social and economy dimensions: behavior of producers and consumers; role of women; incomes; diet innovations. Agriculture development empowering women, 80% of food is produced by women in Africa (Jane Badham’s presentation from South Africa).

The second common point of the tools is the jointly goal of scaling up, step by step, from local, to national, regional, international levels. Indeed, to promote information exchanges through local structures, regional, national and international meetings and local and regional networks that will strengthen the capacity of community groups to organize themselves.

III. WHEN MOBILIZING THE TOOLS?

The survey takes place before the workshop, for bringing people from the different sectors together and to establish a kind of horticultural state of the art.

During the workshop, several national recommendations could be put into words (bound to participants, organizers, policy makers, development partners).

So, after the workshop, for keeping the link, encourage the dynamics there could be important horticultural meetings, aimed at taking stock of the situations in the countries (i.e. All Africa horticulture congress - 1rst: "grown under the sun", Nairobi, Kenya – Aug/Sept 2009/2nd: South Africa, Jan. 2012). In addition, there could be a more regular virtual meeting point, through a newsletter (Cf. presentation on the “Bulletin PROFEL” – Tuesday, 27th, Plenary 3). To finish, and all these elements could provide case studies, identify lessons learnt,
increase the mutual knowledge, promote exchanges, etc... and enhance the initial state of the art of the surveys and the data.

IV. THE PROFEL SURVEY

The survey is a way of co-learning, (i) to defend a knowledge-based approach (baseline), in order to have the necessary background for planning and formulating future interventions, (ii) to promote a bottom-up collaboration (demand driven), and (iii) to support the follow-ups considering the specificities of each country (efficiency).

1) Principal characteristics

The questionnaire was divided into four parts: Identification of participants; consumption; production and national programme and targeted groups

It was filled by two or three representatives per country from the agriculture, health and education sectors.

2) Identification

The survey was sent to eighteen French-speaking countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and answers were received from fifteen countries: Benin, Burundi, Cameroun, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, RCA, RDC, Rwanda, Tchad, Togo.

3) Consumption

The results of the survey show that the consumption of F&V is linked to

- Seasons (seasonal fluctuations of production);
- Geographical and social localisation;

For example, there is a regular consumption of vegetables all year round. The consumption of fruit is opportune and random in rural areas and more regular in urban areas.

The constraints of the shortage risk during the lean season and the problem of accessibility because (localization, roads) were mentioned.

- Use and cooking modes;

VEGETABLES are mainly cooked and eaten during the meals...But they are more considered as garnish or as ingredient of sauces than as principal meal. They are rarely processed (only sometimes dried). FRUIT are mainly uncooked, unprocessed, except in sauces. They could be consumed as garnish, desert or as snack (especially in rural areas).

4) Production

There is a lack of results and statistics because of irregular or incomplete data at national level. But the results underline the issue of post-harvested losses that can raise from 15 to 75% especially on perishable vegetables productions, because of pests and diseases, lack of storage, packaging, transport structures and lack of value chain organization and communication.

In response to the need of optimization of quality and marketing, the important role of processing was emphasized. Processing presents advantages with regard to delay of preservation, availability, diversification of marketing products (new markets, added-value), price control of seasonal products (<= volatility), transport (place, ...). But main constraints remain such as lack of technical support and the required high level of quality and standards.

5) National programme

All the countries have a national programme dealing with diet, nutrition and health... But F&V are not consistently included. The most important which have been identified priorities are:

- Development of the food offer in terms of quantity, quality, availability and diversity
- Better nutrition of young children
- Balance of deficiency of micronutrients

And the most quoted targeted groups are young children and school and mother and pregnant women

CONCLUSION ON THE SURVEY

The good rate of answer has been underlined but the lack of data too. As mentioned by Godfrey Xuereb from WHO, it is a recurrent issue which requires to extrapolate, estimate... But extrapolations could be far from the reality. At this stage, it is difficult to go further, deeper in the analyze. Some points need to be clarified such as the structure of the survey, the possible additional questions (availability, urban vs. rural areas...)

Another questionnaire was built for the English-speaking countries of Sub-Saharan African countries. You received it with the invitation for the PROFAV workshop and Rémi Kahane will present you the first results.
V. THE BULLETIN PROFEL

1) Elements of context
On Monday, we talked about surveys, which take place before the workshop, for bringing people from the different sectors together and to establish a national horticultural state of the art.
This week constitutes the workshop step, as regional event to promote and support implementation of fruit and vegetable programmes at national level, by:
- mapping existing policies, and current programme and activities for the promotion of fruit and vegetables in each country;
- documenting the production and the consumption of fruit and vegetables and their current position in the market;
- assisting in developing specific programmes and actions for each country, in order to implement the FAO framework for promoting fruits and vegetables at national level; and
- boosting and strengthening the joint work amongst health, education and agriculture sectors for promoting fruits and vegetable production and consumption.

During the PROFEL workshop, to reach the challenge of the promotion of fruit and vegetables, recommendations were put into words:

For the participants:
☞ To transmit the workshop results in their respective country and at different level
☞ To keep the links active
☞ To exchange each other on steps and progress

For the organizers:
☞ To create a coordination and communication network on the PROFEL/PROFAV initiative
☞ To transfer the results conclusions and bullet points, including to countries who could not participate
☞ To support national and regional initiatives

So, after the workshop, for keeping the links and encourage the dynamics, two kinds of way have been mobilized: the horticultural meetings and a newsletter.

2) The horticultural meetings
First of all, the horticultural events, as time to visu exchanges at regional or international scales, could be a way to take stock of the situations in the concerned countries, to identify constraints and leverage, to make decisions and to compare experiences and case studies.
- FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SUMMIT IN PARIS, MAY 2008
- ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF AGRICULTURE IN PARIS, FEBRUARY 2009
During this event, the CIRAD’S thematic was “FRUIT AND VEGETABLES”. So, we co-organize an international conference entitled « Fruit and vegetables, nutrition and health for the South » and some PROFEL’s participants were invited for sharing their experiences:
  • Mme Mireille Rahainga Vololona, MINAGRI, Madagascar - From field to table
  • M. Christophe Cocou Tossou, INRAB, Benin - Intra & inter-sectorial collaborations for promoting F&V
- 1ST ALL AFRICA HORTICULTURE CONGRESS IN NAIROBI, KENYA – AUG/SEPT 2009
During the congress, we organized a specific session on PROFEL/PROFAV initiative:
  • To share recent experience and progress of other country initiatives
    - Cameroon’s National Platform for the Promotion of Fruit and Vegetables - Mr. Bellamanga
    - Ad hoc contributions on progress of other country: e.g. Nigeria, Benin, Madagascar, DR Congo, Burundi, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, etc.
  • To discuss jointly with the representatives of English-speaking countries of the workshop strategy and plan of the PROFEL workshop (Where? When? Who?)

CONCLUSION ON HORTICULTURAL MEETINGS
These horticultural meetings are great and effective chance to jointly go on… But not all the initial participants of the workshop could have the opportunity to take part of these horticultural meetings… So these full of exchanges events do not frequently occurred and have not to be considered as the only way to keep the link.
3) Newsletters – example of the Bulletin PROFEL

A newsletter, as a more regular virtual meeting point, is an essential counterpart of horticultural meetings for sharing and exchanging, step by step and for building more sustainable links (king of guiding thread / fil rouge). As an example, I was in charge of the « bulletin PROFEL » (launched in 2009 – five editions) in collaboration with Dr. Jacky Ganry, during my previous employment, focused on horticulture.

The bulletin used to be sent by email monthly or every two months, to approximately 500 persons thanks to a real snowball effect. All the participants of the PROFEL workshop and the persons who have not had the possibility to participate were included in the mailing list. Moreover, the bulletin was built as a participative newsletter, on the basis of the contributions or ideas sent by

It was divided into five parts:
- The editorial
- Several figures linked to fruit and vegetables
- A focus on several fruit and vegetables
- A two-pages special feature on a topic (could be a point on the situation of a participant countries)
- The planed horticultural meetings

### CONCLUSION ON THE BULLETIN PROFEL

A newsletter is a simple and efficient way of exchanges (only 5 or 6 pages, clear messages). The bulletin PROFEL as a participative newsletter, deals with countries’ concerns: it is easy to appropriate.

The bulletin PROFEL (and other communication supports such as reports, bullet points) were used by the participants at national level, to convince and inform.

A newsletter provides elements of answer to the recommendations of the PROFEL workshop

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TARGETED GROUPS</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
<th>NEWSLETTER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIPANTS</td>
<td>To transmit the workshop results</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To keep the links active</td>
<td>+++</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To exchange each other on steps and progress</td>
<td>+++</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORGANIZERS</td>
<td>To create a coordination and communication network on the PROFEL/PROFAV initiative</td>
<td>++ (only one of the tools)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To transfer the results conclusions and bullet points</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To support national and regional initiatives</td>
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But at this time, the BULLETIN is on hiatus (need of a person contact, an intermediary). Maintaining and enhancing the links is a full time job, a time consuming activity.

The strong need and demand of platforms and structures (dedicated web site...) remains: at this time, a GMAIL account was created in order to make all documents available, at the participants’ disposal; the bulletins are available on GLOBALHORT website and the information was spread by HORTIVAR-news tool « good morning HORTIVAR ».

The follow-up require patience: organization takes time. I received and email last week from Dr. Lassinia Fundio, head of vegetable and proteagineous crops research programme (CNRA) and Dr. Patricia N’goran, coordinator of the nutrition national programme of Côte d’Ivoire. They organize a national day for the promotion of fruit and vegetables last month (oct. 2011). This event was postponed several times because of the difficult socio-political situation of the country. Now, things seem to turn out right... and they ask for support.

So, it is necessary, for the organizer, to think about a long-term action plan, including follow-up and animation strategy (through GLOBALHORT, for example).