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Reviving agricultural advisory and extension services in sub-Saharan Africa: for new policies in line with the realities in the field

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SUMMARY

The Inter-réseaux Développement rural – IRAM – Ambre conseil/CERFRANCE – CIRAD group was mobilised by the French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement, or "AFD") in order to spark discussion on agricultural advisory services. The objective is to provide the AFD with elements for strategic reflection and encourage discussions with partner countries and in international forums on agricultural advisory services. It was against this backdrop that IRAM and CIRAD were asked to produce this document. It is the culmination of several expert assessments of agricultural advisory services in Morocco, Tunisia, Cameroon, Niger and Ivory Coast. A number of stakeholders also contributed case studies and helped proofread this report: AFD, AFDI (Agriculteurs Français et Développement International), Ambre conseil/CERFRANCE, APROSSA (Association pour la Promotion de la Sécurité et de la Souveraineté Alimentaires au Burkina), AVSF (Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières), CIRAD (Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement), CORADE, FERT, Inter-réseaux, IRAM (Institut de Recherche et d'Applications des Méthodes de développement). Those case studies are available on Inter-réseaux's website (www.inter-reseaux.org).

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Contents

Preamble

This report was produced by a working group led by Inter-réseaux Développement Rural and comprising IRAM, CIRAD and Ambre Conseil/CERFRANCE. It is the culmination of several joint expert assessments by those three institutions on agricultural advisory services in Morocco[1], Tunisia, Cameroon, Niger and Ivory Coast, among other countries.

A number of stakeholders involved in agricultural advisory services also contributed to this report with case studies and proofreading: AFDI, FERT, AVSF, CORADE (Burkina Faso), Afrique Verte Burkina Faso.

The full report includes a main text of about forty pages with references to eleven case studies, which are presented in the appendices. Those case studies draw on the experiences of several stakeholders in the field who are involved in agricultural advisory services: Cap Malagasy and Réseau SOA in Madagascar; the ACEFA programme in Cameroon; centres for management and rural economy in Senegal; FNGN, FEPAB, CAGEF, UGCPA, UNPCB and CPF in Burkina Faso; FUPRO in Benin; CNOP-G and FPFD in Guinea, milk-collection centres in Kollo and Hamdallaye in Niger; private advisory-services entities in Peru and Ivory Coast; and AVSF in Togo. Two cross-disciplinary case studies are also presented on the contribution of farmers' organisations (FOs) to developing public policies for advisory services (AFDI) and on the emergence of new information and communication technology (NICT) in advisory schemes (CIRAD).

Figure 1: List of case studies[2]

Country	Promoted by	Case study
Sub-Saharan Africa	Agricultural profession	Role of FOs in advisory schemes
Niger	Agricultural profession / Private sector	Multi-actor advisory-scheme model, promoted by a local value chain with a focus on one key stakeholder: a peasant-farmer milk-collection centre offering multiple services
Ivory Coast	Private sector / Agricultural profession	Advisory schemes linked to cocoa certification in Ivory Coast
Burkina Faso	Agricultural profession	Peasant-farmer schemes offering advisory services for family farms (*conseil à l'exploitation familiale*) in Burkina Faso: evolution, features and challenges
Cameroon	State	Advisory-scheme model for overhauling extension services at country level: the ACEFA programme
Burkina Faso	Agricultural profession	Boosting sales for agricultural products: when producers get involved in agricultural advisory services via phone
Madagascar	Agricultural profession / Private sector	Agricultural advisory scheme in Madagascar: Cap Malagasy

[1] This report mainly addresses the revival of agricultural advisory services in sub-Saharan Africa, but several observations and proposals may apply to other regions and countries in the South. Likewise, analyses of public policies and situations relating to agricultural advisory services in Morocco, Tunisia and Peru may be useful for decision-makers in sub-Saharan Africa.

[2] These case studies are available in French at https://www.inter-reseaux.org/ressource/fiches-de-capitalisation-le-conseil-agricole/?lang=fr. English version will be available in 2022.

Senegal	Agricultural profession	Network of centres for management and rural economy in the Senegal River valley
Peru	Private sector	Towards the privatisation of agricultural advisory services: consequences for dairy producers in the Mantaro Valley
Burkina Faso	Private sector / Agricultural profession	How are information and communication technologies transforming advisory schemes? Survey of 16 agricultural advisory services in Burkina Faso
Togo	Agricultural profession	Note on field schools in northern Togo: Coaching to encourage joint development of peasant-farmer innovations

The following individuals helped write this report: Christophe Jacqmin and Vital Pelon (Inter-réseaux); Guy Faure, Patrick Dugué and Michel Havard (CIRAD); Jean-Christophe Claus and Alain Fournier (Ambre Conseil/CERFRANCE); Christophe Rigourd, Damien Halley des Fontaines and François Doligez (IRAM); Valérie Danto (AFD); Laure Hamdi and Anne Souarse (AFDI); and Anne Panel (FERT).

Christophe Rigourd (IRAM) and Patrick Dugué (CIRAD) coordinated the drafting of the report, and final editing was performed by Inter-réseaux. This project was funded by the French Development Agency (AFD).

Summary

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT, JUSTIFICATIONS AND PROPOSAL OF A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE RENEWAL OF AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

The current offer of agricultural advisory services is far from meeting the needs, in terms of quality and quantity, of producers and other stakeholders in the different value chains and territories of sub-Saharan Africa. Although the situations vary greatly from one country to another in sub-Saharan Africa and even within certain countries, it has been widely noted that the offer of services for certain groups such as women, livestock farmers and young people is even weaker. A few countries, however, have introduced special policies and programmes that focus on agricultural advisory services, but making them operational is highly partial and dependent on external funding. The lack of agricultural advisory services tailored to all the different situations and their different potentials (farms, territories and value chains, some of which are prosperous while other are not) is slowing the economic development of sub-Saharan countries: overall agricultural yields remain low, the number of poor people in rural areas is increasing, natural resources are being degraded or are becoming increasingly rare and malnutrition remains very high. The major investments in infrastructure and equipment that are being made to support agriculture are not enough to spur that development. Infrastructure/equipment and advisory services are both essential, but without effective agricultural advisory services those investments do not generate a satisfactory return, are not profitable and are often not sustainable.

Extension services – Advisory services – Assistance. Extension services and advisory services are both necessary, and recent theoretical and practical advances do not mean that extension services should be replaced by advisory services – the former is an integral part of the latter. Agricultural extension services (though often referred to as “training and visit”) still have their place and are still the most suitable and least expensive option when it comes to developing technology transfer (in a prescriptive model). Agricultural advisory services refer to all the methods that are used to help producers make decisions, and more specifically to help them solve problems (helping producers or groups of producers within the advisory-services scheme identify problems and come up with solutions). Lastly, the notion of assistance (*accompagnement*), which is frequently used by farmers’ organisations, refers more to supporting producer initiatives and mediation/facilitation with other actors in the agricultural sector (banks, microfinance institutions, shopkeepers, input suppliers, etc.) over the long term. Extension services, advisory services and assistance are all necessary and complementary.

The renewal of agricultural advisory services addresses three needs:

- **An economic need** to improve food and nutritional security (which remains a priority in many sub-Saharan countries), to improve return on investment in the agricultural sector and ensure the sustainability of those investments over the long term, to reduce poverty, and to boost the income of people in rural areas and family farms;
- **A social need** to provide decent jobs, to reduce migration, to achieve better distribution of revenue along value chains and within territories, and to consider the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly women and young people, as well as other marginalised groups such as livestock farmers and herdsmen;

- **An environmental and health need** to overcome the challenges of climate change, to measure and reduce the negative effects on public health and on the environment following the use of chemical inputs, and to promote the transition to agroecology.

In practice, it is very difficult for a territory, value chain or farmers' organisation (FO) to work towards all three of those objectives simultaneously. It can sometimes be challenging in agriculture to address economic and social objectives simultaneously, such as in the case of social dumping. It is also difficult to address economic and environmental/health objectives when the priority of certain actors is to ensure above all else that their value chain remains competitive, even if it is to the detriment of the healthy management of environmental resources and to the detriment of the health of humans and ecosystems. Governments and players in the agricultural sector therefore play an important role in working to strike the right balance between economic, social and environmental development.

The primary focus is to renew sustainable agricultural advisory services for family farms. Although agricultural advisory services are intended for many different types of producers, the needs of family farms are most important because there are so many of them and because of their socioeconomic importance. Some examples in West Africa also show that peasant-farming families from the same territory receive advice from organisations that have different visions of rural development and different priorities when it comes to economic, social and environmental issues. Therefore, planning for advisory services must take into account the desire of FOs representing family farms and the actors who support them. Family farms should be targeted from a desire to make them real actors, not just recipients of the advisory-services schemes. Their diversity should also be taken into account.

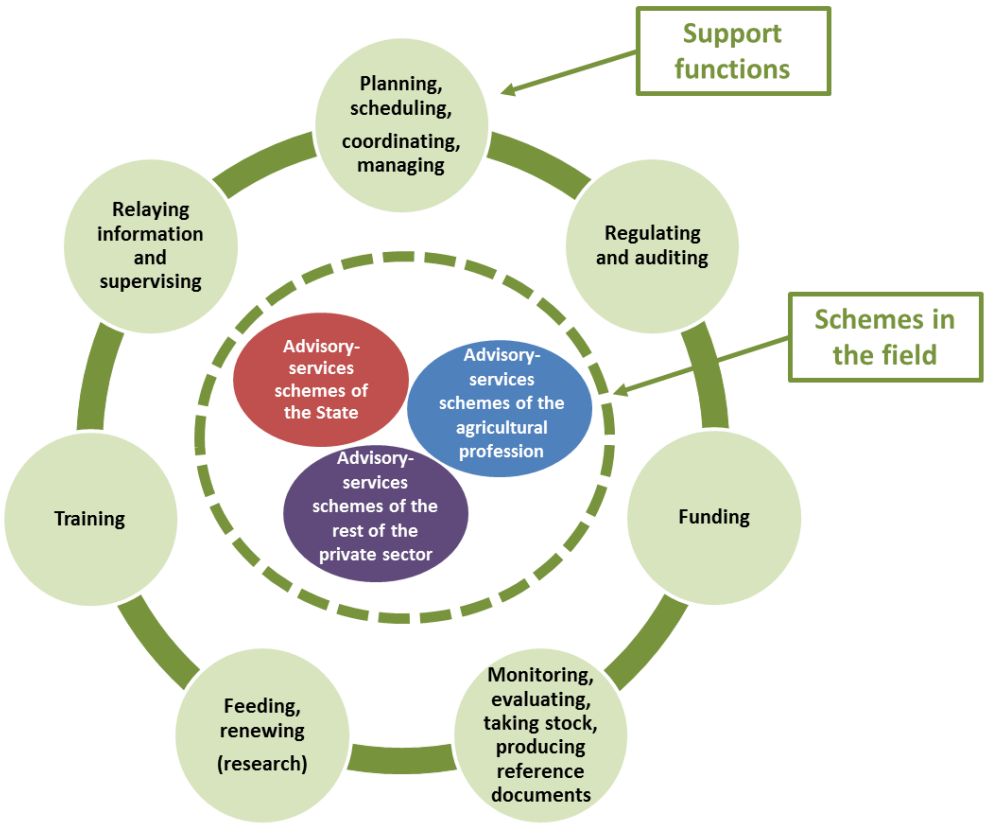
To renew agricultural advisory services, it is essential to **avoid falling into traps such as focusing on a single dogma or "one-size-fits-all" method.** A better approach would be to adapt public policies for agricultural advisory services to the institutional, economic and agricultural context of each country and region. For instance, the farmer field schools (FFS) promoted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the advisory services for family farms (*conseil à l'exploitation familale*) promoted by the French Development Agency (AFD) are interesting methods, but they cannot be the only solutions available.

In addition to choosing what tools to use and methods to follow, **the entire framework for analysing and designing agricultural advisory services needs to be revamped. The notion or concept of an "integrated system for agricultural advisory services", or ISAAS** (*système intégré de conseil agricole*), applicable at different levels (country, region) makes it possible to design (i) national policies for advisory services that are consistent with the diverse realities in the field and (ii) advisory services in the field that are functional, coordinated and more sustainable. **An ISAAS** (see Diagram 1) includes all **advisory-services providers in the field** managed and operated by actors from the public sector, the private sector and the agricultural profession, plus **support functions**: overall governance of the ISAAS, coordination of advisory-services providers, development of financial engineering and management of funds reserved for advisory services, regulating and auditing services providers, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and networking, renewing the ISAAS (renewing the messages, approaches, tools) through research on the topic, training agents, relaying information. Those support functions are not necessarily performed by the

State; they can be shared and performed with stakeholders outside the public sector, depending on their skills and comparative advantages.

An ISAAS is not a single institutional structure[3], but a network of institutions and stakeholders working together to improve the capacities of producers and their professional organisations and to improve agricultural production and the management of resources in support of sustainable development. The interest of this approach is to identify and make use of a wide array of services providers while also improving them, instead of trying to improve a single model or working towards the creation of new schemes that have no real added value and that may be less effective. But there's also the challenge of creating synergies between all the different initiatives and actors. An ISAAS is also an important component **of a system of innovations** allowing for and facilitating desired and/or necessary technical and organisational changes in the agricultural sector. A system of innovations is based on the idea that changes are effective and sustainable only if a group of actors (beyond the trio of "research - advisory services - producers") interact to jointly design and promote them.

Integrated system for agricultural advisory services (ISAAS)



Source: C. Rigourd, P. Dugué , B. Djariri, I. Maman, P. Derache

[3] Not to be confused with public or semi-public advisory agencies, which exist in some countries and which are an advisory-services operator in the field like any other (such as operators from the private sector or from peasant-farmer organisations or interprofessional bodies). Agencies rarely organise and manage support functions.

KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE RENEWAL OF AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

By analysing eight case studies about advisory-services schemes in the field and six public policies, we can identify and define the most important issues with regard to renewing agricultural advisory services (see http://www.inter-reseaux.org/vie-du-reseau/cycles-thematiques/cycle-sur-le-conseil-agricole/article/fiches-de-capitalisation-le?lang=fr).

DEVELOPING SHARED GOVERNANCE BETWEEN THE STATE, THE AGRICULTURAL PROFESSION AND UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM FIRMS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The question of governance is essential. First of all because hidden behind the governance of agricultural advisory services is the broader issue of the **governance of agricultural policies as well as** the joint creation of public policies and, potentially, the joint management of those policies. It is therefore the vision of agriculture and of agriculture's place in society that is at stake, and the nature of agricultural advisory services is closely linked to that vision. Aside from the joint creation of public policies, it is vital to have a specific strategy for agricultural advisory services (not vague ideas diluted in a global strategy for agricultural policy). Next comes the challenge of defining the strategy. In sub-Saharan Africa, the degree to which the agricultural profession (i.e. FOs) is involved in defining policies for advisory services and in jointly managing advisory-services schemes and ISAAS differs greatly from country to country, with some cases of unsuccessful attempts at collaboration and no joint management, some cases of somewhat successful collaboration and joint management, and some cases of very successful collaboration and joint management. The contribution of FOs to advisory services varies greatly depending on the situation: recipients of advisory services, promoter of an advisory-services scheme, contributor to support functions (research-action, training of advisors, etc.).

Even though there are different approaches to agricultural advisory services (advice driven by the market and therefore by downstream actors, advice driven by social priorities and therefore by the State, advice driven by demand and therefore by producers), **the fact that producers participate in the governance of the service is a sign of the service's meaningfulness.** Experience shows that the choice of approach and objectives when it comes to advisory services is closely linked to the type of operator providing the service.

The role of producers in agricultural advisory services therefore needs to be understood at several different levels: defining their expectations and needs, creating tools and approaches that are best suited to their context and type, and mobilising peasant-farmer relays or internal instructors in the advisory-services schemes in the field to expand the reach of the services. It may even involve jointly coordinating or jointly managing the schemes in the field and the (national) ISAAS. In any case, FOs are still key partners for public authorities when it comes to developing advisory services. This is because of their legitimacy/credibility, their appropriateness for the role (justified by a sound understanding of producers' needs), their longevity (which makes it possible to establish agricultural advisory services in the field over the long term) as well as their efficiency and their human and financial responsibility. But certain factors may be obstacles to their participation at different levels: the large number of high-quality people needed to get involved, social and cultural obstacles, weak financial independence (highly dependent on external funding).

After securing and improving the involvement of producers in the governance of advisory services, that governance will also need to be expanded to the private sector[4] in order to better take into account some of the economic concerns of the actors in the different value chains, to ensure better coordination between advisory services, value chains and economic development, and to ensure that the advisory-services schemes will continue to be provided over the long term through diversified participation in funding those schemes.

MOBILISING A SUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF SUSTAINABLE AND VIRTUOUS FUNDING

One thing is for sure: advisory services are expensive. Funding must be secured for the services providers in the field and support functions. Although the cost-benefit ratio for agricultural advisory services is often difficult to assess (not much data is available, and it is rarely up to date), it seems clear that a lack of agricultural advisory services could cost even more over the medium and long term in economic, social and environmental terms, and in terms of public health. If the agricultural advisory services are effective, then wealth will be created, some of which may be reinvested directly in advisory services. Unfortunately, the skills needed to ensure that return on investment and develop that financial engineering are still lacking. More research and work should be performed in this area.

In sub-Saharan Africa, there are **several business models** for advisory services: services that are free for the recipients, services that are partially subsidised, and services that are paid for entirely by the recipients. **A large majority of services are offered for free**, and there is high dependence on international funding. In the case of agricultural advisory services provided through projects that depend on external funding, most of them disappear once the external funding ends, as they are not economically viable over the long term. Most of the time, except in a few rare cases, **funding for advisory services is not sufficient, sustainable, or virtuous.** Those three conditions must be met in order for a system to last.

There are, however, interesting cases where producers and/or value chains already contribute significantly to covering the costs of advisory services, allowing the service providers to partially fund themselves. This has been observed in a variety of contexts.

Several options should be explored in order to overcome challenges when it comes to funding. One way is **to reduce the cost of advisory services** without offering a “low-cost” service. The following are all good ways to cut costs for advisory services: supporting the most efficient private and FO schemes, supporting existing schemes rather than creating new ones, encouraging the use of peasant farmers as instructors and relays, and developing the use of information and communication technologies. **Getting more funding from the public sector** is also crucial, particularly through restricted funds. Efficiently managing those restricted funds is also important given the lack of transparency and weak management capacities within most of these types of financial experiments and, more generally, advisory-services schemes. **Better coordination between advisory services and value chains is also important**, either through sophisticated financial schemes organised by the State (restricted funds from parafiscal charges), or through commercial partnerships between different actors in the value chain. This will also require an **entrepreneurial transition for FOs** and revision of their technical and economic models. Lastly, it is also necessary to promote **virtuous funding**

[4] Producers are clearly also private actors. Here, we are referring more to the other actors (upstream and downstream firms in particular).

schemes with contributions from producers, contractual relationships, costs based on quality, funding mechanisms involving microfinance institutions and the private sector, etc.

Lastly, public-private partnerships may allow for the development of advisory-services schemes based on the resources of private companies and the public sector (funding, skills). The private sector could therefore diversify its target beneficiaries and advisory-services activities in order to go beyond the sole economic objective of selling more inputs or buying more production. Issues such as production quality (labels, health guarantees, etc.), the preservation of natural resources and the inclusion of marginalised communities could therefore be integrated into these private advisory-services schemes supported and supervised by the public sector.

BUILDING THE CAPACITIES OF ACTORS AT ALL LEVELS

The effectiveness of an advisory-services scheme is largely dependent on the skills (knowledge, savoir faire, soft skills) of the people offering the services (ability to offer advice, coordinate, train, and design schemes and approaches) and the people receiving the services (producers). So the revival of agricultural advisory services and the renewal of approaches **must take into account the skills of advisors and their superiors, as well as the skills of producers and their organisations**. Improving the capacities of the different actors is therefore essential to reviving agricultural advisory services. The idea is not to offer occasional training sessions every now and then: one of the objectives is to create a system where assistance is provided over the long term.

In sub-Saharan Africa, a major hurdle to advisory services is that **many producers lack basic literacy skills**, especially women. But that issue is often neglected in advisory-services policies under the pretext that it is something for other sector-focused policies and other ministries to address. But supporting functional literacy should be the cornerstone of a revival of agricultural advisory services, as most people in rural areas are still illiterate. It is also necessary to offer future producers high-quality initial training, so they can have better interaction with the agricultural advisory services that are offered to them later.

Capacity-building can be broken down differently depending on the actors within the different advisory-services schemes: designers, decision-makers and managers of advisory-services schemes; salaried advisors, trainers and extension workers; indigenous instructors (who often receive some compensation) and peasant-farmer relays (mostly volunteers). We must also take into consideration those individuals who offer advisory services as a secondary activity. They do so in addition to their main activity, and actually significantly influence the practices of producers: input sellers, veterinarians, agribusiness professionals, etc. Capacity-building is necessary for all of those actors. Difficulties in the field are often not just linked to advisors and their expertise, but rather **to shortcomings in or a lack of management** on their part. Also, advisory services require the advisor to assume **a particular position**, which is not the same as that of an extension worker. An ISAAS should therefore mobilise different actors with different skills (knowledge, savoir faire, soft skills).

Capacity-building can also be broken down into **different approaches**: basic training (schools and universities) of agents, professional training/continuing education/recycling of agents, monitoring of agents in the field and dialogue between actors.

Lastly, certain skills are still not sufficiently covered and need to be developed: expertise in the engineering of advisory services, development of value chains[5], managerial advice, inclusive approaches, planning, etc. Discussion on "the ability to anticipate" is fundamentally lacking right now in the support provided to FOs. These skills can help those organisations improve their ability to anticipate, and they should be an integral part of the training of those actors.

A lot of progress has been made in this regard thanks to experiments developed through projects or internal dynamics, but that progress is not widely known or shared. The first step to addressing this issue may be to pool together all the progress achieved so far.

RENEWING AND STRENGTHENING ADVISORY-SERVICES SCHEMES IN THE FIELD

Policy decision-makers **must often consider the following two things** before all else:

- Producers and their organisations have **a wide range of needs**, which must be identified and recognised: functional literacy, technical advice, managerial advice, organisational advice, joint-innovation advice, legal advice, accounting, etc. For each type of advisory service, there may be a need for either basic advice (extension services) or advanced/expert advice. So it is important to identify the right starting point and **path to follow** for each type of producer and farmers' organisation. Not everyone will have the same priorities. It all depends on the type of farm, the value chain and how peasant farming is structured in a particular area.
- **There are many different existing** (and potentially valuable) **advisory-services schemes** in the field, which must be identified and recognised: State schemes (technical ministries, public agencies, etc.), agricultural-profession schemes (FOs, chambers of agriculture, service centres), private schemes where advisory services are at the heart of their mission (accounting firms, engineering offices, NGOs, etc.) or in addition to their main business activity (input shops, agribusiness, veterinarians, etc.). All of those schemes are therefore carried out by a wide range of actors who have different comparative advantages. But none of the advisory-services schemes is neutral – it all depends on who is promoting it, funding it or managing it.

This requires conducting assessments in the field to identify the advisory services that are currently offered, and any others that might be needed. We can then, within an ISAAS, address the various needs of the producers through different advisory-services schemes by making the best use possible of the comparative advantages of each of the existing schemes. All of those schemes must be relied on in order to provide an offer that is satisfactory in terms of quality and quantity.

There are several examples of efficient and functional internal schemes within FOs. Road maps for progress and effective innovations were able to be developed. Extension services not only promote technical skills but also foster relationships and a sense of community, as a member of each family can pass on key messages to other family members and/or other farms. The creation of long-term advisory-services schemes is often closely linked to sound coordination with other FO skills (marketing, supply of inputs, etc.).

[5] This appears to be better covered in East Africa than in West Africa.

For private schemes where advisory services are offered in addition to a company's business activity, the quality of the advice provided is one of the most important aspects. The funding mechanism is generally dependent on the private actor, which gives that actor an important role in defining the content and methods of the advisory services. Advisors are often giving advice (outdoor field demonstrations, classroom training sessions) rather than overseeing group exercises or apprenticeships with producers. Technical skills linked to the company's business activity (sale of inputs and equipment) are given priority over peasant-farmer savoir faire and soft skills. As a result, the impact on farm management as a whole is limited. There is also a risk that small farms (for whom advisory services may be difficult to access and less profitable) may be excluded by private actors in favour of bigger farms that are more in line with the expectations of those actors. It is essential that family farms become more professionalised, and FOs therefore need to position themselves as dialogue partners with the private sphere of the agricultural sector when it comes to defining private advisory-services schemes and making them operational.

Given the large number of producers requiring advisory services, the other methodological and organisational challenge is to **harmonise normative and prescriptive approaches with approaches where solutions are sought through joint collaboration.** When it comes to designing and supporting an advisory-services scheme, there are two conflicting requirements:

- **Quantity and standardisation:** reaching as many and as diverse a group of recipients as possible (for the sake of development and equality) through short-term projects. In this case, it is necessary to be able to train as many advisors as possible, as inexpensively as possible, over short training cycles. This approach encourages simplification and standardisation. As a result, the skills of the different actors do not progress much, and quickly diminish.
- **Quality and joint development:** developing advisory services that are adapted to a specific situation or territory and that aim to build capacities, while reaching a smaller number of producers. The goal of this approach, in addition to solving the problems producers face, is to help producers become more involved in discussions and engage in dialogue with researchers, FOs, NGOs, etc. on certain key points. In this case, it is necessary to be able to ensure continuity of the advisory services over the long term, make the schemes more autonomous, and therefore develop real "advisory-services" engineering and expertise in the different countries and regions, set up long-term training courses and methods that are rigorous in terms of quality and level of expertise. All of this helps make the scheme more effective, but also generally adds additional costs.

The role of research and its contribution to innovation[6]. Research entities are some of the more important actors among the support functions of an ISAAS. They have frequent interactions with advisory services by helping the actors involved in advisory services innovate (not only technical innovations, but organisational innovations too), by helping evaluate advisory-services schemes and, lastly, by developing research/measures that will allow service providers to improve their services. Research can also help drive change in technical systems. In the fast-changing world of production, **it is not enough for producers to simply adapt or improve the management of their farm. They also need to innovate**, sometimes

[6] The notion of NAAS is to be distinguished from the broader notion of innovation system.

quickly and radically. Innovation is often linked to research projects, but research needs to **interact better with agricultural-advisory-services schemes** in the field, and vice versa.

Information and communication technology (ICT) and agricultural advisory services. Integration of ICT into advisory-services schemes addresses four objectives: *(i)* relaying information to a vast audience via rural radio, website, call centre, text messaging, etc.; *(ii)* collecting and sharing information and advice among a small group (see the decision-making tool *RiceAdvice*), and monitoring advisors (by their supervisors, by researchers or by other resource people); *(iii)* collecting and sending information to the people managing advisory-services schemes and to a NAAS using tablets and smartphones for the purposes of monitoring, evaluating and auditing (e.g. monitoring traceability and compliance with organic and fair-trade specifications); *(iv)* exchanging knowledge and savoir-faire between producers through instant-messaging applications on smartphones and/or social media.

Of course, in addition to ICT, the more conventional information and communication techniques (flyers, posters, television, flannel boards, theatres, role-playing exercises, etc.) are still good options too.

ICT appears to present an opportunity to help scale up agricultural advisory services: possibility of reaching a large number of people instantly; possibility of creating a network of supervisors, advisors, internal instructors, peasant-farmer relays and peasant farmers; possibility of combining voice messages, text, photos, videos, etc. But so far, ICT presents more of an opportunity for advisors than producers, because advisors have easier access to internet[7]. They can make use of backstopping, training resources, e-learning, etc. ICT also appears to be particularly useful for targeting young people. Experiments using ICT in agricultural advisory services are on the rise in recent years with a wide range of providers. In several different sub-Saharan countries, FOs are providing advisory services using ICT (but they are not the ones who develop the digital tools). There has also been an emergence of new actors who are providing advisory services using digital tools, such as telephony operators and African start-ups, even though they are not so familiar with rural environments.

Several questions have been raised as to the real impact of ICT on the accessibility and interactivity of agricultural advisory services:

- Regarding ICT and better access to agricultural advisory services: The tools often require internet connection, but access to internet in the areas in question is among the lowest in the world (especially in rural areas). This is a major obstacle.
- Regarding interactivity, there are three possible scenarios: dissemination of standardised information and no interaction with the recipient; no interaction through the digital tools, but interaction with an advisor allows for tailoring of the standard information (which requires advisors who have time and specific skills); digital tools that allow for interaction (WhatsApp groups, digital platforms, call centre). In the third scenario, where interaction is possible, the tools are accessible only with good internet connection, and are therefore reserved for elite groups, as mentioned previously.

It is still too early to assess the effects and impact of ICT on the efficiency of advisory services and on producers' performance. A few limits, however, have already been identified. First, the

[7] Though the situation in East and Southern Africa (higher level of ICT use) differs from the situation in West Africa.

complexity of inter-organisational arrangements (beyond technical challenges): behind every advisory-services provider, there is a multitude of actors. The organisational complexity slows down the development of services. Second, funding the launch and management of agricultural services through ICT is still largely dependent on external aid, although some organisations are starting to diversify their activities to fund digital advisory services. At present, digital advisory services are not yet profitable. Lastly, farmers and their FOs are, on the whole, not involved in the development of tools or the production of content adapted to that media: which shows that there is a big need to build the capacities of FOs so that they can be more active in the different initiatives that are currently underway.

It is therefore essential to conduct evaluations and continue to support the designers of advisory services that integrate ICT, provided that's what the farmers and actors in the different sectors want, and provided they are involved in designing them.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING ACTIVITY AND ADVISORY-SERVICES SCHEMES, MEASURING THE IMPACTS

In African countries, entities such as ministries, FOs and interprofessional bodies have very few human and material resources dedicated to monitoring and evaluating advisory services. At best, each project develops its own monitoring and evaluation system over the short term – but that's not always the case. Monitoring and evaluation focuses mainly on the activity, results and direct effects of advisory services (management is often results-oriented). **The impacts, however, are rarely measured** for several reasons: by definition, it cannot be done while projects are being carried out; the areas affected by advisory services can be quite large (field, farm, family, territory, sector, etc.); it is difficult to identify the origin of the impacts (advisory services or other factors such as climate, market evolution).

And yet, advisory services generate a lot of quantitative information (input consumption, yield, revenue, rate of adoption of practices, etc.) and qualitative information (life trajectories, producers' perceptions, etc.). For instance, the mass of data from advisory services for family farms (*conseil à l'exploitation familiale*) is huge but underutilised, although it could be used to inexpensively modernise farm observatories.

Information generated through monitoring and evaluation (annual surveys, data produced by farmers, etc.) would provide a clearer picture of the fast changes and impacts, and would therefore give FOs, other private actors and decision-makers in the public sector a better understanding of the reality so that they could more efficiently create advisory-services policies and schemes. Providing an accurate evaluation of the impacts would also help convince decision-makers that advisory services are useful, and therefore generate more funding. But carrying out objective studies to measure quantitative and qualitative impacts requires investing in the development of robust methods that are tailored to the countries in question and that draw on local skills.

FOR AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES THAT INCLUDE WOMEN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND OTHER MARGINALISED GROUPS

The disengagement of young people from agriculture in rural areas raises questions in terms of food security, land use and the sustainability of certain sectors. There are many reasons for this disengagement: low autonomy of young families on patriarchal farms, lack of land and

start-up capital, difficult working conditions, etc. Still, certain programmes offering training and assistance to young people who want to settle in rural areas have shown the importance of assisting those young people rather than funding students who are far from rural communities looking for work or land. But those programmes are not necessarily linked to the most effective advisory-services schemes, and they are very expensive in terms of the initial investment needed to help the young people get set up, and the assistance provided over the long term.

Women often perform the lion's share of agricultural work (and processing/marketing work). Strengthening the role of women in the agricultural sector is not easy, given the power that married and older men have. Just like for young people in rural areas, it would be a good idea to work with female producers to develop advisory services that are geared towards women. Those services would complement the current advisory-services schemes, which are geared more towards men.

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES PROMOTING THE TRANSITION TO AGROECOLOGY

Extension services and agricultural advisory services have often encouraged the intensification of production in line with the principles of the green revolution (use of chemical inputs and selected varieties). But in some regions, that type of agricultural intensification has involved promoting chemical products that are known to be dangerous to human health and the environment: for instance, products that have been banned for decades in Europe are used on cotton (insecticides) and corn (herbicides), and many non-approved chemical inputs are used in market gardening without any protection for users. In some cases, there's a dangerous mix: increase in the number of crop cycles on a given piece of land (increased phytosanitary pressure) + low literacy rate (difficulty reading the labels of treatment products) + lack of training (difficulty following best practices when applying the products) + underequipped (lack of protection) + massive presence of products acquired through cross-border trafficking that have not been approved or inspected + high number of women working in the fields who may be pregnant, nursing or accompanied by a young child (risk of contaminating a foetus/baby/child during the early stages of development) + poor health systems (difficulty measuring the health impact of intensified chemical use, and identifying and treating diseases).

Particularly in regions of conventional intensification, the renewal of agricultural advisory services needs to help promote an alternative model for agriculture, or at least help reduce the amount of chemical inputs used and ensure they are applied in the best way possible. **At a time when many voices (among FOs, researchers, etc.) are calling for agricultural practices that are healthier, that pollute less and that are less dangerous for producers, it is important to revitalise agricultural advisory services and use them to promote the much-desired transition to agroecology**. In areas that have not seen much conventional intensification in agriculture, advisory services need to focus on promoting better use and management of natural resources, which are the very basis of production. In those regions, transitioning to agroecology will ensure greater diversity in cultivated fields, greater recycling of biomass and nutrients, restoration of pastureland and forests, etc.

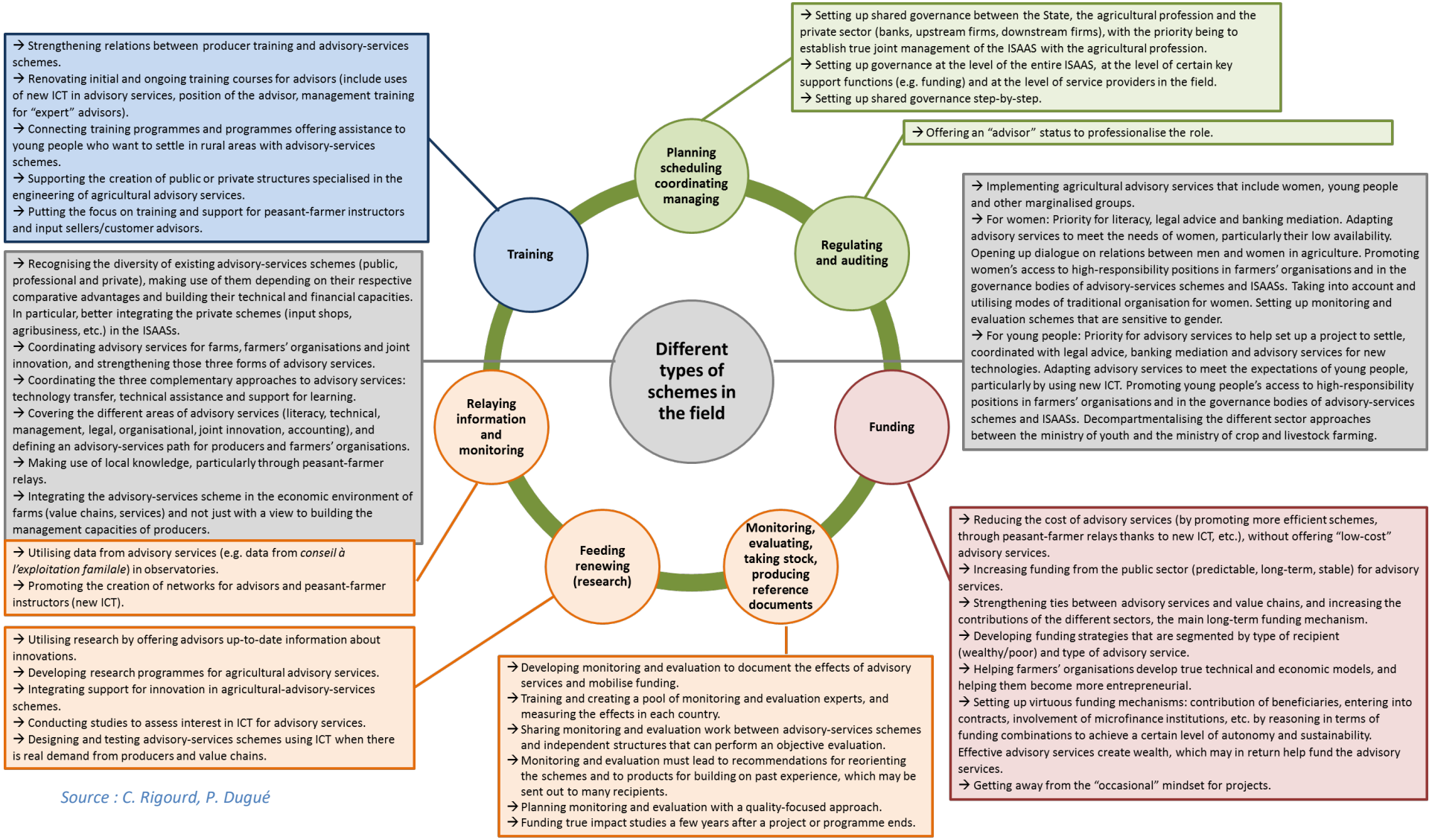
Moreover, the direction of advisory services can sometimes diverge within a given territory, or even within a family. In some sectors, farmers (particularly men who are head of the household) are more inclined to use practices that make heavy use of chemical inputs. Other actors on the other hand – often women, who are more conscious of health and environmental

problems and have less cash on hand – would prefer to use agroecology practices (use of compost and biopesticides, companion planting, etc.) recommended by technicians/advisors from certain NGOs.

When it comes to establishing greater harmony in the global management of village lands and coming together to discuss the much-needed transition to agroecology in connection with national policies, the best thing might be to bring together representatives of farmers and advisors, whether they are from the public sector, NGOs, FOs or the private sector. This kind of dialogue could be organised by elected community leaders (of a municipality, for instance) with significant representation of women. The discussions would be even more effective if they were preceded by a participative diagnostic assessment to identify the main problems and the main economic, social and environmental challenges in the territory in question. In many sub-Saharan countries, municipalities help rural communities better manage natural resources. Unfortunately, those local authorities have very few resources to do so, and the legitimacy granted by the laws and the ballot box is not sufficient.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

A series of recommendations has been drawn up to help overcome these challenges. The recommendations have to do with the different components of the ISAAS (from local to national). They are outlined in detail in the report, and summarised in the following Diagram.



Source : C. Rigourd, P. Dugué

CONCLUSION

SCALING UP

In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of producers covered by advisory-services schemes is still very low overall. Which raises the question of scaling up those schemes. Donors and States too often look for **THE** successful scheme to expand throughout an entire territory, or **THE** most appealing method to replicate on a large scale. **But scaling up will not be successful and should not be attempted if it consists in expanding just one model.**

The "**integrated system for agricultural advisory services**" gets around that issue. The idea is to make use of the multitude of existing approaches and schemes in the field, while bolstering the support functions that make those schemes effective. So the idea is not to scale up a single scheme, but rather to scale up by enhancing, coordinating, creating synergies, monitoring and auditing many different schemes (support functions of an ISAAS).

Once that prerequisite is accepted, there are several ways to scale up. Scaling up requires better segmentation of the different types of advisory services. There must of course be advisory services for everyone (normative and probably prescriptive), but there must also be jointly designed advisory services that aim to build capacities. Many advisory-services schemes feature **"peasant-farmer instructors**" and "peasant-farmer relays", who assist or take over from the salaried advisor and extension workers. Peasant-farmer instructors and peasant-farmer relays are therefore seen as a driving force to help expand the reach of the work (to reach more producers) and scale it up. It is also necessary to ensure better coordination between advisory services and other agricultural services (e.g. marketing), because it gives more meaning to the advisory services and provides them with a more virtuous and sustainable economic model. ICT also offers important possibilities for scaling up.

SIX CONDITIONS FOR REVIVING AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

To generate a virtuous cycle for agricultural advisory services, the following conditions must be met:

- **Condition 1 on governance:** Accepting that governance for agricultural advisory services will be shared by the State, the agricultural profession and the private sector. Shared governance can take shape gradually step-by-step: first by including the agricultural profession, and then by integrating upstream and downstream firms in the private sector. The idea is to share governance of the entire ISAAS, as well as certain key support functions (e.g. funding). In addition to accepting this principle, certain elements are essential to the success of shared governance: strengthening FOs and producers to improve their participation in the governance of agricultural advisory services, clarifying governance-related issues so that all actors have a better understanding of them, and setting up simple and inexpensive forums for dialogue tailored to each level (local, regional or national). The emergence of national, African and global platforms for agricultural advisory services requires discussion to find better ways to coordinate and create synergies between those platforms in order to improve dialogue and share knowledge between actors involved in advisory services beyond the borders of each country.

- **Condition 2 on funding:** Sufficient funding from the public sector with virtuous, long-term mechanisms. Restricted funds for advisory services seem to be a good alternative, paid from the State budget, parafiscal charges and donors. Better coordination between advisory services for different sectors is also essential. Advisory services will thus lead to several positive changes that will facilitate funding of the services themselves: an entrepreneurial transition for FOs that will make them better able to cover the costs of advisory services, better economic performance for farms and value chains which will also facilitate funding of advisory services. Obtaining sufficient, long-term funding can also be achieved by reducing certain costs to improve the efficiency of existing advisory-services schemes and reach a greater number of producers. Breaking down funding strategies by type of advisory service and type of recipient would also make it possible for some of the more financially stable FOs to pay more for more sophisticated agricultural advisory services. Lastly, creating a virtuous funding mechanism is closely in line with the condition of appropriate governance, giving FOs and producers the right to monitor the management of funds.
- **Condition 3 on support functions:** Acknowledging, sharing and funding support functions is essential, because those functions help galvanise the schemes in the field.
- **Condition 4 on improving the capacities of the different actors:** Breaking them down by profile. This requires ongoing basic training for advisors and for managers of the schemes, and recognition of the advisor's role. Improving the literacy skills of producers (particularly female producers) is essential; this issue must not be neglected under the pretext that it is something that must be addressed by other sector-focused policies or other ministries. It is also important to take into account peasant-farmer relays and indigenous instructors, who are also involved in advisory services, because their training needs are still relatively unknown.
- **Condition 5 on inclusion:** The priority here is to better meet the needs of women, who currently have little access to advisory-services schemes. The leverage effect will be considerable. The idea is also to focus more on young people, more and more of whom are abandoning agriculture. The development of advisory-services schemes for herdsmen should also be encouraged.
- **Condition 6 on schemes in the field:** There must be recognition of the diversity of schemes in the field, particularly in the agricultural profession and the private sector. Scaling up is possible only if all the schemes in the field are strengthened.

Taking action and renewing agricultural advisory services in sub-Saharan Africa

The need to renew agricultural advisory services has been noted in several countries. In many cases, the renewal policy has been finalised but not implemented because of a lack of funding and political will. There appears to be a need for some **trigger event, whether internal or external**, to raise awareness about the need for an array of strong advisory services built on a true ISAAS. Once that awareness is raised, there needs to be **a joint mobilisation of the State and the agricultural profession**, and agreement on how to go about designing a ISAAS from existing elements. The more organised, legitimate and recognised the agricultural profession is, the easier that joint work will be. The starting point for this joint endeavour is to make use of existing schemes – but they first need to be identified. Doing so requires conducting a diagnostic assessment to identify what services are needed, what services are

currently offered, whether the offer meets the needs, and what support functions exist. Everyone involved in the renewal of agricultural advisory services should be involved in conducting the diagnostic assessment, particularly farmers' organisations and the private sector. But beyond the need to renew agricultural advisory services, there needs to be an analysis of the vision and direction promoted behind the policies and agricultural advisory services. Certain existing schemes sometimes totally contradict the agricultural-policy vision, and in most cases the advisory services are not neutral. Clearer direction is needed regarding the type of agriculture (family farming, agroecology) those support and advisory services should promote, and to make sure family farms have everything they need to be able to choose the type of agricultural advisory services that are most in line with their interests.

CHAPTER 1: Agricultural advisory services in sub-Saharan Africa need to be revived

I. Agricultural advisory and extension services need to be galvanised and transformed

The sustainable development of the agricultural sector[8] is vital for all countries in sub-Saharan Africa because it plays an important role in improving food security and economic development, and is the leading source of jobs (except in South Africa). More extensive forms of crop farming, livestock farming and use of natural resources also take up space, including in more "marginal" areas. The rural sector therefore controls large areas and contributes to prevent security issues. The sector has lots of room for improvement given current average yields and revenue, and given how value chains are structured. The Maputo Declaration (2003) and the Malabo Declaration (2014), both important milestones in African Union policy, were well aware of the situation and offered a vision of economic growth driven by agriculture with ambitious objectives: 6% annual growth in agriculture, 10% of public investment allocated to agriculture, 1% of agricultural GDP invested in agricultural research.

The African Union, most States, sub-regional organisations and donors **have therefore refocused their efforts and stepped up their support for family farms and private investors** (see support for the development of agricultural growth poles) so that they can easily invest in the agricultural sector, and particularly in their production tools (crop and livestock farms, agricultural/pastoral lands, etc.). These are mainly investments in production (subsidising infrastructure and equipment), and less often to facilitate access to loans and advisory services. **Agricultural advisory services, for instance, are not mentioned in the Maputo or Malabo texts**. At best they mention *"supporting research, dissemination and adoption of technologies"*, which is far too reductive, or *"providing users with relevant knowledge, information and skills,"* but not advisory services. So what hope is there that the agricultural investment plan at national level and the regional agricultural investment plan will be successful? **Those policies are expensive because they require expensive material investments, and in order for them to be effective, efficient and sustainable, it is necessary to provide producers with pluralistic advisory services. Otherwise the equipment and infrastructure will be poorly chosen, poorly utilised or underutilised, poorly maintained and difficult to upgrade**.

At the moment, **the advisory services offered to producers are far from meeting their needs** both quantitatively (ratio of producers to advisors much higher than FAO recommendations) and qualitatively (poor response to the real needs of producers and other rural stakeholders in the different value chains and territories). The situation is even more alarming for female producers and young people (both male and female), whose advisory needs receive little attention. The shortage of advisory services results in excessively low

[8] In this document, the agricultural sector refers to all types of agricultural production systems *sensu stricto*: agropastoral, pastoral and specialised livestock farming, etc.

agricultural productivity and increasingly frequent risks in terms of public health[9] and environmental degradation in regions where agriculture is nevertheless intensifying.

Morocco, which public decision-makers in sub-Saharan Africa often cite as model, has drawn lessons from the first years of the Green Morocco Plan[10] (involving massive investment in equipment and infrastructure for agriculture), reforming and galvanising its public system for agricultural advisory services just a few years after the plan's launch. After adopting national agricultural policies, several countries in sub-Saharan Africa have adopted **specific policies or strategies for agricultural advisory services** (Madagascar in 2006, Benin in 2008, Burkina Faso in 2011, Niger in 2017, Cameroon in 2018, etc.). But **there is not enough funding to sustain those policies over the long term,** despite investment from the private sector (FOs, businesses) in advisory services**. Plans must be made to revive agricultural advisory services quantitatively and qualitatively.**

The revival of agricultural advisory services in sub-Saharan Africa is therefore an economic, social, environmental and health imperative:

- **Economic imperative:** According to the World Bank, while the number of poor people has decreased worldwide since the 1990s, it has increased in Africa. More than half the world's poorest people now live in Africa, and most of them are in the agricultural sector in rural areas. Large investments are being made in agriculture (e.g. hydraulic installations), but advisory schemes tailored to those structural investments are needed to ensure their effectiveness and longevity, and ultimately **to reduce poverty by boosting income, creating jobs and reducing economic migration,** as has been seen many times in the field.
- **Social imperative: Food security** is still a very important issue in sub-Saharan Africa (in cities and rural areas) even though most of the population works in the agricultural sector. Boosting production requires investment accompanied by advisory services. When value chains develop, the distribution of revenue between the different people involved in production (men, women, young people) is not always equal, and the development of value chains can even lead to the **marginalisation of women in those value chains**. Women, young people and other minorities (particularly certain ethnic minorities) rarely receive agricultural advisory services; thus the latter should be more inclusive and fairer.
- **Environmental and health imperative:** Although productivity remains low, agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa is intensifying, particularly in regions that are using more and more imported chemical inputs (market gardening and livestock farming near urban areas, irrigated crops and increase in the number of cycles, cotton/grain system). These changes are creating negative environmental and health impacts that are under-researched but probably substantial. **Conventional intensification** of agriculture **(based on chemical inputs)** in a context where producers and consumers have poor literacy skills and little training, where treatment products are not inspected, where non-approved products are

[9] Risks linked to the growing (and often inappropriate) use of chemical pesticides: increasingly widespread use of herbicides on cotton/grains in cotton and forest zones, insecticides, fungicides on market-gardening crops just about everywhere.

[10] See summary document "Green Morocco Plan: key principles and advances in Moroccan agricultural strategy. Food security brief, No. 20 May 2016, Inter-réseaux and SOS Faim, 8 p.

widely available[11] and where medical services and epidemiological monitoring are scarce **creates a dangerous mix** for producers (especially female producers who are pregnant or nursing) and consumers. Despite being adapted to climate change, agroecology and "best" practices are still either underpromoted or face technical and sociological obstacles (increase in the cost of manual labour).

Against this backdrop, should agricultural advisory services be handed over to professional organisations (FOs, interprofessional bodies) or the private sector (national or multinational firms)? Or should it remain within the hands of the State? **In a context of market liberalisation, advisory and extension services could potentially be offered largely by private entities, with the market regulating supply and demand.** That was more or less the path taken in the 1990s, a decade when most public extension services were de facto dismantled following the implementation of structural adjustment plans for agriculture, with the hope that private services and FOs would develop. **But that theory was clearly not as successful in sub-Saharan Africa as expected.**

To be sure, private advisory schemes organised by the agricultural profession slowly emerged (see below), but most producers (especially female producers) do not have access to advisory services or even to basic extension schemes, which are often organised by the State. There are several reasons for this:

- Producers have little capacity to formulate requests or to pay for even part of this type of service;
- Producers are dispersed and poorly structured[12];
- Value chains are not really built around functional interprofessional bodies or private companies keen on helping producers improve (with the exception of a few cases);
- The private sector is not very interested (with the exception of a few isolated cases) in offering services that do not respond solely to its own needs (selling inputs, guaranteeing their supply of raw materials from producers, etc.).

Experience in sub-Saharan Africa has shown us that we are in a market-failure situation, which calls for public policies and funding to galvanise, subsidise, regulate and coordinate agricultural advisory services.

Experience has also shown us that what works well on other continents (e.g. Training & Visit approach for irrigated systems in Asia, privatisation of advisory services in Chile for farms focusing on the local market and export) does not necessarily work well in sub-Saharan Africa, and that **solutions need to be developed locally**, often taking inspiration from the success of peasant farmers and FOs.

[11] A study by RECA (network of the chambers of agriculture) in Niger concluded that, at the moment, 75% of chemical inputs for market gardening are not approved. Many products from Nigeria have notices in English and Chinese.

[12] That said, the structuring of FOs has taken a giant leap forward since 1990, and peasant-farmer movements have emerged in a number of African countries (e.g. Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Guinea, etc.).

Case study[13]: ACEFA programme in Cameroon. A rare example in sub-Saharan Africa of an initiative to **revive agricultural advisory services, promoted by the State.** Some aspects of the initiative are in line with the former national "NAREP" programme for extension services and agricultural research (priority given to the public scheme, with the best civil-servant extension practitioners selected to become advisors), while other aspects are more innovative (introduction of managerial advisory services for farms and FOs, advisory services for setting up projects, the beginnings of tentative joint management between peasant farmers and the State, future creation of a national advisory-services agency). Ultimately, this is not just a revision/update of the 2002 national strategy, but rather **an "internal revolution" made possible thanks to massive funding from a French debt-reduction mechanism called C2D** (a very exceptional case). Following implementation of the programme, a new document on extension- and advisory-services policy was produced (2018, not yet adopted by the National Assembly). It will have to be implemented in a country where FOs are still weak and are therefore not yet an opposing power or solid partner in the joint management of the agricultural sector.
Case study: Milk-collection centres in Niger. An **original advisory scheme mobilising many stakeholders** (salaried employees and elected leaders from cooperatives of livestock farmers, veterinarians, livestock assistants, milk collectors, industrial dairy producers, chamber of agriculture) **around a collection centre run by peasant farmers and integrated into a local milk value chain.** The advisory services provided to the livestock farmers are therefore linked to the needs of the farmers (guaranteed by peasant-farmer governance of the collection centre) and to the needs of the value chain.
Two case studies: Peru and Ivory Coast. Private schemes for agricultural advisory services (advisory services offered by input suppliers in Peru, and technical advisory services for compliance with "sustainable cocoa" labels as part of the certification process for cocoa producers in Ivory Coast), which are **effective** in terms of covering rural areas (100% and 20% of producers in the target zones, respectively) but **extremely linked to the interests of input suppliers (upstream) and exporters (downstream) rather than the interests of peasant farmers.**

II. Should there be a standardised model for agricultural advisory services? A brief history of agricultural advisory and extension services

Agricultural extension and advisory services in sub-Saharan Africa have gone through several phases since the different independence movements: (i) support for rural areas and promotion of agricultural cooperatives (1960–70s); (ii) agricultural extension services based on the Training & Visit (or "T&V") approach (World Bank) (1970–90s); (iii) withdrawal of public development aid and of States from advisory-support services for producers (1990s) with the exception of a few isolated cases; (vi) re-emergence (2000–10s) of various forms of agricultural advisory services and extension services in technical, economic and managerial matters for farms and FOs with an economic mission.

For many public-service workers in sub-Saharan Africa, **the T&V period was a golden age for agricultural extension services**: abundant human and logistical resources, highly structured system from bottom to top (pyramid-shaped and hierarchical), structured (but top-down) and relatively simple processes, etc. Public-service workers still often consider this "supervisory"[14] approach to be THE benchmark, despite its limited impact and low efficiency when it comes to solving problems that involve more than just transferring knowledge or techniques. The approach is still largely used by certain stakeholders to transfer knowledge

[13] The full case studies are available in French at http://www.inter-reseaux.org
[14] Supervision (*"encadrement"*) was the term used back then, not advisory support. The term supervision (*"encadrement"*) is not used as often anymore.

and technologies (e.g. when cotton companies share new production techniques, when exporters provide training on compliance with production standards, etc.).

Since the 2000s, no initiative has become unanimously established at continent level in the same way T&V was back then. Several methods/approaches have become somewhat established, but without really taking hold: developed initially by IRRI in the Philippines and promoted by the FAO before finally being adopted by other actors, **farmer field schools** are becoming increasingly popular – first in East Africa, and now in West and Central Africa. They have been implemented through many projects with relative success, however sometimes with a large gap[15] between theory and practice (see AVSF Togo case study). **Managerial advisory services[16]** (for family farms and FOs) are essentially promoted by French aid (CERFRANCE, CIRAD, AFDI, etc. with financial support from AFD) and limited mainly to West and Central Africa and French-speaking stakeholders. But scaling up those services has been a struggle. **Innovation platforms**, which are promoted by international researchers and NGOs and which bring together stakeholders from a particular value chain (upstream entities, producers, downstream entities) to solve technical and organisational problems, are struggling to become operational and autonomous, and to move away from the mindset of projects that seek to disseminate their proposals. There are also companies upstream and downstream that are investing in highly targeted advisory services.

Other approaches have been implemented on a smaller scale by various projects, NGOs and private engineering offices: **legal advisory services, advisory services for marketing and sales, coaching, farmer-to-farmer advisory services, resource centre[17],** etc.. Approaches involving **mobile telephony (telephone platforms, information systems, WhatsApp groups for producers, etc.)** have also been appearing over the past few years and seem to have a promising future (see CIRAD and Afrique Verte case studies in Burkina Faso). But those initiatives are struggling to offer services that will be effective over the long term.

While **adopting a single new model** may appear to be a solution that would bring actors together to revive agricultural advisory services and boost the effectiveness/impact of those services, the context (or contexts) is no longer favourable for such a solution, and that option **is** certainly **not desirable**. On the one hand, all countries now have many different public and private actors offering advisory services with different objectives (depending on their position in a given value chain or territory). On the other hand, resources for public advisory services have been considerably reduced, and retiring staff members have not all been replaced (except in special cases). Lastly, at country level, since all the different types of farms and environments give rise to such a wide variety of expectations and needs among producers, one of the most important qualities of a national advisory-services policy is the ability to provide a **range of services tailored to each situation**. It is therefore necessary to develop complementary approaches, from basic extension services to managerial and expert advisory

[15] Contrary to popular belief, field schools are not a tool for carrying out demonstrations and transferring technologies. They offer action-based training (observation in the field), joint development of tailored solutions and cross-disciplinary learning through exchanges between producers and technicians. This method requires a great deal of commitment and diligence from the technicians who provide instruction and the producers.

[16] This is referred to in French as *conseil à l'exploitation familiale (CEF)* and *conseil de gestion aux organisations paysannes (CdG OP)*.

[17] See Degrande, A., Franzel, S., Yeptiep, Y. S., Asaah, E., Tsobeng, A. and Tchoundjeu, Z. (2012). Effectiveness of grassroots organisations in the dissemination of agroforestry innovations. In *Agroforestry for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services-Science and Practice*.

services, as part of a pluralistic advisory-services offer[18]. **Care should be taken to avoid the dangers of following a single dogma and teaching a "one-size-fits-all" method,** and to tailor national policies for agricultural advisory services to the institutional, economic and agricultural context of each country.

Case study: Presentation of several examples of advisory services for family farms (in French: *"conseil à l'exploitation familiale CEF"*) in Burkina Faso. Building on the same methodological foundation, the groups promoting this approach (CIRAD and AFDI) have tailored it to the different types of target producers and to their level of investment (cotton and market-gardening zones or strictly food-production zones). Aside from those differences, the study highlights **convergent positive factors (improvement in the technical/economic performance of farms, coaching to help farms adapt, tool for dialogue and collaboration, ability of FOs to develop intangible services, etc.) and similar difficulties (scaling up, non-sustainable funding, the need to ensure the longevity of the approach, etc.).** This case study also shows that there is a gap between the ambition of the different approaches and the realities in the field.

Case study: Farmer field schools in Togo. This study presents the history of farmer field schools in northern Togo and the pedagogical foundation of this approach. **The study underscores the importance of the initiative, but also shows its limits and the gaps that may arise between theory and practice.** "*Farmer field schools are a good thing, if they're done properly.*"

[18] The French term for "pluralistic advisory services" is *conseil pluriel.*

CHAPTER 2: Rethinking the framework for analysis and reflection on agricultural advisory services

I. Defining agricultural advisory services

Different terms have been used in the past to refer to advisory services in a broad sense. During colonisation and in the 1960–70s, peasant farmers were **"supervised"**. Later, the term **"extension services"** appeared, and now we say **"advisory services" and "advisory support"**. The term **"coaching"** is also used nowadays in reference to a more bottom-up approach that aims to foster cross-disciplinary learning by encouraging farmers to think for themselves and to learn through discussions with other farmers and other stakeholders in the agricultural sector. That's a far cry from the old notion of supervision. What's more, the English terms **"extension"** and **"advisory"** (in French: *vulgarisation* and *conseil*, respectively) are not always used in exactly the same way as their French equivalents.

The French word "*vulgarisation*" has also been used in many different ways. The word historically referred to the dissemination of technical messages, and that is how it is commonly used in France. The FAO, however, uses the term to refer to more complex activities. "Agricultural advisors" (Benin, Guinea) are referred to sometimes as "extension or supervisory agents" (Burkina Faso) and sometimes as "agents in charge of advisory support" (Niger), although the roles are nearly identical.

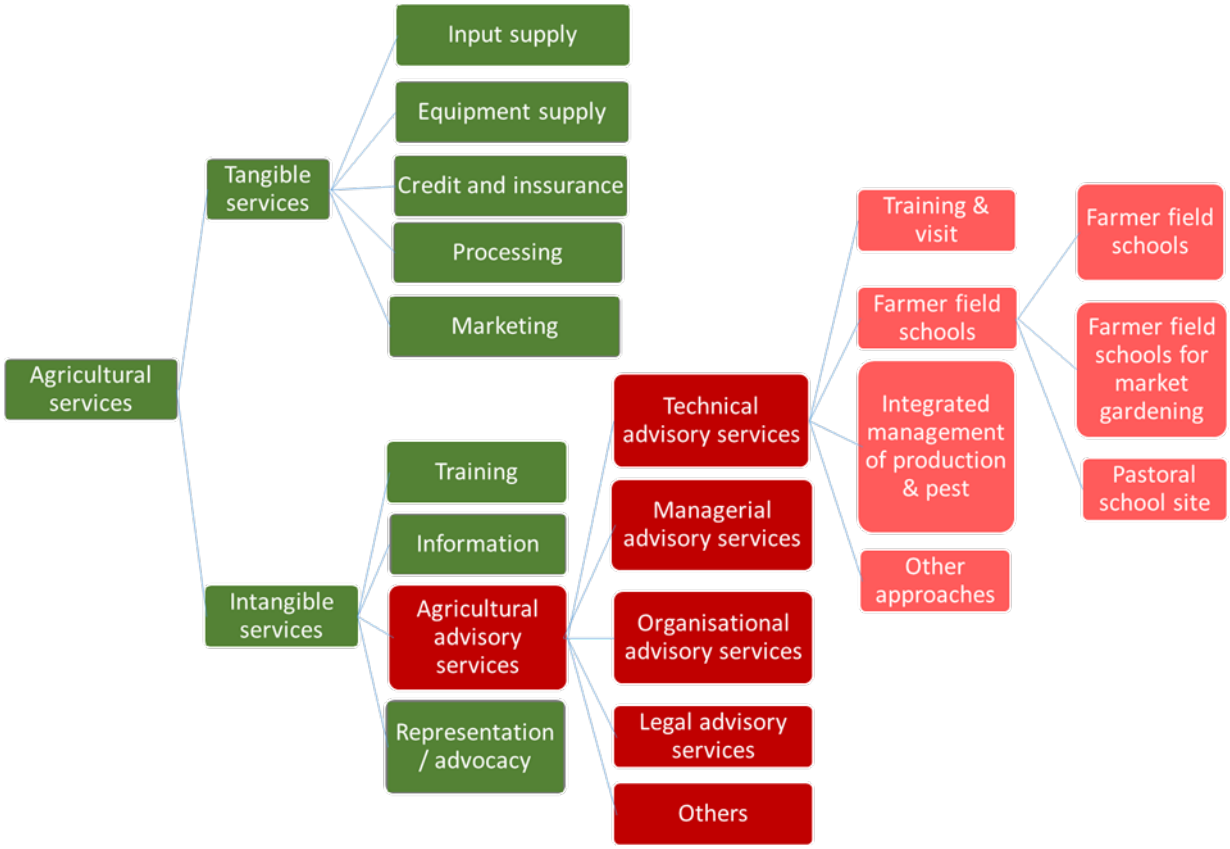
The managerial advisory services of the 1990s, which focused on "accounting and management", differ from the managerial advisory services offered today, which have a much broader approach and are often referred to as "advisory services for family farms" (*conseil à l'exploitation familiale*) or "technical/economic advisory services". The boundary between advisory, information and training services sometimes appears to be a fine one. Many schemes and approaches in the field actually combine advisory, training and information services simultaneously or successively within a single advisory-services scheme or approach. Distinction must also be made between **advisory services for producers**, **advisory services for FOs**[19] and **advisory services for joint innovation**, which may target a wide range of stakeholders (farmers, processors and shopkeepers). Those different types of advisory services may also create synergies and be mutually beneficial for each other. **The very concept of advisory services is therefore rather complex.**

> We define agricultural advisory services as a **set of approaches and schemes** to **support farms** (crop, livestock and fish production; processing and marketing of products) **and FOs** in areas such as production management (choice of techniques, organisation of work, etc.), financial management of farms and group entities (FOs, cooperatives), management of resources within a particular territory (natural resources, financial resources, labour), and acquisition and honing of knowledge and savoir-faire.

[19] FOs have a special status which allows them to both provide and receive advisory services.

Agricultural advisory services are often implemented separately from other services for farmers (supply, marketing, credit, etc.). **But advisory services are more effective when they are offered in tandem with those other services**, when they are rooted in something concrete: one or more value chains, a territory and its resources, a group of specialised producers, a functional cooperative[20], etc. The synergies created with other services (banking, insurance, grouped buying and selling, etc.) also offer the **possibility of a sustainable economic model for advisory services**. The other side of the coin is that advisory services that are closely linked to input-supply or product-marketing services may be highly influenced by those two services and create weaknesses (overconsumption of inputs, overspecialisation, etc.).

Figure 2: Agricultural advisory services in relation to all agricultural services, and a non-exhaustive overview of various types of advisory services



Source: adapted from the 2016 NAAS Niger report

There are many different types of advisory services. It seems necessary to combine several different types of advisory services within a small region or country based on:

- **The beneficiaries of the services[21]:** advisory services for producers and FOs. Those two types of advisory services complement one another well and generate positive synergies. There is also a growing need to promote multi-actor innovation initiatives, in which case

[20] Entity that provides economic and support services to its members, and not one that was created for the sole purpose of siphoning support and subsidies from projects.

[21] The term "beneficiary" is used here in a broad sense. It may refer to beneficiaries, customers, members, etc., depending on the case.

the beneficiaries of the advisory services may include many different actors with varying interests (this is referred to as advisory services for joint innovation).

- **The type of advisory service:** technical, technical/economic (or managerial), accounting, organisational, legal, etc.
- **The scope of the services:** centred around a single production, around the farm as a whole, around an organisation (value chain, FO), or even around a territory. While advisory services centred more around value chains are rooted in something concrete and have an economic foundation, advisory services centred more around the farm and its territory in a broad sense are more oriented towards the needs of producers (or FOs or territories in a broad sense) by taking into account the management of natural resources and coordination between the different stakeholders in the territory.
- **The approach:** technology transfer, technical assistance (solving problems that have been presented or identified) and support for learning initiatives so that producers can find solutions to their problems on their own[22].

Case study: In Ivory Coast, private firms that buy and export cocoa are at the heart of the advisory scheme for cocoa production. Those firms provide the technical references and specifications for sustainable cocoa cultivation. Certification organisations also get involved at the request of those firms or organisations that have been granted a label (e.g. Rainforest). This is a case where the boundaries of the advisory scheme are blurry/broad (going so far as certification organisations) and where advisory services are closely linked to marketing for export. The value chain gets many different stakeholders involved, all of whom are part of an advisory system that produces technical references, organises training programmes, funds advisory services, etc. Those stakeholders include producers, FOs (registered cooperatives), certification organisations, exporters, providers of technical advisory services and peasant-farmer relays (who are not necessarily peasant farmers themselves, but simply locals looking to develop an income-generating activity by advising farmers).

Case study: Milk-collection centres in Niger. Different types of advisory services are provided by different stakeholders gravitating around the centre. Advisory services for animal health and feeding are provided by veterinarians, veterinarian assistants and livestock assistants. Milk collectors, cooperative agents and agribusiness focus on the quality of the milk. The elected leaders of the cooperative raise awareness among livestock farmers (about the value of milk and the role of women) and mediate if conflicts arise. The chamber of agriculture tests the managerial advisory services for livestock farmers with the collection centre. The NGO Karkara and IRAM are involved in advisory services for developing value chains and securing women in the value chain. A collection centre therefore allows for the creation of a multi-actor advisory scheme for livestock farmers and for that scheme to cover the main areas that will help meet the needs of livestock farmers and the value chain. The value chain therefore offers an economic foundation for the advisory services, and the advisory services are closely linked to the value chain for milk.

Case study: Private advisory scheme in Peru. Advisory services for dairy farmers are combined with other activities, such as the sale of inputs, animal care, vaccination, insemination, etc. This mix of activities offers a profitable, long-term economic model for advisory services, but also steers livestock farmers towards conventional intensification based mainly on greater use of inputs, such as concentrated feeds and veterinary products.

Case study: Use of information and communication technology in Burkina Faso (APROSSA). This study shows that “advisory services”, broadly speaking, cover a wide range of complementary activities and tools to facilitate action: initial training, banking intermediation, agricultural exchanges through a website, information systems on the market based on mobile telephony.

[22] According to Roling and Groot (1998), who identified those three major approaches.

II. On the need for an integrated system for agricultural advisory services

Agricultural advisory and extension services currently face complex situations for a number of reasons:

- Producers are requesting[23] diversified advisory services tailored to their particular situations;
- There are many different advisory-services providers, and each has their own strategy and road map: public sector (administrations, development offices, etc.), private sector (private seller, NGO, engineering office), agricultural profession (FOs, chambers of agriculture, etc.);
- Those stakeholders have an array of different approaches to advisory services (field schools, innovation platforms, managerial advisory services/CEF, tools based on information and communication technology, etc.);
- There are more and more types of support that aim to promote joint innovation requiring coordination between different types of actors;
- There is no longer a single hierarchy controlling a national or regional advisory system (i.e. a single administration in charge of advisory services), but rather multiple hierarchies specific to each advisory scheme involving different types of stakeholders. A lack of coordination has been observed between the many different schemes, as well as a lack of vision and strategic management;
- The ties between advisory services/research/training are weaker and more complex than at the time of the T&V programmes;
- Sources of funding are insufficient and numerous. They are highly dependent on technical and financial partners[24], or private companies with objectives linked to their needs, and not sufficiently stable or predictable.

It appears necessary to use the idea of an "integrated system for agricultural advisory services" (ISAAS[25]) that can be applied at different levels (region, country) to create a coherent national policy for advisory services, as well as functional, long-term schemes. This is referred to as a national agricultural advisory system (NAAS[26]) for countries, and a regional or local system for administrative and natural regions.

[23] The request is not always explicit. Sometimes it must be interpreted through an understanding of the needs and constraints of producers.
[24] The "project" approach of most donors underscores the complexity and lack of strategic vision by giving preference to certain regions and, most often, recruiting the best public-service workers.
[25] This is referred to in French as a *Système Intégré de Conseil Agricole,* or "*SICA*".
[26] This is referred to in French as a *Système National de Conseil Agricole*, or "*SNCA*"

An ISAAS/NAAS is defined as a set **of advisory schemes in the field** managed and carried out by different stakeholders from the public sector, private sector[27] and agricultural profession, plus **support functions**: planning, scheduling, coordinating, leading exchange networks, monitoring and evaluating schemes in the field to ensure satisfactory quality, providing funding for certain schemes, monitoring, evaluating, capitalising, drawing lessons from experiences in the field, producing reference materials, adding to and improving the NAAS (through messages, approaches, innovative tools and research on the subject), training agents, relaying information and supervising (see Figure 3). An ISAAS/NAAS is therefore not a single institutional body, but rather a **network of institutions and stakeholders** all working to strengthen the capacities of producers and FOs in order to improve agricultural production and resource management with a view to promoting sustainable development[28].

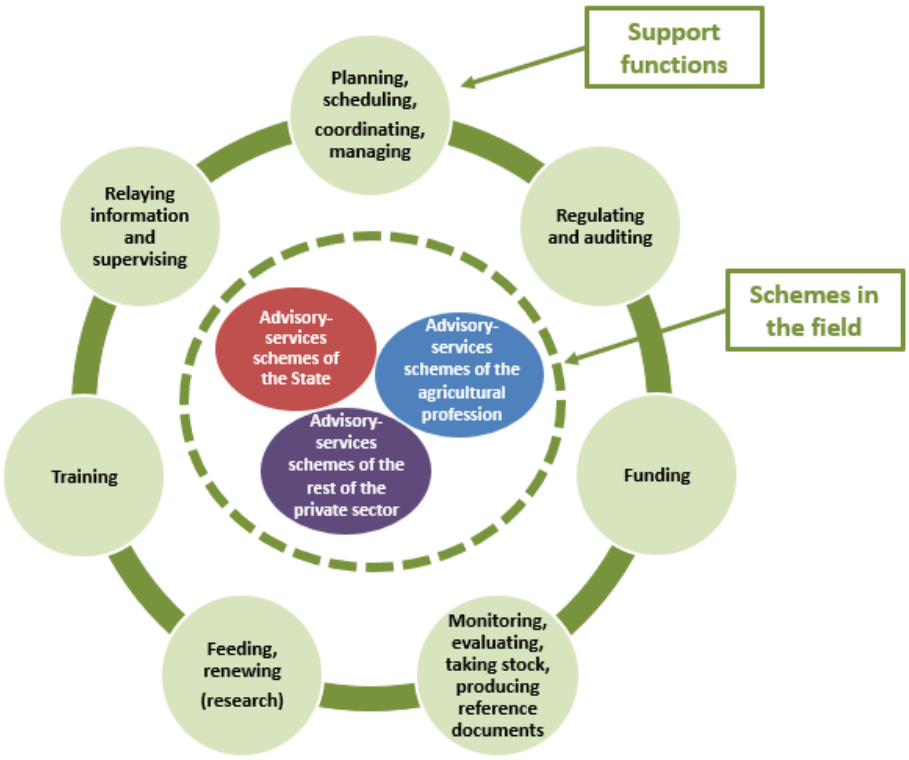
The idea of a system for agricultural advisory services may apply at both national and regional levels. It makes it possible, among other things, to rethink the sharing of roles between the State, the private sector and the agricultural profession. It also helps to reposition the State to focus on sovereign activities (regulation, supervision, etc.), on what falls within the remit of public services (basic literacy and basic extension, research, etc.) and on marginalised regions and communities (territorial continuity and equal access to services).

The idea of an **ISAAS** needs to be linked to the broader idea of a **national or regional innovation system** (see Figure 4). The agricultural innovation system includes all the services and relationships between stakeholders in the agricultural sector that help them progress, particularly by designing and disseminating technical and organisational innovations. Agricultural advisory services are an integral part of the agricultural innovation system. This vision of support for the agricultural sector is promoted by certain international organisations: Since 2000, the World Bank has said that priority must be given to strengthening innovation systems; at its November 2018 conference, the FAO addressed the topic to strengthen innovation policies for agriculture.

[27] In several countries, the objective is to encourage more and more advisory schemes run by private entities (engineering offices, FOs, interprofessional bodies, upstream and downstream firms, etc.). In Uganda, for example, the State limits itself to cross-disciplinary functions and inspection.

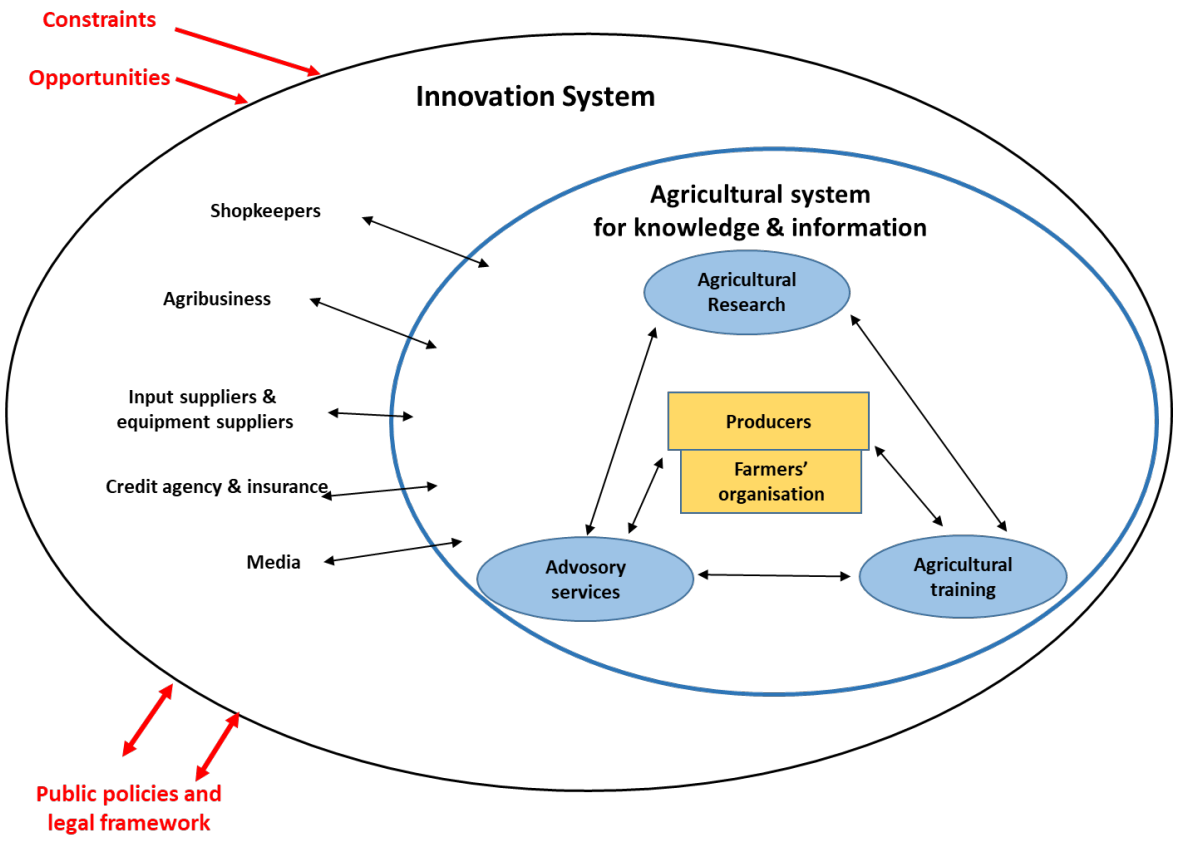
[28] Which does not mean that stakeholders from the network cannot have different, or even opposing, interests.

Figure 3: Diagram of the integrated system for agricultural advisory services



Source : C. Rigourd, P. Dugué , B. Djariri, I. Maman,P. Derache

Figure 4: Innovation system (from Agricultural Innovation Systems, an investment source book, World Bank, 2012)



III. How do the integrated system for agricultural advisory services and the innovation system compare?

These are two different but complementary ideas on how to support changes in agriculture, particularly on farms and within FOs. There are also other ways to encourage those changes or control them, such as public policies to create incentives through price support, subsidies and regulation.

The innovation system is based on the idea that change is effective and lasting only if there is a group of stakeholders working together to create and promote it jointly. It is no longer the trio of research/development/producers that is driving or involved with designing, adopting and disseminating innovations, but a larger group of stakeholders (individuals, institutions, networks, etc.) (see Figure 4). This idea is based on recent advances in the sociology of innovation, institutional economics, management sciences and education. The relationships between the different stakeholders help drive innovation, because they offer opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning and help mobilise the resources and skills needed for innovation. This theory stands in opposition to the standard linear pattern for technical progress and for the transfer of knowledge and technology in the agricultural sector. Agricultural advisory services are an essential component of the innovation system, and therefore of technical and organisational change. But the innovation-system concept is more all-encompassing. It is used mainly to **facilitate change in agriculture and to encourage joint innovations that make sense for all stakeholders** (in terms of revenue, wellbeing, food security, respect for the environment and equality).

The integrated system for advisory services is therefore an integral part of the innovation system. It is a part of the innovation system just like research and agricultural training, and just like the other stakeholders who are working to drive change in the agricultural and agri-food sectors. The concept of **integrated system for agricultural advisory services** (see Figure 3) emphasises the importance of offering an array of different advisory services and the need for support functions to coordinate and contribute to the progress of all the schemes depending on what is needed and on any changes in context (i.e. climate change). This concept allows for detailed analysis of the system's components and how they interact (governance, coordination and accountability mechanisms; objectives; human and financial resources; methods and content of schemes in the field). Traditionally, multi-actor initiatives for designing innovations are not at the heart of the integrated system for agricultural advisory services. Many advisory schemes are working on new ways to manage farms or FOs without referring to individual or joint innovations, and without helping design those types of innovations. But a whole school of thought with regard to advisory services (see GFRAS and its definition of "new extensionist", or the FAO, which uses the term "bridging institution" when discussing advisory services) emphasises the new function of the advisor, which involves intermediation between rural stakeholders or stakeholders in the agricultural sector. The idea is to collectively stimulate relations between producers and upstream or downstream entities, or relations between different types of producers, in order to manage resources within a particular territory. Those "joint innovations" help remove constraints to the production and marketing of products that cannot be processed on the farm. But furthering the debate gives rise to questions, such as: Is an advisor / extension worker from a conventional advisory body

in the best position to play that role? Depending on the type of innovation and the context, wouldn't it be better for that role to be held by specialised organisations, or even an FO or private company? The two systems therefore interact and are complementary.

On examining the figures, there are complementarities and similarities between the two systems:

- Agricultural advisory services for farms do not work without interaction with other stakeholders. To be operational and effective, they must be connected with various stakeholders such as providers of services other than advisory services (supply, banking, etc.) and economic stakeholders other than producers (shopkeepers, processors, etc.).
- The two systems are monitored or regulated by public policies, so long as those policies are functional, and are therefore provided with financial and human resources (at least for supervision and compliance with regulations). In many countries, policies for strengthening agricultural innovation systems have a component focusing on the advisory-services system.

IV. Identifying and responding to the diversity of needs and demand for advisory services

Historically, the major extension programmes focused mainly on transferring agricultural research techniques to male producers (and to a lesser extent female producers). But producers (both male and female) **now have much greater advisory needs**, including support for joint initiatives. While **functional literacy** is still often the essential prerequisite for rolling out advisory services (and yet too often neglected), male and female producers need advisory services in the following fields: **technical, technical/economic or managerial, organisational and collective innovation, legal and accounting** (for the most advanced). There are also different types of advisory services within each of those broader fields. Figure 5 (see below) outlines the main needs in terms of agricultural advisory services. While some services are limited exclusively to agricultural, forest and pastoral production, others (such as advisory services for farms) take into account the many different activities performed by families (processing, marketing, exodus, etc.) in theory, but not always in practice.

Figure 5: Possible needs/demand in terms of agricultural advisory services, based on the capacities of producers

		Areas of advisory services for producers and FOs						
		Literacy	Technical	Technical/economic and managerial		Organisational and joint innovation	Legal	Accounting
Levels of advisory services or capabilities of producers	Extension / initiation advising	Basic functional literacy	Basic technical extension services	Initiation in management of a farm	Initiation in management of an FO	Leading rural initiatives, raising awareness about joint action	Making texts more accessible	Basic accounting
	Advanced advising	Advanced functional literacy	Advanced technical advisory services	Advisory services for management of a farm	Advisory services for management of an FO	Advisory services in structuring FOs (federations) and improving professional skills	Legal advisory services, intermediation	Advanced accounting
				Advisory services for setting up a project	Advisory services for value chains			
	Expert advising	Second-chance school or classic training	Expert technical advisory services	Business advisory services for farms	Business advisory services for FOs		Legal assistance, including international	Expert accounting

Adapted from the Methodological Guide for the Regional Diagnostic Assessment and Planning of Agricultural Advisory Services – Creation of a Regional System for Agricultural Advisory Services in Line with NAAS, Republic of the Niger, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, C. Rigourd and B. Djariri, July 2018.

But not all producers have the same needs. The following factors appear to provide an indication of what producers need when it comes to advisory services[29]:

- **Type of farm:** family farm mainly for self-consumption, family farm where production is sold, family farm with some salaried employees, farm business. The relative importance of **the multiple activities** (**agricultural and non-agricultural**) performed by producers will also influence the needs and nature of the advisory services.
- **Type of value chain/commodity:** food production for self-sufficiency and rural markets, food production with national scope (markets in large cities), export commodity (often taxed by the State).
- **Degree to which peasant farmers are structured:** relatively little structure (few FOs), peasant farmers starting to team up, existence of a real peasant-farmer movement[30] with groups working to defend the profession and FOs offering essential technical/economic services to their members.
- **Geographic isolation or connection to the market:** existence of transport infrastructure, distance to markets and to places where information may be obtained and exchanged.

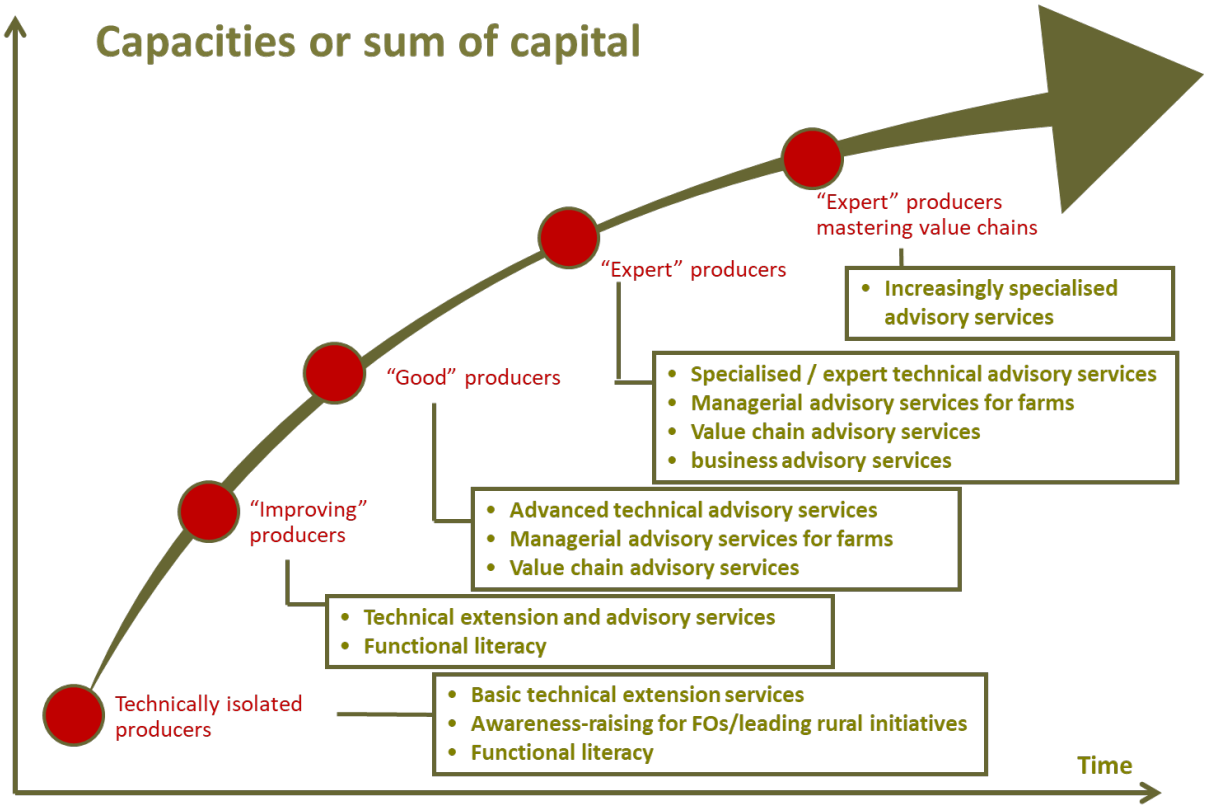
[29] Four studies cited in the reference section (Morocco, Niger, Ivory Coast and Cameroon) based their recommendations on a characterisation of agricultural advisory needs after analysis of the diversity of farms, types of organisation within the profession and value chains. Different types of advisory needs (we refer here to implicit needs that are not necessarily expressed by the producers or FOs) were identified based on criteria that were often identical for each country.

[30] D. Gentil and MR. Mercoiret (1991) propose a definition of "peasant-farmer movement" based on five criteria: intellectual and financial independence, deliberate and explicit objectives, significant relationships with the State and/or the rest of civil society, "sufficient" economic and political size or influence, an already-established internal organisation.

- **Type of innovation:** the innovation may be rolled out on the farm while also requiring interaction and coordination with other stakeholders to access or manage certain resources (inputs, water, shared paths, etc.) to facilitate the processing and marketing of products.

Lastly, those needs change over time as peasant farmers change (see Figure 6). In other words, a producer's advisory needs will evolve over time as he or she develops new skills, increases sales volume, passes the farm down to children and develops new activities in addition to agricultural, forest and pastoral production (processing, sales, seasonal work in the cities, etc.)[31]. Needs and demand may also be expressed by stakeholders other than producers within value chains (upstream and downstream) and territories (local authorities).

Figure 6: How producers evolve as they move along the advisory path



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Farming, Republic of Niger, national agricultural advisory system, 2017

Each "agrarian situation" has different advisory needs/demand. **The best "starting point" for agricultural advisory services needs to be identified each time:** Is it better to start by investing in structuring peasant-farmer communities (support/literacy) or by offering technical advisory services on a large scale? Or is it best to start by offering managerial advisory services for farms? Should priority be given to intervening at the level of the farm, FO, groups comprising many different actors or the value chain?

The diversity of advisory methods and tools is recognised as an advantage for NAAS/ISAAS. It is also understood that (i) there is no standard one-size-fits-all method

[31] Two studies (Niger and Cameroon) also looked at how peasant farmers and organisations evolve, and proposed "advisory paths" to support those changes.

and that (ii) there is a need for synergies (and therefore de-partitioning) between technical extension services, technical/economic and managerial advisory services and other types of advisory services.

Moreover, the lack of taxes, VAT declaration and regulatory obligations (environmental requirements, animal tagging, social declarations, health monitoring, traceability, etc.) in agriculture – or the great difficulty enforcing them in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa – makes it hard to create a framework that incentivises the development of advisory services.

Case study: Advisory services coupled with certification for "sustainable cocoa cultivation" in Ivory Coast. A scheme offering technical advisory services with a focus on managing cocoa farms, implemented by the downstream portion of the value chain. The scheme did not develop organisational advisory services for cooperatives, even though advisory services depend on the technicians from those groups. **The study notes that farmer field schools, which are considered to be a major tool for technical advisory services, are quickly "running out of steam", and that a new "coaching" approach needs to be introduced combining group training and advisory services with individual advisory services.**

Case study: Implementation of advisory services for family farms by FOs in Burkina Faso. An overview of the experience of the National Federation of Naam Groups (Fédération Nationale des Groupements Naam), which created **a segmentation mechanism for its members in order to better serve their needs.** Level 1 is for producers who are not familiar with advisory services for family farms. Level 2 is for members who have learned the basics of advisory services for family farms and who want to progress further. Level 3 is for members who receive individual advisory services; they also receive group advisory services. Level 4 is for members who have received individual advisory services for several years and are now looking for more tailored advisory services to set up projects.

Case study: ACEFA programme in Cameroon. Segmentation of "beneficiaries" (referred to as "clients") according to their needs: Level 1 (65% to 70% of total): technical advisory services and technical/economic advisory services for "small" businesses (individual or groups) with few or no means of production and few or no activities, assisted by agropastoral technical/economic advisors and specialised technical/economic advisors. Level 2 (20% to 25%): technical/economic advisory services and managerial advisory services for "mid-sized" companies, assisted by management advisors. Level 3 (5% to 10%): managerial advisory services and business advisory services for "large" companies, assisted by business advisors.

V. Recognising the diversity of the offer and the variety of current schemes in the field

The current offer of agricultural advisory services is insufficient, to be sure, but **there is a great diversity of agricultural advisory schemes in the field**. The rich variety of schemes, however, is **rarely acknowledged by policy decision-makers**[32], who often underestimate schemes run by the private sector and the agricultural profession.

[32] Two recent studies in Niger (one in Dosso and the other in Tahoua, Tillabéri and Agadez) indicate that public advisory schemes (by the State) now have the fewest staff and advisors in the field.

That diversity can be analysed from several different angles:

- **Institutional and governance models:** public schemes (run by an administration or a public or semi-public office), private schemes (input suppliers, engineering offices, NGOs, etc.), schemes by the agricultural profession (cooperatives, service centres, chambers of agriculture, etc.);
- **Technical models:** Distinction must first be made between schemes where advisory services are the main focus (e.g. accounting firm or service centre) and schemes where advisory services play a secondary role (e.g. input supplier, agribusiness). Schemes also differ in terms of the field or fields covered (technical extension services only, managerial advisory services for farms or FOs, legal advisory services, etc.) and approach (individual approach vs group approach, degree to which farmers are involved in producing the advisory services). Another important aspect of the technical model for advisory services is the decision of whether or not to link advisory services to other services for farmers.
- **Human-resources skills at all levels:** people managing and designing advisory schemes, supervisors, advisors in the field (a managerial advisor for an FO is very different from a technical/commercial advisor for an input supplier or equipment seller), peasant-farmer instructors[33]. Those skills will help determine the type of advisory services and how they are provided.
- **Economic and financial models:** fully subsidised by the State, shared-cost (State, value chains, producers), paid for by the beneficiaries (directly or indirectly), combined (or not) with other services, etc.

A table summarising different agricultural advisory schemes is presented in the appendix, and an excerpt of that summary table is presented in Table 1. The summary table is organised by type of advisory operator. It distinguishes in particular between State schemes, schemes run by the agricultural profession and schemes run by the private sector/businesses. It is first and foremost characterised by the objectives those operators set for themselves: a private stakeholder in a value chain, such as an agribusiness firm, will develop advisory services for the types of production it will buy from a specific group (the producers it has a purchase agreement with). A public service or "general-purpose" FO will offer advisory services to a more diverse group within a particular region, to ensure equality and support the development of the territory.

Nearly a quarter-century after the State's partial withdrawal from agricultural advisory services, **private schemes offering advisory services finally emerged** – albeit slowly – in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. That was in large part because production systems started becoming more intensified, and inputs and equipment were used more frequently. For example, dairy companies may have an interest in developing advisory services for animal nutrition in order to sell feed and artificial insemination, and therefore be able to buy more milk during the dry season.

The different schemes illustrate the diversity of the offer. For some, advisory services are at the heart of their mission. For others, advisory services complement their commercial activity. The former see themselves as an advisory scheme and are generally recognised as such by

[33] Depending on the country, the following terms are used: peasant-farmer instructors, indigenous instructors, peasant-farmer relays, relay instructors, peasant-farmer pilots, etc.

the State, but that is not always the case with the latter. Certain schemes are closely linked to agri-food value chains: input and equipment shops, and private pesticide applicators (who, for instance, are used a lot in market gardening), private veterinarians and livestock assistants who can get involved in intensive workshops (e.g. poultry farming near urban areas), downstream companies (trade or processing industries) that can train producers on the quality of the products demanded. Private companies that a priori have nothing to do with the agricultural sector (e.g. mobile-telephony companies) are also getting involved in agricultural advisory services. Other schemes are more linked to investment projects: engineering offices that are often involved as service providers for development projects or for agricultural companies; microfinance institutions that can help review a business plan. Lastly, NGOs and civil-society organisations present a unique case when they develop advisory services with a general interest rather than a strictly private or commercial interest.

The boundaries between those major types of advisory schemes can also be blurry sometimes, for instance between engineering offices and NGOs that can provide the same advisory services in competition with each other. **It is clear, therefore, that there is a wide variety of private actors involved in agricultural advisory services with very different interests, means and approaches.** It is therefore important to have a **better understanding** of what the private sector is doing in terms of agricultural advisory services, especially since those stakeholders are rarely proactive when it comes to presenting their activities to the State services or discussing their methodological choices and results.

The **offer of advisory services from the private sector has advantages and disadvantages.** On the one hand, it costs nothing to the State (except for cases involving subsidies), it is generally based on sustainable funding models (contribution from producers or value chains, whether the cost of the advisory services is clearly stated or concealed) and it has the potential to affect a large number of producers in organised value chains. On the other hand, it generally has an underlying “interest” influencing the technical messages (for instance, input shops in Peru that encourage overconsumption of chemical inputs), it rarely takes into account the farm as a whole, and it generally does not affect producers who are marginalised (geographically, socially or economically). So although it is a good idea to better identify and recognise these private advisory schemes in order to **better integrate them into an NAAS/ISAAS** (control them better, train them better, get them to participate in experience-sharing), the private sector should not be mythologised.

The same goes for schemes run by the agricultural profession, which emerged a quarter-century ago in certain countries and which also present a great diversity. There are, however, notable differences between the different countries (Mali, Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Guinea, for example, have well-developed peasant-farmer movements, while Tunisia and Chad have much more rudimentary FOs).

To achieve a producer/advisor ratio that is more or less acceptable (quantitative objective), **there is no choice but to recognise and draw on the diversity of schemes in the field: public, private, agricultural profession.** Moreover, those different schemes often have complementary approaches (technology transfer, farmer-to-farmer exchanges, mediation, etc.) and mobilise complementary skills (superior technicians or engineers, basic technicians,

FO employees trained on the job, indigenous peasant farmers[34]/peasant-farmer relays, elected FO leaders). Drawing on the diversity of schemes by making use of their comparative advantages helps ensure that producers' various needs are met (qualitative objectives).

AFDI note on FOs and agricultural and advisory policies, which shows that several FOs have developed advisory schemes in the field and have gotten involved in creating advisory policies. In Benin, where joint management between the State and the profession is well established, the national strategy for agricultural advisory services identifies four major types of stakeholders in advisory services: the public sector through the Ministry of Agriculture and its different branches; farmers and FOs; decentralised local authorities; and the private sector, including its commercial and industrial components. In Benin, drawing up contracts for advisory services makes it possible to clearly define each party's roles. The situation is not as clear in Guinea, and Moussa Para Diallo, president of the national council of peasant-farmer organisations in Guinea (CNOP-G) and the FPFD peasant-farmer federation, confirms that "*FOs are carrying out interesting experiments with regard to agricultural advisory services, but those experiments are not sufficiently recognised, built on or shared.*"

Case study: Madagascar. This study explains how the Cap Magalasy organisation, an offshoot of an FO, structured itself an association that specialises in advisory services. It shows that the line between FO, NGO and service centre is sometimes very fine, and that space must be made for those institutional innovations, particularly if they are promoted by peasant farmers.

Case study: APROSSA-Afrique Verte in Burkina Faso. This study highlights the complementarity of the roles of the different "agents" in the field within a chain of training instructors: instructors for running group and individual training for peasant-farmer relays; peasant-farmer relays for replicating them and offering advisory services at local level; and elected FO leaders to raise awareness or manage tensions/conflicts.

Table 1: Main types of advisory schemes (see detailed breakdown of schemes in appendix)

	SCHEME PROMOTED BY	EXAMPLE	SERVICES
PUBLIC / STATE	**State and its services** (public, led by administration employees)	ONCA: Morocco AVFA: Tunisia Extension services of ministries: many countries	Mainly extension and technical advisory services Technical/economic advisory services (less common) Managerial advisory services (less common)
	Advisory agency (public economic institution led by elected officials, OR semi-public company: State, private sector, producers)	ANADER: Ivory Coast ANCAR: Senegal ACEFA and project for a future advisory agency: Cameroon	Extension and technical advisory services Technical/economic advisory services Managerial advisory services
AGRICULTURAL	**Chamber of Agriculture** (also linked to the public sector)	Network of chambers of agriculture and regional chambers of agriculture in Niger	Extension services / Technical advisory services Technical-economic advisory services / Managerial advisory services

[34] This figure in advisory and extension services, also referred to as "peasant-farmer instructor", has been included in many schemes in the field without any particular study having been dedicated to it. They are male (and, less commonly, female) producers recognised by their peers as good technicians who are capable of instructing groups, providing information and providing basic advisory services. Their mobilisation depends mainly on their motivation and any material/financial aid they receive from projects or directly from their FO.

	"General-purpose" FOs (in several production-related value chains) Involved downstream and upstream of production	FUPRO (FO) with its affiliate "Maïs": Benin	Technical advisory services of a general nature for several crops, not always very "specialised" (rarely technical/economic)
	"Specialised" FOs highly integrated in value chains and demanding markets downstream (and sometimes upstream)	Farmer milk-collection centres offering multiple services: Niger Advisory services for certified-cocoa cooperatives: Ivory Coast, Cameroon Cotton advisory services – UNPCB: Burkina Faso	Specialised technical advisory services for production, sometimes with technical-economic advisory services / managerial advisory services: analysis of group margins, technical meetings in the field), individual managerial advisory services
	Advisory services run by **farmer "management centres"**	CGERV: Senegal CGR (cotton): Mali Faranfasi so federation of service centres (FCPS): Mali	Technical/economic advisory services (rarely technical advisory services), managerial advisory services, business advisory services, legal advisory services, specialised advisory services (e.g. water management), training, information
OTHER PRIVATE SECTOR	Private entities **supplying inputs and equipment** upstream (and sometimes downstream)	Private advisory services – input suppliers: Peru Private veterinarians and livestock assistants: Niger Input shops, veterinarian pharmacies: many countries	Technical advisory services of a general nature for several crops, not always very "specialised" (rarely technical/economic) The advisory services support commercial activity
	Private **agribusiness and industrial-agriculture** firms in a value chain, therefore downstream and often upstream	Company in the poultry value chain: Ivory Coast Company in the cashew value chain: Ivory Coast SODECOTON: Cameroon Cocoa certification: Ivory Coast industrial milk-processing company (Solani) on the quality of milk: Niger	Specialised technical advisory services for production and technical/economic advisory services Managerial advisory services (less common) The advisory services support commercial activity
	Private advisory **firms** and engineering offices Economic interest groups Independent consultants Specialists in business and/or agriculture	Private advisors: Tunisia Offices that "draw up business plans to obtain funding: Morocco, Cameroon, Private accounting firms Certain banks (CAM Morocco)	Specialised (or highly specialised) advisory services generally with a high level of expertise (therefore billable), often on an ad hoc basis, and may cover several areas (business advisory services): technical / technical-economic, legal, accounting, tax, organisational, quality / certification, environment, management, etc.
	Private company not necessarily specialised in advisory services, business or agriculture, and therefore with support from technical partners (who are specialised)	Orange ICT advisory services: Mali Farmerline (TAHMO initiative): Ghana	Provision of specialised agricultural information (monitoring): technical, weather, prices, etc. The advisory services support commercial activity and vice versa
	Scheme run by **"NGOs" and civil-society organisations**	NGOs sufficiently specialised in agricultural advisory services: AFDI, FERT, AGRISUD, AVSF, etc. Many other less-specialised NGOs and civil-society organisations: local NGOs, churches	Extension services Technical advisory services Technical/economic advisory services Managerial advisory services

Source: This table was produced as part of this study.

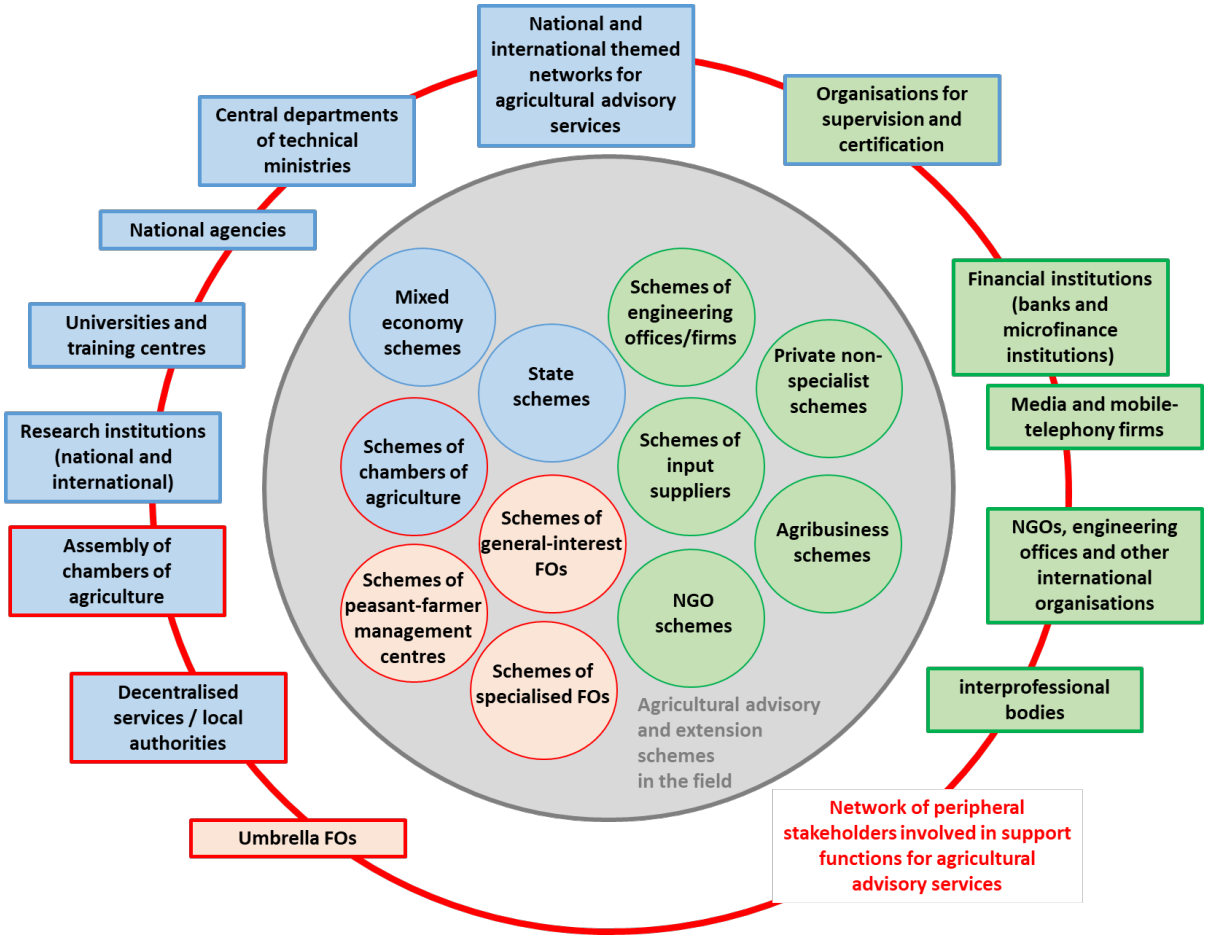
VI. Recognising the diversity of advisory stakeholders and the importance of support functions

The centre of Figure 7 shows the diversity of advisory schemes in the field for producers and FOs. Those schemes are run by three types of actors: public services or similar (in blue), private companies (including engineering offices and NGOs) (in green) and FOs (in red). The

boundaries between those three categories are not always rigid: for example, in cases of joint management (semi-public agency associating different stakeholders), or NGOs with farmers on the board of directors, or chambers of agriculture (which are public entities from the agricultural profession).

Too often, diagnostic studies and studies for the creation of advisory policies only look at advisory schemes in the field, despite the fact that there are other stakeholders who are essential to ensuring that those schemes function properly and make all necessary progress. Figure 7 shows all the **stakeholders that perform the different support functions** that underpin or are connected with the schemes in the field. There are three types of actors: **those who provide support to advisory schemes** (research, training, funding agencies); **those who coordinate, supervise and monitor**[35] (central public services, coordination agencies jointly managed with the profession); and **those who develop partnerships** (networks of advisory experts) or **provide services** (banks, microfinance institutions, insurance, media, telephony operators). Those partners galvanise, orient, contribute to and sometimes fund advisory services, because they have every interest in helping farms grow. **They must therefore be recognised and taken into account in an NAAS.**

Figure 7: Diversity of schemes in the field and network of stakeholders for support functions



Source: This table was produced as part of this study

[35] Particularly in the case of regulated professions.

VII. Identifying, galvanising and sharing the support functions of an NAAS/ISAAS

A number of support functions are necessary to ensure the proper functioning of an NAAS/ISAAS: planning, scheduling, coordinating, leading exchange networks, monitoring schemes in the field and ensuring satisfactory quality, funding certain innovative schemes, evaluating, capitalising, drawing lessons from experiences in the field, producing reference materials, adding to and improving NAAS/ISAAS content (messages, approaches, tools) through research on the subject, training agents, relaying information and supervising.

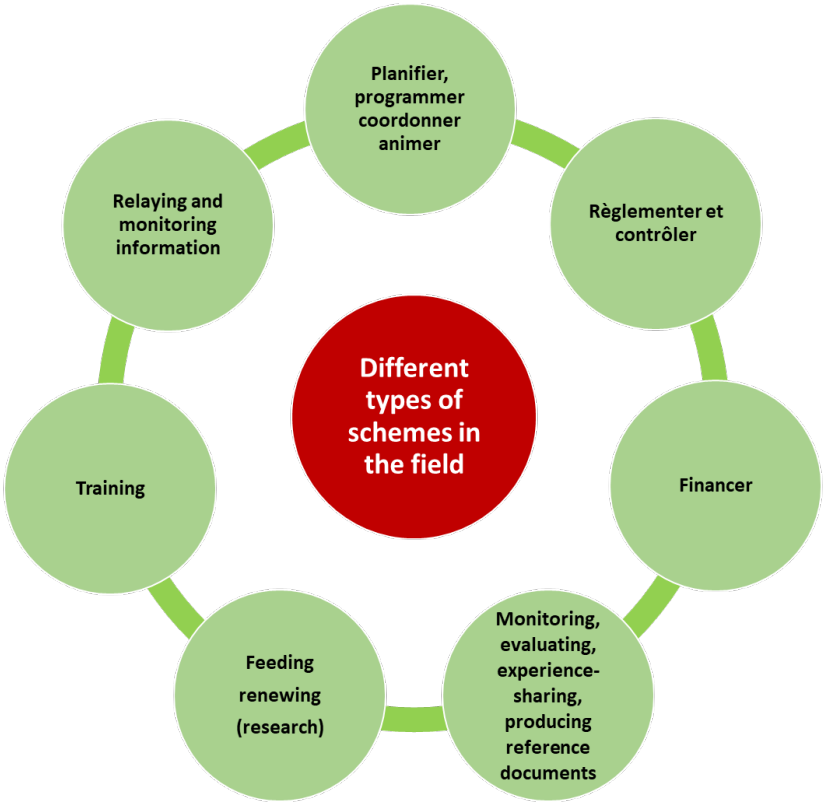
Those functions may be carried out by public entities, private entities or entities from the agricultural profession (according to the rule of comparative advantages) or by different ministerial sectors (agriculture, research, higher education and vocational training). **Some of those functions are solely the responsibility of the State (e.g. supervision), while others may/must be shared.**

The stakeholders involved in the support functions must provide consistent and regular support for the advisory schemes in the field (Figures 7 and 8). In addition to the sovereign functions of regulatory supervision, **four main support functions** help galvanise the schemes in the field and boost their impact by facilitating the exchange of information about past experience:

- Updating training programmes for advisors and producers by incorporating the basics and postures of advisory services;
- Updating technical messages and advisory methods and tools (the latter aspect is often neglected[36]) based on how production needs and constraints are changing over time;
- Building on the schemes' past experience, organising exchanges between them, informing as many people as possible;
- Developing economic and financial models for advisory schemes in the field and support functions (financial and tax engineering, negotiation with donors).

Figure 8: Support functions of an NAAS/ISAAS

[36] There is generally a lack of skills in advisory engineering ("methodologists").



Source : *C. Rigourd, P. Dugué, B. Djariri, I. Maman,P. Derache*

Table 2: Main support functions of the NAAS/ISAAS
(each may be performed by one or more stakeholders, depending on the case)

Support functions	
Planning, scheduling, coordinating and leading *(main aspects of steering)*	• Define the national strategy for agricultural advisory services and extension services • Propose draft bills/decrees to the government, or make the necessary decisions
	• Plan the implementation of the agricultural advisory and extension-services strategy, and schedule cross-functional and support activities at national level • Lead the NAAS/ISAAS and coordinate its actions at national level • Ensure consistency between NAAS/ISAAS and the other rural-development programmes/ initiatives
	• Schedule the implementation of the agricultural advisory strategy at sub-national level (adapting the NAAS/ISAAS to regional or other contexts) • Lead the NAAS/ISAAS and coordinate the schemes in the field at sub-national level (regional or other)
Regulating, supervising the schemes and NAAS/ISAAS	• Regulate agricultural advisory services and extension services (in line with environmental, tax, legal and social regulations) • Supervise/audit the management of public funds at central level • Supervise/audit the management of funds allocated to public and private advisory and extension schemes in the field • Supervise the quality of the NAAS/ISAAS's processes • Provide certification: veterinarian, certified accountant, certification for labels, etc.
Funding the schemes in the field	• Help fund private schemes promoted by the agricultural profession (according to sustainable, virtuous mechanisms differentiated based on whether it is the private sector or the agricultural profession)
	• Help fund public schemes
Monitoring, evaluating, sharing experiences, drawing lessons, producing reference materials	• Monitor and evaluate the NAAS/ISAAS • Build on the NAAS/ISAAS's experience (study, scientific publication, note for decision-makers) • Encourage the sharing of experiences, management of knowledge (via ICT in particular), communication • Produce technical/economic reference materials (observatory function) for decision-makers, agricultural professionals, advisors, banks and financial institutions
Contributing to and updating the system for agricultural advisory services and extension services *(research)*	• Draw up technical messages • Conduct research in the social sciences on advisory services and innovation • Propose approaches, methods and tools for advisory and extension services • Approve messages and approaches/methods/tools • Organise technical and methodological support (back-stopping)
Training advisors	• Basic training • Continuing training
	• Update and improve training programmes (include new topics: nutrition, sustainable practices, gender, postures of advisors, etc.) • Facilitate experience-sharing between advisors
Relaying information and monitoring	Relaying information and monitoring on: • Advisory schemes, their services and access to them (and, more generally, on the stakeholders in the agricultural world and their functions) • Aid (subsidies) and, in general, funding (banks, etc.) for agriculture • Regulation: environmental, legal, tax, social, etc. • Projects, programmes, etc. and their "support" • Markets • Agricultural statistics • Campaign forecasts

Identifying in detail the different support functions and associated tasks makes it easier to plan how to best share them between the different stakeholders, and allows the State to refocus on its key functions.

There is no single answer when it comes to defining the State's role in advisory services. Two things are certain: (i) the State's role in advisory services has diminished, (ii) the State is still a necessary player in advisory services. **In particular, the State must:**

- Fulfil certain sovereign functions of an NAAS/ISAAS: define the national strategy, regulate, monitor;
- Fulfil certain public-service missions that are essential to an NAAS/ISAAS: functional literacy, basic training, research[37];
- Guarantee equality of access to advisory services for all, by covering marginal zones and by working with marginalised communities that will never be of interest to the private sector.

Case study: Peru. The study presents a scheme for technical advisory services that is quite efficient (in terms of 100% coverage for dairy farmers and without excluding producers) but that focuses only on the milk workshop and that is implemented by suppliers of inputs and veterinary products. The technical messages come from firms that supply input sellers (*casas commerciales*). **The scheme is not part of a broader advisory system and does not have support functions.** The advisors' activities are not coordinated, the advisors do not receive complementary back-stopping/training aside from a few informal exchanges between advisors, the impacts are not evaluated (technical advisory services lead to an increase in the consumption of inputs and therefore production costs, and they promote conventional intensification; but is this in the interest of producers?). The Mantaro region does not have any strong, active FOs, which explains the lack of peasant farmers in advisory governance.

VIII. Developing sustainable funding for advisory services

The FAO recently began using the **business-model** concept as a simplified analytical tool for understanding how a service provider[38] determines its operating procedures, interacts with customers, covers its costs and – if all goes well – generates profit. Seven business models have been identified (see Table 3) and may be broken down into three main groups.

- **Services that are free for beneficiaries (A1, A2, A3):** The **A1** model is the most common. The government or donors fund the service provider, who provides its services to the producers, small businesses or FOs in order to strengthen their capacities. In the **A2** model, agri-food businesses (input suppliers or buyers) sign a contract with a service provider so that the provider will advise a certain type of farmer. The input suppliers have an interest in making sure that the farmers use the inputs correctly and that they are encouraged to buy the inputs again the following season. The buyers hope the farmers will boost their production volume or improve the quality of their production. The **A3** model features services cheques: farmers receive cheques funded in large part by the government or a

[37] Most often, research is conducted by the public sector. But experience-sharing and monitoring and evaluation may be handled by private entities, NGOs or engineering offices.

[38] The service providers (e.g. agricultural advisory services) are sometimes also stakeholders in the value chain (buyers, processors, etc.).

donor thanks to taxation at a certain level of the value chain. They can use those cheques to pay previously identified providers of advisory services.

- **Subsidised services that are partially paid for by producers (B1, B2):** In the **B1** model, the farmers, either individually or as a group, pay for a portion of the service they receive in cash or in kind. Most of the cost is funded by the government or donors. In the **B2** model, the cooperative provides the service to its members either directly or through an intermediary (service provider). Funding for the service provider comes in large part from the cooperative, and from subscription fees and financial support from donors or the government.
- **Services paid for in full (C1, C2):** Farmers may also pay in full for the advisory services they receive. This is the case for larger entities (large farms or large cooperatives of family farmers). In the **C1** business model, the farmers may ask a service provider or their cooperative to perform services in exchange for payment. In the **C2** model, the service provider incorporates the service into another transaction, such as the rental of equipment, the purchase of inputs or the sale of products.

This tool is useful, but simplified. The boundaries between the different models are not always watertight. For instance, A2 and C2 are sometimes quite similar, because the company in A2 may pass on the cost of the service to the farmer in one way or another. In other cases, funding for advisory services is obtained from value chains through parafiscal charges, and farmers therefore cover a portion of the cost of those services.

Table 3: Main business models for advisory schemes

Group	Business model	Description	Funders	Service providers	Clients
A Free services	A1	Services mainly free	Donors, governments	Public or private	Producers, small businesses, other service providers
	A2	Services paid for by companies, offered to producers	Companies	Private	Producers, small businesses
	A3	Cheques for services	Governments, donors	Private	Producers, cooperatives
B Subsidised services	B1	Service partially paid for by producers	Governments, donors, fees, contributions in kind	Private	Producers (groups)
	B2	Services subsidised by cooperatives for their members	Governments, donors, subscription fees	Cooperatives	Members of cooperatives
C Services paid for in full	C1	Services paid for by clients	Clients	Private	Entrepreneurs, cooperatives
	C2	Integrated services	Clients: included in the price of other transactions	Company selling inputs or buying agricultural products	Producers

Source: Barlet, 2014 adapted from Wongtschowski, 2013

While those business models are useful for describing and designing funding mechanisms for schemes in the field, they do not cover funding for support functions, which are vital to agricultural advisory services. Are support functions always covered by the State with support from donors?

CHAPTER 3: From comparative analysis of policies or programmes for agricultural advisory services in Africa to identification of key challenges

I. Comparative analysis of six public policies for agricultural advisory services in Africa

A comparative analysis of five different cases that we contributed to involving the creation of national policies or programmes for agricultural advisory services in Africa (Morocco 2013, Tunisia 2016, Niger 2016, Ivory Coast 2016, Cameroon 2017[39]), plus one case in Uganda, reveals very different strategic approaches with regard to agricultural advisory policy. Those strategic approaches differ from one another in terms of who manages the schemes in the field, governance methods and funding mechanisms. The analysis also reveals shared priorities among the different countries.

This analysis of the different strategies and policies (whether recent or currently being developed) for advisory services shows the place given to advisory services in the policies and projects for agricultural development in the different countries, the challenges that have been identified by stakeholders and the balance of power between stakeholders, which has an influence on how problems are tackled and on the solutions proposed.

II. Presentation of six public policies

(See Table 4 below for brief overview of the six public policies)

In Cameroon: The ACEFA[40] programme, which was set up in 2008 and is funded through "C2D" (debt-reduction and development contract) funds, mobilises more than 2,100 public advisors in the field with several areas of specialisation, giving priority to managerial advisory services for more than 17,000 basic producer groups and FOs to ensure their longevity and help them develop, and to implement production-focused projects. Coaching advisory services are coupled with technical advisory services and collective technical/economic advisory services for the main areas of production of the members of those groups, and with ad hoc producer groups. Certain management advisors offer individual assistance to family farms (currently about 3,000 farms), which has led to the creation of an observatory for producing technical/economic reference materials on the different types of production and production systems they represent throughout Cameroon. Joint management, which is being established with agricultural professionals at regional and national level, is presented as a necessary

[39] Note, however, that the studies did not have the same scope: development of national strategies for agricultural advisory services in Niger and Cameroon, development of projects/programmes relating to managerial advisory services in Morocco, Tunisia and Ivory Coast.

[40] Improving the Competitivity of Agropastoral Family Farms. https://www.afd.fr/fr/ameliorer-la-competitivite-des-exploitations-familiales-au-cameroun-quels-impacts

condition for the programme's success. The strategy for ensuring the programme's longevity involves creating, by the end of the programme in 2022, a national agency for agropastoral advisory services in Cameroon funded by the State, by parafiscal charges in organised value chains and by international donors. It also involves, for extension services, the few remaining NAREP[41] agents and the scheme integrated into the cotton value chain and entirely funded by that value chain (200 agents) and a multitude of small operators linked to NGOs, including churches and cooperatives (cocoa, food production, etc.). **This is therefore a pretty massive revival of public extension and advisory services with some notable new features which actually constitute an "internal revolution": introduction of joint management between the State and the agricultural profession, introduction of managerial advisory services (for FOs on production-focused projects and for producers), upcoming creation of a national agency and, ultimately, mixed funding (including parafiscal charges).**

In Morocco: The Green Morocco Plan (GMP), a massive financial tool that is essential for agricultural development through value chains, was launched before agricultural advisory services were reformed. That reform, particularly the implementation of the public advisory office (ONCA), remedies certain weaknesses of the GMP when it comes to coaching producers. Support/advisory services for producers are very different depending on whether the focus is on small family farms (Pillar II of the Green Morocco Plan) or large farms (Pillar I). Schemes in the field are mixed in theory, but public schemes get more attention, particularly through the ONCA, which employs roughly 1,500 agents working to support small family farms under Pillar II. Private advisory services are provided to family farms mainly by input and equipment suppliers, with no supervision or support from the State. Public advisory services (ONCA) are often coupled with investments that are highly subsidised by GMP (irrigation equipment, planting of fruit trees, etc.). Governance for "Pillar II" advisory schemes is public and leaves little room for chambers of agriculture, which have little influence in Morocco. In a second phase of the advisory-services reform, the State encourages the emergence of private advisory services by largely subsidising projects in the field, training staff at engineering offices and granting approval to private entities capable of delivering agricultural advisory services. **For small family farms under *Pillar II,* it is therefore essentially a public advisory scheme (because of its advisors, governance, funding) which ultimately aims to see a greater presence of the private sector in advisory services.**

In Niger: An advisory-services reform was launched in 2016, adopted in 2017, and became operational in 2018. The NAAS is based on multiple advisory schemes in the field: public (ministries and National office of hydro-agricultural facilities – ONAHA), agricultural profession (FOs, chambers of agriculture) and private (veterinarians and livestock assistants, service centres, economic interest groups/advisory groups, NGOs, input sellers and veterinary pharmacies, seed farms, agribusiness companies, milk collectors, etc.). Public schemes now have the fewest advisors in the field, and the balance at national level between schemes run by the public sector, private sector and agricultural profession[42] is 1/3, 1/3 and 1/3. Those schemes cover an array of different advisory needs (technical, managerial, legal, for producers and FOs, etc.), with a strong focus at the moment on technical extension and advisory services

[41] National Agricultural Research and Extension Programme

[42] That 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 balance takes into account supervisors, advisors and indigenous instructors, but not peasant-farmer relays. If peasant-farmer relays were included, schemes run by the agricultural profession would have the greater share.

and a growing interest in managerial advisory services (for FOs and producers). Value-chain advisory services, however, are poorly covered, and agroecology issues are insufficiently taken into account, as are the specific needs of women and young people. The NAAS has been adapted to each region in order to be more in line with the realities of producers (SRCAs, which are based on regional diagnostic assessments and create their regional plans). Niger also set up an agency to promote agricultural advisory services (*agence de promotion du conseil agricole*, or "*APCA*"), but it is only involved in support functions (national and regional: coordination, supervision, monitoring/evaluation, allocation of funding, etc.) and does not employ advisors, which is a significant difference compared with agencies promoting agricultural advisory services in other countries. The APCA is a public administrative entity, and its governance is shared between the State and the agricultural private sector[43]. The NAAS will be rolled out gradually in several steps, and ultimately the State will refocus on its sovereign functions and on ramping up schemes run by the private sector and the agricultural profession. The NAAS has ties with FISAN (fund for agriculture), both reforms having been adopted simultaneously as part of the presidential 3N Initiative (Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens). **The sector is therefore currently undergoing major reform in terms of the funding of agriculture and advisory services. The reform is spearheaded by the State, but it must leave substantial room for the agricultural profession and the private sector when it comes to joint governance and to funding a wide range of advisory schemes in the field.**

In Ivory Coast: Advisory services in the field are provided mainly by ANADER[44], a semi-public entity that was founded in 1993 and that became a 35% State-owned public limited company (*société anonyme*) in 1998, with organised value chains contributing to its governance. ANADER deploys roughly 1,400 agents in the field throughout the entire country, 72% of whom are basic rural-development agents who implement "agricultural advisory services" and who work with farms and FOs. ANADER is funded in part by the State for general-interest projects, and by FIRCA[45] for more specialised projects, and therefore indirectly by the organised value chains. Private operators and operators from the profession also provide advisory services at the request of FOs. Those services are funded by FIRCA, by projects receiving external aid (more and more loans) or directly by the value chains. Created in 2002, FIRCA collects parafiscal charges from organised value chains and funds programmes for the provision of agricultural services (research, extension services, advisory services and training) in crop, forestry and animal production. Since 2017, FIRCA has been coordinating (through C2D funds, as part of the FADCI programme) a pilot experiment for managerial advisory services at three sites, because it identified the need to complement technical advisory services focusing on the value chain with more global advisory services for farms and FOs. In 2017, FIRCA had a budget of over 13.9 billion CFA francs[46] and employed 116 agents. **It is therefore a mixed system (State, agricultural profession, private sector) with strong participation from the agricultural profession and the private sector, well-established joint management and a**

[43] There are six State representatives on the board of directors as well as six representatives from the agricultural private sector: five from the agricultural profession (FOs and chambers of agriculture) and one from the agricultural private sector (chamber of commerce).
[44] National Agency for the Support of Rural Development.
[45] Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Development.
[46] 99% of which is from five value chains: rubber (47%), coffee – cacao (21%), oil palm (16%), cashew (9%) and cotton (6%).

powerful financial tool (FIRCA) covering all crop and livestock-farming value chains, but with a big focus on technical advisory services in the major export value chains (which cover most of the funding needs through parafiscal charges for exports).

In Tunisia: Extension services and training are provided to farmers by AFVA[47], which was founded in 1999 and which comprises roughly 550 agents in the field divided into 186 territorial extension cells for agriculture, which oversee 357 agricultural influence cells at local level. There are also roughly 200 accredited agricultural advisors, who are independent private stakeholders (individual or at engineering offices) providing specialised technical advisory services. Some of them provide technical/economic advisory services and managerial advisory services for farms. Those managerial advisory services were developed with support from APIA[48] and are mainly intended for the beneficiaries of its funding. Input and equipment suppliers are also a source of advisory services. Lastly, agricultural development groups (local FOs initially bringing together farmers for the management of water) should ultimately manage subsidies, take charge of extension services and therefore herald a large-scale privatisation of agricultural services. But agricultural development groups are currently struggling to autonomously perform their main mission: to ensure collective management of irrigation water. **It is therefore a predominantly public system (in its schemes in the field, governance and funding) with low participation from the private sector. The agricultural profession is still weakly structured, and therefore has a small presence in advisory services.**

In Uganda, privatisation of agricultural advisory services was initiated in 2001 as part of projects funded by external aid and following mixed results from public extension programmes (T&V). Advisory services are therefore provided to farmers by NGOs, engineering offices or agricultural supply firms based on requests from FOs. State services and district governments supervise and monitor all the schemes. A semi-public agency called the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS, http://www.naads.or.ug/) decides which requests may be dealt with, allocates funding, ensures coordination in the field and monitors/evaluates advisory service providers. Large upstream and downstream agricultural and telephony firms and large farms are asked to help fund advisory services. By 2021, the State plans to directly fund only 50% of the cost of advisory services, with the private sector and agricultural profession covering the rest (the State currently funds 75%, and the rest is covered by external aid). NAADS also organises experience-sharing and provides useful information to producers and advisors from the private sector. It also promotes the emergence of digital tools that are useful for advisory services. This in-depth reform of advisory services was approved in 2016 through the publication of a new agricultural advisory policy. **It is therefore a system where advisory services are provided mainly by the private sector at the request of FOs, but supervised, monitored, coordinated and funded mainly by the State, with participation from the private sector expected to increase, including in funding.**

[47] Agency for Agricultural Extension Services and Training. Public administrative entity under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources and therefore the Regional Commissions for Agricultural Development and their branches, offices by product.

[48] Agency for the Promotion of Agricultural Investment, which is a Tunisian government agency created in 1983.

Table 4: Comparative analysis of six national agricultural advisory policies in Africa

	Main public-policy orientations to revive agricultural advisory services in six different contexts		
	Scheme	Two key support functions	
		Governance	Funding
Cameroon	Mainly public (ACEFA, NAREP)	Currently public, but joint management between the State and agricultural profession is being tested (ACEFA)	External aid + State
Morocco	Mixed: ONCA (public) plays an important role for small farms, and private advisory services for big farms	Public (Ministry of Agriculture) – not jointly managed at the moment	Green Morocco Plan (State + loan) and Ministry of Agriculture budget Funded in part by the producers directly: private advisory services
Niger	Mixed (public, agricultural profession, private), but public scheme now has fewest staff	Joint management between the State, agricultural profession and agricultural private sector currently being launched	FISAN (currently being launched) + External aid
Ivory Coast	Mixed (public, agricultural profession, private) with ANADER (semi-public, State holds a minority share) playing an important role	Joint management between the State, agricultural profession and agricultural private sector already well established (in FIRCA)	State + FIRCA + External aid
Tunisia	Mainly public for extension services and training (AFVA) There are also accredited private advisors	Public	External aid + State (AVFA, APIA) Funded in part by the producers directly: private advisory services
Uganda	Mainly private (NGOs, engineering offices) based on FO requests	Public State services and regional governments allocate funding and coordinate	Mainly the State + External aid and contribution from local authorities, producers and a few businesses

Source: Table produced as part of the study

III. Lessons drawn from the comparative analysis

In an effort to revive the agricultural sector, some African countries have introduced a policy or national strategy for agricultural advisory services that builds on the agricultural policy. **This is an indication that those countries need to update their advisory schemes, ensure better coordination between them and provide support for them**. Those policies, provided they are developed collectively and consensually, offer a framework for intervention, which was often lacking for public decision-makers, peasant-farmer leaders and donors when it came to developing and implementing programmes for agricultural advisory services and, more broadly, rural development. The current challenge in many countries is making those advisory policies operational over the long term or at least coordinating/supervising multi-year projects with an agricultural advisory component.

Analysis of the six public policies or strategies for agricultural advisory services shows the differences and similarities between them. **Certain common issues** stand out clearly and largely echo the analyses we presented in the first part of the report. **Governance** and **funding** mechanisms, for instance, need to be improved in order to get the agricultural profession and value chains (interprofessional bodies, private sector) more involved. The challenge of **capacity-building** is always identified too. **Changes to advisory-services methods** are addressed in a more diverse manner (not limited to technical advisory services), and the use of digital tools is generally discussed. Beyond those similarities, analysis of those national strategies also highlights **the complexity and uniqueness of each country**. The proposed policies or strategies reflect the balances of power between stakeholders that have different visions (particularly between public organisations, FOs and private stakeholders from the different value chains). **There is no one-size-fits-all solution for all countries; it is dialogue and negotiation that lead to solid and stable compromises.**

Policies for reviving agricultural advisory services overlap most often on the following points:

- In most cases, the policies evolve, in theory (at least in the documents), **from extension services to agricultural advisory services**[49]. And yet there is not just one technical model for agricultural advisory services but rather a wide range of approaches in the field, which is a great advantage. Moreover, depending on the policy documents, **extension services and technology transfer are still necessary** and are a part of agricultural advisory services[50].
- All advisory schemes face the **difficult task of helping public extension practitioners become advisors**, as those two roles require different soft skills and savoir-faire. Historically approaches were mostly top-down, and agents in the field still tend to give orders and want to impose “the right way of doing things” and “best practices”. Another reason for this is the asymmetry between producers and advisors[51], owing to poor literacy skills among producers and the “learned” attitude of advisors who come from the city or who have received academic training. Which is why it is so important to combine advisory

[49] The glossary (see appendix) provides definitions. In practice, in the field, the evolution of extension services towards advisory services is much less clear and often still involves top-down technology transfer.
[50] In Cameroon, the ministries in question speak of policies for agricultural extension and advisory services, with an emphasis on extension services.
[51] Or “feeling of inferiority” for producers.

services with literacy skills and basic education for young people in rural areas. In most countries, there is also strong growth in the number of peasant-farmer instructors, who are often seen as relays for the advisors. It is necessary to better recognise and assist that function, and to strengthen the capacities of those individuals.

- All these policies recognise, in theory, the different needs (functional literacy, technical advisory services, technical/economic or managerial advisory services, business advisory services, legal advisory services, etc.) and evolving needs (basic needs, advanced needs, all along an "advisory path") of producers. **But addressing all those different needs is not easy in practice. Many countries would like to develop advisory services for agricultural businesses** in order to encourage the emergence of more new agricultural entrepreneurs and/or private investment in agriculture (including agribusiness). But schemes for operational advisory services targeting that group are rare or in the experimental stage: agricultural growth poles in Cameroon and Ivory Coast, and aggregation contracts in Morocco, are having trouble becoming established.
- Certain policies for agricultural advisory services propose **combining advisory services for family farms (*conseil aux exploitations familiales*) and advisory services for FOs** (whether the organisations are formal or not). But advisory services for producers (whether individual or collective) are always the priority because of the strong focus on technical advisory services, and those two types of advisory services (for farms and FOs) are generally run by different department, or even different ministries. But those policies are struggling to establish a link with multi-actor advisory services for joint innovation, which require special skills. They are struggling to coordinate with policies for innovation and research developed by other ministries, which nevertheless affect rural development.
- **All of them have difficulties responding to certain specific needs: on the one hand, those of women and young people in particular, and those of pastoralists (transhumant)**; and on the other hand, when unforeseeable cyclical events arise requiring a swift reaction and extensive expertise (linked to the market: drop in prices; climate variations: drought or excess water, spreading of pests, etc.). The policies concern all regions in those countries, but in reality the schemes in the field are having trouble being rolled out in **zones that are isolated** geographically or where there is no organised value chain.
- **Making them operational is expensive. Consequently, policies to revive agricultural advisory services need to be linked to ambitious funding policies for the sector.** Several countries are setting up dedicated funds (FIRCA in Ivory Coast, FISAN in Niger) or tapping into the State's budget (Green Morocco Plan in Morocco, C2D/State in Cameroon), which requires strong commitment from the State and donors (and therefore trust over the long term). The private sector and agricultural profession may be asked to contribute through a levy on value chains (e.g. FIRCA in Ivory Coast) or if the firms and FOs fund the advisory services themselves. But the political commitment of the different economic stakeholders with regard to advisory services is still weak. In several cases, it is linked to policies that support agriculture by subsidising investment and facilitating access to credit (Tunisia, Morocco and Niger shortly).
- More recently, those policies have sought to develop "massive" tools for relaying information and advisory services, based on **new information and communication technology (NICT) and the rapid development of mobile telephony** (see case study on Burkina Faso in appendix). But these innovations are currently under "development" and

have not yet proven their effectiveness. A pilot phase for designing innovations and evaluating their adoption by advisors (or producers) and their initial impacts is vital for developing this “digital agriculture” on a broader scale.

CHAPTER 4: Analysis of issues and recommendations relating to the revival agricultural advisory services in sub-Saharan Africa

I. Governance issues relating to agricultural advisory services, and recommendations

Agricultural advisory services have an impact in a number of different areas: first, they affect family farms; then FOs, value chains and territories; and lastly, more broadly and indirectly or reflexively, agricultural policies. The choice of advisory policy is therefore closely linked to the choice of agricultural policy, giving indications about which agricultural model(s) to promote: family farming in a large sense, farming as a business, agricultural growth pole or contractual agriculture. **Therefore, the issue hidden behind the governance of schemes or systems for agricultural advisory services is actually the broader issue of the governance of agricultural policies** and joint development (and subsequently joint management) of public policies. Shaping the governance of agricultural advisory services may therefore be a source of tension.

Although the words *participation*, *consultation*, *collaboration* have entered into the jargon of projects, programmes and policies for agricultural development, **the agricultural profession's participation in developing national advisory policies and in jointly managing advisory services is highly variable depending on the country.** Either because the States do not really want it (in which case the place reserved for FOs is narrow, and public administrations are not yet accustomed to engaging in collaboration), or because the FOs choose not to position themselves as joint managers or do not have the capacity or the means to do so. The methods and place given to producers in the governance of agricultural advisory services differ greatly depending on the country:

- **Unsuccessful collaboration and no joint management:** Broad positions are sometimes adopted, such as *"agricultural advisory services are a sovereign function*[52] *of the State"*, which is a clear way of excluding the agricultural profession from being involved in the governance of agricultural advisory services and from carrying out those services in the field. The term "*joint management*" is simply refuted, as in the case of Morocco in 2013. In Burkina Faso, there appeared to be collaboration in 2011 to create the National System for Extension Services and Support for Agricultural Advisory Services (*système national de vulgarisation et d'appui conseil agricole*, or "*SNVACA*"), but the Peasant-Farmer Confederation of Burkina Faso, which actively participated in the process, quickly became disillusioned with the results. In 2012, Marc Gansore, then vice secretary general of CPF and secretary general of the Federation of Agricultural Professionals of Burkina Faso (*fédération des professionnels agricoles du Burkina*, or "*FEPAB*"), said: *"In the initial*

[52] There is no absolute definition of the sovereign functions in the agricultural sector. It depends on the school of thought and on the country.

version of System for Extension Services and Support for Agricultural Advisory Services (système national de vulgarisation et d'appui conseil agricole, or "*SNVACA*"), *no diagnostic assessment was performed for the agricultural advisory services that were set up by the FOs. Agents from the ministry devised a strategy without taking into account the main stakeholders: the producers and FOs!"* (Source: AFDI note in appendix).

- **Somewhat successful collaboration and joint management:** In some cases, positions change over time towards greater acceptance of the principle of joint management, which gradually shapes capacity-building for FOs on the one hand, and the evolution of public services on the other. That is the case, for example, in Niger and Cameroon.
- **Very successful collaboration and joint management:** There are also notable examples showing that FOs can have their voices heard and help define advisory policies. That was the case with "*regards paysans*" ("farmers' views") in Madagascar, collaboration with FOs in Benin and Guinea, etc. There are also moves towards greater joint management of agricultural advisory services: joint management of FIRCA in Ivory Coast; mixed boards of directors at agricultural advisory agencies such as ANADER in Ivory Coast, ANCAR in Senegal and (soon) regional agencies in Benin; joint management in projects to distribute subsidies (ACEFA) in Cameroon and funds from the agricultural development fund in Madagascar.

The fact that producers participate in the governance of agricultural advisory services is a sign that the services are meaningful: reporting the needs/requests of producers, choosing the right tools and approaches for advisory services, identifying the messages, etc. Systems run by the public sector, private sector and agricultural profession may use the same approaches and tools (e.g. farmer field schools), but advisory services will be radically different depending on whether or not peasant farmers participate in their governance. **Too often, the type of advisory service and its aim are closely linked to the choices and type of operators providing the service, whereas they should be based on the requests (or needs) of the producers** (or value chains and territories)**.**

In reality, producers play an important role at all levels of agricultural advisory services: from mobilising peasant-farmer relays and indigenous instructors in the field, to managing the national scheme.

Historically, the State was the sole stakeholder when it came to the governance of agricultural advisory services. FOs then gradually started to participate in governance (depending on the country). While FOs are sometimes able to make their voices heard and participate in the joint management of advisory services, it is rarer for the private sector (value chains) to be involved in governance, with the exception of specific cases such as FIRCA in Ivory Coast and the governance of certain schemes in the field. **And yet the participation of banks and stakeholders upstream and downstream of production is also necessary to better take into account certain economic issues and improve the longevity of advisory systems. Joint management should therefore involve three areas: the State, the agricultural profession and the private agricultural sector.**

Governance bodies could also integrate representatives of agricultural advisors. But in order for that to happen, the role of advisor should be recognised through charters, standards, associations and professional networks. The role of advisor and the many people

in that role (in both the public and private sectors) would therefore be recognised and better taken into account with regard to their commitment in the field under conditions that are often difficult. Certain countries and regional institutions have set out in that direction, such as: Morocco with a law governing the profession of accredited agricultural advisor; the South African Society for Agricultural Extension in South Africa; and the Rural and Agricultural Advisory Network in West and Central Africa (RESCAR–AOC), supported by WECARD.

More globally, as with any large-scale reform, the institutional reforms needed to revive national systems and advisory schemes must also **take into account the long time frame.** The involvement of FOs in the governance of advisory services cannot simply be decreed; it must go hand-in-hand with improvements in the skills of FOs. It is also important to remember that the schemes and support functions need to be developed over time in order to make continual improvements, cope with sudden changes and **facilitate the gradual emergence of the principle of joint management.**

Sometimes there is even a total lack of governance for agricultural advisory services. This is often the case when private firms are the main suppliers of advisory services. In such cases, it seems that it is State supervision and coordination between the different schemes that are most lacking.

AFDI note on agricultural and advisory policies, which shows how **the transition occurred from supervision to participation, joint development of advisory policy, joint management of advisory services and joint management of agricultural policy.** The situations differ by country: collaboration between the State and the profession in Madagascar (2006), Benin (2008) and Niger (2017), leading to the development of advisory policy/strategy; without collaboration in Burkina Faso (2011). Jean-Louis Razafindramanda, president of the SOA network from 2009 to 2016, said: *"Long considered simply as beneficiaries, **peasant farmers in Madagascar are now recognised as stakeholders in society**, capable of participating in policy orientations."* The note also shows that the successful collaboration in Benin **occurred over a long period of time**. Lionel Guezodjé, president of FUPRO from 2010 to 2016, said: "*FOs were really involved in the process, in accordance with their skills at the time. Before 2010, FOs and their technicians were somewhat or entirely unfamiliar with the ins and outs of agricultural advisory services, so much so that they did not have much input to provide or demands to make. (…) Today, it is FUPRO with its multiple branches that is helping carry out most of the advisory activities in Benin through various projects and programmes. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Farming and Fishing does not remain fixed on the texts, which are expected to evolve depending on their implementation.*

Study: Advisory services for family farms (*conseil à l'exploitation familiale*, or "*CEF*") in Burkina Faso. This study shows that **the implementation of CEF is linked to power.** The objectives of a CEF scheme will differ depending on whether it is implemented by cotton producers (UNPCB) (objectives: boost the family farm's performance in terms of crop and livestock farming, and strengthen its capacities to negotiate with commercial partners) or by SOFITEX (objective: boost performance of cotton cultivation). Governance of the scheme is therefore a key issue. In Burkina Faso, the lack of an agreement between UNPCB and SOFITEX regarding CEF governance was one of the reasons why the scheme did not last.

Case study: ACEFA programme in Cameroon. This study identifies **four levels of joint management** (between the State and the profession): national level with a steering committee that monitors compliance with strategic orientations; regional and departmental level with regional and departmental project-selection committees that study their relevance and grant funding; departmental level with departmental support and advisory-services committees that select group projects and assess the service provided by the advisors; and local level with local committees of

producers that represent the advisory-services beneficiaries and that serve as platforms for exchange between producers.

Two studies: private advisory schemes in Peru and Ivory Coast, which are highly linked to value chains and which show that advisory services are more focused on upstream functions in Peru (input suppliers) and downstream functions in Ivory Coast (exporters), than on the needs of producers. **In these cases, there is no shared governance for the advisory schemes, which orient the agricultural model towards greater conventional intensification.**

Main recommendations in terms of governance for national systems and advisory schemes in the field:

- ➔ **In order to improve and strengthen the governance of agricultural advisory services, governance must first be simplified** (particularly to avoid tension). This involves:
  - Identifying two main levels of governance: (i) the level of the integrated system for agricultural advisory services (national or regional) when it comes to joint management or shared coordination, and (ii) the level of each scheme in the field (connected directly to the beneficiaries), addressing in particular the role of producers in managing the schemes;
  - Identifying the different functions that contribute to governance. This also involves identifying support functions that are truly sovereign (e.g. supervision) and those which may be shared or jointly managed[53]. Some support functions, such as monitoring and evaluation, capitalisation and coordination of actions, contribute to the governance of the national advisory system and are easier to share.
- ➔ **Three groups or types of stakeholders must then be involved in governance: the State, the agricultural profession and the private sector (banks, upstream, downstream).** If advisory services are not jointly managed, the first priority will be to empower FOs. Their ability to participate in governance bodies must be developed (requiring major programmes in support of FOs). If they are already well represented, then the idea may be to strengthen their roles and promote the representation of the private sector, which is often less involved at national level.
- ➔ Support national and regional dialogue on **improving the status of advisor**, professionalising the role of advisor and facilitating networking between stakeholders.
- ➔ **Lastly, governance must be shaped through several stages and over a sufficiently long period of time** (which is not the lifespan of the projects) in order to adapt to the public-services reforms and to the capacity-building of FOs.

II. Funding agricultural advisory services, and recommendations

While several countries have adopted policies or strategies for agricultural advisory services, the challenge now is that they are **difficult to implement, in particular because of a lack of national funding** – except for a few specific cases, such as the Green Morocco Plan in Morocco.

Advisory services are expensive. First, the schemes in the field must be funded: salaries and/or indemnities for peasant-farmer instructors, advisors and supervisors, logistical means (investment and recurring costs, particularly for transport, which is a critical point).

[53] There is no absolute definition of the sovereign functions in the agricultural sector. It depends on the school of thought and on the country.

Support functions also need to be funded: at national level, funding must be provided for the training offered to advisors, research and development, the creation of pedagogical materials, governance bodies, networks for sharing knowledge, monitoring and evaluation, etc., and some of those costs are also incurred at regional level.

But not providing advisory services is even more expensive. Agricultural advisory services are an economic, social, environmental and health imperative. Without advisory services, negative impacts arise in all those areas.

There are **several different business models for services** in sub-Saharan Africa[54], **with strong dominance for free agricultural advisory services** (see § Developing sustainable funding for advisory services p. 34):

- **Free services: The dominant business model for advisory services is the free-services model** (type A1) funded by the State (salaries of public agents) and international donors. But even though those public services are free, they are **weak and ineffective** because they are under-funded by the State and donors. There are also a few cases, particularly in cotton-producing zones, where services appear to be free (type A2: paid for by companies), but where the cost of those services is often indirectly passed on to the producers. **With the exception of a few specific cases (Morocco, Cameroon), this business model is more like an obstacle,** because resources are insufficient and because no feeling of accountability vis-à-vis the advisory services has been created (leading to a lower quality of service and lower satisfaction on the part of the producer).
- **Subsidised services (type B):** A few FOs or service centres (rural management centre in Senegal, *Fédération Faranfasi so* in Mali, *Tillabéri service centre* in Niger) have developed lasting advisory services based on the subsidised-services business model (type B) with **financial contributions from producers or FOs of up to 70% of the cost of the service**. In these cases, accountability and quality of service are seen favourably by advisors and producers (or FOs). These cases are unfortunately still **too rare, particularly because few FOs have developed sustainable economic models and reliable management tools**. This type of business model for advisory services actually reflects the economic model of FOs. Mobile-telephony companies are also developing advisory-services offers with projects, FOs, etc. These are often experiments, and the cost is covered partly by projects and partly by charging for text messaging or subscriptions (therefore by the producers).
- **Services paid for entirely by the beneficiaries (type C):** The idea of advisory services in exchange for payment of a fee has not really caught on yet for family farms. These schemes are often neglected because they do not necessarily give the impression of being advisory schemes (they instead place emphasis on other economic activities, such as the sale of inputs). There are, however, many different types of them. **Most often, the cost of advisory services is incorporated into another service:** Input shops, veterinarians or livestock assistants, buyers of agricultural products, etc. incorporate the cost of advisory services into the sales price for the product (fertiliser, veterinary medication, etc.), service (vaccination, treatment, etc.) or agricultural product (type C2). **These are therefore, for**

[54] Throughout the world, very few advisory schemes are entirely funded by direct users (producers and private sector), or there are other mechanisms for subsidising producers (case of France). In most cases, the State, value chains and, to a lesser extent, producers (whether directly or indirectly) help fund them.

the most part, private advisory schemes. But this concerns only producers who are already sufficiently integrated into the value chains. Lastly, private providers, such as engineering offices, sometimes charge FOs for their advisory services (type C1) for feasibility studies and applications to request funding. The cost of advisory services is therefore included in the request for funding that is made to the bank (the cost is effectively passed on to the producer) or to the project (the cost is ultimately free for the producer). Only large agricultural firms[55] are able to pay for advisory services directly.

On the whole, funding for advisory services is insufficient, non-sustainable and non-virtuous:

- **Insufficient funding:** The funding allocated to advisory services is still well below what is needed to adequately reach a majority of producers. The result is **very low coverage and low quality of service** (low level of training, weak coaching, lack of tools, weak motivation on the part of agents). The States and donors in particular have a lot of trouble mobilising the resources to galvanise support functions, which are essential to the proper functioning of advisory services in the field.
- **Non-sustainable funding:** Donors rarely provide funding with medium- or long-term intentions, and that funding is dependent on policy choices and on the economic health of the countries providing it. This state of affairs is not compatible with a long-term commitment or with long-term and better-reasoned withdrawal procedures making it possible to establish advisory schemes and strengthen the capacities of the different stakeholders.
- **Non-virtuous funding:** Low financial contribution from producers (almost entirely absent most of the time) does not encourage **accountability, quality of service** or professional commitment from advisors. Some obstacles include: difficulty getting producers[56] to pay for an intellectual service that is usually free; remuneration of production that does not include the notion of improving quality, which may be from systems of agricultural advisory services; etc. At equivalent cost, an advisory scheme with virtuous funding will be more effective, relevant and sustainable.

To date, original funding experiments have included the creation of **funds (competitive or not) paid into by value chains, the State and donors** to encourage organised producers to define their advisory needs, find a service provider that is right for them, and control and evaluate what the service provides. The best-known example (and one that has been in existence for a while) is FIRCA in Ivory Coast, which has a number of strong points (real contributions from value chains; joint management) and weak points (domination by export value chains, which contribute the most; a certain disengagement by the State). Niger recently acquired a funding tool for the sector (FISAN), which has a facility specially dedicated to advisory services and research (facility 3), but it is still too early to assess how it works. It is interesting to note, however, that the reform of agricultural advisory services went hand in hand with the reform of funding for the agricultural sector (both adopted in August 2017 at the same council of ministers meeting), with the adoption of an NAAS and the establishment of the Agency for the Promotion of Agricultural Advisory Services (*agence de promotion du conseil agricole*, or “APCA”) on the one hand, and the creation of FISAN on the other. Other notable

[55] But those firms also receive aid from certain investment aid programmes, and through those programmes they may receive free advisory services.

[56] And, what’s worse, in certain projects the producers receive compensation for attending the technical training programmes that are offered to them.

examples include the development fund in Madagascar and the World Bank competitive funds. The Development Fund for Cocoa and Coffee (*fonds de developpement du cacao et du cafe*) in Cameroon is more of a counterexample, owing to a lack of transparency in the management of the fund. The real challenge is, in the near future, allowing the agricultural sector **(value chains in particular) to be able to obtain a large part of the funding for advisory services through parafiscal charges (on markets, on export, during transport, etc.) and to pay into those funds.**

Without necessarily going so far as to create dedicated funds, **value chains** are an important potential source of funding for agricultural advisory services, provided the funds are jointly managed transparently and efficiently (timely disbursement, no over-charging, etc.). Contributions from value chains may come in different forms, and they may be institutionalised (varying degrees of State participation), sophisticated and targeted to varying degrees. We distinguish between the following:

- **Highly institutionalised mechanisms (with State participation) funded by the value chain**: the cotton zone in Mali illustrates a rather institutionalised case supported by the State – the Malian Company for the Development of Textiles (*compagnie malienne du développement du textile*, or "*CMDT*") is 99.5% State-owned – where advisory services are provided to cotton producers by a panel of stakeholders from the public sector, agricultural profession and private sector (CMDT for technical advisory services, rural management centres for managerial advisory services for FOs, and economic interest groups for advisory services for family farms). Advisory services are paid for in large part by the value chain through a mechanism involving withdrawals on each tonne of cotton produced. The rural management centres (peasant-farmer schemes offering advisory services to cotton cooperatives) are therefore currently able to achieve 90% self-funding (excluding investments). The case of FIRCA in Ivory Coast also falls within this category.
- **Targeted mechanisms funded by the value chain (without State participation)**: the example of advisory services for the production of certified "sustainable cocoa" in Ivory Coast involves the establishment of a contract between stakeholders that are exclusively private (or professionals), and it is closely linked to issues in the downstream portion of the value chain.
- **Less targeted mechanisms funded by the value chain (without State participation)**: the example of the Niamey dairy basin is a case that is much less institutionalised (no contract for advisory services), less targeted and relatively innovative. The local dairy value chain that is developing around a central stakeholder (a collection centre) offers an economic basis for several private stakeholders who provide advisory services in addition to other technical or commercial activities: milk collectors, the collection centre itself, veterinarians (with veterinary assistants and livestock assistants), SOLANI (industrial milk-processing company). Input shops in Peru fall within the same category.

These funding mechanisms linked to value chains, however, do not apply in areas with low production potential.

There are also interesting cases where advisory schemes in the field run by the agricultural profession have been funded with contributions from FOs (up to 70%), and less often from individual producers. Advisory services are therefore provided within the framework of a

service agreement, and billed to the FO (see rural management centre in Senegal, and *Faranfasi so* in Mali).

Governance is considered to take precedence over funding so that, where possible, it is the governance bodies that decide the purpose of the advisory scheme, and so that abusive commercial practices may be avoided. This also means that the governance of funding mechanisms (e.g. restricted funds) should be just like governance of the NAAS: shared between the State, the agricultural profession and the private sector.

Lastly, the creation of sustainable and virtuous funding mechanisms requires specialised skills in financial engineering at sector level.

Study: experiments in advisory services for family farms (*conseil à l'exploitation familiale,* or *CEF*) in Burkina Faso regarding free services (type A1). It shows that **several large-scale CEF schemes had to stop their activities because of a lack of funding** after the withdrawal of the donor. Although this type of advisory service is highly relevant, it is expensive to implement and unfortunately presents **few opportunities for an economic model that can last without public funding from the State or external funding.**

Case study: rural management centres in Senegal, with regard to subsidised services (type B). It shows that by offering an essential service to FOs (support for the management of fees for irrigation water in particular, without which the cooperatives managing the different areas are unable to perform their function) while sharing tasks with the Company for the Development and Exploitation of the Lands of the Senegal River Delta (SAED), a management centre may develop based on a long-term economic model **combining public subsidies and significant contributions from beneficiaries** (70% self-funding from rural management centres at local level, 30% from the umbrella entity). Those management centres are now nearly 15 years old and **may therefore be considered as long-lasting**, even though they are not 100% self-funded.

Case study: sustainable-cocoa value chain in Ivory Coast. This study shows that **exporters can fund technical advisory services using the additional gains obtained through the sale of a high-quality product with a label** (rainforest label, zero-deforestation label, etc.). The producer receives free advisory services and a price that is greater than the standard price for cocoa. But **the FO funds a portion of the cost of certification** by losing a portion of the sustainable-cocoa rebate. This case study also shows the limits of this type of advisory service, which is intended more for reassuring consumers in the North than for really improving the skills of producers in the South, and which also helps build the loyalty of cooperatives for the delivery of cocoa.

Main recommendations in terms of funding:

➔ **One option to explore in order to overcome funding challenges is to reduce the cost of advisory services, without offering a "low-cost" service.**

- **The use of indigenous instructors and peasant-farmer relays** is one option that has been explored by many schemes in the field (particularly FOs), making it possible to expand the coaching offered in the field at a relatively low cost. This approach is also advantageous in terms of quality: close relationships with producers allow for better understanding of the challenges they face, promotion of local knowledge, sustainability of financial and human resources, improvement of local skills, etc.
- **Giving priority to the most efficient advisory bodies will also help reduce costs: private advisory schemes and advisory services provided by FOs** appear in this respect to be more efficient than schemes run by public administrations (ministries, offices), which have higher structural costs. Private

advisory services, however, are often closely linked to the interests of the service provider (input supplier).
- **NICT** (call centres, WhatsApp groups, etc.) **will likely help reduce costs too**, but few experiments have been performed so far.
- The following appear to be good paths to pursue in order to prevent cost-cutting measures from diminishing the quality of advisory services ("low-cost" advisory services): **develop the use of contracts, accountability and peasant-farmer control** over advisory schemes.

➔ **It is vital to increase public funding for advisory services.** In accordance with the Maputo Protocol, the State must make significant contributions to help fund agricultural development (including advisory services) and not focus exclusively on funding infrastructure. This may involve the creation **of a public fund dedicated to advisory services** (such as FISAN, which is in the process of becoming operational in Niger), which would be supported by the State budget and multi-year external budgetary aid, and supplemented by parafiscal charges (on imports[57] and exports).

➔ **Value chains and the private sector must gradually become the top providers of funding for advisory services.** This may involve somewhat sophisticated financial and governance mechanisms:
- Sophisticated mechanisms with State participation: in a context where it is difficult to ask producers and FOs to pay, and where contributions from States and donors tend to fluctuate, moderate charges to value chains (on export, on markets, on entry to processing factories) should be promoted. This involves creating national mechanisms to fund advisory services, such as FIRCA[58] in Ivory Coast, which could be combined with the abovementioned public fund for advisory services. Those mechanisms require highly specialised skills in financial engineering and good understanding of the context of farmers on the one hand, and a commitment from stakeholders in the different value chains on the other.
- Simpler mechanisms without State participation, utilising resources mobilised by stakeholders upstream (input and equipment suppliers, veterinarians, etc.) or downstream (company for marketing or processing goods) that integrate advisory costs into the cost of their other services or into the purchase/sales price.

We should remember, however, that greater contribution from value chains for advisory services, especially without State participation, necessarily comes with risks, which should be anticipated and mitigated: abandoning more marginalised territories and communities, promoting more intensive use of chemical inputs in agriculture, failing to consider the farm in its entirety, etc.

➔ **It also appears necessary to develop segmented funding strategies, as is done by many FOs (which use the following strategies):**
- **Segmentation based on the beneficiary of the advisory services:** advisory services for more vulnerable groups and struggling FOs should be more highly subsidised than advisory services for agribusiness entrepreneurs and more successful FOs.
- **Segmentation based on the type of advisory service and the added value directly generated by the service:** literacy (which is essential to advisory services), promotion of rural activity and basic technical advisory services should be more highly subsidised than expert technical advisory services and advisory services for businesses, for instance.

[57] For example on rice imports in order to make local production more competitive in countries with high production potential for this type of crop.
[58] FIRCA has been around for over 10 years, and it would be useful, working in agreement with FIRCA, to draw lessons from this full-scale experiment.

- **Segmentation within the national system for advisory services:** support functions should receive more funding from the public sector and should be subsidised, whereas schemes in the field may receive private funding (and may or may not be subsidised by the State).

➔ FOs (which in many cases are now key stakeholders in advisory services) play an important role. **Support must be provided to help them develop technical/economic business models allowing them to better coordinate the services they offer (advisory services, supply, marketing, etc.).** The idea is to promote entrepreneurship instead of leaving them to depend on funding for projects, and to do so without losing their social value (which is a major added value for those FOs). The supply and marketing services of FOs may be sources of funding for advisory services, while combining them with invoices (total or partial) for certain services. But that requires overhauling the economic model of FOs in connection with value chains.

➔ **It is essential to create virtuous funding mechanisms.** Several mechanisms may allow for doing so:

- **Contributions from beneficiaries, even if those contributions are often small** (except for expert advisory services requested by large farms in high-potential areas). Contributions from FOs are easier to obtain than contributions from individuals.
- **The establishment of contractual relationships** between producers and providers of advisory services.
- **The involvement of microfinance institutions** (trio: producer/service provider/microfinance institution) is also a path to explore: microfinance institutions generally recognise that producers and FOs that receive advisory services develop more viable projects and are more likely to repay their loans, which reduces the risk for the microfinance institution (and thus reduces the cost of the loan too). Some microfinance institutions require that borrowers belong to a management centre in order to receive a loan. A portion of the cost of managerial advisory services may therefore be covered by the microfinance institution (in the form of a lower interest rate, for instance).
- In order to obtain a subsidy (e.g. for equipment), subsidy recipients may also be required to be part of an advisory scheme. And, in general, all regulatory mechanisms (tax, environmental standards, social standards, legal standards, etc.) may lead producers to request advisory services.
- **The financial circuit:** Subsidising FOs so that they can contract with advisory-service providers and pay those providers directly, as opposed to subsidising service providers; channelling public funding through a chamber of agriculture so that it can delegate its advisory mandate to a more competent service centre; etc.

➔ **There must also be discussion about combining funding in order to achieve "operating equilibrium":** directly invoicing producers for a portion of the cost of the advisory services, debiting a portion of the margins obtained through other services (supply, marketing), discounts on text messages (paid by the telephony company), volunteering for certain roles (indigenous instructors, peasant-farmer relays), contributions in kind from producers (meals for advisors, construction of premises for advisory-services sessions, provision of a plot of land), sale of services by FOs and management centre, sale of production from farmer field schools, rebates on parafiscal charges for value chains (therefore linked to producers), balancing subsidy from the State (or from donors).

➔ **It also seems important to gradually move away from a "short-term" approach to projects**[59] funded largely through external aid, which hinders the creation of long-term

[59] The project approach preferred by donors does not ensure sustainable funding and does not encourage states to assume their responsibilities.

funding mechanisms and takes responsibility away from the State and other stakeholders.

➔ **Lastly, we believe that an effective national advisory system can create wealth for producers and value chains, and that some of that wealth may in return help fund advisory services.**

III. Building the capacities of advisory stakeholders, and recommendations

The effectiveness of advisory activities depends largely on the skills (knowledge, savoir-faire, soft skills) of the advisory stakeholders (**designers and managers of advisory schemes, advisors and trainers, and peasant-farmer instructors**) and **the beneficiaries** (producers)**.** Therefore, the revival of agricultural advisory services and any change in approach must take into account the skills of the advisors, the managers of the national advisory system and the producers. Moreover, **capacity-building differs depending on the type of stakeholder** and is therefore a major issue when it comes to reviving agricultural advisory services.

A major obstacle to advisory services is the low level of basic literacy among many producers. As agricultural advisory services and functional literacy generally fall within the remit of ministries and sector-specific policies, advisory schemes rarely include basic functional-literacy programmes for producers. But that considerably limits their ability to learn (learning to learn) and has a big impact on advisory services. Generally, advisory schemes led by FOs cover those needs more frequently than private or public schemes (for crop or livestock farming).

Often difficulties in the field are not only linked to advisors and their expertise or skills, but to **shortcomings or a lack of "management"** of those advisors. Most of the time, it's a neglected support function.

It is therefore necessary to improve skills at all levels:

- **For designers, managers, instructors and supervisors of advisory schemes,** the idea is to understand the logic and functioning of advisory organisations in general, to have a good understanding of the different approaches and tools used elsewhere and to identify the options available to them to act and improve their own advisory scheme. It is also necessary to place particular emphasis on the management function of advisors to coordinate activities, organise and lead teams (collaboration between advisors, technical exchanges, experience-sharing), and perform monitoring and evaluation.
- **For advisors and trainers,** beyond skills relating to agricultural production or management of farms and FOs, the idea is to improve skills for managing interactions with farmers or other people in rural areas, and facilitating individual or group learning. In particular, given the growing number of peasant-farmer instructors in the schemes, the capacities of advisors need to be improved so that they can assist the peasant-farmer instructors. In addition to having the technical skills needed to train and support the peasant-farmer instructor, the advisor also needs to have good skills for coaching and assistance (leadership tools, listening tools, encouragement tools, etc.).

- **For private economic actors who offer advisory services in addition to their technical/commercial activity (input sellers, agribusinesses, etc.).** The idea may be to strengthen their ties with FOs, researchers or technical State services so that the private entities have a better understanding of the constraints, interests and means of the producers, so that advisory services are better tailored to the local context. The idea is also to help them learn more about the products they sell so that they can be used more conservatively[60]. This will also allow private entities to better understand that they belong to the NAAS/ISAAS: that they may contribute to it (by providing technical specifications), that they may benefit from it (by getting feedback from producers, having training programmes and even receiving financial and technical support), and that they will be supervised.
- **Peasant-farmer instructors** (peasant-farmer relays, indigenous instructors, pilot farmers, etc.) are becoming more and more essential in many schemes in the field. The idea is to help them find a balance between their advisory activities and their usual activities (agricultural or non-agricultural) and acquire basic skills (agricultural production, leadership techniques). It is also necessary to define methods and tools that may be used by this type of stakeholder with limited training and semi-volunteer status (not a full-time salaried employee, very rarely compensated).

Capacity-building can also be broken down into the different types of training for agents (basic training, professional training) and by the organisation of exchanges between stakeholders:

- **Basic training: often there is no initial training for advisors.** At best, future advisors have decent technical skills (though sometimes they are disconnected from the realities of peasant farmers) and an awareness of the different approaches to advisory/extension services (often not very up to date). The different postures, savoir-faire and soft skills of advisors are rarely taught. **Schemes in the field must therefore almost always carry out ad hoc training when integrating new advisors.** For advisors and people designing and managing advisory services, it is important to improve the training programmes for agricultural technicians and engineers in order to better take into account the requirements of the profession of advisors and/or instructors in rural areas. Discussions on the subject are already in progress. The international network for agricultural and rural training (FAR network) organises exchanges between the different organisations involved in the training of future advisors, and supports projects linked to technical and professional agricultural training in Africa. Agreenium creates online training modules in French on different topics relating to agriculture, including farm management and agricultural advisory services. There are also national experiments in countries such as Benin (University of Parakou) and Cameroon (AFOP Programme), which modified the training programmes of students in this regard. The changes, however, are slow and fall short of meeting the needs that were expressed.
- **Continuing professional training:** Programmes for continuing training must also be created or updated in order to improve advisors' skills. It is currently the projects that offer this type of training to their staff. There are no efforts to pool or build on actions undertaken

[60] Greater integration/promotion of input sellers within an NAAS is actually a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it's an opportunity, given their presence near producers in the field; on the other hand, they risk promoting an intensive agricultural model (chemical inputs) rather than agroecology.

by the different projects, and no continuing-training schemes at national level for advisors who operate on a large scale and without project assistance. The ACEFA programme in Cameroon may be seen as such a scheme, but it is still dependent on international aid and external technical assistance. In 2015, the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) published a note on the "new extensionist" and offered a learning kit with 13 modules on its site, with an emphasis on improving advisors' methodological and functional skills in addition to their technical skills. Digital resources (MOOCs in particular) may be very useful for speeding things up and increasing the number of actions for initial and continuing training.

- **Experience-sharing/knowledge management:** Lastly, capacity-building for managers of advisory schemes, advisors and peasant-farmer instructors involves organising discussions between peers for experience-sharing, and creating entities or networks for engineering advisory services in the different countries. First, networks such as the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) and RESCAR-AOC[61] may help formalise national networks with a focus on policy decision-makers, scheme managers and advisory experts. Second, the idea is also to encourage the creation of networks at local level for sharing experiences between advisors and peasant-farmer instructors to help them identify peers that can assist them, discuss the achievements and failures of their actions, and build on their past experience. But actually, few or no experiences have been structured or documented in this area. Those networks and discussions could be organised through local workshops (useful but expensive) or through the use of communication tools (social networks, in particular). Third, states, interprofessional bodies and representative umbrella FOs will likely encourage the creation of public bodies (through a department of the relevant ministry, or research entity or training centre) or private bodies (through an association, engineering office, economic interest group, etc.) specialised in engineering agricultural advisory services in order to reflect on methods and tools[62]. This body would be present in each country and would participate in building on past experience and help stakeholders involved in advisory services design their schemes, improve their methods and assess their impacts.

Certain skill areas have not been sufficiently covered or mastered. Although skills in basic technical extension services and in the organisation of activities in rural areas are generally satisfactory within existing advisory schemes in sub-Saharan Africa, the skills needed to meet other advisory needs are severely lacking. On the one hand, there is a **lack of knowledge and savoir-faire in technical/economic and managerial matters, including the contribution of FOs to managing value chains**. On the other hand, **there is also a lack of soft skills** (agents more used to giving orders than to listening and offering advice) and **savoir-**

[61] Rural and Agricultural Advisory Services Network in West and Central Africa, member of AFAAS and supported by CORAF/WECARD.

[62] For example, under PASE II in Mali (Project to support the improvement of productivity and sustainability of farming systems in cotton areas), a pedagogical commission was set up (CMDT, C-SCPC, Institute of Rural Economy-IER, APCAM) to discuss methods and tools for advisory services, the training needs of the different stakeholders, etc. Its operation, however, is still linked to a project.

faire when it comes to engineering advisory services (methodological advisory services in particular)[63].

Schemes in the field must also be able to adapt their methods and tools to changes regarding production (climate change, proliferation of pests) and **marketing** (development of contracts and specifications for certain value chains). Literacy is on the rise among producers in rural areas. Some have received basic agricultural training, and many use a mobile phone (some even have a smartphone with internet access). In order to make such changes, countries must have national skills in evaluating and designing methods (researchers, experts and practitioners that have those capacities organised in a network or belonging to a dedicated entity).

Capacity-building and advisory services for producers and FOs are long-term processes and must not be confused with "one-shot" training sessions (the practice of many projects). Otherwise, **the "advisory path" concept will not take shape.** A series of one-off services is insufficient when it comes to promoting, developing and helping implement changes or projects for farms and FOs over the long term. Peasant farmers and livestock farmers are very attached to this idea **of long-term coaching** and close relationships with advisors in the field.

Case study: Rural management centre in the Senegal River valley: The rural management centre in the Senegal River valley (umbrella entity for coordination) provides **methodological support** by assisting three regional management centres. It could be a precursor of a **resource centre** specialising in advisory services for all of Senegal, if one or more management centres are set up in the southern part of the country.

Case studies: Cap Malagasy in Madagascar, rural management centre in Senegal, ACEFA in Cameroon. The studies show that local or national advisory bodies must train new advisors before they are integrated into schemes in the field. But few entities are able to subsequently offer them continuing training

Main recommendations in terms of capacity-building:

- ➔ **Strengthen a few national initiatives to improve programmes offering initial training** (engineer, technician) **and continuing training** (manager, advisor, input seller) for advisory services and in support of rural areas, particularly by making digital resources available and encouraging their use.
- ➔ **Strengthen ties between training for producers** (training of young people in rural areas, functional literacy, etc.) **and advisory schemes.**
- ➔ **Develop training programmes on management** for "expert" or experienced advisors (coordination, steering, HR management, leading a team of advisors, monitoring/evaluation).
- ➔ **Significantly develop the use of new information and communication technologies** in continuing training for advisors and peasant-farmer instructors with tailored products (video and writing in local and national languages including testimonials, theory and practice, etc.) while facilitating the creation of networks.

[63] Which explains the frequent use of foreign technical assistance in agricultural advisory programmes owing to the lack of national experts. Skills for running functional-literacy sessions exist in general (in NGOs, FOs, ministries in charge of education, etc.), but are insufficiently mobilised in agricultural advisory schemes.

➔ **Support the creation of public or private bodies that specialise in engineering agricultural advisory services** by utilising human resources that are already available (researchers, instructors, experts) by thinking about their economic model from the start.
➔ **Experiment with the creation of networks of advisors and peasant-farmer instructors at local level** in order to encourage learning and help advisors become more autonomous so they can develop advisory services that are tailored to the needs of the people in question.
➔ **Focus on training and supporting peasant-farmer instructors and input sellers** as they are more and more present in advisory schemes in the field. For input sellers, anticipate the risk of promoting excessive conventional intensification instead of agroecology.

IV. Adapting and improving schemes in the field, and recommendations

IMPROVING EXISTING SCHEMES IN THE FIELD AND MAKING USE OF THEIR DIVERSITY

The challenges regarding schemes in the field and the content of advisory services were addressed in the section on the conceptual framework. In a nutshell, the main challenges regarding schemes in the field and the content of advisory services are:

- A **very low rate of coverage** for producers by the schemes in the field (below FAO standards).
- A **very partial response to the many different needs** of producers and value chains (technical advisory services, managerial advisory services, value-chain advisory services, legal advisory services, organisational advisory services, etc.) and difficulty taking into account the evolution of those needs (response to problems concerning climate change, supporting agroecology rather than the intensified use of chemical inputs, supporting the trajectory of change among producers, etc.).
- The situation is even worse for certain categories: the needs of **women, young people, herdsmen and other marginalised groups are even less covered** (schemes not inclusive enough).
- Relatively **little recognition by the State of the wide range of non-public advisory schemes** and no mechanisms offering financial or methodological support for those schemes (depends on the country, however).
- **Relations between advisory schemes and value chains are highly variable depending on the situation. A strong link with value chains presents both advantages and disadvantages.** The positioning of advisory services in a value chain (for stakeholders in the value chain) may be considered as a strength if the value chain generates wealth (contribution to funding the advisory services) and/or constitutes a possible organisational framework for the advisory service which is already well structured or in the process of becoming well structured. Conversely, a certain autonomy vis-à-vis value chains allows advisory schemes to better respond to the many different requests from producers, to address broader questions on managing natural resources, coordinating between different types of producers (crop farmers, livestock farmers), strategies for farms,

FOs and firms, and to avoid over-consuming inputs (offered by advisors from agricultural supply firms).

Given the large number of producers concerned by advisory services, the other methodological and organisational challenge for the designers of the schemes is to be able to articulate normative/prescriptive approaches and approaches encouraging the joint development of solutions. Those two approaches require different skills. For example, an advisor with a high level of academic training and experience may develop complex approaches to advisory services (e.g. strategic advisory services for farms), but the cost will be higher, and the advisor will work only with a limited number of farmers. Conversely, an advisor with little training or experience will be more inclined to use standardised methods for advisory services, with a focus on more tactical advisory services, but he or she will probably work with a greater number of farmers. When it comes to designing and supporting the different schemes and to training advisors, there are two contradictory requirements:

- Quantity and standardisation: Reaching the greatest number and broadest diversity of beneficiaries (with a focus on development and equality) with projects that are often short-term. In which case, it is important to be able to train as many advisors as possible at the lowest cost over relatively short training cycles. Doing so encourages simplification and standardisation. Ultimately, skills improve little and degrade quickly.
- Quality and joint construction: Sustaining advisory services over the long term, making schemes more autonomous and therefore developing true "advisory" expertise and engineering with long-term training cycles and formats that are rigorous in terms of quality and level of expertise.

Main recommendations in terms of adapting and improving advisory schemes:

- ➔ **Recognise the diversity and wealth of existing schemes in the field (public, private and agricultural profession) and make good use of them by strengthening** their technical and financial capacities based on their comparative advantages, rather than rolling out a new scheme through a project.
- ➔ **Develop synergies between advisory services for farms, advisory services for FOs and advisory services for joint innovation, and strengthen those three types of advisory services.** Those three types of advisory services need to develop synergies in order to overcome different but complementary challenges. For example: technical advisory services for producers to help them become expert producers with sound production skills; advisory services for their cooperative so that it can better manage supply and marketing issues; and advisory services for joint innovation to manage issues involving multiple stakeholders in different value chains (e.g. creation of a interprofessional bodies). It would not make sense to invest massively in advisory services for farms without simultaneously strengthening advisory services for FOs, because doing so would fail to take advantage of the FO leverage effect.
- ➔ Develop synergies between the three complementary types of advisory services: **technology transfer, technical assistance and support for learning to learn.** Technical extension services are still necessary and are a component of agricultural advisory services, but they do not exclude other types of advisory services.
- ➔ **Cover different areas of advisory services**: technical, technical-economic/managerial, organisational, legal, etc. But it is not necessary to cover all of those needs simultaneously. **The best gateway** needs to be found for each situation. In some cases it is best to start with technical advisory services, and in other cases it is best to focus on managerial advisory services in order to go beyond the limits of technical

advisory services. In some cases it is best to give priority to advisory services for farms, and in other cases it is best to first lift any collective constraints. A diagnostic assessment must therefore be performed in order to **define an advisory path** to follow.

- ➔ **Support the gradual implementation of accounting in FOs/cooperatives** (required under the Organisation for the Harmonisation of Corporate Law in Africa - OHADA Treaty - and necessary for transparency vis-à-vis members) by coupling it with advisory services in order to transform the obligation into real **management tools**. Doing so would help those entities **become more entrepreneurial**.
- ➔ **Putting local knowledge to good use.** Deploying **peasant-farmer instructors in the field** (or peasant-farmer relays, indigenous instructors, etc.) is a good way to establish a link between local knowledge and advisory services.
- ➔ Creating ties between the advisory scheme and stakeholders in the value chain could contribute to the success of an advisory scheme (advisory services for FOs and producers, and support for marketing). The same goes for creating ties between the advisory scheme and other public and private agricultural services (credit and supply are mentioned most often, but not training). Those two elements advocate for **anchoring advisory schemes more firmly in the economic environment of farms** (value chains, services, companies upstream and downstream) and not solely with a view to strengthening the managerial capacities of farmers. In other words, creating a national or regional system for agricultural advisory services is necessary, but not sufficient, when it comes to ensuring the success of advisory services. **The advisory scheme must be "connected" to the other services and economic actors,** which the projects do not always do.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AT THE SERVICE OF AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SCHEMES

It is important to remember that **innovation is not only technical** (new varieties, new technical procedures, new machines, new integrated-pest-management methods, etc.) **but also organisational and institutional**. But research often works (and is perceived) only with regard to the technical dimension of innovation. Joint design and coaching for innovation, however, must take into account all three dimensions.

Research entities are stakeholders that can contribute to innovation in technical systems and may also perform support functions for advisory services. Research frequently interacts with advisory schemes in the following three areas:

- **With regard to technology transfer**, research generally proposes new agricultural techniques for dissemination through advisory schemes after validation by peasant-farmer innovators and testers (principle of research/action in partnership). With regard to collaborative innovation, agricultural research interacts with all stakeholders to help them innovate by sharing scientific knowledge and expertise; these cases are rarer but are growing in number through mobilisation of the innovation-system concept (see § "On the need for an integrated system for agricultural advisory services");
- **Research may be associated with the evaluation of advisory schemes,** either by developing evaluation methods (evaluating how they function, measuring effects and impacts) or by contributing directly to the evaluations (data collection, analyses, etc.).
- **Lastly, social-sciences researchers are working on advisory methods and tools and on learning processes** between producers and with advisors, and more globally on coaching producers. Either they characterise those processes within the framework of

analytical and comprehensive approaches, or they undertake research/actions that aim to go beyond those characterisations, with a view to helping stakeholders involved in advisory services improve their advisory schemes and their production and management activities both upstream and downstream.

If advisory services and research (and other services) are considered to be an integral part of the agricultural innovation system (local/regional and national) (see Figure 4 and Chapter 2: Rethinking the framework for analysis), the idea is then to mobilise those entities in the best way possible so that farmers innovate and do not limit themselves to improving the way they manage their farm and optimising the use of available resources (which in itself would already be a positive step forward). Faced with rapid changes in the physical environment (climate change, proliferation of pests, etc.) and socio-economic environment, **it is not enough for producers to adapt; they must also innovate**, sometimes radically and quickly. For example, to reduce the use of chemical inputs in market gardening, to respond to rising temperatures which are hurting poultry-farming operations, and to combat the armyworm (which is causing significant losses in yield).

The innovation processes must be based on theme-based research programmes and research/action programmes involving producers, researchers, technicians and all stakeholders in the different value chains or territories affected by a particular innovation. In order for those programmes to be meaningful and to be of interest to a region or country, **the innovation processes must therefore include agricultural advisory schemes.**

The different case studies mention few collaborations between research and national schemes and systems for advisory services, except when research transfers its knowledge to advisors or, less often, when researchers characterise or evaluate those schemes. It would be a good idea for managers of advisory services to communicate with researchers in order to specify their needs (in technical areas, but also in methodological areas) and help create partnerships between researchers/farmers/advisors and stakeholders in the different value chains or areas (e.g. by bringing together groups of producers and their technicians for research/action programmes).

Main recommendations regarding the contribution of research to adapting agricultural advisory services:

- ➔ **Ensure better integration of research and agricultural advisory schemes** when carrying out innovations so that farms and FOs can quickly adapt to changing production conditions. It is important to strike the right balance between advisory services (managerial advisory services, technical advisory services) and research/action programmes, so that the latter do not cause producers to take too many risks.
- ➔ **Encourage the definition and execution of research programmes dedicated to agricultural advisory services and, more globally, to coaching producers and promoting innovation.** This could be achieved by creating competitive funds whose allocation is restricted to research and organising calls for bids in this area, which would complement the calls for bids that too often focus on technical aspects.
- ➔ **Put research findings to good use** by providing agricultural advisory agents (advisors, managers, specialised technicians) with information about proposals from research. This activity is not limited to updating technical specifications and manuals, but requires overhauling the research entities' information systems by utilising video tools, social networks, etc. that may be used by advisors and certain producers.

CAN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) TRANSFORM ADVISORY SCHEMES?

Over the past decade, the usefulness of ICT and NICT in the provision of agricultural advisory services has been frequently debated in sub-Saharan Africa. The first initiatives appeared in Kenya and South Africa, where **the combined use of traditional ICTs (radio, television) and new ICTs (mobile phone)** make it possible to improve the standard model of technical advisory services based on the "training and visit" approach.

NICT appears to present an opportunity to contribute to scaling up agricultural advisory services and offer, in theory, interesting possibilities: possibility to reach a large number of people instantly; possibilities to create networks of supervisors, advisors, indigenous instructors, peasant-farmer relays and peasant farmers; possibility to be more interactive (exchanges between producers, creation of networks for advisors from different entities); possibility to combine voice messages, texts, photos, videos, etc. NICT also appears to be particularly useful for targeting young people. More and more experiments using NICT in agricultural advisory services have therefore been conducted over the past few years.

Experts and researchers are now trying to answer the following questions: Does NICT really lead to the emergence of advisory approaches that are more participative and better adapted to the needs of producers? How is the use of those technologies transforming advisory schemes? Do those technologies make it possible to reach more producers, and does their use have an impact on rural development?

In Burkina Faso (see case study on 16 advisory schemes using NICT), **many different themes are addressed by advisory services (in a broad sense) using ICT and NICT:** information on production techniques and sales prices, weather forecasts, assistance choosing techniques and varieties, quick transfer of data from farms for managerial advisory services and monitoring of advisory activities, etc.

In general, there are four main types of schemes:

- **Dissemination of information to a large number of people:** the service makes information available (on a website, through a call centre) or disseminates information (via text message) to a large number of crop or livestock farmers directly and with no need for an intermediary. Those schemes are more and more frequent (website, call centre), but their roll-out is limited (few farmers in question), especially in cases where beneficiaries are asked to pay for all or part of the service.
- **Collection and sharing of information for offering advisory services to a small number of people:** for example, the decision-making support tool for rice growers (RiceAdvice) promoted by AfricaRice is based on an application for smartphone or tablet that allows advisors to directly advise farmers on how to manage their rice field, based on data collected from the farmers (cropping history, cost of fertilisers, production objectives). This is a form of backstopping for advisors. Farmers must be able to provide accurate information about their practices. The tool's recommendations often differ from the normative recommendations (technical specifications) from the more conventional advisory bodies, so rice growers apply them cautiously and experiment on small plots.

- **Collection of information for monitoring/evaluation and supervision.** NICT (tablets and smartphones) is used by advisors as (i) a tool for collecting and sending data to advisory organisations (e.g. certain schemes offering managerial advisory services for family farms), or (ii) a tool for monitoring whether farmers are in compliance with specifications (organic cotton, high-quality sesame). Here, we are moving away from advisory services as a form of coaching, and ICT should be considered more as a data-transmission and monitoring/evaluation tool that allows the managers of a project or organisation to supervise the activities that are carried out (number of training sessions given by advisors, identity of farmers present, etc.) and, if necessary, report the needs of farmers and advisors.
- **Sharing of knowledge and savoir-faire between organised producers:** NICT (in this case, smartphones) is used directly by farmers to discuss various aspects of production, using instant-messaging applications that can be downloaded for free or social networks. For example, there is a discussion group for rabbit breeders called "*Le Cercle des Cuniculteurs*", moderated and managed by a member of the group.

Of course, in addition to NICT, the more conventional techniques for communicating and sharing information (flyers, posters, image boxes, flannel boards, theatres, role-playing exercises, etc.) are all good options too.

At this stage, it is too early to assess the effects and impacts of ICTs on the change in approaches and the effectiveness of advisory services. NICT presents opportunities, to be sure, but it should not be overhyped. In addition to the interest aroused by these technologies (especially from service providers), it appears that:

- advisory services that use ICT are largely funded by external donors and **have not yet found their economic model** despite the involvement of a few private mobile-telephony companies.
- creation of this type of service requires **collaboration between a large number of organisations** (IT engineer, agronomist, advisory manager, telephony company, etc.), which is not always easy to achieve. Given the resulting material and organisational constraints, **advisory services are not yet able to move towards greater interaction with farmers** so that their specific needs are given greater consideration.

Case study: 16 advisory schemes using NICT in Burkina Faso: This study shows that in a country with a very low penetration rate for smartphones, 16 advisory schemes using NICT have already been developed over the past seven years (and that list may not be exhaustive). NICT therefore has a strong presence in advisory services, and a new figure has appeared: the *remote advisor*. These are mainly NGO initiatives and, less often, initiatives by private entities or FOs, but they are never State initiatives. But, contrary to expectations, those schemes do not appear to exceed the limits of the usual advisory schemes: they are overall not very interactive, they rarely include producers when designing the scheme and messages, they are dependent mainly on international funding (NGOs), they have trouble getting different stakeholders to work together, they disseminate messages that are often highly standardised and that are not really adapted to the local constraints of producers, they especially encourage conventional intensification, etc. And yet, there is real interest from stakeholders for these new tools and real enthusiasm, which could perhaps make it possible to go beyond those limits.

Main recommendations regarding use of NICT by advisory schemes:

- ➔ **Conduct studies on the current use of ICT** in the agricultural sector in close connection or with agricultural advisory services in order to understand the logic of the stakeholders involved in these technological and socio-economic changes.
- ➔ Despite the previous recommendation, **some schemes can now be strengthened and expanded** (call centre, WhatsApp groups, social networks, etc.) in order to reach more producers, particularly young people who are more interested in these technologies and more skilled at using them.
- ➔ **Add to the training programme** for future agronomists and advisors initiations on the use of ICT so that they can then communicate and collaborate with the designers of digital and telecommunications tools.
- ➔ In experimental projects, **encourage the joint design of advisory services and tools using ICT** when there is a real request from an FO or from stakeholders in a value chain. The idea is to go beyond the use of ICT to send information and supervise, but first to promote activities such as exchanges, capacity-building and learning, and to facilitate agricultural advisory services in response to requests from producers.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING ACTIVITIES AND ADVISORY SCHEMES, MEASURING THE IMPACTS

Giving priority to the "project" approach has led decision-makers to internalise the monitoring/evaluation function of advisory services in those projects while maintaining a periodic external evaluation of the projects (mid-term review or final evaluation) entrusted to external experts for qualitative work that is often superficial. This is often **monitoring/evaluation that focuses on the direct activities and results** of the project rather than on the process of change (effects, impacts, causal links, theory of change) produced or encouraged by the advisory services. Consequently, there is very little qualitative, and even less quantitative, evaluation work on the impacts of programmes to support development and advisory schemes in particular.

In the context of the projects, advisory services for family farms may also be a source of information for better understanding the situation of farms. Producers (alone or helped by advisors or indigenous instructors) are recording data about their production and marketing activities. **That mass of data is underutilised and could help support[64] an observatory for family farms at a low cost.** That observatory could be a tool for evaluating the progress (or failure) of producers that receive advisory services and would therefore help assess the short- and medium-term impacts of advisory services. It is important, however, to limit the amount of data to collect, which is a tedious activity that is quickly abandoned by producers receiving advisory services. **A limited number of indicators should therefore be defined for measuring changes and evaluating advisory services.**

Beyond monitoring and evaluating the activities of a project or advisory scheme, it may seem logical[65] for decision-makers and donors to want to know **the rate of return** on their investment

[64] Making sure, however, that the producers are informed and willing, and that the data is made anonymous.
[65] One of the objectives of advisory services is to strengthen the capacities of producers in terms of management, reasoning and making the right choices. No one would think of asking about the rate of return for an educational

in **a policy for agricultural advisory services.** That request seems particularly logical since it is considered that **agricultural advisory services must become integrated into the economic operation of the different value chains, territories, FOs and production units.** In many cases, those decision-makers request a cost/benefit approach, which the experts perform rarely or imperfectly because of the lack of easily applicable methods. But for that, it is necessary to be able to quantify the impacts that are actually linked to the advisory service.

It is very difficult to evaluate the effects and impacts of an intangible service such as an agricultural advisory service. It is possible, of course, to evaluate and measure changes in the performance or structural indicators of a farm or an economic service of an FO (in terms of revenue, production costs, quantities of biomass produced, surface area, etc.). But how can those changes be attributed solely to the agricultural advisory services received by the producer? Various other factors may have influenced the performance of production systems or FO services: variability in climate and prices, intervention of another project, new equipment or a new input on the market, etc.

There are, however, **evaluation methods based on econometric calculations.** But as was shown by different studies conducted by the AFD's research and evaluation department (Naudet et al., 2012; Delarue et al., 2011) and other researchers (Cawley[66] A. et al. 2018), those methods are complex and hard to use for development agents and even researchers who are not specialised in the area. Those methods, particularly those in connection with experimental economics (Duflo et al., 2003), have shown limits and are very expensive to implement and questionable from an ethical point of view[67]. They make it possible to quantify differences (between the control group and the population receiving a service) but are not as useful when it comes to understanding the mechanisms of change brought about by the projects. Following that theoretical and empirical work on evaluating the impact, an initial conclusion was noted: Although it is desirable to measure/quantify the impacts, this must go hand in hand with a qualitative evaluation of the causalities and impact pathways (how a farm has changed in five years based on advice received, and other changes regarding production and getting to market). **One qualitative evaluation method looking at impact pathways** (ImpresS ex post) was developed by CIRAD and its partners to evaluate the impacts of research projects. It could very well be applied and adapted to situations relating to agricultural advisory services.

To perform quantitative/qualitative impact evaluations, it is necessary to have human resources with adequate training in the countries in question. But the general observation is that in the vast majority of countries studied, there are no resources in permanent structures (ministries, FOs, interprofessional bodies) dedicated to monitoring/evaluation and to measuring the impacts of advisory services.

system. Of course, there is more to advisory services, and those services should lead to tangible changes in terms of technical/economic performance and wealth creation.

[66] This study by Cawley et al. shows that the average increase in revenue of a group of 1,100 farmers in Ireland who were the beneficiaries of an advisory programme varied between 19% and 35%, depending on the calculation method used.

[67] Because they are based on the comparison of two groups with no relation between one another (a priori): the beneficiaries of the project and the control group (which is surveyed/monitored but does not benefit from the innovation or from the support of a project or service).

Moreover, **there is no scheme for monitoring/evaluation or for measuring the impact of a pluralistic system for advisory services (set of schemes) at the level of a country or territory. The evaluation** is never carried out **and the impacts are never measured**, because by definition it cannot be undertaken by the projects. The impacts are real, stabilised and may last several years after the end of the project. Long-term funding independent of the projects is therefore necessary in order to measure those impacts.

And yet, there is information generated by projects, advisory schemes (benchmark survey at the start of the project, annual or post-project survey), FOs and sometimes even the producers within those schemes. If that information is saved, centralised and analysed regularly, it would be possible to more accurately measure the rapid changes and impacts brought on by the advisory services. FOs and decision-makers would then have a better understanding of the reality for more efficient construction of future policies and advisory schemes.

Main recommendations in terms of monitoring/evaluation and measuring the impact of advisory services:

- ➔ It would be a good idea to encourage sharing and discussion of **monitoring/evaluation data produced by the different advisory schemes** (monitoring of activities and evaluation of initial changes) in a given country. That data should be saved by a permanent structure so that it can be kept up-to-date over the long term.
- ➔ **Training and the creation of a pool of experts for monitoring/evaluation and measuring impact** should be encouraged through a policy for university training and continuing training. Those experts pooled together in independent bodies of advisory schemes would therefore be able to objectively evaluate those schemes and measure their impact over the long term. Those skills could be used to evaluate the impact of other programmes and public policies in various economic sectors.
- ➔ **Monitoring/evaluation should lead to recommendations** for reorienting schemes and to capitalisation products that can be disseminated to as many people as possible.
- ➔ **An innovative way to think about monitoring/evaluation would be to promote a quality-focused approach where users of the service assess the quality of the service and decide on any changes[68].**
- ➔ Fund real **impact studies** a few years after the end of the projects and programmes. Those studies should focus on advisory schemes that are well-defined in time and space, and where a quantitative assessment of their impact is conceivable, at least for a few key indicators. It will be more difficult, but interesting, to measure the impact of a pluralistic advisory system at the level of a territory or value chain. But in both cases, it would be a good idea to **allocate resources to designing quantitative and qualitative methods** that are not too expensive to implement.

[68] That is what happens in France.

V. Issues relating to women, young people and other marginalised groups in agricultural advisory services

ISSUES RELATING TO WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES[69]

The woman's place is very important in most agrarian situations in sub-Saharan Africa, either because she performs a very large part of the agricultural (and processing/marketing) work for workshops usually managed by the man (the head of the farm), or because she develops her own activities, which are vital to the life of rural households and urban markets (production and processing of condiments, leafy vegetables, etc.). But the woman's place is not sufficiently documented.

According to *United Nations Developement Programme* (UNDP), **West Africa has the highest gender inequality in the world** (gender inequality index rating of 0.64, versus 0.57 for East Africa, 0.40 for South East Asia, 0.37 for South America and 0.14 for Europe). Oxfam, Roppa, RBM and Apess have listed ten realities about gender inequality in the agricultural sector in West Africa, for female crop and livestock farmers (see Table 5 below).

Table 5: Ten realities relating to gender inequality in the agricultural world in West Africa, for female crop and livestock farmers

10 realities for female crop farmers	10 realities for female livestock farmers
1. Women generate on average three-quarters of their income from agricultural activities. 2. Female crop farmers work on average 12 hours more per week than male crop farmers. 3. Female crop farmers contribute to the production of 80% of basic food items. 4. Female crop farmers earn less money than male crop farmers. 5. Reports on agriculture do not sufficiently take into account the role of women. 6. Female crop farmers represent only 8% of landowners and have access to only 10% of available credit in West Africa. 7. Female crop farmers are more vulnerable to food and financial crises. 8. Female crop farmers are more vulnerable to shocks resulting from catastrophes and climate change. 9. Female crop farmers are more vulnerable and are disadvantaged by their low level of education and literacy. 10. Female crop farmers hold less than a quarter of the positions of responsibility in FOs.	1. Female livestock farmers generate most of their income solely from livestock-farming activities. 2. Female livestock farmers have little mobility outside where they live and therefore have few economic opportunities. 3. Female livestock farmers earn less money than male livestock farmers. 4. Reports on livestock farming do not take into account the pastoral profession for women. 5. Female livestock farmers are losing control of milk in the management of family goods and are becoming more and more vulnerable. 6. Female livestock farmers spend a lot of time performing domestic tasks. 7. Female livestock farmers are disadvantaged by their low level of education and literacy. 8. Female livestock farmers occupy less than a quarter of the positions of responsibility in civil-society organisations. 9. Female livestock farmers' access to livestock is changing with a general downward trend for all traditional modes of access, which were more favourable. 10. The decline in gathering and artisanship are considerably reducing the sources of revenue for female livestock farmers.

Source: Grow / Alimenterre-CFSI, Oxfam, Roppa, RBM, Apess

[69] This section draws on a publication by the Grow campaign on gender inequality.

THE ISSUES FOR WOMEN IN TERMS OF AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- **The domestic and agricultural workload leaves very little time for women to participate in capacity-building activities** (literacy, training, community meetings); not to mention relations between men and women that may impose additional constraints on women's participation in those activities (if a husband refuses to let his wife go to a meeting alone, etc.). And the little availability women do have does not necessarily coincide with the times proposed by the different projects and administrations.
- Throughout the world, only **5% of extension services target women in rural areas, and only 15% of extension practitioners are female.** The latter percentage is probably even lower in West Africa.
- Extension services also focus more on cash crops than on food and subsistence crops, which are the main focus of women in rural areas. **There are very few extension activities focusing on women's agricultural and agriculture-related activities:** subsistence crops; small-scale business, which allows them to generate considerable revenue; small-scale processing; small production workshops not requiring land (e.g. fattening); etc.
- Most schemes for agricultural advisory services focus on technical advisory services. But because the two main obstacles for women are access to land and credit, **their needs are more closely linked to legal advisory services and banking mediation,** which still get too little attention in advisory schemes.
- **Women in rural areas are on average much less literate and educated than men in rural areas. Low literacy is a major obstacle when it comes to gaining access to other types of advisory services**: certain training programmes are therefore not accessible to them; learning is more difficult (and special procedures need to be developed for people with no literacy skills, which is not always the case); managerial advice and legal advice are more difficult for women to grasp. Lower levels of education and literacy mean that women have more difficulty grasping laws, are less inclined to assert their rights (which they do not necessarily understand) and are not as familiar with how institutions function (microfinance institutions, FOs). **But the fact that literacy is rarely included in agricultural advisory programmes (because it often falls within the remit of another ministry) increases the gap between men and women by excluding women from advisory services.**
- Most agricultural advisory schemes **are intended for the heads of farms**, who are mostly men. Others supporting local groups (male, female or mixed) are intended for men and women without distinction and without methods targeting a particular gender. And yet, various studies have shown that in South Africa, Honduras, Nepal, the Philippines, Rwanda and Zambia, **when women were included in designing and testing new technologies in the field, the innovations were adopted more quickly, increasing productivity and revenue.**
- To sum up, agricultural advisory services should **give women the same opportunities as men, particularly in terms of access to land, credit and training** – but that is rarely the case today. Especially since studies show that one euro invested in agriculture for the benefit of women has a greater impact than one euro invested for the benefit of men.

Case study: milk-collection centres in Niger, where a **strategy was developed to secure women in the value chain with specific advisory activities taking into account the concerns of women**[70] and combining: literacy skills for women, awareness-raising among men and women (with videos and conversations/discussion groups), empowerment of women, support for women in negotiating milk prices, support for the management of income-generating activities for women (which aim to offset any losses in revenue that occur when a husband takes control of milk), banking intermediation for women's groups, organisation of meetings at times that are more convenient for women (or at times of the year when women are more available), or at times when it is easier for men and women to gather together.

Main recommendations for greater consideration of women in agricultural advisory services:

- ➔ More precisely identify the **specific needs of women** in terms of agricultural advisory services in order to provide a concrete response.
  - Types of advisory services that take priority: **legal advice** (for gaining access to land), **banking mediation** (for gaining access to credit) and **literacy** (for learning how to learn; for empowering women; for gaining easier access to other types of advisory services, such as managerial advisory services, in order to enjoy easier access to positions of responsibility in FOs) often take priority over technical advice.
  - Advisory themes: focus also on **subsistence crops and small-scale livestock farming**, **small-scale business** by women, **small-scale processing**, **child nutrition**, **handling of products for treating crops or treated agricultural products** (particularly for women who are pregnant or nursing). Particular attention must be paid to **traditionally female value chains** (e.g. milk in many Sahel countries).
- ➔ **Tailor advisory services to constraints faced by women**, particularly their limited availability: include literacy sessions for women more systematically in advisory programmes; adapt training hours and periods; set up pro-female training centres; encourage communication between peers (conversations); focus more on empowerment and awareness-raising; in some cases, it is better to consult with female advisors.
- ➔ **Do not exclude men and organise mixed conversations** to encourage dialogue about relations between men and women in agriculture, about the workload of women, about sharing revenue, etc.
- ➔ **Promote women's access to positions of responsibility in FOs and in the governance bodies of advisory schemes or NAAS/ISAAS;** otherwise their interests will always be neglected.
- ➔ **Take into account and utilise traditional organisational structures for women (e.g. *tontines*), instead of setting up female groups for ad hoc advisory services.**
- ➔ **Set up monitoring/evaluation schemes that are sensitive to gender** (sex-specific indicators, women's focus groups for generating qualitative data, etc.).

[70] Conversely, most of the other case studies do not mention the specific needs of women or gender issues. This is an indication that gender issues are not sufficiently taken into consideration in agricultural advisory services.

ISSUES RELATING TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

Two important points must first be raised:

- A strategy for taking young people into account in advisory services must also **focus on gender issues** and take into account the respective limitations and strengths of young men and young women.
- An **age criterion** must be defined for young people, particularly with regard to men, in a social context where the idea of a young person calls to mind someone who is a "youth or dependant" of the head of the family or lineage. An age range between 15 and 35 years would be a possibility[71]. For young women, the gender criterion (which is linked to early marriages) still has an effect, as it is most often marriage that signifies a woman's passage into adulthood.

The withdrawal of young people in rural areas from agriculture and the low interest they have for the professions of crop and livestock farming raise questions in terms of food security, land use and the sustainability of value chains and agribusiness. This withdrawal is stronger in countries or regions where large cities or secondary towns may offer jobs and profitable business opportunities.

There are many reasons for this withdrawal: patriarchal structure of family farms making young people autonomous after 40 years old, lack of arable land or pastoral space, arduousness of the work, limited revenue during the initial years, lack of capital to invest, limited social and cultural services in villages, isolation, few alternative models to what their parents do, etc.

The critical phase for young people is getting set up and their first years of activity, when they must invest a lot of work (and sometimes capital) while receiving little remuneration in return. Several governments and donors are aware of the importance of helping young people set up as farmers in rural areas under reasonably acceptable conditions. Certain training programmes for young people in rural areas and programmes to help those young people get set up (AFOP programme in Cameroon) have shown that it is a good idea to assist those young people rather than funding students looking for work or land far from rural communities. Those programmes are most often implemented by entities offering agricultural training and do not necessarily have ties with the national agricultural advisory system (when it is structured and visible) or with the most efficient advisory schemes.

Case study: milk-collection centres in Niger. The study drew up a strategy for taking young people into account in the value chain. The development of the local milk value chain generates **job opportunities for young people** (milk collector by bicycle or motorcycle, livestock assistant, collection-centre employees), who perform some of the advisory activities for livestock farmers.
Case study: Cap Malagasy in Madagascar. The study shows that FIFATA (national umbrella organisation for FOs) set up an **entity called "Fekama" for the professional integration of young people.**
Case study: rural management centres in Senegal. The study shows that **managerial advisory services for FOs have gradually attracted more younger people to take on positions of responsibility within those FOs**. Young people are taking on more and more positions of responsibility, and the average age is currently 35 years, versus 45 in 2004**.**

[71] Note: The African Youth Charter defines a "young person" as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. That age range may differ slightly from one country to another.

Main recommendations for greater consideration of young people in agricultural advisory services:

- ➔ More precisely identify the **specific needs of young people** in terms of agricultural advisory services in order to provide a response.
  - Types of advisory services that take priority: the gateway should be advice on **creating projects to help young people set up,** in conjunction with **legal advice** for access to land, **banking mediation** for access to credit in order to be able to set up, **technical advice** for mastering new techniques and technologies and for not reproducing the same models as their parents.
  - Advisory subjects: setting up, small intensive workshops (fish farming, poultry farming, etc.) seem to offer them more possibilities (not much land required, easier to change activity if it doesn't work, strong market integration), which revolves around techniques and technologies, certain activities in the value chains that may be of particular interest to young people (e.g. collection or livestock assistant in milk value chains).
- ➔ Place strong focus on everything relating to **helping young people get set up in crop and livestock farming**: creation of projects to help young people set up, access to land, access to credit, management of start-up years. Advisory services of course need to be coordinated with strategies for helping young people set up (e.g. by reducing registration fees for land rights in Niger).
- ➔ **Tailor advisory services to the aspirations of young people.** In particular, anything relating to NICT (smartphone applications, WhatsApp groups, social networks, etc.) offers good opportunities for young people.
- ➔ **Promote young people's access to positions of responsibility in FOs and in governance bodies for advisory schemes or NAAS/ISAAS;** otherwise their interests will always be neglected.
- ➔ **Decompartmentalise sector-specific approaches** between the ministry of youth and the ministry of agriculture and livestock farming. Develop partnerships between training programmes and programmes to help young people set up as farmers on the one hand, and agricultural advisory schemes on the other.

ISSUES RELATING TO OTHER MARGINALISED GROUPS IN AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

Those other marginalised groups are highly dependent on context. They may include:

- Nomadic herdsmen, who are often not as well taken into account in advisory schemes as sedentary crop and livestock farmers;
- Other users of natural resources (fishermen, foragers, etc.), who are often not as well taken into account in advisory schemes as farmers are;
- Ethnic minorities, such as: the Batwa in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda; the Pygmies in Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo; and the Himbas in Namibia, etc.;
- Communities that are extremely vulnerable because of their level of poverty and/or handicap;
- Communities in zones that are particularly isolated.

The challenges in terms of agricultural advisory services are of course specific to each situation.

Main recommendations for greater consideration of marginalised groups in advisory services:

➔ More precisely identify the marginalised groups in each context, identify their specific needs and assess to what extent they can be taken into account, or not, by an NAAS/ISAAS. In certain cases, for those groups to truly be taken into account, it is better to address those needs outside the NAAS/ISAAS through ad hoc policies or strategies, such as aid schemes for handicapped individuals, social aid, etc.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

I. Scaling up

In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of producers covered by advisory schemes is still very low overall. Which raises the question of scaling up those schemes in all regions and for all types of producers. Donors and States too often look for THE successful scheme to expand throughout an entire territory, or THE most appealing method to replicate on a large scale (CEF and managerial advisory services for AFD, farmer field schools for the FAO, etc.). **But scaling up will not be successful and should not be attempted if it consists in expanding just one model.**

The integrated system for agricultural advisory services (ISAAS) gets around that issue. The idea is to make use of the multitude of existing approaches and schemes in the field (instead of singling out just one), while taking charge of the support functions that contribute to the performance of the all the different schemes in the field. **The idea is therefore not to scale up a single scheme, but to scale up using many different schemes** that are built on, coordinated, put into synergy, monitored and audited by an NAAS/ISAAS, each of which responds to specific challenges linked to a particular context and each of which makes use of the comparative advantages of a particular operator.

Once the above conditions have been accepted, there are several ways to scale up:

- **Better segmentation of the different types of advisory services:** There must of course be advisory services for everyone (therefore normative and probably prescriptive), but there must also be jointly designed advisory services that aim to build the capacities of farmers and, over the medium term, to promote autonomy with regard to advisory services. The three main approaches of advisory services are technology transfer (e.g. technical extension services), technical assistance (e.g. advisory services for family farms) and improving and coaching “learning to learn” programmes (e.g. functional literacy and all types of capacity-building for producers). Functional literacy and technical extension services certainly cost less than advisory services for family farms. Certain types of advisory services may therefore offer greater coverage than others.
- **Make use of local human resources:** In many advisory services promoted by FOs, there is a **peasant-farmer instructor** (indigenous instructor or peasant-farmer relay) who assists or relays the information provided by the salaried advisor (cacao cooperative in Ivory Coast; APROSA, FEPAB, UGCPA and FNGN in Burkina Faso; Cap Magalasy in Madagascar). In the latter case, the advisory operator considers that for basic advisory services (technical advice / extension), the peasant-farmer instructor can replace the advisor. In CEF experiments, the peasant-farmer instructor may fill out (or help fill out) monitoring documents for the producer. **Using the peasant-farmer instructor is always seen as a way to expand the action** (= reach more producers), at the risk of the salaried advisor becoming a supervisor and becoming less and less invested in the field.
- **Make use of NICT.** NICT also offers important possibilities for scaling up, making it possible to: reach a large number of producers and advisors instantly, interact through social networks, etc.

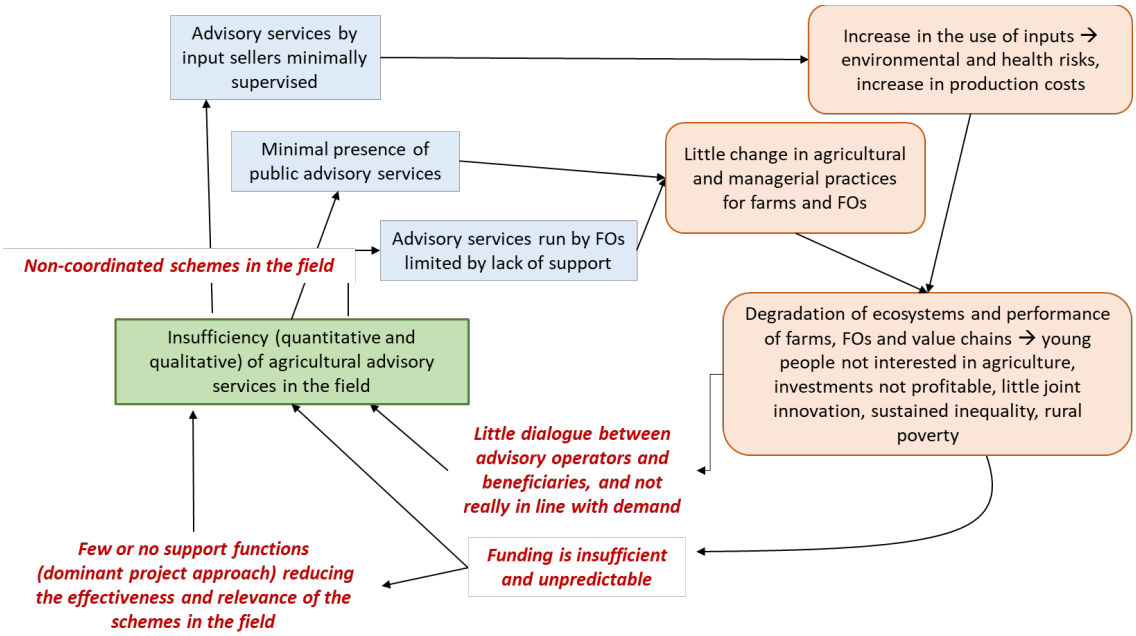
- **Create synergies between advisory services and other agricultural services** (e.g. marketing) is also necessary because it gives more meaning to advisory services and offers a more virtuous and sustainable technical/economic model.
- **Encourage public-private partnerships** in order to develop advisory schemes that can utilise the resources of private firms and public funds. The private sector could therefore diversify its target audience and its advisory activities in order to achieve the sole economic objective of selling more inputs or buying more production. Issues relating to production quality, preservation of natural resources and inclusion of marginalised groups could be integrated into those private advisory schemes supported and supervised by public authorities.

Case study: advisory services for family farms (CEF) in Burkina Faso. This study shows that at best the CEF schemes of FEPAB and UGCPA reach 10% of the members of those FOs, and that the CEF scheme in the cotton zone reaches at best only 10% of cotton growers.
Study: advisory services for certification in Ivory Coast. This study shows that the advisory scheme for certification reaches only 20% of cacao producers.
Conversely, the case study in Peru shows that 100% of dairy farmers in the zone under review have dealings with private advisors (commercial firms): all livestock farmers benefit from technology transfer, but only the biggest ones (who can afford to pay) receive real, individualised technical assistance.

II. Transitioning from a vicious circle of insufficient advisory services to a virtuous circle of agricultural advisory services

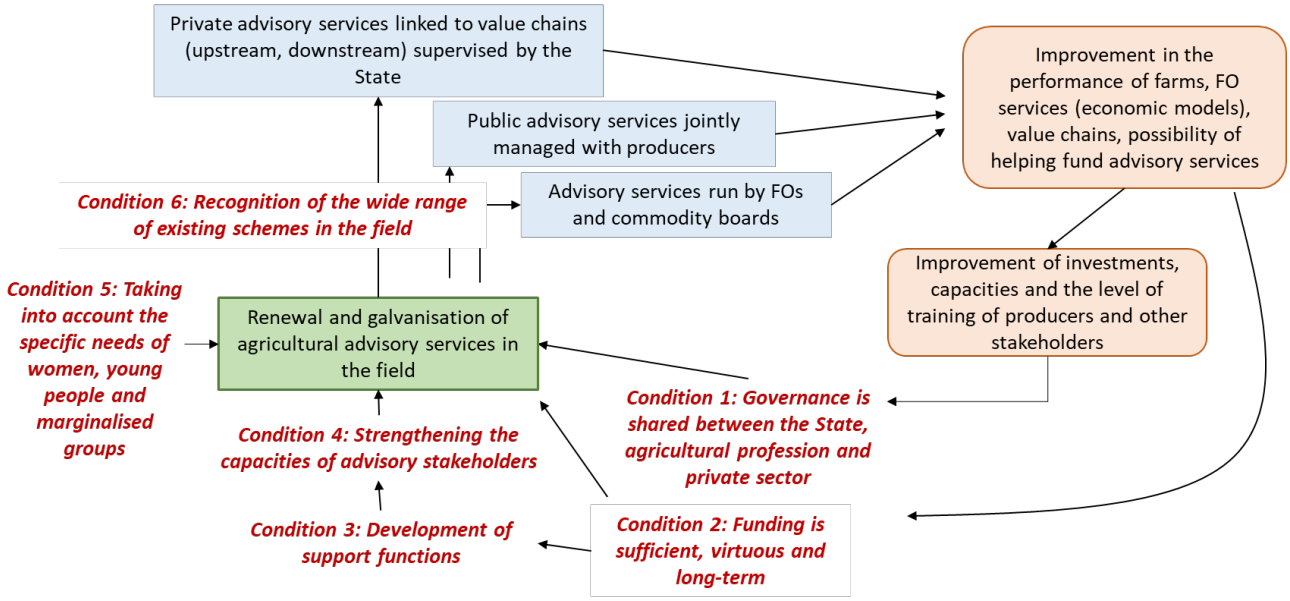
The two diagrams below (figures 9 and 10) offer a simplified breakdown of two situations: one with weak agricultural advisory services, and one with a virtuous circle of effective agricultural advisory services. The virtuous circle highlights the conditions that must be met in order to revive agricultural advisory services.

Figure 9: Vicious circle of insufficient agricultural advisory services



Source: C. Rigourd, P. Dugué

Figure 10: Virtuous circle of agricultural advisory services



Source: C. Rigourd, P. Dugué

To start a virtuous circle of agricultural advisory services, the following conditions must be met:

- **Condition 1 on governance:** Accept that governance for agricultural advisory services is shared by the State, agricultural profession and private sector. Shared governance may take shape gradually step-by-step: first by including the agricultural profession, and then by integrating upstream and downstream firms in the private sector.
- **Condition 2 on funding:** Sufficient funding from the public sector with virtuous, long-term mechanisms. Restricted funds for advisory services seem to be a good alternative, paid from the State budget, parafiscal charges and donors. Advisory services will thus lead to several positive changes that will facilitate funding for the services themselves: an entrepreneurial transition for FOs that will make them better able to cover the costs of advisory services; better economic performance for farms and value chains, which will also help fund the advisory services.
- **Condition 3 on support functions:** Sharing and funding support functions is essential, because those functions help galvanise the schemes in the field.
- **Condition 4 on improving the capacities of the different stakeholders:** This requires basic and continuing training for advisors and for the managers of the schemes, and recognition of the advisor's role. An essential condition for producers, and in particular female producers, is to improve their literacy skills; this issue must not be neglected under the pretext that it is something that must be addressed by other sector-based policies or other ministries.
- **Condition 5 on inclusion:** The priority here is to better meet the needs of women, who currently have little access to advisory schemes. The leverage effect will be considerable. The idea is also to focus more on young people (more and more of whom are leaving the agricultural sector) and make agriculture more attractive.
- **Condition 6 on schemes in the field:** There must be recognition of the diversity of schemes in the field, particularly those run by the agricultural profession and the private sector. Scaling up is possible only if all the schemes in the field are strengthened.

III. For taking action and reviving agricultural advisory services in sub-Saharan Africa

The main question is not “how to set up an advisory scheme to revive advisory services”, but rather “how to set up an integrated system for agricultural advisory services, comprising schemes in the field and support functions”.

NEED FOR A TRIGGERING FACTOR AND REALISATION THAT AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES ARE NECESSARY

Several countries have noted a need to revive agricultural advisory services. In Morocco, the reform of agricultural advisory services (with the creation of ONCA) was launched after initial investments in the Green Morocco Plan were found to have had mixed results and impacts because of a lack of coaching for producers. Likewise, in Niger, there were no agricultural advisory services in the presidential 3N Initiative (Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens). Political will at the highest level, mobilisation of the agricultural profession, international technical assistance and donor incentivisation were therefore needed (triggers for additional tranches of budget support for the EU and ADB) for the reforms to occur. Conversely, in Mali, although the creation of an NAAS was included in the agricultural orientation law as early as 2006, no progress has been noted over the past 12 years. The stakeholders (Ministry of Agriculture, representatives of producers, donors) appear to unanimously recognise the current deficiencies regarding agricultural advisory services in Mali, but discussion on the topic is beginning very timidly. In other countries that have a policy for the creation of an NAAS, the problem is often that there is not enough funding to make the system operational or that there is an erroneous vision of what an NAAS should be[72].

It seems therefore that there needs to be a **strong triggering factor, whether internal or external**, in each country in order to raise awareness about the need for a strong, pluralistic offer of advisory services, to promote reform and to revive all the components of an integrated system for agricultural advisory services. **Awareness needs to be raised at a sufficiently high level,** because reform and revival of advisory services will necessarily affect **multiple sectors and multiple stakeholders, and will be a long and complex process** (affecting roles within public services, affecting tools for funding the sector, etc.).

Studies (evaluation of programmes, impact studies, position notes, formulation of projects/programmes, etc.), international events (conferences on advisory services, ministerial summits) and visits for exchange between countries that are more accessible to FOs and producers may certainly help raise awareness.

POLITICAL MOBILISATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL PROFESSION AND THE COMMUNITY OF DONORS

Once awareness has been raised, there must be **joint mobilisation of the State and agricultural profession,** and agreement on the process for designing an NAAS/ISAAS from

[72] For example, the return of a fully State-run initiative

existing elements. This joint work would be easier if the agricultural profession were organised, legitimate and recognised.

The initiative may also be driven by international partners provided it echoes true awareness of the national component. It should then receive **financial and technical support from international donors.** In Niger, the creation of the NAAS received financial and technical support from Switzerland, Germany and Denmark. The EU and ADB also supported the process through triggers for additional tranches of budget support in connection with the reform. Today, even more donors are aligning with the NAAS and are helping make it operational. In Cameroon, the same exercise was performed but did not actually lead to the creation of a new NAAS or innovative mechanisms for funding advisory services. But the creation of an agency for agricultural advisory services associated with the profession is being studied.

FIRST STEP: GENUINE DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND OF THE EXISTING OFFER OF AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

An NAAS utilises existing schemes instead of creating a new scheme. But the existing scheme must be known and recognised.

A diagnostic assessment is therefore required for:

- All advisory needs;
- All current offers/current advisory schemes;
- Adequacy of the offers/needs;
- Support functions.

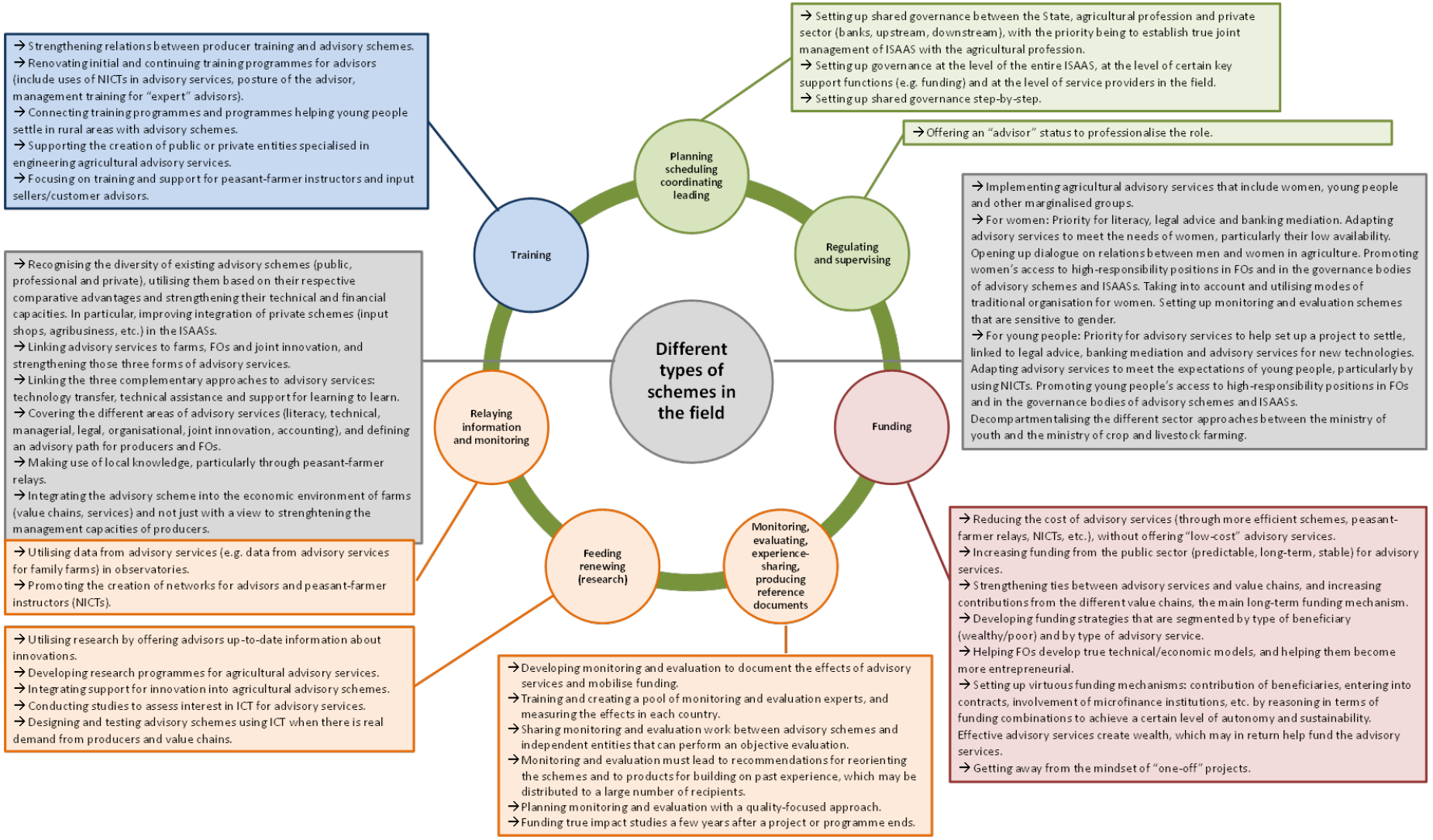
In many cases, the diagnostic assessment reveals the wide range of schemes in place, their respective comparative advantages, and their weaknesses, shortcomings, complementarities and possible synergies. An external diagnostic assessment (performed by consultants) could be performed initially, and then, ideally, the stakeholders themselves would team up and build on that work.

Based on that diagnostic assessment, the State and agricultural profession (and private sector, if possible) may then start to define a common vision for the future NAAS. Other studies will then need to be conducted, such as studies on funding tools, on the improvement of training programmes, etc.

IV. Summary of recommendations

Figure 11 on the following page summarises the main recommendations for the advisory schemes in the field and support functions.

Figure 11: Main recommendations for advisory schemes in the field and support functions



Source: C. Rigourd, P. Dugué

List of acronyms and abbreviations

3N Initiative	Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens [French: *Les nigériens nourrissent les nigériens*]
ACEFA	Programme for the Improvement of Competitiveness of Family Agro-pastoral Farms (Cameroon)
ADB	African Development Bank
AFAAS	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
AFD	French Agency for Development [French: *Agence française de développement*]
AFDI	*Agriculteurs français et développement international*
AFOP	Support program for the renovation and development of vocational training in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors (Cameroon)
AFVA	Agricultural Extension and Training Agency (Tunisia) [French: *Agence de la vulgarisation et de la formation agricoles*]
ANADER	National Agency for Rural Development Support (Ivory Coast) [French: *Agence nationale d'appui au développement rural*]
ANCAR	National Agency for Agricultural and Rural Consulting (Senegal) [French: *Agence nationale de conseil agricole et rural*]
APCA	Agence de promotion du conseil agricole Agency for the promotion of advisory services in agricultural (Niger) [French: *Agence de promotion du conseil agricole*]
APCAM	Permanent Assembly of the Chambers of Agriculture of Mali [French: *Assemblée permanente des Chambres d'agriculture du Mali*]
APIA	Agency for the promotion of agricultural investments (Tunisia) [French: *Agence de promotion des investissements agricoles*]
APROSSA	*Association pour la promotion de la sécurité et de la souveraineté alimentaires (Afrique Verte Burkina)*
AVSF	*Agronomes et vétérinaires sans frontières*
C2D	Debt Reduction and Development Contract (AFD) [French: *Contrat de désendettement et de développement*]
CAGEF	Family Farm Management Support Center (Burkina Faso) [French: *Centre d'appui à la gestion des exploitations familiales*]
CEF	Advisory services for family farms [French: *Conseil à l'exploitation familiale*]
CEP	Farmer's field school [French : *Champ école paysans*]
CFSI	*Comité français pour la solidarité internationale*
CGER	Center for Management and Rural Economy (Senegal) [French: *Centre de gestion et d'économie rurale*]
CIRAD	The French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development [French: *Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le Développement*]
CMDT	Malian Company for the development of textiles [French: *Compagnie malienne pour le développement des textiles*]
CNOP-G	National Confederation of Peasant Organizations of Guinea [French: *Confédération nationale des organisations paysannes de Guinée*]

CPF	Peasant Confederation of Faso (Burkina Faso) [French: *Confédération paysanne du Faso*]
C-SCPC	Confederation of cooperative societies of cotton producers (Mali) [French: *Confédération des sociétés coopératives de producteurs de coton*]
EU	European Union
FADCI	Sustainable agricultural value chains in Ivory Cost (programme) [French: *Filières agricoles durables de Côte d'Ivoire*]
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
CFA franc	Franc of the Financial Community of Africa [French: *Franc de la Communauté financière d'Afrique*]
FEPAB	Federation of Agricultural Professionals of Burkina Faso [French: *Fédération des professionnels agricoles du Burkina*]
FIFATA	*Fikambanana Fampivoarana ny Tansaha* (Madagascar) National umbrella organisation for FOs [French: *Association pour le progrès des paysans*]
FIRCA	Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Development (Côte d'Ivoire) [French: *Fonds interprofessionnel pour la recherche et le conseil agricoles*]
FISAN	Investment Fund for Food and Nutrition Security (Niger) [French: *Fonds d'investissement pour la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle*]
FNGN	National Federation of Naam Groups (Burkina Faso) [French: *Fédération nationale des groupements Naam*]
FPFD	Federation of Peasants of Fouta Djallon (Guinée) [French: *Fédération des paysans du Fouta Djallon*]
FUPRO	Federation of Producer Unions (Bénin) [French: *Fédération des unions de producteurs*]
GFRAS	Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IRAM	Institute for research and application of development methods [French: *Institut de recherches et d'applications des méthodes de développement*]
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
ISAAS	integrated system for agricultural advisory services [French: *système intégré de conseil agricole*]
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services (Ouganda)
NAAS	National Agriculture Advisory Services
NAREP	National Agricultural Research and Extension Programme
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NICT	New Information and Communications Nechnologies
ONCA	Public advisory office (Maroc) [French: *Office national du conseil agricole*]
R&D	Research and development
SAED	Company for the Development and Exploitation of the Lands of the Senegal River Delta [French: *Société nationale d'aménagement et d'exploitation des terres (Sénégal)*]
SASAE	South African Society for Agricultural Extension (Afrique du Sud)
SOA (Réseau)	Union of Agricultural Organisations (Madagascar) [French: *Syndicat des organisations agricoles*]
SODECOTON	Cameroon Cotton Production Company

SOFITEX	Textile Fibre Company of Burkina Faso [French: *Société burkinabè des fibres textiles*]
T&V	Training and visit
UGCPA/BM	Union of groups for the marketing of agricultural products in the Mouhoun loop (Burkina Faso) [French: *Union des groupements pour la commercialisation de produits agricoles de la boucle du Mouhoun*]
UNPCB	National Union of Cotton Producers in Burkina Faso [French: *Union Nationale des sociétés coopératives de Producteurs de Coton du Burkina Faso*]
WECARD	West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development

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Appendix 1: Glossary

Agricultural advisory services: Set of approaches and schemes to support farms (crop, animal and fish production) and FOs in production management (choice of techniques, organisation of work, etc.), economic management and management of resources (natural, financial, labour), and in the acquisition and mastery of savoir-faire and knowledge.

Agricultural service: Any scheme allowing the farmer to run his or her farm with regard to production, management of natural resources and sale of products. The main agricultural services are: supply of inputs and equipment, grouped or individual sales, agricultural loans, equipment-sharing, supply of irrigation water, animal health and agricultural advisory services.

- **"Tangible" agricultural services:** Services providing a tangible good or money: loan; supply of fertiliser, pesticides or seeds; animal health. If the good is not consumed, it may be kept or resold.
- **"Intangible" agricultural services:** These include providing the crop or livestock farmer with advisory services or training, which should have an impact on the performance of the farm. The farmer cannot resell, loan or rent this type of service.

Managerial advisory services (for farms): Managerial advisory services take into account the farm in its entirety and, through discussions with the farmer, try to find ways to improve over a period often lasting several years (Faure and Kleene, 2004). Managerial advisory services offer an opportunity to work with beneficiaries (on a voluntary basis or in response to a request) to help them boost their skills in analysis, decision-making, problem-solving and implementation of solutions. It is characterised by an approach (the global approach), a method (the management cycle), a teaching style (coaching), management tools and specific skills (Rigourd et al., 2014).

Advisory services for family farms (*conseil à l'exploitation familiale*, or "*CEF*"): Coaching provided to family farms to help farmers and active members of their family improve their skills so that they can master their production system by taking into account:

- all the farm's activities;
- the technical and economic aspects (and sometimes even legal aspects) of farm management;
- the complexity of the production systems from a technical, economic, environmental and social point of view.

It is therefore not a standardised approach, but rather an approach that must be adapted to each context. The producer must make specific decisions, with support from the advisor, in order to meet predefined objectives (Dugué and Faure, 2003; Faure et al., 2004).

Managerial advisory services for FOs: Coaching provided to FOs to strengthen group capacities and the capacities of the elected leaders and salaried employees in order to help them master the development of their activities and ensure their technical, economic and social sustainability.

Business advisory services: Advisory services for entities involved in production (farm) or services (service centre) that have achieved a good level of organisation and that have mastered the principles of management. Business advisory services seek to improve the management of targeted sub-systems or of the business as a whole (Rigourd et al., 2013).

Specialised or business advisory services are provided on an ad hoc basis (expertise): strategic or specific diagnostic assessment of a particular area or function of the target business, study and coaching for projects (business plan), general studies, acquisition and/or transfer of farms and/or agricultural businesses, legal advice, tax advice, social advice, asset advice, environmental advice, marketing advice, organisational advice, quality advice, human-resources advice, etc. (Ambre Conseil/CERFRANCE).

Support/advisory services: Generic term whose meaning is close to that of "agricultural advisory services" (see above) but which gives greater importance to relations between advisory services and other agricultural services.

Coaching: posture and method of working with producers and heads of FOs to help them the achieve their objectives. This method is characterised by a long-term (several months or years) commitment to training, monitoring of activities, participative evaluation, help finding solutions, etc.

Advisory scheme: Set of the resources and procedures mobilised to provide agricultural advisory services. The scheme includes (i) human, logistical and financial resources, (ii) steering, governance, capitalisation and monitoring/evaluation bodies, and (iii) knowledge and savoir-faire (approaches, tools, etc.).

Agricultural extension services: Set of approaches and schemes at the level of a country or region to promote technical innovations that may help solve the different types of problems encountered by producers and/or other stakeholders in different value chains or rural territories. In addition to providing information to producers, agricultural extension services also aim to train them in the proper use of the new practices (synonym: technical advisory services).

> Other definition: Agricultural extension services consist in sharing the results of research and savoir-faire with farmers, and in helping them exploit a larger part of the value chain (Hailn, 2012).

Technology transfer: Approach which consists in transposing a technical innovation from a situation of experimentation or adoption to a rural situation where it is not known. The transfer generally occurs from the research sector to the production sector, or from the production sector in a particular region or country to a different region.

Innovation platform: Formal or informal structure with a diverse group of stakeholders from the public and private sectors who come together to work towards a shared objective to improve production, processing and marketing processes (focus on one or more components of the value chain). According to WECARD (2012), "The platform considers innovation to be a dynamic systemic process and recognises that innovation may stem from several different sources, complex interactions and information flows. Innovation involves three basic elements: (i) technology, including new varieties or breeds, and practices for managing soil and water; (ii) organisational aspects, in the sense of organising and sharing knowledge about new methods, and (iii) institutional aspects concerning rules, crops, values, standards, behaviours, policies and laws."

Basic training: Training offered to children and young people during elementary school, secondary school and higher education for general learning and professional training.

Continuing or professional training: Training for adults who have mastered a profession or who want to transition to a new profession.

Sovereign functions of the State: Sovereign functions are functions that are exclusively the responsibility of the State and that cannot be delegated. Sovereign functions may vary depending on each country's political systems or opinions. In general, however, they include: making laws, issuing money (by the central bank), levying taxes, raising and managing an army and police force, engaging in war, signing peace treaties, managing customs, ensuring domestic security, rendering justice, granting pardons, building public infrastructure, etc. Distinction is often made between sovereign functions reserved exclusively for the State, economic functions of the private sector and functions that are shared between the public and private sectors. Basic, advanced and professional training, and health, are increasingly shared between the public sector (which makes it possible to offer training and treatment for everyone) and the private sector (for those who can afford to pay). But in any case, the State regulates and supervises all of those services, both public and private.

In the agricultural sector, the refocusing of the State on its sovereign functions signifies in general that it is creating the conditions for the economic and social development of the agricultural sector by defining and participating in the implementation of agricultural policy and defining the rules governing interaction between the different institutional stakeholders (legislative and regulatory texts). The State may also perform supervisory functions (import and production of seeds, import of pesticides, etc.) and authorisation functions (veterinary, seeds, pesticides, etc.). By refocusing its role, the State therefore withdraws from production, processing, marketing and agricultural-services functions (credit, advisory services, supply of inputs, etc.).

According to these definitions of "sovereign functions", not all cross-disciplinary functions relating to agricultural advisory services are the State's exclusive responsibility. Some could be shared with the agricultural profession. The refocusing of the State on its sovereign functions would logically lead it to withdraw (gradually) from operational advisory services in the field.

As mentioned above, the definition of "sovereign function" varies depending on the different systems and opinions; there is no single position. Therefore, what the State wants to preserve as its exclusive mandate and what it wants to share with other stakeholders is a political choice.

Appendix 2: Types of agricultural advisory and extension schemes in the field, by promoter

No.	PROMOTED BY	EXAMPLE	SERVICES	OBJECTIVES/PURPOSE	CLIENTS/ BENEFICIARIES	FUNDING	GOVERNANCE/ DECISION CENTRE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES/RISKS
1	**"General-purpose" FOs (in several production-related value chains) upstream and downstream**	FUPRO (FO) with its affiliate "Maïs": Benin	Technical advisory services of a general nature for several crops, not always very "specialised" (rarely technical/economic)	Ensure quantity, quality and timing (deadlines) of production sold (sell supplies linked to the crops sold)	All producers who are members of the FO	Funded by margins generated on the sale of products (downstream) and supplies (upstream)	Collective in compliance with fundamentals, rules and collective choices	Technical advisory services "appear" to be free Helps FO boost sales volume The margins generated are reinvested in the FO and/or distributed to members of the FO (rebates, price supplements, etc.)	The technician risks becoming a technical salesperson with sale of inputs at all prices (overuse, over-indebtedness, etc.)
2	**Private input suppliers upstream (and sometimes downstream)**	Private advisory services – input suppliers: Peru		Sell supplies linked to the crops sold (ensure quantity, quality and timing (deadlines) of production sold)	Client producers who buy inputs	Funded by margins generated on the sale of supplies (upstream)	Individual Private	Technical advisory services "appear" to be free Facility to obtain credit for supplies	Advisory services provided by a de facto technical salesperson
3	**"Specialised" FOs highly integrated into value chains and demanding markets downstream (and sometimes upstream)**	Farmer milk-collection centres offering multiple services: Niger Advisory services for cocoa cooperatives: Ivory Coast/Cameroon Advisory services for cotton – UNPCB: Burkina Faso	Specialised technical advisory services for production, sometimes with technical-economic advisory services / managerial advisory services: analysis of group margins, technical meetings in the field), individual managerial advisory services	Ensure quantity, quality and timing (deadlines) of production sold Help producers progress technically to develop the depth of their range and niche markets	All producers who are members of the FO	Funded by margins generated from products (downstream) and, to a lesser extent, through the sale of supplies (upstream)	Collective in compliance with fundamentals, rules and collective choices	Advisory services "appear" to be free Helps FO boost sales volume and develop new markets The margins generated are reinvested in the FO and/or distributed to members of the FO (rebates, price supplements, etc.) A wide range of services may be developed	The advisory services are above all meant to support production and take into account less the needs and interests of the farm as a whole Risk of leading producers to make decisions (investments, crop rotation, specialisation, etc.) that are not always in line with their interests and needs For private entities: buying production at a lower price, because credit on supplies for advance payments for harvest
4	**Private agribusiness and industrial-agriculture firms in a value chain, therefore downstream and often upstream**	Company in the poultry value chain: Ivory Coast Company in the cashew value chain: Ivory Coast SODECOTON: Cameroon	Specialised technical advisory services for production and technical/economic advisory services Managerial advisory services (less common)		All producers who are suppliers of the private company		Individual Private	Advisory services "appear" to be free Helps FO boost sales volume and develop new markets Facility to obtain credit for supplies	

No.	PROMOTED BY	EXAMPLE	SERVICES	OBJECTIVES/PURPOSE	CLIENTS/ BENEFICIARIES	FUNDING	GOVERNANCE/ DECISION CENTRE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES/RISKS
5	**Private advisory firm Engineering offices Independent consultants Specialists in business and/or agriculture**	Private advisors: Tunisia Offices that "draw up business plans to obtain funding: Morocco, Cameroon, etc. Private accounting firms Certain banks (CAM Morocco)	Specialised (or highly specialised) advisory services generally with a high level of expertise (therefore billable), often on an ad hoc basis, and may cover several areas (business advisory services): technical / technical-economic, legal, accounting, tax, organisational, quality / certification, environment, management, etc.	Do business with their expertise Respond to specific and/or complex requests from mid-size and large agricultural companies (producer upstream and companies downstream) requiring a high level of expertise	Farmer, FO or company downstream, on an individual basis, with the potential to grow, invest, etc., therefore solvent and bankable	By the client, sometimes with mechanisms involving "advisory cheques" (funded by projects/public sector)	Individual Private	Efficient response to specific one-off needs (Highly) specialised expertise for complex projects and/or projects of "mid-size and large" companies Business advisory services	Intended only for clients who can afford it "Partnerships" and possible links with value chains and other private entities (providers of agricultural services: supplies, banks, insurers, etc.) that may limit the independence of advisory services Rarely global advisory services, advisory services for supporting change over the long term
6	**Private firm not necessarily specialised in advisory services, business or agriculture, and therefore with support from technical partners (who are specialised)**	Orange ICT advisory services: Mali Farmerline (TAHMO initiative): Ghana	Provision of specialised agricultural information (monitoring): technical, weather, prices, etc.	Seize an opportunity and do business with provision of agricultural information Diversify its market and products	All producers who are clients and/or technical partners of the company	For pay, through the sale of information services	Individual Private	Makes it possible to instantly reach a large number of producers with real-time information May evolve towards the creation of apps (for smartphone) and therefore towards assistance with decision-making and advisory services	Provision of information is not really an advisory service, strictly speaking If there is insufficient targeting/segmentation of producers, information may be too generalised and therefore not relevant, with beneficiaries losing interest and many resources and costs incurred for minimal impact Excess of information, with the risk being: "too much information means no information at all"
7	**Advisory services promoted by peasant-farmer "management centres"**	CGERV: Senegal CGR (cotton): Mali Faranfasi so federation of service centres (FCPS): Mali	All areas of advisory services are included: Technical/economic advisory services (rarely technical advisory services) Managerial advisory services Business advisory services Specialised advisory services Training Information	Develop agricultural businesses Develop the territories Ensure the success of the member companies' projects	All producers and FOs belonging to the association	For pay, through subscription fees and payment of invoices for services Direct or indirect financial support (advisory cheque) from the State and donors	Collective in compliance with fundamentals, rules and collective choices Association	Cross-disciplinary approach (multiple value chains) taking into account the farm in its entirety with advisory services over the long term Mutualist spirit, therefore able to satisfy requests for advisory services where the beneficiaries are unable to cover the entire cost No shareholders to pay, so all added value is reinjected into the association, R&D, employees, etc. No elected leaders representing specific agricultural interests (no union mindset) Independence of funding and advisory services Ability to adapt the services offer more quickly (compared with the public sector)	In Africa, difficulty receiving a "fair" price for services and balancing the entity's budget Competitive market (compared with no. 5): ensure financial equilibrium, which may sometimes be to the detriment of mutualism Multiple value chains and multiple types of production, therefore difficult to develop technical advisory services

No.	PROMOTED BY	EXAMPLE	SERVICES	OBJECTIVES/PURPOSE	CLIENTS/ BENEFICIARIES	FUNDING	GOVERNANCE/ DECISION CENTRE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES/RISKS
8	**Scheme promoted by "NGOs"**	AFDI FERT AGRISUD VSF	Extension services Technical advisory services Technical/economic advisory services Managerial advisory services	Contribute to the development of countries in the South and their agriculture Improve the governance of FOs and their representation and advocacy capacities	All producers and FOs potentially without particular distinction	Public and private donors (donations) Value chains (parafiscal charges) Agricultural unions	Collective in compliance with fundamentals, rules and collective choices		
9	**Chamber of Agriculture/Advisory agency (public economic institution led by elected officials, OR semi-public company: State, private sector, producers)**	ANADER: Ivory Coast ACEFA and project for an advisory agency: Cameroon	Extension services Technical advisory services Technical-economic advisory services Managerial advisory services	Ensure representation among FOs, public authorities and local authorities Support territories/value chains Position agriculture at the heart of the territory Provide coaching and encourage people to set up in agriculture Support and disseminate innovations		Value chains (parafiscal charges) Public and private donors (donations, loans) The State Certain services may be partially for pay	Collective (State, producers through their value chains, private sector) with or without elected leaders	Intended for all producers and FOs, whether or not they are able to cover the cost Coverage may include the entire territory Some autonomy when it comes to decision-making and management Independence of advisory services Possibility to develop business advisory services	Slower reactivity when it comes to driving change in the services offered and in the professions because of national coverage, centralised organisation and financial dependence (State, donors, etc.) In practice, difficulties responding to all requests (lack of funding and/or expertise) No commitment or consideration required of beneficiaries (delivery of production, purchase of an input or service, etc.) generating weak qualitative "pressure" for the service, and therefore with a risk of weakening the expertise over time, especially during periods of budgetary restraint (For 100% public, the advisor may be likened to a "supervisor")
10	**State and its services (public, led by the administration's salaried employees)**	ONCA: Morocco AVFA: Tunisia		Improve food security Reduce poverty in rural areas Reduce the rural exodus Boost jobs Increase export volume and tax resources		The State Public donors (donations, loans)	The State and services	Advisory services "appear" to be free Intended for all producers and FOs, whether or not they are able to cover the cost Coverage may include the entire territory Other general-interest missions may be performed by the advisors (survey of prices, statistics, checks, etc.)	

Appendix 3: Comparison of case studies according to several criteria[73]

TABLE A: Summary of case studies

Case study	Major operator and type	Production potential, link with value chain	Final objective of advisory services	Target beneficiaries Number or %	Location
1. Private advisory services irrigated zone Peru	Sellers of inputs for plant and animal (firms and small entities) Dairy firms	Strong Milk on the rise thanks to irrigation (fodder)	Improve technical and economic performance through appropriate use of inputs	All potential or current producers/ consumers of inputs Concerns the majority > 70% But technical assistance, especially for large entities	Sale area Collection area
2. Advisory services for certification of sustainable cocoa Ivory Coast	Chocolate firms, cooperatives and service providers or co-op employees	Strong Only focused on cocoa	Boost productivity while limiting environmental impact Certify production (rainforest label, sustainable-cocoa label)	150,000 producers # 20% Within multiple cooperatives that provide advisory services and ensure compliance with specifications	Several large production areas in Ivory Coast
3. Public advisory services ACEFA Cameroon	The State Civil servants assigned to a "national project" entity	Highly variable depending on the region No direct link with value chains (family-farms concept)	Boost producers' revenue through better management of resources in a broad sense	Voluntary producers within producer groups/economic interest groups or co-ops supported by ACEFA for a joint production-related project 3 types of clients (producer groups, farms or companies)	All of Cameroon
4. Multi-actor advisory services in the dairy value chain Niger	Milk-collection centre (FO); Private vet; Private collectors; NGO	Medium to strong (depends on the import of powder) and the state of demand (on the rise)	Improve the performance of the different components of the value chain, starting with producers	Milk producers having ties with three collection centres (five at end 2018) A few hundred or 10^3 producers	Collection areas around Niamey
5. Management centre Senegal River valley	3 management centres, associative entities, and an umbrella entity	Strong (but dependent on the price of rice, which is in competition with imports)	Improve the management of economic interest groups, in particular credit for growing season	Rice producers (irrigated areas) (# 30 to 50,000) And 46 hydraulic unions (nearly 100%), 300 economic interest groups (1/3), 90 producers (via 3PRD/AFD project) and 120 private entities (service providers, hulling, etc.) directly	The river valley (irrigated areas)
6. APPROSA Afrique Verte ICT sale of grains	Project managed by an NGO in connection with grain FOs	Low to medium (depends on rainfall, production zone) Little structure within grain value chain, operates on surpluses after storage for consumption.	Boost producers' revenue by selling grains at a better price and by boosting yields Facilitate the food market for all stakeholders (trust)	6,800 producers in 280 FOs and 9 FO unions	Poor zones: Sahel, Centre, Centre-Est and Centre-Nord Wealthier zones: Boucle du Mouhoun, Hauts-Bassins, Cascades and Est (name of FOs not specified? what links with FEPAB and UGCPA)
7. CEF Burkina Faso implemented by FOs	CEF-type advisory services implemented directly by FOs (FNGN, FEPAB, UGCPA, etc.) Design and support by AFDI regions	Varies by region Focus on market gardening for FNGN Grains for the others	Boost revenue and improve food security for families Better reasoning for credit (FNGN, UGCPA) Boost productivity (especially yield) Have access to data at FO level (FNGN)	FNGN roughly 600 (< 10%) FEPAB roughly 3,000 (10% of members) UGCPA: 240 or # 10%	Sahel FNGN Mouhoun: UGCPA Various regions FEPAB
8. Cap Magalasy Madagascar	Advisory services implemented by an association created/manged by an umbrella FO called FIFATA (2016)	Medium: natural potential for production, but major structural constraints (roads, etc.)	Improve technical/economic performance of farms	# 8,000 producers in 4 regions (582 basic FOs and 49 municipal unions, 4 regions)	Vakinankaratra Haute Matsiatra Itasy, Analamanga, Ihorombe, Amoron'i

[73] Text boxes throughout the document present information from studies that are relevant to each paragraph. The studies are available in French (and soon in English) on Inter-réseaux's website

Notes on Table A: structure, objectives/purpose, target audience

The type of advisory service and its purpose are closely linked to the type of operator who implements it. Without being exhaustive, analysis of the eight cases leads to four different situations:

- The advisory services are provided, managed and oriented by stakeholders in the private sector (input seller in Peru, cocoa and milk buyers in Ivory Coast and Peru, etc.). In this case, those operators invest in advisory services in order to first make their activities productive;
- The advisory services are provided by a public or similar service, and are therefore a priori intended for a large number of people and a wide variety of producers nationally (e.g. the ACEFA programme (future national advisory agency) in Cameroon);
- The advisory services are provided and managed by FOs or associations dominated by producers (e.g. FNGN, UGCPA and FEPAB in Burkina Faso; milk-collection centre in Niger; rural management centre in Senegal; Cap Magalasy in Madagascar). Those FOs manage the schemes and salaried advisors, or compensate some of their members serving as local or regional instructors. Most often, there is a combination of salaried employees and indigenous “volunteer” instructors and members of the FO;
- Lastly, an NGO in partnership with FOs manages a agricultural advisory project (APROSSA-AVB). In addition to the project, there is a strategy that evolves over time and that aims to ensure the longevity of the advisory scheme by rooting it more and more in the FOs.

All the schemes **aim** to improve the performance of farms and boost farmers’ revenue, but their secondary objectives vary, especially in terms of strengthening the capacities of rural stakeholders (producers, basic FOs, advisors, etc.) and helping them become more autonomous regarding projects (development operators) and stakeholders upstream and downstream (shopkeepers, agribusiness). For example, chocolate firms invest little or nothing to support cooperatives even though those cooperatives adhere to the required specifications, which results in better prices (the same goes for Peruvian agricultural supply firms). In all other cases, however, basic FOs and higher-level FOs appear in the schemes:

- because they receive tailored advisory services directly from the advisory operator/scheme that can help them progress (basic FOs supported by ACEFA to capitalise on the joint investments, milk-collection centres in Niger supported by an NGO, FOs assisted by Afrique Verte BKF to sell more grains) or that is necessary and vital to the survival of agriculture (e.g. service that the rural management centre provides to rice FOs to ensure payment of “water” charges and loans);
- because the FOs are the advisory operators. In this case, other support structures provide support/advisory services to those FOs to improve the operation of the advisory schemes (e.g. relations between AFDI/CORADE and FOs in Burkina Faso such as FNGN and FEPAB, or relations between FERT and Cap Magalasy, CER France and the rural management centre in Senegal and Karaka/IRAM and milk-collection centres).

It is clear that in the vast majority of cases, agricultural advisory services are understood as the combination of advisory services for producers and FOs. This may seem obvious since FOs appear as major stakeholders in agricultural development when they are considered by public policies, and especially projects, as vital organisations when it comes to working with a large number of producers and to ensuring the longevity of the actions put in place (beyond the end of the projects). But that is not easy to put in place because of the distrust between public stakeholders (and certain donors) and FOs, and especially because of the low level of investment in capacity-building for FOs. For certain decision-makers, and in the wake of the “value-chain development” wave, advisory services should highlight the category of “entrepreneur” farmers by encouraging investment from elites and from the private sector, which is unusual in agriculture (e.g. second-

generation agriculture in Cameroon), and investment from upstream and downstream firms (see privatisation of advisory services and their funding: case of Peru and chocolatiers in Ivory Coast).

Relations between the advisory schemes presented and value chains are highly variable depending on the situation. The positioning of advisory services in a value chain (for stakeholders in the value chain) may be considered as an advantage if the value chain generates wealth (contribution to funding advisory services) (case of milk in Peru and cocoa in Ivory Coast) and/or constitutes a possible organisational framework for advisory services that is already well structured (economic interest group for rice and water management in Senegal, groups of grain producers in Burkina Faso) or in the process of becoming well structured (case of milk and stakeholders involved in collection around Niamey). But organisation of the value chain (with interprofessional bodies, local and umbrella FOs, etc.) is not sufficient for the emergence of new and original advisory schemes. For example, despite their various experiments, the cotton value chains in sub-Saharan Africa have innovated relatively little in terms of advisory services during the past decade, and have in most cases engaged in extension services and technology transfer.

By being less connected with value chains, advisory schemes can:

- provide a better response to the wide range of requests from producers;
- address more global questions concerning management of natural resources and strategies for farms, FOs and firms;
- avoid overusing inputs (offered by advisors from agricultural supply firms).

The latter situation occurs particularly in the case of ACEFA in Cameroon, Cap Malagasy, and to a lesser extent in certain “general-purpose/territorial” FOs in Burkina Faso, such as FEPAB.

The target audience is primarily producers belonging to the scheme, or in other words those who are directly involved in the advisory activities, but in most cases (except in Peru) associated FOs are also targeted. But the performance indicator is the number of producers advised and how that number changes, except in the specific case of the rural management centre in Senegal, whose activity focuses particularly on advisory services for managing FOs and for firms other than rice-production firms (agricultural works, hulling). One of the criteria for the success of a scheme (often requested by the donors) is the number of producers advised and how it changes over time.

According to those criteria, **the importance of the schemes** is highly variable and should be viewed in relation to the type of advisory service (the cost of large-scale extension services for the advised unit is lower than the cost of more elaborate advisory services), the overall amount invested, the economies of scale obtained by mobilising peasant-farmer instructors or peasant-farmer relays. The case studies therefore present “massive” schemes: those of the private sector (20% of cocoa producers in Ivory Coast) and large national programmes with large budgets (ACEFA at least 150,000 producers but the advised unit is the collective project[74] of the group (17,000 producer groups in question). For the other advisory schemes for producers, the figures vary between a few hundred and a few thousand, but never exceed 8,000 producers.

[74] It may be livestock-farming buildings and the development of the pork or poultry workshop, processing facility for manioc and other foods, production equipment such as a full harness for draught animals, etc.

Table B: summary of case studies

Case study	Type of advisory service/methods and tools	Who performs it (service provider, directly)	Skills of the basic advisor	Funding	Results
1. Private advisory services irrigated zone Peru	Technical advisory services, support/training and individual technical assistance for some	Salaried employees at agricultural supply companies & independent sellers	Mainly technical, level highly variable (agricultural & veterinarian technician)	By the firms, on the margin of sales or purchase of milk	Good dissemination of technical info to a large number of producers
2. Advisory services for certification of sustainable cocoa Ivory Coast	Transfer/extension for farmer field schools and individual advisory services, but always technical	Group administrators (GA = co-op technicians) and peasant-farmer relays with 1 for 100)	Mainly technical, level highly variable (agricultural & veterinarian technician)	Advisory services paid for by the firms, on the margin of cocoa purchases The co-ops fund certification	Large-scale dissemination of info on best practices
3. Public advisory services ACEFA Cameroon	Advisory services for the management of a joint project of the producer group (advisory services with a strong economic focus) Five-step advisory programme (management cycle)	Advisors of producer groups (1,740, civil servants selected and trained) + FO advisors, etc. No external service providers	High-level agricultural technician trained in managerial advisory services by ACEFA	The State + C2D	National scheme covering all departments
4. Multi-actor advisory services in the dairy value chain Niger	Technical advisory services (including health) Under construction: managerial advisory services for FOs and producers Advisory services for women	Vets, private collectors (input sellers), advisors of projects provided by NGO Salaried employees of the Chamber of Agriculture	Highly variable: from vets to FO agents trained on the job	The value chain and projects supporting the value chain (AFD, Coop Monégasque, etc.) Sale of inputs for health + food for animals	Increase in collection and quality of milk A collection centre provides 30 direct and indirect jobs
5. Management centre Senegal River valley	Advisory services for the management of economic interest groups, unions, companies (management cycle) Accounting and management tools (very little technical)	Accounting and managerial employees (BTS technician certificate), mostly from the region	Management, accounting	Invoicing for services 37% SAED subsidy and others 12% AFD subsidy 51%	Credit works better The water fee is paid
6. APPROSA Afrique Verte ICT sale of grains	Coupling: info on markets x support for marketing x support for production (contract with microfinance institution) Digital platform: info on prices and basic technical advisory services and agricultural grant And classic tools (training, coaching)	9 salaried employees of the NGO/project 32 volunteer peasant-farmer trainers (not salaried employees) 1 IT engineer for SIMAGRI Collaboration with microfinance institution and mobile-telephony operators	Salaried employees at NGOs (high-level technician or +) Literate peasant-farmer trainers selected by FOs	70% from technical and financial partners, including ECOWAS 10% sale of text messaging 20% training service for NGOs/third-party projects Seeking a greater % of self-funding by selling services	Assistance provided to 6,800 organised producers Increase in volume sold through FOs (not necessarily at peasant-farmer level) Increase in the number of SimAgri users (15,000, or more than twice the number of producers supported directly) Increase in loans for intrants and other loans (but only 200 peasant farmers)
7. CEF Burkina Faso implemented by FOs	CEF more or less complex depending on the FO Group advisory services with a little individual for UGCPA and FNGN But those FOs participate in other projects that all have their own methods (CEP with IFDC, etc.)	Salaried advisors + peasant-farmer instructors: FNGN Instructors (mostly peasant farmers, and at different levels of FEPAB) + 1 salaried coordinator Same for UGCPA: 1 salaried coordinator and peasant-farmer instructors in situ	Varies depending on how long the scheme has been in place and on advisors' experience FNGN distinguishes between 4 levels of skill for producers in CEF and has a team of well-trained salaried employees UGCPA and FEPAB are more fragile, CEF is dependent on peasant-farmer or indigenous instructors	Between 94% and 99% from technical and financial partners, the rest are subscription fees from members (producers) and unions Cost per producer highly variable: 35,000/year for FEPAB, 50,000 for FNGN and 190,000/year for UGPA	Not mentioned
8. Cap Magalasy Madagascar	Technical and technical/economic advisory services (CEF expanded) Advisory services for FOs	Salaried advisors (5 to 7) supervised by a salaried technical manager Peasant-farmer relay for basic advisory services Peasant-farmer leaders for managing associative life	High-level technician (Bac+2) trained as an advisor over a seven-week period with a six-month work/study programme Peasant-farmer relays selected by peers and compensated by them	➢ 99% from projects and from technical and financial partners	Rapid increase in the number of producers advised (3,000 to 80,000, from 2012 to 2018) Increase in yield (rice, local chicken) Inventory management through training and investment in shops

Notes on Table B:

The choice of advisory methods and tools is closely linked to the objectives set by the advisory operator. In most cases, it is not the beneficiaries or their representatives who are behind the choice of method. They may be consulted, of course, but we know that in Africa it is difficult to say no to projects and to technical and financial partners. When reading the case studies, it is difficult to assess the influence of the FOs in those choices and in the governance of all the schemes.

Technical advisory services (or extension services) are at the heart of the schemes run by private entities in Peru (input sellers) and Ivory Coast (best practices, responsible label-certified farming). They are combined with "global" advisory services for farms (FEPAB, FNGN, UGCPA in Burkina Faso; Cap Magalasy) or with marketing advisory services (APROSA) or advisory services for joint-investment projects supported by ACEFA. They are also present in the case of the milk value chain, which is organised around collection centres in Niger, but in a manner that is not formalised or coordinated via veterinarians and milk collectors. This case study illustrates the project to build an advisory scheme with multiple actors who are useful to livestock farmers and to the value chain, rather than a scheme that is running smoothly. A lot of feedback from people in the field has highlighted producers' expectations for technical advisory services because there are many constraints and problems to solve and peasant farmers are looking for reliable, inexpensive solutions, and at the very least information to help solve them. (The circulation of all kinds of information is also a component of advisory services, but cannot be summed up as that). Only APROSA mentions using digital tools to inform producers (via text message and the SimAgri platform).

Only the rural management centre does not address technical advisory services, but by monitoring accounting records it detects technical problems (productivity-related weaknesses such as yield, increased consumption of inputs such as fuel for pumping), which it sends to FOs/producers.

The choice of methods clearly orients **the profile of advisors,** whose **level of training** varies depending on the situation (generally agricultural technician with bac+2 or higher). Only FEPAB uses indigenous instructors (literate producers, trained on the job and compensated) in its advisory scheme. Several operators believe that basic training for salaried employees is insufficient even if they have followed an agricultural programme (in certain cases, they have an accounting/management programme). ACEFA and Cap Magalasy are therefore investing to train new advisors just after they are recruited. Others favour training on the job with more experienced people (rural management centre in Senegal). Regardless of the level of training, it is often mentioned that a recruitment preference is granted to people from the region, and that preference is almost systematic in the schemes managed by FOs. (There's also the criterion of being able to speak the local language).t

But **the peasant-farmer instructor** appears in many cases. The peasant-farmer instructor assists or relays information provided by the salaried advisor (Coop Cacao in Ivory Coast; APROSA, FEPAB, UGCPA and FNGN in Burkina Faso; Cap Magalasy). In the latter case, the advisory-services operator considers that for basic advisory services (technical advisory services?) the peasant-farmer instructor may very well replace the advisor. In CEF experiments, the peasant-farmer instructor may fill out the monitoring and analysis documents in place of the producer, which goes against the latter's authorisation. Use of the peasant-farmer instructor is always seen as one of the tools for expanding the action (= reaching more producers) with the risk being that the salaried advisor may become a supervisor and focus less and less on work in the field.

Funding for private advisory services is provided by private companies, but they do so as an investment which they see as lucrative: input sellers aim to increase their market share by boosting they loyalty of their customers, chocolatiers can sell chocolate at a higher price if it has a label so long as the customer's trust is maintained. In the other cases, advisory services are based mainly on support from external donors. The State is practically absent except in the case of ACEFA with significant support for the salaries of all staff members (civil servants) and, to a less er extent, the rural management centre through a subsidy from SAED – a modest sum compared with its operating budget**.** There's a long way to go to ensure sustainable funding for advisory services from States (public-service mission) and the agricultural profession, unless research and the alternation of external donors is a desirable strategy (case of FNGN, whose CEF scheme has been running for the past 15 years[75]).

The sustainability of funding and the "severing" of international aid are often presented as an objective for FOs and NGOs promoting the advisory scheme, but no viable, lasting economic models have been prepared yet. There may be several reasons for this:

- the strategy for finding a donor is the most efficient, so why change it;
- the FO or NGO lacks the skills needed to develop and implement an alternative economic model;
- the constraints to mobilising financial resources are too strong: obtaining funds from buoyant value chains without assistance from the State and stakeholders in the value chain, mobilisation of State funds is very long, collection of fees from beneficiaries and from the sale of services is very difficult ("advisory services are always free for producers", "the other projects give us material support, per diems, etc.", etc.);
- lastly, the region (with its value chains, entrepreneurs) or country (State) have very few potentially mobilisable financial resources.

The nature of the **results obtained** and presented in the eight case studies is highly variable, because it is always difficult to distinguish between results (outcomes) and impacts (what has changed over time on the farms, FOs, etc.). In most cases, the documents present results (what the project has actually done) because the schemes do not have the means and often, the methods to assess the impacts as the timing of the projects is not compatible with the timing of measuring the impacts (which is done retrospectively two, three or five years after the end of the project, or after the beneficiaries have had enough time to sustainably change their practices and organisation):

A few types of results: change in the number of producers advised, increase in the volume of milk collected (not necessarily in connection with the advisory services), a better credit reimbursement rate.

In terms of impact, mention is made of an increase in quantities sold thanks to the advisory services (APROSA AVB) and an increase in yields (Cap Magalasy), knowing that they are also heavily conditioned by climate conditions.

This diagram also shows that the case studies give little or no mention of the system for monitoring/evaluating the advisory schemes except for the ACEFA farm observatory (but not linked to group advisory services).

[75] This shows the strong capacity of this FO to enrol donors, which, in addition to communicate skills and the ability to defend its cause, is dependent on tangible results.

Table C: Summary of case studies

Case study	Governance of the advisory scheme or system	Advantages	Disadvantages	Future prospects and scaling up
1. Private advisory services irrigated zone Peru	None, because there is no forum for collaboration or formal regional advisory system Putting private advisors, vets and inseminators in competition with one another	Large-scale intervention corresponding to producers' expectations	Non-technical and non-production-related topics not addressed No putting things into perspective, nor critical evaluation (questions on the environment, health) Favours large entities Does not favour learning	Reconsider the place of producers and strengthen FOs Place public service as mediator/coordinator Help improve the skills of advisors
2. Advisory services for certification of sustainable cocoa Ivory Coast	Limited, very top-down, everything comes from firms and specifications not discussed with the co-ops Collaboration with ANADER for training advisors, leading farmer field schools	Large-scale intervention reaching 20% of the country's cocoa farmers	Needs expressed not taken into account (commerce, management, excl. cacao, etc.) Low visibility of tangible results (few practical changes) Little or no capacity-building Doubts about the seriousness of certification and about evolution towards greater "sustainability"	Is it possible to help improve this scheme? Do firms wish for that to happen? Levers of action: inspection by the State? Building the capacities of co-ops so that they give their opinion and help improve the scheme
3. Public advisory services ACEFA Cameroon	Steering committee for the project Joint management with the profession (PLANOPAC) at three levels (region, department, local) for the selection of producer-group projects, monitoring and collaboration/exchanges	National coverage Advisory services coupled with support for "income-generating activities" for producer groups, therefore attractive Insert in public services, so availability of civil servants, sign of a certain sustainability if operation is ensured	Rather elitist (roughly 150,000 to 200,000 farms through the joint project of their producer group for 2 to 3 million farms in Cameroon) Little connection with other operators (research and development), which explains why technical issues and innovation are taken into account so little No putting things into perspective/subsidy vs credit	A strategy for ensuring longevity (2018 22) through the creation of a national advisory agency and a FIRCA-type fund + joint management with umbrella FO (PLANOPAC)
4. Multi-actor advisory services in the dairy value chain Niger	Peasant-farmer governance of the collection centre But no coordination between stakeholders and no local governance of dairy advisory services	Pragmatic approach by stakeholders in the value chain (especially producers and private entities)	Weak economic model unless there is growth in supply and demand Focus on milk while producers can manage other workshops (meats, crops) Lack of a milk platform (a framework for collaboration)	Governance & coordination will be implemented with the creation of the NAAS (national, regional) Increase the number of collection centres and their size (in l/day)
5. Management centre Senegal River valley	Four associative bodies managed by a board of directors dominated by clients (producers) Problem concerning skills and availabilities of elected leaders/day-to-day management and strategy of rural management centres	15 years' experience, little turn-over, strong skills Ability to provide services for others (but which given the geographic location)	Not independent financially Offering advisory services directly to production companies is rare (especially outside rice), whereas it could generate revenue and gains Low capacity for analysis of data collected and available	How to achieve self-funding in Senegal (increase the State and SAED portion) Need to grow but also diversify, improve methods/capacities for analysis Opening to the south (Haute Casamance)
6. APPROSA Afrique Verte ICT sale of grains	The FOs belonging to the board of directors of the NGO APROSSA AVB Planning and assessment workshops led by advisors Non-formalised collaboration with the FOs involved in the project and others (CPF, rice FO, etc.)	Coupling on-site advisory services (group?) and support via ICT text messaging Coupling advisory services and access to credit Proximity because of the engagement of peasant-farmer trainers (to utilise text messaging in particular) Expansion thanks to SimAgri (15,000 peasant farmers, but what about the impact when there's no advisory services in situ)	Fragility of the financial arrangement highly dependent on technical and financial partners Fragile medium-term engagement of volunteer peasant-farmer trainers Complexity of the advisory model, which requires a long time for training	Expansion by a greater number of peasant-farmer trainers from FOs that are well-trained and well-monitored (need for good trainers of trainers) Develop a multi-actor strategy by communicating better about the results obtained
7. CEF Burkina Faso support AFDI	1 CEF committee at the level of UGCPA at the centre (with whom?) The Gestion Burkina network (a forum for exchange between FOs involved in CEF) ceased when the instructor's funding came to an end	Indigenous instructor in all cases helps expand the project and offer training for skills in the FOs that will remain Coupling of CEF and credit, at least in two cases out of three (FNGN, UGCPA)	No well-reasoned economic model, except to say that searching for the support of technical and financial partners is one No evaluation system Little evolution in content and method, therefore few challenges and little evaluation (linked perhaps to the strong presence of AFDI and to the lack of strategic steering skills in FOs)	Not developed
8. Cap Magalasy Madagascar	1 board of directors with general assembly, bureau managed by Cap Magalasy and comprises 2 groups (producers, salaried employees) with evolution towards a greater place for peasant farmers Annual self-evaluation Wants to strengthen bottom-up (which the basic FOs want)	Local advisory services ("by bike") Capacity-building by the advisor, who has time because assisted by the peasant-farmer relay Advisory services, one of the services provided by the group FIFATA (credit through microfinance institutions, etc.)	Too much proximity may create tensions between the advisor and producers Certain tools are too complex for illiterate peasant farmers Weakness of infrastructure and public services (i.e. animal health)	Utilise more peasant-farmer relays Advisors taken charge of by functional FOs Disseminate the methods of Cap Malagasy among other Malagasy stakeholders

Notes on Table C:

Governance is shared between advisory stakeholders and representatives of beneficiaries in every case, except for private-sector schemes (Peru, Ivory Coast). In those situations, the authors point out the need to create at the very least a monitoring system (State) and a regional coordination system to encourage exchanges between advisory schemes.

In the other cases, the FOs are stakeholders or managers of the scheme, and mention is always made of forums for collaboration/exchange which allow for planning, assessment/evaluation of the advisory activities performed. The presentations are too brief to assess whether it is simply a consultation of beneficiaries, collaboration or real joint management. In order for shared and symmetrical governance to work, it is not enough for the advisory scheme to be run by an FO or for an umbrella FO to be in the steering/governance bodies. In the FOs and projects, the influence of the salaried employees and project managers is known.

The advantages and limitations of the different cases presented are very diverse. The objectivity of their presentation depends on the precision of the analysis and on the ability to put things in perspective (especially when the author is a promoter or stakeholder of the scheme). Four elements stand out:

- The limit of the project approach and dependence on donors are often highlighted as an obstacle to the longevity of the schemes;
- The cost/benefit indicator might be a good indicator for evaluating the schemes. Large-scale extension services may be a good idea if they can produce measurable impacts. Conversely, advisory methods that are more expensive but more precise and that make it possible to address complex questions (investment, sustainability, etc.) must result in more impacts and have a ripple effect on local producers and FOs. This is another reason for the coexistence/creation of synergies between the different types of advisory services;
- The building of relations between the advisory scheme and the stakeholders in the value chain could be a tool for ensuring the success of an advisory scheme: advisory services for FOs and producers, and support for marketing;
- The same goes for the building of relations between the advisory scheme and the other public and private agricultural services (credit and supply are mentioned most often, but not training).

➔ Those two elements are fighting to place the advisory scheme in the economic environment of farms (value chains, services, upstream and downstream companies) and not just with a view to strengthening the managerial capacities of farmers (in other words, building the national or regional agricultural advisory system is necessary for the success of the advisory services, but not sufficient in itself). The advisory scheme needs to be “connected” to the other services and economic stakeholders, which the projects do not always do.

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