In order to explore the pertinence of agricultural innovation platforms (IPs) as regards sustainable intensification (SI) processes in West-African savannah, the ASAP research platform organized a seminar in Bobo-Dioulasso in 2013. The objectives were to take stock of 3 systems research results on innovation processes that contribute to SI, and lessons from the experiments of IPs set up in different countries (Burkina-Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal). Then we explored the possible functions of IPs in SI processes and we examined implications for researchers to achieve the high expectations that are being laid at their door.

Two main types of IPs are being promoted by governments and developers in West-Africa:

1. **Value chains approach-based IPs**
   - General original aims: Apply predefined principles to contribute to the agricultural sectors’ structuration through networking of producers’ organisations and up-down value chains actors.
   - Key lessons: Reduce mismatches between farmers’ and local stakeholders’ expectations on one hand and predefined R&D project objectives and researchers’ visions on the other hand.

2. **Research-oriented IPs**
   - General original aims: Develop specific skills (integrative, subversive and reflexive skills), postures and tools in order to make more efficient their contribution to learning and change processes in multi-stakeholders platforms.
   - Key lessons: Improve situation before and planning and implementing IPs three questions should be answered:
     - What is the context of change: why changes must take place and who are the leaders?
     - What should be changed?
     - How to drive change processes?

### Priorities areas for future training and research

If they are to play their part to the full, researchers have to face several challenges:

**Ecological intensification and innovations**
- Evaluation of the environmental performances of innovative farming systems at several scales.
  - Watch over niche innovations in order to analyze them and support them.

**Extension and innovation systems**
- Identify convergence and complementarities between the different extension and innovation systems that support sustainable intensification.

**The functioning of innovation platforms**
- Develop tools to support socio-cognitive processes within innovation platforms.

### Research organization and objectives
- Develop more work with and for “change leaders”:
  - Clarify their underlying assumptions, individual values and ideology, all of which influence knowledge production and eventually innovation.
  - Be much more involved in the management of the knowledge production and exchanges processes within IPs.

### Capacity building issues
- Develop specific skills (integrative, subversive and reflexive skills), postures and tools in order to make more efficient their contribution to learning and change processes in multi-stakeholders platforms.

### Three priority areas for future research have been identified by ASAP platform:

1. **Ecological intensification and innovations**
2. **Extension and innovation systems**
3. **The functioning of innovation platforms**