

Report – Mapping Session

Report of the session on ‘Developing a Strategy for Mapping of FOs and Local Agricultural Products’ at the PAFO’s 6th General Assembly

26th October 2023
Tunis, Tunisia



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Introduction

Following the appointment of a consultant to support PAFO in the development of a strategy for mapping FOs and Local Agricultural Products, the consultant was given an opportunity to interact with the stakeholders gathered at the PAFO General Assembly, held in Tunis from 23-28 October 2023.

It provided an opportunity for Krishan Bheenick to introduce himself to the wider PAFO community and to gain an insight into the operations and membership arrangements of PAFO. It was also an opportunity to meet with leaders of the RFOs with whom he had previously interacted in a different capacity. As part of the GA, one session was allocated to interactions around the Mapping Strategy.

The GA session on the Mapping Strategy



Mr Bheenick launched the session through a presentation of the Terms of Reference of the consultancy and took the audience through his interpretation of the ToRs as well as some reflection on what the results of this assignment would mean to PAFO, and especially where it could lead to as an asset of PAFO once it is being implemented. He pointed out that the current assignment was to help PAFO develop a Strategy for mapping the FOs rather than implementing one, and that the ToR at times also alluded to the outcomes of the Strategy being implemented. Therefore, he used the outcomes of implementation as a guide and vision of what the mapping will be aiming to achieve, and thus it would determine the processes that should accompany the mapping process. At the same time, he proposed that it would be hard to justify the process of mapping if some illustrations of its use was not also generated at the same time, even if it represented a proof of concept.

(Figure 1)



Figure 1. Overview of the Terms of Reference of the assignment to develop a Strategy for mapping FO and Local Agricultural Products, and the ultimate outcome of its implementation

One of the major conclusions of this initial reflection on the ToR and the assignment was to define the outcome of the mapping exercise and its implementation, which was for *“PAFO, RFO and NFO to be seen as a resilient, vertically connected infrastructure of partners, representing a preferred network of partners to work with by the African and International Development Partners”*. This resonated with members of the audience as it reflects a long-term vision that can guide the development and implementation of the mapping strategy.

The context of the assignment

The consultant then illustrated that there are parallels that can be drawn with other regional/continental organizations with memberships in the countries. Leaders of the RFO pointed out the differences between some of the networks that go from country to global networks and highlighted that PAFO has the RFOs as its members and the latter have the FOs as theirs, all respecting the principles of subsidiarity. The consultant acknowledged the difference (the slides have been modified as a result so as not to create confusion in this report). Nevertheless, it is the coordinated and networked approach of these families of organizations that make the PAFO ‘network’ a powerful representation of the voices of the FOs in Africa, while the mapping process should also be empowering for the members of the PAFO.

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You are not alone in this situation...

Through the literature

- Parallels can be drawn with other Regional Farmers Organisations e.g. FO4ACP programme
- Similarities with other Regional 'structures' in African Agriculture:
 - FARA-SARDI/NARSIO, COIRAF, ASARECA, CCARDESA) - NARS/NARS
 - PAFO - IFDC/UNIMAGRI, ROPPA, PROPHIC, EAFFU, SACCAU) ... NFO
 - (Members of FAO and PAFO and the Sub-regional Organisations and Regional FOs respectively)
 - Similarly, the extension and advisory services networks in Africa:
 - AFASIS (RESGAR/AGC, SARIRAS) ... Country Forum
- Similar Donors (EU is a major contributor; Regionalisation; New Post-Cotonou Agreement)
- Similar principles...(and constraints)?
 - Principles of subsidiarity...
 - Direct targeting of country interventions by Donor institutions (target countries), UN Organisations (One UN), CGIAR (One CG)
 - Direct targeting of local partners by projects with little consultations and little scope for collaboration
 - Major funding to come: Food Systems Transformation, Horizon Europe, AU-EU Platform, Innovation, ESG – however, All projects aim to see impact at the level of the beneficiaries: the farmers and the rural community

PAFO, RFO and NFO to be seen as a resilient, vertically connected infrastructure of partners, representing a preferred network of partners to work with by the African and International Development Partners

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Learning from the experience of others

e.g. Asia-Pacific Farmers Forum

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A Strategy to demonstrate capacity & resilience

- A Strategy document on how PAFO and its network will strengthen its coordination, knowledge management and engagement capacity amongst its members and their own members
- A Strategy that respects the principles of subsidiarity but at the same time demonstrates that such principles are not a barrier to coordinated action
- A Strategy document that is accompanied by a proof of concept that the PAFO network is operational and effective to engage with R&D investments in African Agriculture and Agroecology
- A strategic mechanism for operation that inspires more investment in the PAFO network

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Learning from our own experiences

- How did we manage to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What lessons did we learn from the use of ICT tools and how fast we adapted? Are we losing these new skills or do we build up on them?
- What are we learning about Change that is not stopping – there is no scope for stabilization as it was before: only perpetual change
- Be prepared for more changes (Geo-politics; AI technology; advances in connectivity; Need for Food Systems Transformation in a changing climate)
- So let's embrace technological solutions to adapt to change and share our experiences amongst our network: Data privacy, data sharing, Information sharing, Knowledge sharing for the greater good (e.g. agroecological approaches)

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Learning about Data: Resolution, Perspectives, Information uses

Data you possess Information needed Intended Information use

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Let's Innovate... together

*If you want to go fast, go alone
 If you want to go far, go together...*

*... we move forward in small incremental steps
 altogether and we appreciate our successes at
 each step*

Are you going to join me on this journey?

Figure 2. Contextualization of the development of the Mapping Strategy by PAFO in view of the existing experiences and the vision of working in collaboration

During this session, the consultant also tried to contextualize the development of the Strategy within PAFO, with the experiences that can be gained from sister organizations in other regions of the world (e.g. the Asia Pacific Farmers Forum with the publication of a Directory of FOs; existing online initiatives to map farmers and rural producers organizations (<http://www.fo-mapp.com>) and, the experiences of the members of the RFOs and FOs to use online tools during the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 2). Therefore, the context is currently different from previous initiatives to carry out the mapping, and this new opportunity also enables the introduction of innovative approaches that remind the members of the network about the power of collaboration and coordinated interventions.



Situation analysis and the Minimum Viable Product

With the above backdrop, the consultant presented the results of a rapid desk research for information about the membership of PAFO, based on the Website of PAFO, the links provided to the websites of the RFOs and eventually their links to websites and web pages about the FOs. Where the social media links were highlighted, an assessment was made of the type of information that was available from the social media pages about the roles of the FOs. The general picture of the assessment was captured in a table which the participants from each sub-region would have the opportunity to assess and comment on during the group work session. Based on the current situation and the experiences that was shown above from other similar organisations, the consultant proposed that during this assignment of developing the Strategy, it would be useful to also develop a proof of concept of the principles that underscore the new strategy: one that continuously motivates the data contributors from the FOs to update information about themselves into a shared space, which can be used by and packaged by each level of the network of organisations. He then presented a sample of the kinds of data that would be attempted to be collected during this short consultancy process. The participants would have the opportunity to discuss these in the group work that followed (Figure 3).

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 Getting started... now!

1. As from today, understand the current set up at regional levels that can be built on, and improve on what is currently visible though the PAFO and RFO websites
2. Be inspired by the Asian Farmers Association Directory as a Minimum Viable Product, and be innovative
3. Build and maintain a network of data and information contributors from the PAFO network, and acknowledge their roles in the products developed
4. Achieve the Proof of Concept of a Resilient, vertically connected infrastructure, network of partners using the innovative approach

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 Stocktake of the current situation...

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| No | List of RFOs members of RFOs | COUNTRY | Online info | Directory information (RFO/low/CR) | Website | FB | Remarks |
|---------------|--|--------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|----|---------------|
| 22 | Zimbabwe National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) | Zimbabwe | Y | CR | zfnu.org.zw | Y | |
| 23 | Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe (CFUZ) | Zimbabwe | Y | CR | cfuzim.com | | |
| 24 | Namibia National Farmers' Union (NNFU) | Namibia | Y | CR | nfnu.org.na | | |
| 25 | Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU) | Namibia | Y | CR | nau.com.na | Y | |
| ROPPA | | | | | | | |
| 26 | Confédération paysanne du Faso (CFP) | Burkina Faso | Y | CR | roppa-africque.org | Y | |
| 27 | National Platform of Professional Agricultural Organizations of Benin (NPPAOB) | Benin | Y | CR | ppaf.org | | |
| 28 | National Association of Professional Agricultural Organizations of Côte d'Ivoire (NAPAOCI) | Cote d'Ivoire | N | CR | | | |
| 29 | National Coordinating Farmers of Gambia (N.A.CO.F.A.G) | Gambia | N | CR | | | email, CH, FB |
| 30 | Farmer Organisation Network of Ghana (FONG) | Ghana | Y | Low | fongh.org | Y | |
| 31 | National Council of Peasant Organizations (NCOP) | Guinea Conakry | N | CR | | | |
| 32 | ONCOP/PA/IB | Guinea Bissau | N | CR | | | email |
| 33 | Farmer Union Network of Liberia (FUN-INC) | Liberia | N | CR | funliberia.org | Y | |
| 34 | National Coordination of Peasant Organizations of Mali (CNOP-Mali) | Mali | N | CR | | | |
| 35 | Niger Peasant Platform (PPN) | Niger | Y | CR | | | |
| 36 | National Council for Rural Dialogue and Cooperation (NCRC) | Senegal | N | CR | | | |
| 37 | Association nationale des agriculteurs de Sierra Leone (NAPS) | Sierra Leone | N | CR | | | |
| 38 | Trigler Coordination of Peasant Organizations (TCOP) | Togo | N | Low | | | Y |
| 39 | Confederation of Traditional Herder Organizations in Africa (COBRET) | Nigeria | Y | Low | | | Y |
| PROFAC | | | | | | | |
| 40 | National Union of Agricultural Confederations of Angola(UNACA) | Angola | Y | CR | infoprofac.org | Y | |
| 41 | Concentration of Farmers Organizations of Burundi(CNOF/Burundi) | Burundi | N | CR | | | |
| 42 | Concentration of Farmers Organizations of Cameroon (CNOF-CAM) | Cameroon | Y | CR | | | Y |
| 43 | Concentration of Farmers Organizations of Central Africa (CNOF-CA) | Central African Republic | N | CR | | | Y |

Deliverables – revisited; How to get there?

- Facilitate a validation workshop that will be held in an African country identified by PAFO.
- (conceptual innovations in the approach presented today) A draft African strategy and action plan for Mapping of FOs and African Agricultural Local Products
- Establish a mechanism for collaboration online (since we have all learnt to work using online tools since COVID?)
- Continue to meet online (Dgroups) and/or on WhatsApp
- A final version of the strategy and action plan documents incorporating feedback from PAFO.

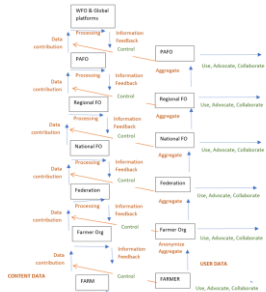
Innovation: Incremental approach - a minimum dataset... ..within one month of the AGM?

- Farmer Organisation description:**
 - Summary in 100 words
 - Establishment overview
 - Vision
 - Mission
 - Purpose or Objectives
 - Current Strategic Objectives
 - Current strategy period
- Contact details:**
 - Physical Address
 - Mailing Address
 - Coordinates of Headquarters on Google Map
 - Institutional contact person: Name and Position
 - Phone (Office) (Mobile)
 - Email address
 - Website URL
 - Social Media Account names: FB, Instagram, X
- Focal Point for Data Management:**
 - Name of Focal Point
 - Position in FO
 - Email Address
 - Phone (Landline) (Mobile)
 - WhatsApp number
- Membership:**
 - Number of Associations as Members
 - Demographic of Members: (Numbers of Male, Female, Youth Male, Youth Female)
 - Number of households represented?
 - Main geographic location of Members (Administrative level 1 or 2)/ Closest village or Town
- Production profile:**
 - Total area under agriculture per Association
 - Annual production of Crops: (Crop, Area under each crop, Yield of each crop)
 - Annual production of Livestock (Type, Number of heads, Area used)
- Agricultural 'Terroir' Product profile:**
 - Product or Produce category
 - Specialized product name
 - Distinguishing description/Characteristics
 - Local Relevance
 - Annual Production
 - Location of production (relate to locality name)

Figure 3. Situation analysis and definition of the minimum dataset to be collected as a proof of concept of the mapping strategy

Innovation: The Network and operational mechanism

- Establish the proof of concept during this assignment
- Demonstration of the effectiveness of collaboration, collective effort and synergistic value-adding...
- On a minimum set of data
- Demonstrate value adding and feedback to contributor at every level



Innovation: A self-motivated coordination model

- Establish a Dgroups community of all the data contributors at regional, sub-regional, national (and sub-national) levels
- Explain the data contribution through Excel sheets
- Coordinate collection (self motivated) – devolved
- Compile and celebrate incremental achievements
- Two rounds of data collection before the end Nov/mid Dec and produce a harmonized directory of members and their basic profiles before mid December
- Configure spreadsheets to automatically draw national, sub-regional and regional picture of the situation
- Build on our success and maintain the community (and grow)

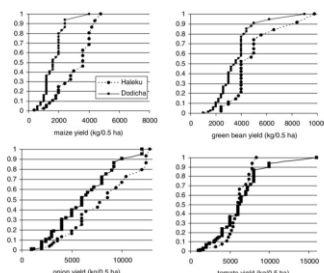
Innovation... in-built feedback to the data contributor

Anonimized cumulative frequency curves

Cumulative frequency curves as one method of providing feedback to the data contributor in an anonymised dataset

The system may be programmed only to provide feedback when there are a minimum number of contributors from the region (e.g. >30) and return the generic feedback to the contributor so they can understand where they stand

Similarly, organisations at a higher level from the ground need aggregated information (or secondary data) but do not need access to the primary data



Innovation: Agricultural Products & Geographic Indicators

Les caractéristiques d'un terroir ne deviennent stratégiquement importantes qu'à la suite d'un engagement collectif. Le terroir est ainsi associé à des choix d'orientation de l'organisation et de ses partenaires. Les produits de terroir sont caractérisés par trois attributs-ressources :

- Tangibles :** spécifications techniques, agro climatiques, géographiques ;
- Intangibles :** savoir-faire, valeur, symbole, idées véhiculées ;
- Historiques :** accumulation de l'expérience, transmission générationnelle.

L'indication géographique se décrit à travers ces trois attributs:

- Le produit :** il doit présenter des caractéristiques uniques liées à son origine, qui lui confèrent sa qualité spécifique et sa réputation sur le marché, et qui correspondent à une demande de consommateurs ;
- Le territoire :** les caractéristiques spécifiques sont le résultat de la combinaison des ressources naturelles et humaines ancrées au lieu de production ;
- Les acteurs locaux :** les producteurs, qui ont hérité de traditions et d'un savoir-faire, aux côtés d'autres acteurs concernés, sont conscients de leur patrimoine et sont motivés pour développer une démarche collective de préservation et de valorisation du produit.

Agricultural Products & Geographic Indicators

- Si l'IG n'est construite que dans le seul but de dynamiser des filières d'exportation, par l'Etat ou par l'aval de la filière, en cherchant à la rendre la plus compatible possible avec les filières internationales existantes, et non la plus apte à protéger les intérêts de groupements de producteurs et à renforcer des processus de développement territoriaux, les producteurs ne pourront s'engager durablement. Il importe donc naturellement que la construction des IG rencontre également les intérêts de ces derniers.
- à l'heure actuelle, la mise en place des IG est toujours assez incomprise en Afrique.
- L'Union Africaine, La FAO ont des documents récents sur la mise en œuvre des indications géographiques.



Data collection for Agricultural 'Terroir' Products

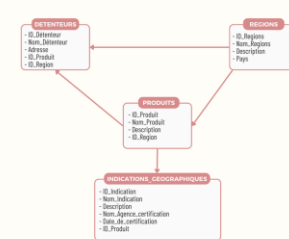


Tableau 1 : Exemple de tableau pour collecter des produits du terroir – Niveau 1

| Produit | Désignation du Produit | Catégorie | Zone de Production |
|---------|------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Tableau 2 : Exemple de tableau pour collecter des produits du terroir – Niveau 2

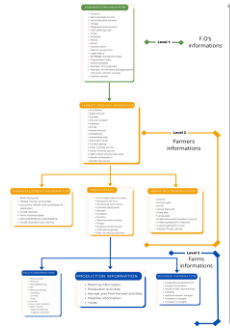
| Produit | Détenteur/porteur | Adresse Détenteur | Région/Type |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Tableau 3 : Exemple de tableau pour collecter des produits du terroir – Niveau 3

| Produit | Nom reconnaissance juridique | Date reconnaissance | Commentaires |
|---------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

The Strategy Document

- Will contain a vision with more ambitious ideas and proposals on how PAFO will build of the proof of concept model
- Will mention potential partners and synergies sought with international partners
- Will involve dialogue before intervention (W3 consortium approach)
- Will remain incremental in its process (and provide a pathway to new members)
- Will comprise the Agricultural 'Terroir' products (Geographic Indication)



Proposed Group Discussions

- PART 1: Validation of approach (10 m)
- Confirmation on the focus of the current intervention of developing a Mapping Strategy?
 - Confirmation of the Strategy to demonstrate the Resilience and Capacity of the PAFO Network?
- PART 2: Discussions on the feasibility of the minimum product by end of 2023 (20 m)
- PART 3: Discussions on the innovative approaches (30 m)
- Incremental approaches – moving together, celebrating achievements together, setting a pathway for new members
 - The network and Coordination mechanism – subsidiarity, controlled access, information and knowledge sharing for greater good;
 - Anonymization and sharing of compiled information to data contributors; consultations before implementation; Data sharing for greater good
 - Geographical Indicators and 'local'/'Terroir' products as high value products for markets
- PART 4: Discussions on the Strategic and long-term goal for PAFO using the mapping process (20 m)

Figure 4. Examples of innovative approaches being considered for inclusion in the Mapping Strategy of FOs and Local Agricultural products

The final part of the presentation by the consultant covered the innovative approaches that were being considered in the context of the Mapping strategy. One of these approaches is to make more explicit the principle of subsidiarity that is often raised by the Donor organisations, but which has remained poorly defined other than in concept. The PAFO and its members work along the lines of the same principles of subsidiarity, but it assumes that the organisations are well prepared and resourced to engage and interact with each other laterally and vertically across structures of organisation. This is further complicated when it comes to the sharing of information and data. The consultant is being inspired by developments in the field of Digital Public Infrastructure that is being promoted as a way of democratizing access to markets and information. Therefore, the Strategy will propose the establishment of a mechanism that can on one hand empower the data contributor to control who has access to their data and the aggregator of data demonstrating their value added service to the data contributor. In fact, these can even be negotiated in concept before implementation goes ahead.



However, the above mechanism requires that the data operators across the range of members of PAFO are connected and are able to understand the responsibilities, implications and empowering factors that this mode of collaboration brings. Therefore, at this consultancy stage, the key stakeholders in data management from the FOs will be connected on an online platform to discuss and try out a simplified version of the collaboration model, using Excel spreadsheets to better understand the mechanisms that will be scaled up in the implementation phase. Therefore, one of the collaborative activities that will be held with the data management representatives of the FOs will be a collaborative approach to gathering information to generate a Minimum Viable Product (the PAFO Directory and Map of FOs in Africa)

In terms of the approach to the mapping of Local Agricultural Products in Africa, the focus will be on valued products originating from the PAFO membership. These products are generally those that should be undergoing a process of recognition and labelling of Geographic Indicators. Guidelines have been published on the process of developing profiles of products with Geographic Indicators (e.g by FAO and also by the African Union). These are available to be implemented and a simplified structure for data collection has been developed for data collection during this consultancy process, as a pilot to the larger scale implementation of the strategy.

Farmer profiles are also an interesting element that would be a logical follow-up to the process of mapping FOs in Africa. The consultant described multiple project interventions where PAFO has been involved along with technical cooperation partners such as CTA, IFAD, FAO etc. These have all been developed with slightly different objectives and it is now high time for the FOs to take the lead on development of their own profiles, but work in collaboration to move towards a harmonized system of developing and storing farmer profiles. Ideally, the mechanism of data control and the principle of subsidiarity described earlier should be combined with the use of farmer data with a differentiation between what is considered as User data and Content Data. Several international development partners are also working on these issues and it would make more sense for PAFO to join the conversations to help bring about the harmonization process (farmers and farmer organizations both as data contributors and data beneficiaries).



Therefore, in order to enable a discussion on the issues presented, the participants were provided with a set of guiding questions to address on the ideas presented above. Time was limited and there was no opportunity to come back to a plenary session for presentation and discussion of the reactions from the different sub-regional group work. Nevertheless, the main ideas and suggestions coming from the group-work have been captured as the summary of the session presented to the General Assembly (see next section).

The issues and ideas will be brought up on the online forum amongst the data management representatives of the FO as the process of the online collaborative model is tested out before the end of the year. This exercise is expected to take place towards the end of November until mid-December while the documentation of the Mapping Strategy will be ongoing. A validation process may be further organized by PAFO.

Summary recommendations to the PAFO GA

The consultant presented the Terms of Reference of the assignment, differentiated the current assignment of development of a Strategy document for PAFO for the mapping process and the intended objectives of the mapping process itself when it is implemented. He shared the insights gained through literature review of past projects of PAFO with its partners, the new post-Covid context of addressing the mapping exercise (especially around the use of digital tools) and previous experiences that PAFO can learn from.

Nevertheless, since the consultant is proposing the introduction of innovative approaches to the process of mapping, he is proposing that a proof of concept of the approach along with the Strategy document, will enable PAFO to make a stronger case for mobilization of resources.

PAFO Management provided some clarifications on the structure of PAFO and its members, compared to other continental structures on agricultural research and extension, especially in relation to global networks engaging in agricultural and rural development. The audience was appreciative of the context and insight provided at this phase of the process.

Following the presentation, the audience went into group work per region on the principles of the approach to mapping and to discuss the approaches being proposed. A few recommendations have already emerged:

- Members are keen to see the mapping process of FOs and Agricultural Products being implemented soon, as this forms a foundational component of their interactions for the future. They recommend PAFO to seek resources to implement the Strategy as soon as it has been developed.
- Members agreed that the goal of developing the Mapping Strategy is for “PAFO, RFO and NFO to be seen as a resilient, vertically connected, infrastructure of partners, representing a preferred ‘network of network’ of partners for African and International Development Institutions”
- In the long term, Members would like to see the mapping process include profiles of the producers who are gathered under the PAFO umbrella.
- Members are in a position to identify suitable representatives who can provide data for the mapping exercise during the pilot ‘Proof of concept’ phase and which can constitute the foundation of the network that will support the implementation of the strategy
- Members discussed and appreciated the innovative approaches to the mapping process as being inclusive, consultative and iterative while providing a pathway for new members to join the process smoothly.
- Members look forward to participating in the pilot phase and to the establishment of coordination mechanism amongst members at national, regional and continental level.

