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# The Newsletter of Inades-Formation

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## THE CONSCIENCE ALIMENTERRE CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY



Conscience AlimenTERRE awareness caravan

### Editorial

The Conscience AlimenTERRE campaign is highlighting the problem of toxicity of synthetic chemical pesticides for the environment and humans. Launched by the Inades-Formation network, analyses, studies, awareness-raising and advocacy are the watchwords of this campaign, which aims to encourage everyone to question what they eat and to exercise their right to food in terms of healthy, adequate and sustainable food. Let's follow some of the national offices in their activities, and Mr Baridomo will tell us more about the campaign.

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### Synthetic chemical pesticides : the need to improve of the legal framework



international and EU regulations.

The results were presented at a workshop in Lomé on 30 June 2023.

The analysis showed that Togo, like other countries, is party to several conventions and regulations. Unfortunately, these texts have not yet been fully integrated into national regulations. «After workshops with producers and case studies in the market garden production zone in Lomé and in the commune of Amou 3, the results revealed the presence of unregistered synthetic chemical pesticides, despite the international and national regulations in force», says Mrs Sélome ADOUSSI HOUETOGRON, Director of Inades-Formation Togo.

As part of its advocacy campaign entitled «AlimenTERRE Conscience Campaign», advocating the right to healthy food for the realisation of the right to food in sub-Saharan Africa, Inades-Formation Togo commissioned an analysis of the existing regulatory framework for synthetic chemical pesticides at national level, in the light of

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#### Contributors to this issue were :

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«An analysis of this legal framework reveals a number of shortcomings, including a mismatch between the national legislative framework and the provisions of the international legal framework, inadequate regulation of the various links in the development of pesticides, inadequate management of waste resulting from packaging and obsolete pesticides, inadequate monitoring of pesticide entry and use flows, and failure to take account of bio-pesticides in the regulations. In Togo, we have texts and a relevant legal framework, but the problem is their applicability. It is therefore important for the government to be much more vigilant about the entry and management of these chemical pesticides», stresses Paul Dossou BANKA, an expert in international environmental law and consultant to the study.

The study therefore recommends «the development and adoption of an agro-ecological policy and strategy integrating pesticides, the adoption of a policy to promote bio-pesticides, the establishment of a national food safety structure, the strengthening of criminal sanctions, the development and adoption of a regulatory framework that takes into account all the links in the pesticide sector, and the development and dissemination of guides to good practice in the use of registered pesticides for each link».

The meeting brought together those involved in the AlimenTERRE awareness campaign, ministries responsible for pesticide management, decentralised government technical services, farmers' organisations, students, consumer associations and teacher-researchers.

With these recommendations, Inades-Formation Togo and its allies intend to lobby political decision-makers to strengthen the national regulatory framework for the import, circulation and use of synthetic chemical pesticides in agriculture.

## Promoting sustainable food systems: Inades-Formation Burkina promotes experience sharing



On 12 May 2023, Inades-Formation Burkina organised a national workshop to reflect on and share experiences in promoting sustainable food systems. The event took place in Ouagadougou in the Conference Room

of the Ouind Yidé Hotel. The aim was to help mobilise and engage allies in the «Conscience AlimenTERRE» advocacy campaign to reduce the use of synthetic chemical pesticides in Burkina Faso and to ensure more stringent regulation of the sector.

The opening ceremony of the workshop was chaired by the National Agroecology Correspondent of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Resources and Fisheries (MARAH). He recalled the ministry's concern about the misuse of chemical pesticides and its efforts to develop agroecology. He also praised the initiative of Inades-Formation Burkina to work with various stakeholders to promote sustainable food systems in Burkina Faso. Mr Adama SAVADOGO was joined at the presidium by Ms Marcelle TONDE, representative of the CEO of Inades-Formation Burkina, and Mr TOCOMA SY, representative of the Belgian NGO Broederlijk Delen (BD). One of the highlights of the workshop was the presentation of a study initiated by Inades-Formation on the intensive use of synthetic chemical pesticides. The presentation was made by Dr Adèle Ouédraogo. The study was conducted by this researcher from the Institut de Recherche en Sciences

Appliquées et Technologies (IRSAT) in Bobo-Dioulasso. In her presentation, she highlighted the following realities, among others: the majority of farmers use synthetic chemical pesticides, especially those that are not registered; there is a low level of use of personal protective equipment; and the recommended doses are not respected, with very excessive levels in market gardening.

The study also revealed poor management of packaging by farmers, who often abandon it in the fields, high levels of contamination of water by residues of synthetic chemical pesticides, and the importation and use of unregistered and highly dangerous pesticides, especially in market gardening. Among the recommendations made were: to require producers to have a minimum level of instruction in phytosanitary treatments, to train farmers in integrated pest management techniques, and to raise consumer awareness so that they require producers to produce healthily.

The workshop programme also included a presentation on the National Strategy for the Development of Agroecology (SND-AE), with a focus on bio-inputs and the place and role of civil society in implementing this strategy. Mr Adama SAVADOGO, MARAH's National Agroecology Correspondent, was in charge of speaking on the subject. The workshop on experiences in promoting sustainable food systems was an opportunity for CNABio (Conseil national de l'agriculture biologique), through its coordinator Clémence SAMBA/LANKOANDE, to present the action plan for promoting bio-inputs. The workshop ended with discussions on ways in which the various players could work together to advocate a reduction in the use of synthetic chemical pesticides. Among the various ideas put forward was the organisation of an awareness-raising campaign on the use of herbicides. This activity will be carried out in partnership with CNABio.

## INTERVIEW with Mr. BARIDOMO PASCAL

Just over two years ago, in March 2021, Inades-Formation officially launched the Conscience AlimenTERRE campaign in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Mr Baridomo Pascal, advocacy officer at Inades-Formation's General Secretariat and in charge of steering the campaign at network level, gives us an update on the campaign since then and shares the results with us.



**M. Baridomo Pascal,**  
Advocacy Officer

**NIF: Inades-Formation has launched the Conscience AlimenTERRE campaign in March 2021. What motivated this campaign and what do you expect from it?**

**BP :** The ultimate aim of the Conscience AlimenTERRE campaign is to promote practices, behaviours and public policies in favour of food systems that respect human health and the environment. It is an advocacy component of the structuring programme «Food systems based on family farming, for healthy and sustainable food». The dominant agricultural models are based on dependence on synthetic chemical pesticides and fertilisers. It is recognised that the use of synthetic chemical pesticides is detrimental to the health of farmers, those around them, consumers and the environment. Yet it is the environment that hosts the biodiversity resources on which sustainable production depends. This situation contrasts with Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and various conventions ratified by our States. This is why Inades-Formation affirms that «the toxicity of synthetic chemical pesticides for humans and the

environment constitutes an obstacle to the right to healthy and sustainable food».

**NIF: How is the campaign being run in the network?**

**BP:** The campaign has three objectives: Firstly, to raise public awareness of the right to healthy and sustainable food by developing food citizenship and monitoring the right to healthy food; Secondly, to call for a reduction in the import of synthetic chemical pesticides and for rigorous regulation and control of the sector;

Thirdly, to advocate the adoption of public policies and programmes in favour of agro-ecological solutions.

The campaign is aimed at various target groups (farmers, consumers, school and university communities, decision-makers). The first step was to define content that could be used by all ten associations in the network.

The slogan was adopted: «Food is a right and eating is a vote», and the title of the campaign is also unique to the entire network: «Conscience AlimenTERRE».

A brochure presenting the campaign has been published so that users can use it without interpreting it differently or distorting the spirit of the campaign. Two inter-NB workshops were held (2020 in Lomé and 2022 in Bujumbura) to ensure consistency in the implementation of the campaign.

Instructions for the official launch of the campaign at national level were shared for greater consistency and to take account of the context. Study themes have been targeted to highlight the obvious in order to promote awareness and advocacy at country, sub-regional and network level. There is also the building of alliances at various levels, including openness, collaboration with ECOWAS, notably on West African pesticide registration mechanisms (West African Pesticide Registration Commission COAHP) and reflections on mechanisms for promoting agroecology.

**NIF: How is the public reacting to this campaign?**

**BP :** The public is diverse and reacts according to interests and sensitivities. We find receptive farmers who are exposed to the risks of synthetic chemical pesticides and who adopt agro-ecological solutions. On the other hand, there are others who are trained in

« **Because of their toxicity, the intensive use of synthetic chemical pesticides is recognised as being harmful to the health of farmers, those around them, consumers and the environment.** » »

the logic that productivity depends on the use of synthetic chemical inputs. Consumers are more positively sensitive to the campaign, especially on the subject of food safety, given the various illnesses linked to what we eat. Generally speaking, the message is catching on with the public. At the same time, it upsets the promoters of synthetic chemical inputs. This is understandable, as the market and the control of production systems are at stake.



That's why we have to make ourselves heard and dominate those who hold views contrary to our own.

**NIF: The campaign has now officially been underway for two years. What progress has been made and what results have been achieved?**

**BP :** In terms of the capacities of the network's entities, I would say that the NLs have arguments resulting from studies carried out to support the public debate, in particular (i) exploratory studies on the context of synthetic chemical pesticides (09 countries), (ii) taking account of international conventions on managing the risks of chemical pesticides (05 countries), (iii) case studies on the effects of chemical pesticides on health and the environment (3 countries). Raising public awareness and developing alliances: The Conscience AlimenTERRE campaign is being conducted in the ten countries where Inades-Formation is active. It has been officially launched in 7 countries. It has attracted the involvement of the relevant authorities, in particular the ministries responsible for agriculture. This explains the growing relevance of the campaign in the eyes of the public and the authorities.

In terms of social mobilisation, CNAFs and other allies have been mobilised to support Inades-Formation in implementing the campaign. In some countries, groups of media professionals have been set up and have signed up to contracts. This enables us to get our messages across to as many people as possible and influence public opinion.

The action taken has led to a dynamic synergy with NGOs from the North (Europe) on advocacy against the export to Africa of chemical pesticides banned in the countries of origin. In terms of influencing decision-making processes, it is clear that the process is evolving slowly. The debate on regulatory reform in the chemical pesticide sector is more developed and inclusive in all the countries of intervention. Action taken in collaboration with others is influencing the adoption of agri-ecological

## « Consumers are more positively disposed to the campaign, and especially to the subject of food safety, given the various illnesses linked to what we eat. »

solutions by the authorities. In Burkina Faso, the government has adopted a national agro-ecology strategy. In Burundi, the Ministry of Agriculture has approved technical specifications for the production and use of certain agroecological inputs. These will be incorporated into the Ministry's agricultural support tools. Participation in steering the regional agro-ecology programme at ECOWAS level provides Inades-Formation with an opportunity to influence the thinking and development of agro-ecological solutions.

On the basis of a study report, consideration is being given at this level to agro-ecology funding mechanisms.

### **NIF: What are the next priorities for the campaign?**

The agendas in the various countries should focus on the following aspects:

- A network-wide mid-term review,
- Carrying out specific studies in certain countries and regional studies such as ECOWAS, ECCAS and EAC to take account of EU policies.
- Communicate sufficiently on the actions of the campaign through forums, seminars, conferences, webinars, posters, popular events such as caravans, sports tournaments, and by involving the various media;
- Work on drawing up policy briefs, analysis documents and proposals to help decision-making, and lead public debates, drawing on evidence from studies and public debates;
- Work to get the authorities to adopt proposals on regulatory reform and reducing imports of synthetic chemical pesticides;
- Bringing together more agro-ecology stakeholders and working to get the authorities to adopt pro-posals on agro-ecology policies and programmes.

### **Testimonial from a beneficiary**

*My name is NKENGURUKIYE Placide, originally from Cibitoke Province, Commune Murwi, Colline Mirombero in Burundi.*

*I am a model farmer thanks to the support of Inades-Formation Burundi. In the past, I used synthetic chemical products to control plant pests and protect crops in storage. With the new practices, I have evolved. Here are a few examples.*

*For a 40m x 40m plot, with 10 kg of bean seed, the harvest was 40 to 50 kg despite the use of synthetic chemicals. But with the use of biofertilisers, in particular Bokashi, which we have locally named 'Ntabizawimbure', the same area produces between 75 and 80 kg. For maize, on a 15mx60m plot, the situation is almost the same. The harvest doubled from 70kg to 150kg. The same applies to manioc. On a plot of land of the same size as the maize crop mentioned above, the harvest, which was between 100 kg and 150 kg, currently varies between 600 kg and 700 kg.*

*I use the produce to feed my family and sell the surplus on the market. So I'm able to cover my family's needs. In 2018, I considered a one-cow farmer to be a very rich man, but now I've bought 3 cows. My family and I are in good health.*

*I have to admit that everything I am is thanks to the use of biofertilisers and biopesticides in my fields. In any case, with the new techniques I've learnt, it's easy for me to have a net sum of 500,000 FBU per growing season. I'm very satisfied thanks to the support of Inades-Formation Burundi.*