

# Organic agriculture and food security in Cameroon

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The objective of this work is to evaluate the relationship between organic farming and food security in Cameroon. To achieve this, our study focused on field surveys through semi structured interviews in the Central and Littoral regions of Cameroon, a bibliographical review of gray and scientific literature, construction of the analysis grids; Definition of the typologies of organic agriculture and their potential consequences on food security based on a prototype developed in Benin as part of the ABASS project (Diversity of biological agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa and contribution to food security); Organization of two reflection workshops in the Central and Littoral regions of Cameroon, as these are the areas where most governmental and non governmental institutions and enterprises are located. These workshops were the occasion to mobilize a typology of actors because of their important contribution to the debates in progress on the models of agricultural development and that of organic farming in order to define organic farming in the context of Cameroon, To share knowledge bases on the topic among participants and to characterize its relationships or interactions with food security. These actors were:

- the current national research institutions (institutes and universities) or international organizations favoring emergence<sup>3</sup> organic farming;
- State structures, non-governmental organizations, extension structures capable of putting in place regulatory mechanisms for organic farming;
- contractors either in the agri-supply sector for the AB (bio-fertilizers, seeds, biological control agent...), or that of the production (farmer) and the agro-food processing of the products. At the end of this work, we arrive on the one hand to the result of the existence of three types of organic farming in Cameroon: “certified”, “natural”, “hybrid”. On the other hand, to evaluate the potential consequences of these biological agricultures on each dimension of food security. This evaluation has shown that each typology has more or less strong intensities with food security but with a better balance with “natural” organic farming. These results lead to proposals concerning the development of the organic farming sector in Cameroon, considered as a niche of innovation through the transition model developed by Geels. This model allowed us to highlight the different trajectories that it can take. In this way, we propose in a global way to introduce an organic agricultural law which would entail, among other things, the creation of jobs, the setting of government objectives and necessary actions as well as the financial support to achieve them, Destination of the international organic markets (niche market of innovation) source of obtaining foreign exchange for Cameroon, to support interprofessional and organizations to encourage the transformation and finally the setting up of a network with the IFOAM which will participate Probably with the Network of Organic Research in Africa (NOARA) to organize a Regional Conference on Organic Agriculture in Cameroon in 2018, etc.

The widespread innovation that will make organic farming attractive to producers will bring economic benefits and will trigger a new wave of reconversions requiring more funding for research and extension.

A reflection for future research seems to be emerging around the question of assessing the impact of these organic agricultural models on food security in Cameroon through field surveys highlighting Potential indicators (dietary diversity score and index of wealth, index of hunger) due to their ease of use. Indeed, this impact calls for reflection on the evolution of certified organic farming, “natural” organic farming and “hybrid” organic farming that deserves to be supervised.

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3. A window of opportunity to capture contracts, a place of experimentation on new technical fronts, a place of experimentation of new inputs produced locally, etc.