

PROJECT

***“Increasing incomes and food security of small farmers
in West and Central Africa through exports of
organic and fair-trade tropical products”***

GCP/RAF/404/GER

***Assessment of the impact of the project in
Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana,
Senegal and Sierra Leone***

-

Summary report



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Project “Increasing incomes and food security of small farmers in West and Central Africa through exports of organic and fair-trade tropical products”
GCP/RAF/404/GER

Assessment of the impact of the project in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone - Summary report

Trade and Markets Division

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Rome, 2009

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Introduction

Over the course of the period September 2005 – September 2009, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed and implemented, with funds provided by the German government, project GCP/RAF/404/GER in five West and Central African countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

The project, entitled “Increasing incomes and food security of small farmers in West and Central Africa through exports of organic and fair-trade tropical products”, was developed to assist farmer groups in West and Central Africa in reinforcing their capacity to produce and export organic and fair-trade products, with the aim of increasing their incomes and improving their food security.

The growth markets for organic and fair-trade products demand products of high quality, and farmers need to comply with certification requirements. In addition, the organic market can only be accessed after a conversion period, during which farmers are faced with higher costs, without having access to the market yet. The project GCP/RAF/404/GER has helped producer groups and small exporters to overcome these obstacles and exploit these remunerative markets.

The present report aims at giving an overview of the impact of the activities organized in the framework of the project on the commercial activities and livelihoods of small farmers in the five beneficiary countries. The report is based upon the various country- and product-specific impact assessment studies carried out for each of the sub-projects. These reports are based on interviews with individual producers, carried out in May and June 2008 (May and June 2009 for Senegal). They therefore do not take account of more recent developments.

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1. THE PROJECT- RATIONALE AND STRATEGY

Markets for organic and fair-trade products have been growing steadily in many developed countries in recent years, and are expected to continue to do so, both for organic and for fair-trade foods. Organic and fair-trade products tend to fetch higher prices than equivalent conventional products.

However, exporting organic and fair-trade products poses a number of challenges, including technical constraints linked to the compliance with standards and high quality requirements. In addition, certification tends to be costly, and requires certain administrative and organizational arrangements. The organic market is prone to price volatility and can be entered only after a conversion period, during which producers are faced with higher costs, without receiving a premium for their products yet.

The project "Increasing incomes and food security of small farmers in West and Central Africa through exports of organic and fair-trade tropical products" was developed to assist farmer groups in West and Central Africa in reinforcing their capacity to produce and export organic and fair-trade products, with the overall aim of increasing their incomes and improving their food security. The project was financed by the German government and implemented in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal and Sierra Leone over the course of the period September 2005 – September 2009.

During the project formulation phase in 2004, a market study was conducted to identify organic and fair-trade growth markets in Europe. The following product categories were selected:

- tropical fruits: pineapple and mango;
- cocoa;
- shea butter.

Subsequently, producer groups and exporters were selected on the basis of four criteria:

- ability to supply one of the selected products;
- readiness to export, or exporting already;
- interest in organic and/or fair-trade certification;
- possible advantages of the project for small farmers.

The project took a participatory approach. Rather than using a standard set of activities, "tailor-made" programmes of activities were developed for each supply chain. The project interventions were based on a participatory assessment of the needs of each selected supply chain. A programme of activities, usually for one-year periods, was agreed upon in collaboration with the beneficiary group and/or exporter.

In the cases of Cameroon, Burkina Faso and the Sugarloaf pineapples in Ghana, exports were already taking place when the project started. In these cases, the activities focused on the weakest part of the chain, or on activities necessary to obtain certification. In the other cases, the supply chains had to be developed from scratch, and activities were tailored to build on the existing organizational and technical capacity.

2. THE PROJECT - PARTNERS AND ACTIVITIES

The project provided assistance to the following partners:

		Exporter	Producer group(s)	Certifications
Burkina Faso	Mango	BurkiNature	Yuwalo Zoutou	Organic Fair-trade GLOBALGAP
			Other producer groups supplying BurkiNature	Organic GLOBALGAP
	Shea butter	Club des Productrices de Beurre de Karité Biologique (CPBKB)	- Association Burkinabé pour la Promotion de la Jeune Fille (ABPJF) - Ragussi - Union des Groupements Féminins / Ce Dwane Nucet (UGF/CDN)	Organic
Cameroon	Pineapple	Groupe d'Initiatives Communes - Unité Agropastorale du Cameroun (UNAPAC)		Organic*
Ghana	Pineapple	Weija Agricultural Development (WAD)	Ekumfi Atwia WAD Organic Farmers Association (EAWOFA)	Organic
	Mango for drying		Volta Organic Mango Farmers Association (VOMAGA)	Organic
Senegal	Mango	Bio Niayes Organisation (BNO)	- Fédération des Agropasteurs de Diender (FAPD) - Union des Groupements des Paysans de Niayes (UGPN)	Organic
Sierra Leone	Cocoa	Kpeya Agricultural Enterprise (KAE)		Fair-trade

* UNAPAC is currently preparing for fair-trade certification; however, this preparation process has remained blocked since 2006.

The activities organized in the framework of the project are detailed in Annex A of this report.

In order to disseminate the experiences and lessons learned in the framework of the project, national workshops were organized in each beneficiary country. The first national workshop took place in Ghana in January 2007; the last one was organized in Senegal in April 2009. In addition to presentations by the project's beneficiary farmer groups, these workshops also featured presentations on the development of the international market for organic and fair-trade products. Furthermore, the workshops offered a platform to other certified farmer groups to share their experiences. The workshop in Cameroon led to the creation of a follow-up committee that set up an e-mail forum. In 2009, the project financed and supervised diagnostic studies of the organic sectors in Cameroon, Ghana and Senegal.

3. THE PROJECT - RESULTS

3.1. Characteristics of the samples

In order to assess the impact of the project on the commercial activities and livelihoods of its participants, surveys were conducted among the producers and collectors of each sub-project.

		Total number of participants in the training sessions organized by the project	Sample
Burkina Faso	Mango	- 58 organic and fair-trade certified producers - 486 producers trained through the FFS programme*	13 producers (members of the fair-trade certified farmer groups)
	Shea butter	- 2 614 women collectors of shea nuts - 108 women producers of shea butter	29 women collectors of shea nuts 14 women producers of shea butter
Cameroon	Ananas	48 producers	9 producers
Ghana	Ananas	30 producers	4 producers
	Mango (for drying)	60 producers	6 producers
Senegal	Mango	200 (at the beginning of the project) to 140 (at the end of the project) producers	16 producers
Sierra Leone	Cocoa	1 300 producers	42 producers

* The «Farmers' Field School » is a group-based learning process, organized around a structured group of farmers who meet regularly in their own fields to learn how to resolve problems relating to their operations, thereby assisted by a facilitator.

3.2. Impact of the training sessions and of the application of the organic methods

The vast majority of the participants declare to be “satisfied” or even “very satisfied” with the training received in the framework of the project; the majority of the participants had never received such training before the project. The large majority of the participants confirm their intention to continue applying the new organic cultivation methods learned in the framework of the project.

As to the impact of the application of the new cultivation techniques, the participants confirm nearly unanimously that the new techniques have had a positive effect on the organoleptic qualities (*mangoes in Burkina Faso and Senegal, pineapples in Cameroon and Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone*) and the cleanliness (*shea nuts and butter in Burkina Faso, cocoa in Sierra Leone*) of their products. Several producers note that organically produced fruits/pods are larger (*mangoes in Burkina Faso and Senegal, pineapples and mangoes in Ghana, and cocoa in Sierra Leone*). In

addition, they note that the number of rotten (*mangoes in Ghana, shea nuts in Burkina Faso*) and fallen (*mangoes in Burkina Faso, pineapples in Ghana*) fruits has decreased.

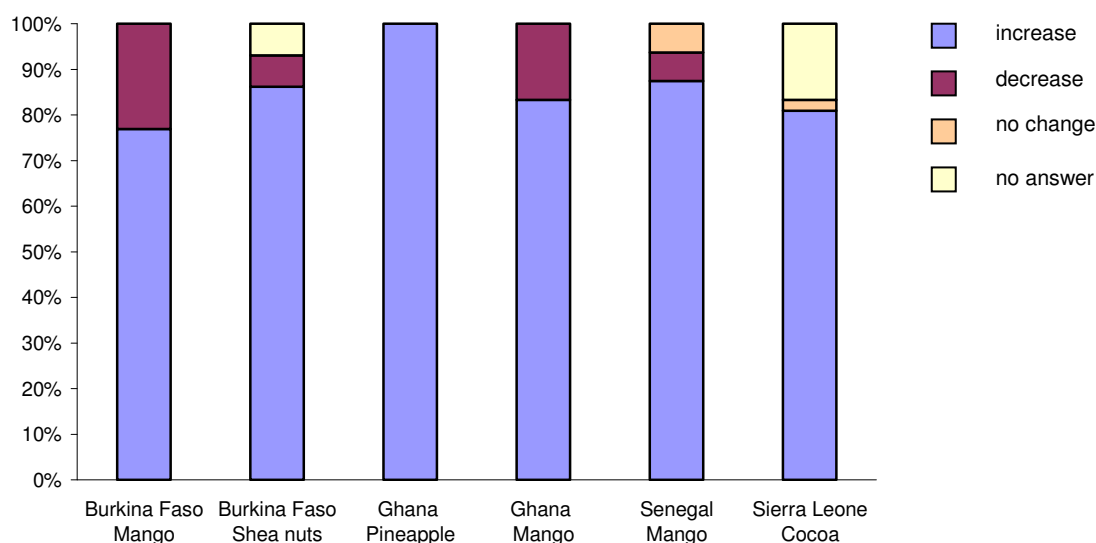
The main problem relating to the application of the new techniques appears to be the lack of materials and tools necessary to comply with the requirements of the new methods (*shea nuts and butter in Burkina Faso, mangoes in Senegal*). Other problems mentioned in the framework of one of the sub-projects include the absence of defence methods against insect pests (*mangoes in Burkina Faso*), the scarcity of water (*shea nuts in Burkina Faso*), the lack of funds to purchase new fields (*pineapples in Cameroon*), and difficulties related to the purchasing of agricultural inputs (*pineapples in Cameroon*) and record keeping (*pineapples in Ghana*). Three out of 42 producers of cocoa in Sierra Leone underline the fact that the organic production techniques are more labour intensive, which may give rise to financial problems.

3.3. Impact on production

3.3.1. Total production

The vast majority of the producers/collectors declare that their production volume has increased since the inception of the project. The percentage of producers/collectors who have observed an increase in their production volumes ranges from 77 percent in the case of the producers of mangoes in Burkina Faso, to 100 percent in the case of the Ghanaian pineapple producers.

Figure 1. Impact of the project on total production (relative importance of the answers)



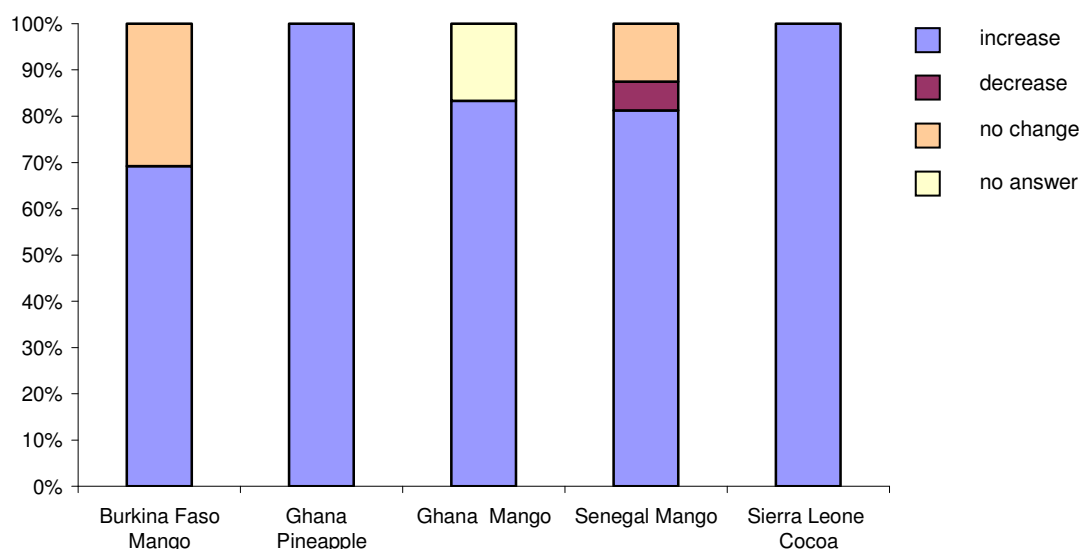
With the exception of shea butter, this evolution of the production volumes is a result of the evolution of yields or cultivated areas or a combination of both. It is, however, impossible to quantify the causal relationship between these two factors and the increase in production.

Several producers/collectors observe that they have decided to increase their production in view of the possibilities to sell their products created by the project (*mangoes and shea nuts in Burkina Faso*) as well as the fact that production has become more remunerative (*shea nuts in Burkina Faso, cocoa in Sierra Leone*).

3.3.2. Cultivated areas

The large majority of producers confirm that their cultivated areas have increased since the beginning of the project. One producer (of mangoes in Senegal) has reduced the area of his orchard.

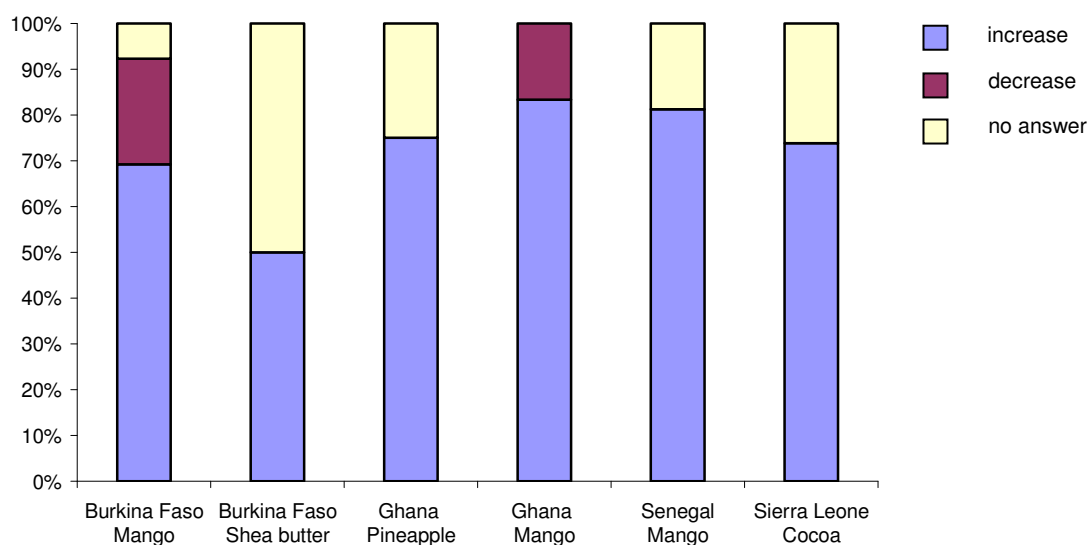
Figure 2. Impact of the project on cultivated areas (relative importance of the answers)



3.3.3. Yields

The majority of the producers involved in the project observe an improvement of the yield (yield per hectare; daily production quantity in the case of shea butter in Burkina Faso) of their operations since the beginning of the project.

Figure 3. Impact of the project on yields (relative importance of the answers)



The introduction of new cultivation methods in the framework of the project appears to be a very important factor behind the increase in yields. The vast majority of producers who observe an increase in yields attribute this increase to the project and more in particular to:

- the adoption of organic techniques (techniques relating to maintenance, pruning, grafting, insect pest and disease control, planting and fertilization, etc.) (*mangoes in Burkina Faso and in Senegal, mangoes and pineapples in Ghana*);
- the reduction of production losses due to improved processing and storage techniques (*shea nuts in Burkina Faso*);
- the optimization of the processing stages (*shea nuts and butter in Burkina Faso, cocoa in Sierra Leone*).

Other explanatory factors are linked, not to the introduction of organic cultivation or processing methods, but rather to the implementation of the project in a larger sense (new plantings, the participation of other family members in maintenance work, the heightened spirit of competition, the use of new tools), or are external to the project (weather conditions, reduced incidence of termites).

The mango producers in Burkina Faso who observe a reduction in their production volumes cite the following factors to explain the negative impact of the application of organic techniques on the productivity of their trees: the lack of defence techniques against insect pests due to the prohibition of the use of pesticides; and the reduction in marketable volumes due to the stricter sorting of the fruits.

In two cases, the reduction in yields due to the application of organic techniques is compensated by an improvement in the quality of the products (*shea nuts in Burkina Faso, mangoes in Ghana*).

The other cases of yield reduction are not linked to the introduction of organic techniques, but rather to external factors (rainfall, soil depletion, advanced age of the producer, advanced age of the trees).

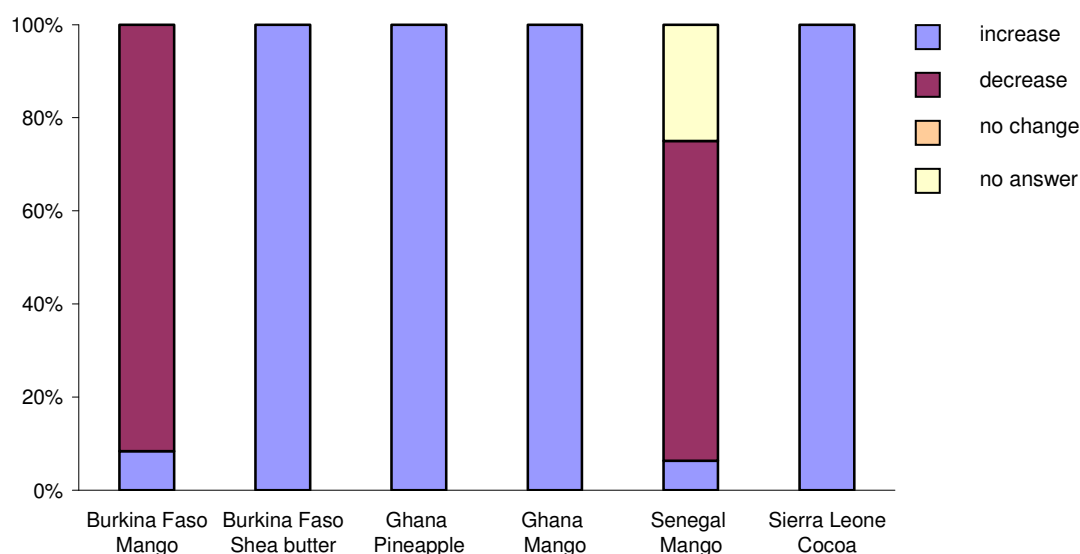
3.3.4. Production costs

With the exception of the pineapple producers in Cameroon, the producers involved in the project used very little agricultural inputs; very often, they did not use any agrochemicals at all. The agricultural training organized in the framework of the project was aimed at intensifying production and/or improving its quality through the application of organic methods¹.

The impact of the application of the new production and processing methods on the costs of production varies considerably from one sub-project to another. The women producers of shea butter in Burkina Faso, the producers of pineapples and mangoes in Ghana and the cocoa producers in Sierra Leone declare nearly unanimously that their production costs have increased since the introduction of the organic techniques learned in the framework of the project, while the vast majority of mango producers in Burkina Faso and Senegal observe a reduction in their costs of production.

¹ Particular attention was paid to pruning methods, as correct pruning can increase the productivity of a tree and improve the quality of its fruits, as well as reduce the incidence of certain diseases – an important factor in view of the prohibition of the use of pesticides.

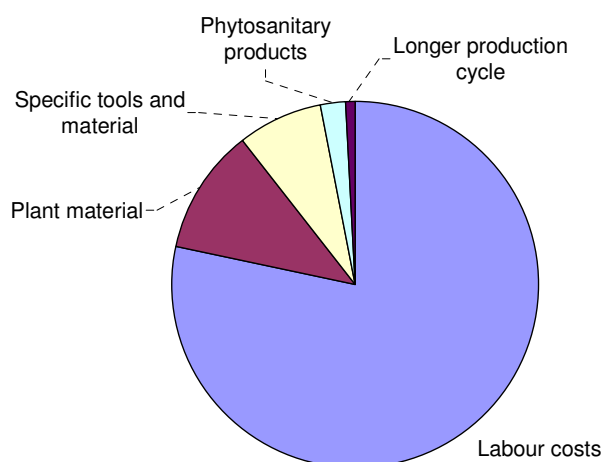
Figure 4. Impact of the project on costs of production (relative importance of the answers)



The application of the new organic methods generally results in an increase in the following costs (in decreasing order of importance):

- labour costs (contracted labour or producers' family members) (*cocoa in Sierra Leone, mangoes and pineapples in Ghana, pineapples in Cameroon, mangoes in Senegal*);
- plant material costs (*cocoa in Sierra Leone, mangoes and pineapples in Ghana*);
- costs relating to the purchasing of tools and material specific to organic agriculture (*cocoa in Sierra Leone, pineapples in Cameroon, shea butter in Burkina Faso*);
- costs relating to the purchasing of phytosanitary products (*mangoes in Ghana*);
- costs relating to the longer production cycle (*pineapples in Cameroon*).

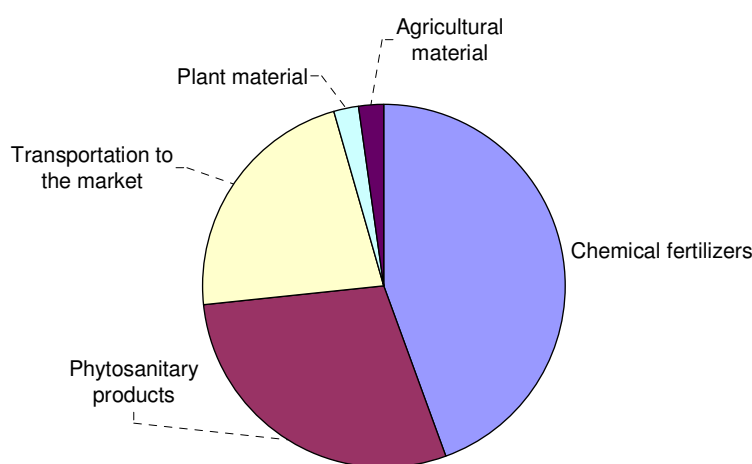
Figure 5. Increase in production costs following the implementation of the project (relative importance of the answers)



Meanwhile, the producers/collectors observe that the following costs have decreased following the introduction of the new organic techniques (in decreasing order of importance):

- Costs related to the purchasing of chemical fertilizers (*pineapples in Cameroon, mangoes and pineapples in Ghana, mangoes in Senegal, cocoa in Sierra Leone*);
- Costs related to the purchasing of phytosanitary products (*pineapples in Cameroon, mangoes in Senegal*);
- Costs of transportation to the market (*mangoes and pineapples in Ghana, mangoes in Senegal*);
- Costs related to the purchasing of agricultural material (*mangoes in Senegal*).

Figure 6. Decrease in production costs following the implementation of the project (relative importance of the answers)



The answers given by the women collectors of shea nuts in Burkina Faso as to the impact of the organic techniques on the time necessitated by the processing of the nuts do not allow for a conclusive interpretation: 86 percent of the collectors argue that the organic methods require more labour and care, while 14 percent of the collectors are convinced that the processing stages have become more efficient following the introduction of the new techniques, and require less time.

The majority of the shea butter producers in Burkina Faso state that the production costs of organic shea butter are higher than those of conventional shea butter due to the following factors: the higher costs of production materials; the higher costs of the production process; and the higher rejection rate of the final product².

3.4. Impact on marketing

5 out of 7 sub-projects analysed in this report have resulted in the marketing of organic and/or fair-trade certified products. The mango producers in Senegal had not yet managed to sell their fruits with an organic label at the time of the survey as their organization (BNO) had been unable to find a buyer³, while the pineapple producers in Cameroon had not yet harvested any certified fruits; at the time of the survey, UNAPAC had exported only a few tonnes of organic pineapples grown on the experimental field.

For those projects which did result in the marketing of certified products, producers confirm nearly unanimously the positive impact of the marketing of their products by the producer groups; none of

² However, the producers argue that the increase in production costs is compensated by the organic premium, as well as by the increase in the volume produced.

³ In 2008 there was an importer interested and BNO had an agreement with an exporter to handle the packing and shipment of two containers, but the exporter withdrew three days before the first shipment.

the respondents cite any negative aspects related to group marketing. The main advantages⁴ cited by the producers/collectors as to the marketing of certified products by the producer groups include:

- *Higher and/or more stable prices (mangoes, shea nuts and butter in Burkina Faso, pineapples in Cameroon, pineapples and mangoes in Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone)*: the information and sensitization of producers as to price levels strengthen their position in price negotiations with buyers. The collectors of shea nuts in Burkina Faso stress the fact that they obtain a fixed price, which annihilates the need to enter into time-costly price negotiations;
- *Creation of marketing outlets by the farmer groups (mangoes and shea butter in Burkina Faso, pineapples and mangoes in Ghana, pineapples in Cameroon)*: group marketing allows producers to access promising markets; the reputation of the groups facilitates the marketing of the products;
- *Sale and collection of the products at the farm gate (mangoes, shea nuts and butter in Burkina Faso, mangoes in Ghana, pineapples in Cameroon, cocoa in Sierra Leone)*: the products are sold at the farm gate, which means that farmers no longer have to assume the costs of transportation to the market;
- *Centralized sales (shea butter in Burkina Faso, pineapples in Ghana and Cameroon)*: sales negotiations are carried out by the farmer groups, rather than by the individual producers/collectors, who no longer need to go to the market; the sales negotiations have become more transparent;
- *Faster sales (mangoes and shea butter in Burkina Faso)*: the time dedicated by individual producers to sales negotiations, which are now carried out by the farmer groups, is reduced;
- *Production on order (shea butter in Burkina Faso)*: the group produces in function of the orders it receives, which facilitates production planning; only the quantity ordered is produced, which means no products go off, and reduces storage needs;
- *Payment upon collection (mangoes in Burkina Faso)*: the producers are paid at the moment of the sale, rather than after a long period of waiting for their money.

Several producers/collectors state that they have become more aware of the importance of the quality of their products in marketing (*mangoes and shea butter in Burkina Faso, pineapples in Cameroon*).

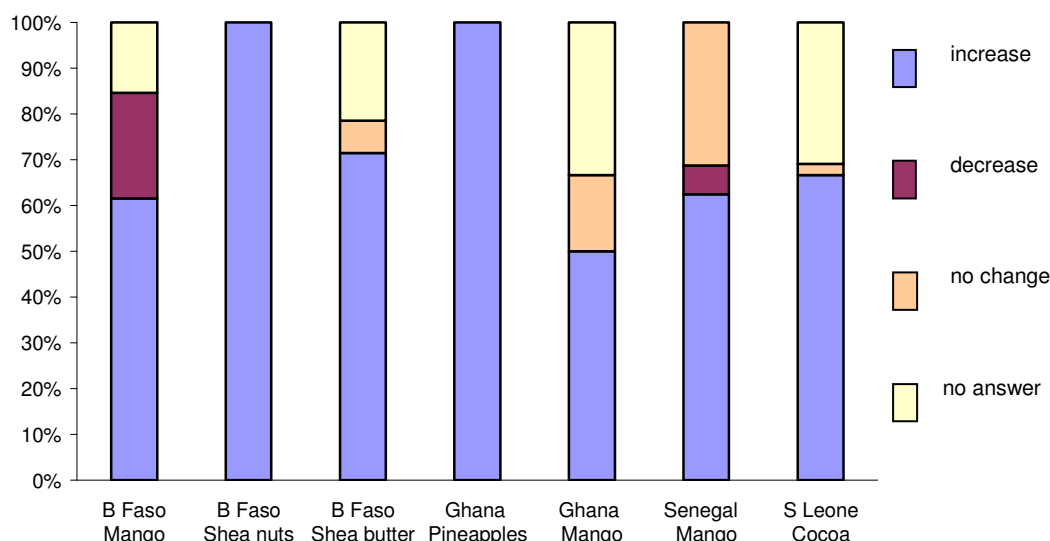
3.5. Impact on the incomes of the producers/collectors

The production and sale of the products covered by the project account for the bulk of the income of the vast majority of its participants.

The majority of the project's participants argue that their incomes have increased since the inception of the project, as a result of the increase in their production volumes or in prices. The percentage of producers/collectors who observe an increase in their income varies from 50 percent for the mango producers in Ghana to 100 percent for the shea nut collectors in Burkina Faso and the pineapple producers in Ghana.

⁴ Certain of these advantages are linked to the group marketing, rather than to certification per se. However, they are the indirect result of certification, since certification strengthens group marketing.

Figure 7. Impact of the project on the incomes of the producers/collectors (relative importance of the answers)



The three mango producers in Burkina Faso who observe a reduction in their incomes following certification – two of these three producers argue that their production volume has decreased (see 3.3.3.) – attribute this decrease to their exporter's low buying price, as well as to the fact that the exporter buys only a part of their harvest. The only Senegalese producer who declares that his income has decreased following certification attributes this decrease to factors which are not linked to the project (weather conditions, soil depletion).

The additional income generated through the sale of certified products is used primarily to buy food, pay childrens' school fees, buy clothes or pay for medical care. Other important uses include the payment of debts or taxes, celebrations or funerals, and the construction or improvement of homes. Several producers/collectors declare that they use their additional income to buy agricultural material, hire labour, purchase a bicycle, save, etc. Several shea nut collectors and shea butter producers in Burkina Faso indicate that the additional income generated through the sale of certified products has allowed them to set up an additional commercial activity (millet and beans, groundnuts, soap, baskets, cattle, etc.).

3.6. Impact on other food crops

The majority of producers is convinced that the application of the new techniques and the production of certified products in the framework of the project has a positive impact upon the production of other food crops.

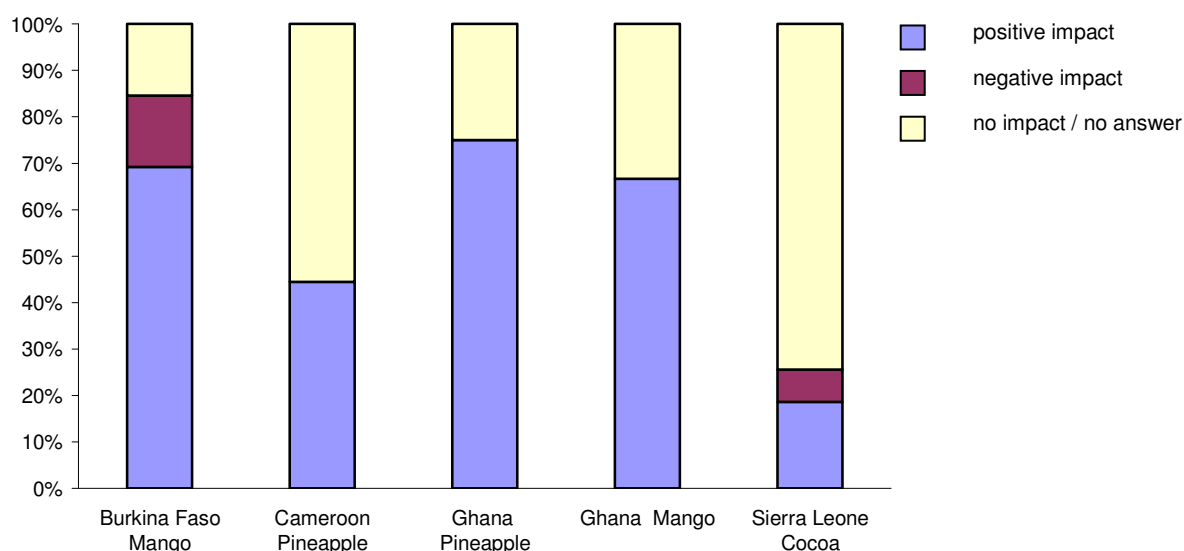
Several producers argue that the improvement of production methods brought about by the project has an impact on other food crops, which benefit from the extended application of the organic methods. Several respondents mention the use of organic fertilizers in this respect (*mangoes and shea butter in Burkina Faso, pineapples in Cameroon and Ghana*). Other techniques which are applied in the cultivation of other food crops include pruning and weeding (*mangoes in Burkina Faso and Ghana*).

Furthermore, the additional incomes generated through the production and sale of certified products as observed by the large majority of participants (see 3.3.1.) allow producers to hire additional labour to produce food crops (*mangoes, shea nuts and butter in Burkina Faso,*

pineapples in Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone), or to buy agricultural material for the production of other crops (mangoes in Burkina Faso).

A minority of producers stresses the risk of competition between the production of certified products and other food crops, which manifests itself primarily at the level of the employment of labour (mangoes in Burkina Faso, cocoa in Sierra Leone).

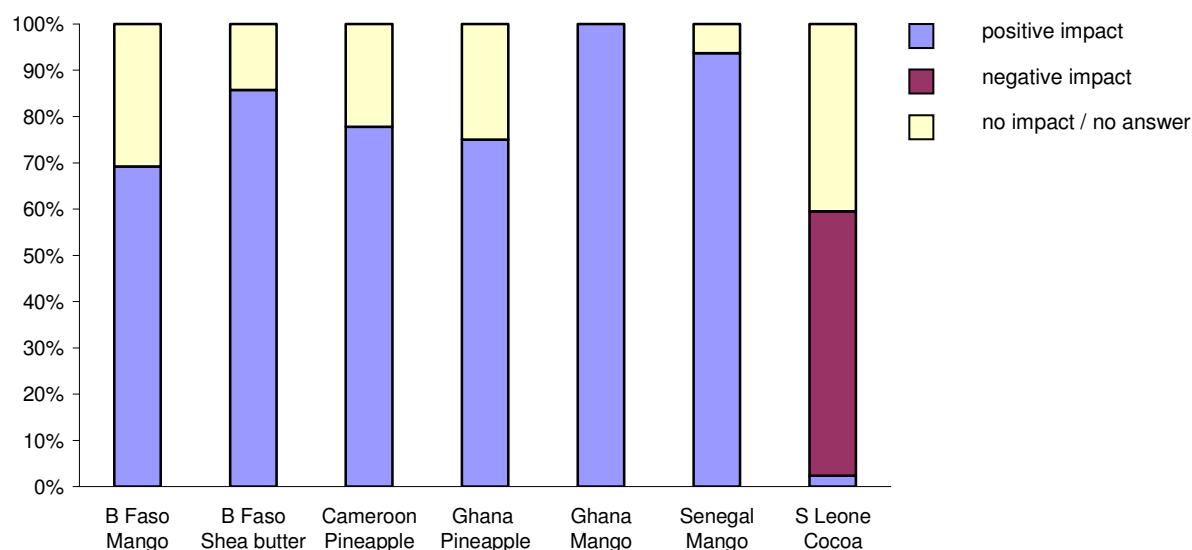
Figure 8. Impact of the project on other food crops (relative importance of the answers)



3.7. Impact on the health of the producers/collectors

With the exception of the project in Sierra Leone, the vast majority of the participants is convinced that the application of the new organic techniques has a positive impact upon their health and that of their family. The percentage of participants observing a positive effect ranges from 70 percent in the case of the mango producers in Burkina Faso to 100 percent in the case of the Ghanaian mango producers.

Figure 9. Impact of the project upon the health of the producers/collectors



The positive effects of the application of the new organic techniques on the health of the producers and their family are linked to the following factors:

- The reduced exposure to chemical products (*mangoes and shea butter in Burkina Faso, mangoes in Senegal, pineapples in Cameroon and Ghana*);
- The increase in incomes, allowing producers to pay for medical care and buy medication (*pineapples and mangoes in Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone*);
- Increased awareness (for example the sensitization to the adverse effects of the use of chemical products, or to the importance of a healthy diet) and behavioural changes as to health matters (*mangoes in Burkina Faso, pineapples and mangoes in Ghana*);
- Less stress, better relations with the other producers (*mangoes in Ghana*);
- The application of new hygiene rules (*shea butter in Burkina Faso*);
- The use of protective clothing and materials and the application of new techniques aimed at preventing work-related accidents (*shea butter and mangoes in Burkina Faso*);
- The work has become less tiring as a result of the better division of labour, the regular maintenance of plantations, the use of specific tools (*mangoes in Burkina Faso*);
- The reduction of the time spent working in the fields (*shea butter in Burkina Faso*);
- The reduction of the risk of snake bites resulting from the better maintenance of the plantations (*mangoes in Burkina Faso*).

Only the cocoa producers in Sierra Leone state – nearly unanimously – that the project has a negative impact on their health. This negative impact is primarily linked to the increased time spent working in the plantations, which may give rise to health problems (body pains, headaches, colds, fever), especially in the case of rain.

3.8. Gender-specific impacts

Although the large majority of the participants argue that the project has a specific impact upon the living and working conditions of women, most of the impacts cited by the respondents in this respect are not specific to women, such as for example the increase in incomes and buying power of the families involved in the project, the adoption of new agricultural techniques or the increased solidarity amongst producers. In addition, it should be noted that in the cases of shea nuts and butter in Burkina Faso, all participants are women, whereas in the case of mango production in Burkina Faso all interviewed producers (and practically all participants) are men.

The main gender-specific impact upon the living and working conditions of women appears to be their empowerment: women are more respected as members of the producer groups, they participate more in decision making processes; the training and increased contacts with other producers contribute to their development as individuals (*pineapples and mangoes in Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone*). An additional impact, cited in the case of the mango producers in Burkina Faso, is the reduction of the distance travelled by women to fetch water due to the reparation of the water pump in the village.

3.9. Impact at the level of the community and the dynamics of the producer groups

The participants confirm nearly unanimously that the application of the new techniques and the production and sale of certified products has an impact at the level of the villages and on producers who do not participate directly in the project.

The impact of the project at the level of the community manifests itself primarily through the creation of jobs for workers involved directly in the production of certified products (harvest helpers, pickers, agricultural workers (mainly for weeding), processing aids, inspectors, quality agents), as well as for workers and administrative staff involved in production supporting services (couriers, secretaries, treasurers).

In the case of the production of mangoes in Burkina Faso, the impact of the project at village level is mainly linked to the Fairtrade premium, which has, for example, enabled the village to repair its water pump or buy school material.

The impact of the project on producers who are not a member of the producer groups manifests itself primarily through the adoption by these producers of the new organic production techniques. This impact is observed by participants of each of the sub-projects, with the exception of the project in Cameroon. The organic techniques applied by non-members of the producer groups include techniques relating to pruning, harvesting, grafting, composting, planting, maintenance and processing, and – in the case of shea butter – sorting, washing and filtering of the butter. The mango and shea butter producers in Burkina Faso allow their colleagues non-members of the group to observe the production activities and thus acquire the new techniques⁵.

All producers confirm that new members want to join their respective groups.

The project has reinforced producer groups in two ways. On the one hand, the project has encouraged individual producers to organize themselves with a view to obtaining organic and/or fair-trade certification (group certification reduces the certification costs per individual producer); on the other hand, the internal control systems developed in the framework of the project have improved the management of the producer groups.

The majority of mango and shea butter producers in Burkina Faso observe an improvement in the relations within their respective groups since the beginning of the project; they indicate a better sharing of ideas and a stronger spirit of cordiality and solidarity. The producers argue that they have become less fatalistic, more proactive; the group work has given them an “openness of mind”. In the case of the project in Senegal, this enthusiasm is believed to affect even producers non-members of the group.

3.10. Problems and recommendations

The main problems cited by the project’s participants include:

- *The marketing of certified products:* several producers stress their concern as to the creation of marketing outlets for their certified products. A number of mango producers in Burkina Faso state that they are unsatisfied with the previous season (low prices, broken promises on the part of buyers), while their Senegalese colleagues criticize the fact that the project has so far been unable to find buyers for their certified products. The pineapple producers in Cameroon – who had not yet harvested any certified fruits at the time of the survey – declare that they would like to be more certain to find a market for their fruits and obtain good prices before investing in the organic production of pineapples;
- *The lack of technical tools necessary to comply with the requirements of the new methods (shea butter in Burkina Faso, mangoes in Senegal);*
- *The lack of financial means:* several producers stress their need for additional financial means, for example to build storage or processing infrastructure, expand the area under certified production, buy planting material or pre-finance their harvests (*mangoes in Senegal and Ghana, pineapples in Cameroon and Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone*);
- *The increase in the work load resulting from the application of organic techniques (see 3.3.4.).*

⁵ In the case of the shea butter producers, non-members are allowed to observe only the conventional production process.

The main recommendations put forward by the project's participants with a view to optimizing the project's impact are the following:

- *Training*: several producers underline the need to repeat certain training sessions and to organize additional training, for example on organic production, harvesting, maintenance and processing techniques and agricultural management (*mangoes in Burkina Faso and Senegal, shea butter in Burkina Faso, pineapples in Cameroon, pineapples and mangoes in Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone*);
- *Agricultural material*: several producers request support to purchase agricultural material (tractors, processing material, plant material, fertilizers) (*mangoes and shea butter in Burkina Faso, mangoes in Senegal, pineapples in Cameroon and Ghana*);
- *Financial support*: several producers emphasize their need for financial support (for example in the form of agricultural credit), especially with a view to constructing packing, storage and processing (of unsold fruits) infrastructure (*mangoes in Burkina Faso, Senegal and Ghana, cocoa in Sierra Leone, pineapples in Ghana*);
- *Creation of marketing outlets*: in view of the problems related to the marketing of certified products (see 3.11.), several producers underline the need to reinforce and create marketing outlets for certified products (*shea butter in Burkina Faso, mangoes in Senegal, pineapples in Ghana*);
- *Strengthening of the project*: in view of the overall positive impact of the project, a good number of participants would welcome the extension of the project (inclusion of other crops and varieties, increase in the number of participants, strengthening of the cooperation within the organizations and improvement of the management of the producer groups) (*mangoes in Burkina Faso and Senegal*).

4. THE PROJECT – CONCLUSIONS

The project “Increasing incomes and food security of small farmers in West and Central Africa through exports of organic and fair-trade tropical products” was developed to assist producer groups in West and Central Africa in reinforcing their capacity to produce and export organic and fair-trade products, with the overall aim of increasing their incomes and improving their food security.

It is important to note that the project’s impact on the commercial activities and livelihoods of its participants depends for the greater part on their respective initial situations. For example, the project’s impact on the poverty level of the women shea nut collectors in Burkina Faso – who are often faced with situations of food insecurity – has been more apparent than its impact on the livelihoods of the mango producers in Senegal, whose living conditions are better. It can generally be concluded that the more producers enjoyed a situation of food security and relatively good living conditions, the more the project’s impact manifested itself through an increase in the volume of production and exports, rather than through an apparent improvement of living conditions and food security.

The agricultural training sessions, which constituted one of the main activities of the project directly involving the producers, were highly valued by the participants. The impact of the implementation of the new organic techniques appears to manifest itself mainly at the level of the quality of the products, whereas the main problem regarding the application of the new techniques seems to be the lack of material and tools necessary to meet the requirements of the new methods.

In the greater majority of the cases, the project has led to an increase in production volumes. As ascertained by the large majority of the participants, this increase is linked to the extension of the cultivated areas on the one hand, and to the improvement of yields on the other. The adoption of the new agricultural methods in the framework of the project appears to be a very important factor behind the increase in yields. However, a number of producers observe a decrease in their production volumes following the implementation of the new organic methods. The lack of defence methods against insect pests resulting from the prohibition of the use of pesticides and the reduction of the marketable volume due to the stricter sorting procedures seem to be the main explanatory factors in this respect.

The impact of the adoption of the new agricultural and processing methods on the total costs of production varies considerably from one sub-project to the other. However, it is clear that the implementation of the organic methods generally results in an increase in labour costs, and a decrease in the costs related to the purchasing of agrochemicals and the transportation of the products to the market.

Five out of the seven sub-projects discussed in this report had led to the marketing of certified products at the moment of the survey. The Senegalese producers of mangoes had not yet succeeded in selling their products as “organic” fruits, whereas the Cameroonian producers of pineapples had not yet harvested any certified fruits. As far as the other projects are concerned, the producers confirmed nearly unanimously the positive impact of the marketing of the certified products by the producer groups; no disadvantageous aspects were mentioned.

In general, the project has resulted in an increase in the incomes of its participants as a result of the increase in the production volumes or the price paid to the producers. The additional income generated through the sale of certified products is mainly used for purchasing food or clothing, for paying school fees and for medical expenditures, thereby improving the living conditions and the food security of the participants.

The improvement of production methods resulting from the project is extended to other crops through the generalized adoption of the organic methods, and especially the use of organic fertilizers. As such, the project has had a largely positive impact on the production of other food crops, and hence on the food security of the producers.

With the exception of the project in Sierra Leone, the adoption of the new organic techniques has a very positive impact on the health of the producers and their families. This impact seems to be primarily linked to the fact that no chemical substances are used, as well as to the increase in the incomes of the producers, which allows them to pay for medical care and medicines.

The project's impact at the community level manifests itself primarily through the creation of jobs for workers directly involved in the production of certified products, as well as for workers and administrative staff involved in production supporting services. Moreover, the new organic production methods have also been adopted by producers non-members of the producer groups. Those who participated in the project unanimously confirm the desire of new producers to join their groups.

The main problems encountered during the implementation of the project relate to the marketing of the certified products. In the case of the Senegalese mango producers, the group had not yet managed to find buyers for its certified products at the time of the survey, giving rise to doubts as to the usefulness of the – often costly – investments in organic agriculture. Other producers underline their wish to be more certain to find a market for their fruits and obtain good prices in view of the costs involved in the conversion to organic farming. Another crucial problem appears to be the lack of technical tools necessary to meet the requirements of the new methods, as well as the need for financial means to undertake additional investments.

These problems are mirrored in the main recommendations put forward by the project's participants: to increase the support for the purchasing of agricultural material; to increase the financial aid (notably in view of the construction of packing, storage and processing (of unsold fruits) infrastructure); to reinforce and create marketing outlets for certified products; to repeat certain training sessions and organize additional training; and to extend the project (inclusion of other crops and varieties and increase in the number of participants).

ANNEX A. Activities organized in the framework of the project

		Exporter	Producer group
Burkina Faso	Mango	BurkiNature	Yuwalo / Zoutou / other suppliers
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development, with funding by the project, of a database of the producer groups supplying BurkiNature; - Financial support to obtain fair-trade certification; - Provision of a motorcycle; - Training by an expert on red ants; - Training of producers through Farmer Field School programme on organic production methods, record keeping, certification programmes, compliance with the standards of GLOBALGAP, development of an internal control system, facilitation techniques; - Training of harvesting and packing teams with a view to complying with organic standards and improving hygiene and first-aid practices (training organized by BurkiNature with funding by the project); - Training of the administrative staff (bookkeepers) of producer groups; - Study visit of the quality agent of BurkiNature to the importer in France; - Exhibit of BurkiNature at the BioFach trade fair (2008). 	
	Shea butter	CPBKB	ABPJF / Ragussi / UGF/CDN
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of the shea nut collectors and shea butter producers with a view to complying with organic standards; - Technical and financial support to be re-certified organic; - Support to CPBKB for office equipment and the employment of a secretary; - Training of the managers in planning and cost-benefit analysis of the production of shea nuts and butter; - Participatory analysis with the nut collectors on the costs of production of the nuts; - Training in marketing and commercial negotiation techniques; - Study visit by the management of CPBKB to Tamale (Ghana) to participate in a technical training session organized by another project; - Support for the construction of three village nut processing and storage centres; - Exhibit of CPBKB at the BioFach trade fair (2008). 	

Cameroon	Pineapple	UNAPAC	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness raising on organic agriculture and fair-trade and training on FLO fair-trade standards; - Collaboration with AFDI⁶ to facilitate discussions with the importer on the entry into organic and fair-trade markets; - Contracting of a consultant to set up an experimental plot of organic pineapple and organize training on organic production methods and a field visit to an organic plantation; - Provision of a motorcycle; - Technical and financial aid to obtain organic certification and labelling; assistance to purchase new organic labels; - Setting up of a packing station for organic pineapples; - Participatory cost-benefit analysis of the activities of UNAPAC and training of its members on cost-of-production analysis; - Study visit to the BioFach trade fair (2006) and to France, and presentation of UNAPAC at BioFach 2008. 	
Ghana	Pineapple	WAD	EAWOFA
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organization of training on the setting up of an internal control system in the framework of organic certification and on the GLOBALGAP standards (WAD); on the development of the association (statutes), on organic production methods, on production planning (development of a planting schedule) and on the GLOBALGAP standards (EAWOFA); - Technical and financial assistance to WAD to obtain organic certification, improve its packing station, and develop organic labels (co-financed by WAD); - Financial assistance to employ a field agent to train producers on organic production methods (WAD) ; - Financial assistance to EAWOFA to purchase office and agricultural production material; - Exhibit of WAD at the BioFach trade fair. 	
	Mango		VOMAGA
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organization of a) a feasibility study on organic and fair-trade certification; b) training on organic production methods, administration, traceability and planning of the management of VOMAGA (2009); and c) assistance to develop a marketing system; - Assistance to set up an office and training of VOMAGA's executive committee on how to use a computer; - Provision of a motorcycle and support to purchase agricultural production material; - Support to VOMAGA to recruit a field agent to a) provide training on organic production methods; b) set up an internal control system (ICS); and c) train a member of VOMAGA as the officer in charge of the ICS; - Training of VOMAGA managers on administration and on the organization of meetings by the Department of Cooperative Development of the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment; 	

⁶ *Agriculteurs Français et Développement International.*

		BNO	FAPD / UGPN
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of the mango producers of FAPD and UGPN on organic production methods (composting, pruning, etc.), fair-trade, the setting up of an internal control system, production planning, quality management and on the GLOBALGAP standards; - Assistance to BNO to obtain certification and to develop commercial relations; - Training on organic fruit fly control methods by the Direction de l'Horticulture of the Ministry of Agriculture; - Technical and financial support to obtain organic certification and set up an internal control system; - Study visit by the chairmen of FAPD and UGPN to the BioFach trade fair; - Training of the staff of BNO on cost-benefit analysis and on marketing techniques; - Setting up of an FFS programme on the organic production of mangoes, in collaboration with the IPM⁸ programme of FAO, Agrecol Afrique and the Direction de l'Horticulture⁹. 	
Sierra Leone	Cocoa	KAE	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support to KAE in the development of its statutes, the registration of its members, the management of the association, fair-trade certification and the training of village produce agents; - Support to KAE in its export activities; - Provision of a motorcycle; - Technical and financial support to obtain fair-trade certification; - Development of a curriculum and training of facilitators for a total of 50 Farmer Field Schools, assisting producers in rehabilitating their plantations and introducing correct fermentation and drying techniques, allowing them to obtain high-quality cocoa (programme managed by KAE, with funds and supervision from the project and technical assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security) ; - Study visit by the manager of KAE to a fair-trade certified cooperative in Ghana, and to fair-trade cocoa importers in the United Kingdom; - Visit by the liaison officer of FLO with a view to preparing the association for its first inspection. 	

⁷ Starting in January 2007.

⁸ Integrated Pest Management, see <<http://www.fao.org/agriculture/crops/core-themes/theme/pests/ipm/en/>>.

⁹ In 2009, to be continued after the end of the project.