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Family farming

Participation of family farmers in rural development in Latin America

Research conducted by UMR ART-Dev under the 'Public policy and inequality in Latin America' partnership research platform revealed that the participation of family farms and their organizations in rural development policy negotiations or implementation is linked to a combination of four factors:

- The emergence of national family farmer or peasant organizations in democratic transition settings; which, in the 1990s and especially the 2000s, led to the drawing up of targeted policies on family farming.
- The more or less marked withdrawal, depending on the country, of the State from technical assistance, training, marketing, sectoral regulation, credit, etc.
- Policy decentralization and/or territorialization.
- Finally, the adoption of a crosscutting approach to policies (concerning the environment, health, etc.).



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In Brazil, a focus country, this participation is combined with production-oriented support, but with few allocated resources.

Assessments of federal rural territorial support policies launched in 2004 showed that this participation opened windows of opportunity for family farming representatives regarding training and inclusion in public policies. However, a closer look revealed that this mainly benefited local leaders and traditional farming community representatives.

Once they were 'transactional leaders', they became professionalized in negotiating rural development projects with technicians, while also being instrumental in overseeing policy implementation. Farmers remain dependent on the expert technical and agricultural system which maintains control over projects. Territorialization is hampered by the federal administrative and financial structure and procedures, and the crosscutting approach is thwarted by corporatism of the sectoral ministries (Brazil, Uruguay).

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▲ *Participation in action...*

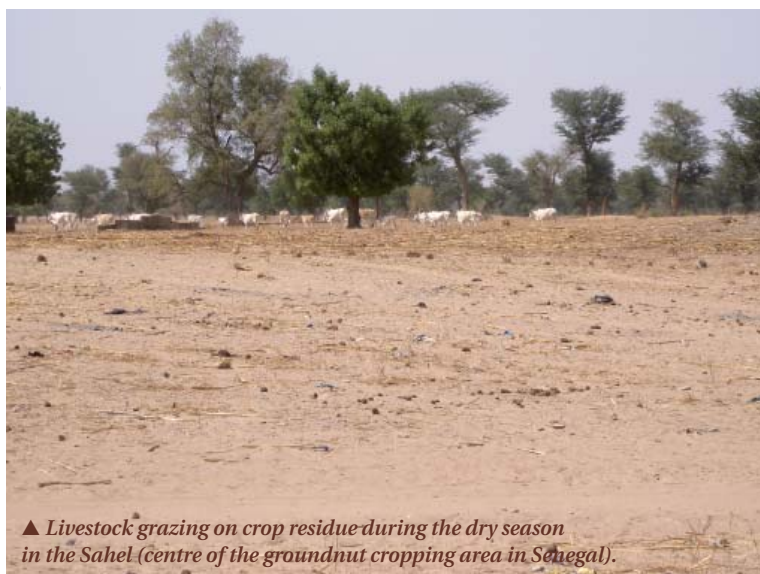
Vulnerability of family farming in West Africa to variability and climate change

The aim of the 'Environmental and Social Changes in Africa: Past, Present and Future' project (ANR-ESCAPE, 2011-2015) is to characterize the vulnerability of family farming in West Africa to variability and climate change and to the economic context, while proposing adaptation options for the future. In this project, which involves climatologists, sociologists and micro- and macro-economists, UPR AIDA agronomists contribute to bioeconomic farm modelling in order to determine the extent of farmers' technical flexibility according to their biophysical and economic environment.

The model will help assess the impact of climate change scenarios on farming families' income, food security, farm production and their main environmental impacts. These climate change scenarios will be matched against economic change scenarios: variations in the price ratio between products and inputs and their interannual variability, the development or not of credit and insurance against climatic hazards. The impacts of farmers gaining access to climate information and meteorological information will also be investigated. The bioeconomic model and simulations will also be compared to farmers' viewpoints so as to identify potential adaptation strategies not taken into account in the modelling process.

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For further information: www.locean-ipsl.upmc.fr/~ESCAPE



▲ *Livestock grazing on crop residue during the dry season in the Sahel (centre of the groundnut cropping area in Senegal).*

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