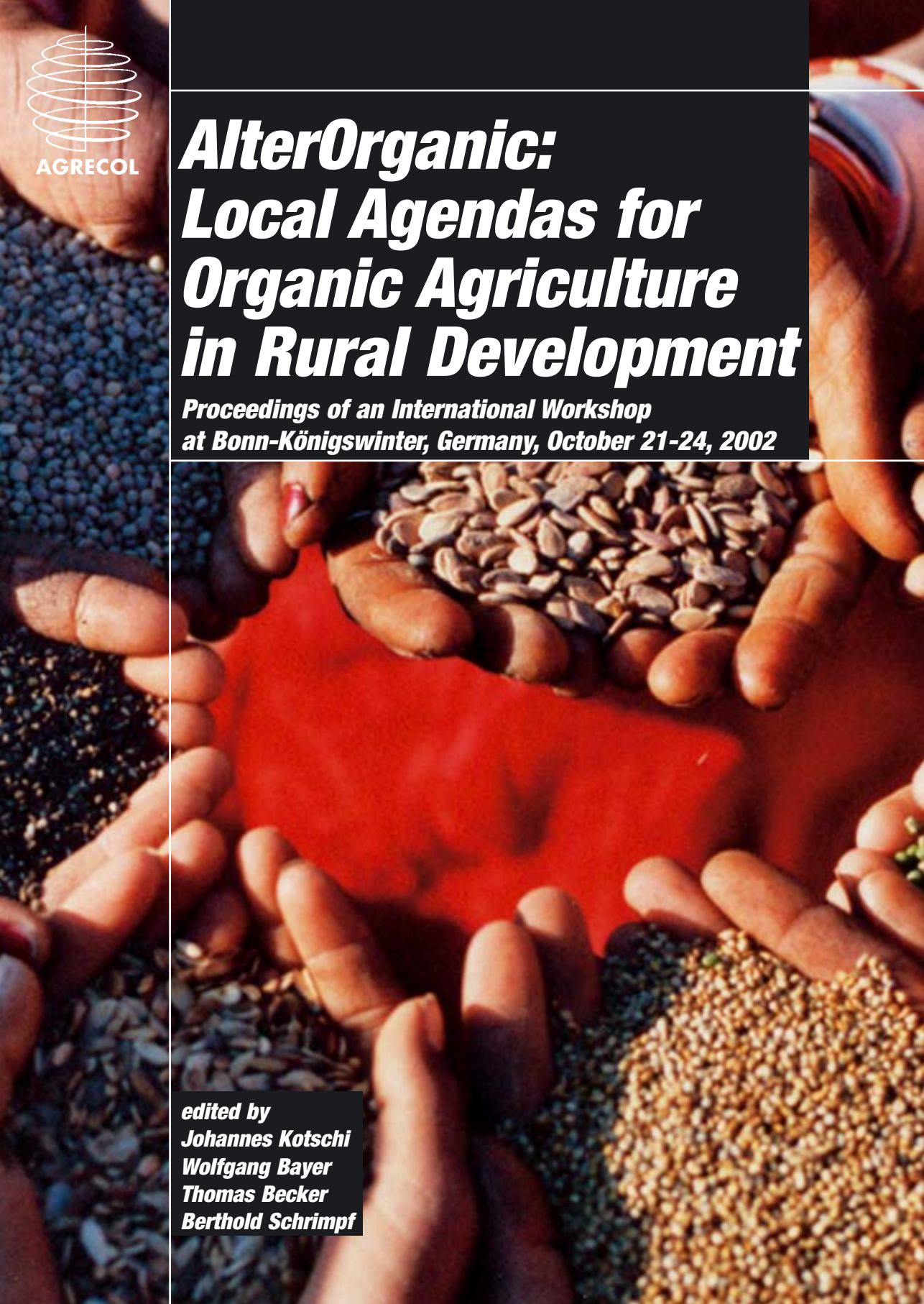
AGRECOL

# AlterOrganic: Local Agendas for Organic Agriculture in Rural Development

## Proceedings of an International Workshop at Bonn-Königswinter, Germany, October 21-24, 2002



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# *AlterOrganic: Local Agendas for Organic Agriculture in Rural Development*

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# Foreword

Farming that is deliberately based on ecological principles, with a view to benefiting from natural synergies and protecting the environment, has a history of about hundred years in Europe. This movement was a reaction to industrialisation, to concerted efforts to control and manipulate Nature, not only by means of breeding and cultivation - as farmers have done for thousands of years - but also by applying mineral fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides. These potentially poisonous inputs derived from non-renewable resources have been exerting a heavy burden on the environment in a one-sided approach to increasing agricultural production.

The first ecological farmers in Europe regarded agriculture not only as a way of producing food but also as a way of living in harmony with Nature. It was a philosophy of life. They were few in number and operated on a small scale, selling mainly to consumers close by - people who trusted and valued their way of thinking and farming. As environmental awareness grew in Europe, so did the market for ecologically produced food and - as a consequence - so did the distance between producers and customers. Certification of the products then became necessary. There has been a strong move in the last two decades to codify ecological agriculture in the form of "Organic Agriculture". On European markets, organically produced food can be sold for a premium price as compared with conventionally produced food. Organic farmers have also contributed to developing a model for environmentally friendly ways of producing food, and they and their supporters in civil society have contributed to developing policies for sustainable agricultural and rural development. Lively discussions continue about how ecologically sound the production and marketing (above all, the packaging and transport) of organic food really is. This reveals a healthy critical awareness within civil society and creates the pressure to innovate, to find new ways of making agriculture more ecological and sustainable

Producing and marketing organic food offers an opportunity for family farms to survive in the face of the growing consolidation of farms into larger industrial units with high levels of mechanisation - not only in Europe but also in other continents. The concepts behind ecologically-oriented agriculture were introduced into Development Cooperation more than 25 years ago. To some extent, this served to awaken interest in indigenous systems of low-external-input and sustainable agriculture. However, despite the fact that many more farmers in the South practise ecologically-oriented agriculture than in the North, the discussions on Organic Agriculture and the agenda for its research and development and related policymaking have continued to be dominated by issues emanating from the North.

Researchers and development agents who have been working closely with farmers in developing countries have realised already for a long time that there are many different systems of ecological agriculture being practised, in some cases, since centuries. These systems have grown out of and are dependent on the specific biological, economic and sociocultural conditions in each area, and they can differ from what is considered to be "ecologically sound" in the North. For example, the system of slash-and burn agriculture can be ecologically sound if the human population is low and cultivated plots are small. But many "Northern-grown" proponents of organic farming are aghast that fire is considered ecological.

Much of the discussion and many of the activities concerned with promoting organic farming in the South have been focused on marketing organic products in the North. Whereas the importance of organic coffee, tea, banana or whatever for consumers in the North should not be belittled, producing for overseas markets is only one of many reasons for promoting ecologically sound or Organic Agriculture in the South. It was with the aim of broadening the discussion on Organic Agriculture that the German non-governmental organisation AGRECOL e.V. organised a workshop on "AlterOrganic: Local Agendas for Organic Agriculture in Rural Development".

Four years earlier, AGRECOL e.V. had organised the German-language workshop "ZwischenErnte" and invited development-support agencies based in Germany to reflect on the role of ecological agriculture in Development Cooperation. The AlterOrganic workshop opened up the discussion to give an opportunity for contributions from concerned individuals and organisations actively engaged in promoting Organic Agriculture in other countries and continents. It was therefore held in English rather than German.

Already at the conference of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements) in Basel, Switzerland, in August 2000, Johannes Kotschi, then the Chair of AGRECOL e.V., stimulated discussion through his paper entitled "Poverty alleviation in the south - can Organic Agriculture help?". As a follow-up to this and in preparation for the AlterOrganic workshop, AGRECOL organised an e-mail consultation involving about 90 persons in the period from May to September 2002. Over 60 persons from 20 countries in five continents attended the workshop itself, held on 21-24 October 2002 in Bonn-Königswinter. This volume presents the papers contributed to this workshop and the main outcomes of the working groups and the plenary discussions, including the Bonn Declaration prepared by the participants.

The e-discussion group, strengthened by the face-to-face meeting in Bonn, is now a platform for further concept development, exchange of new ideas, inclusi-

on of new actors and - hopefully - organisation of regional meetings to develop alternative agendas for locally-appropriate Organic Agriculture. AlterOrganic has generated a great deal of momentum, carried by a large number of persons throughout the world, and it is now the challenge for all of us to maintain this momentum.

We would like to thank Johannes Kotschi for formulating the original concept for AlterOrganic and for his leadership in preparing the workshop. The members of the Steering Committee who were elected from within the e-discussion group - Mathai Koshy (India), Eusebius Mukhwana (Kenya), Saryug Prasad Yadav (Nepal) and Sang Mok Sohn (Korea) - worked together with Johannes Kotschi and the AGRECOL members Evelyn Mathias and Wolfgang Bayer in planning and organising the workshop. They also helped generate case studies and focus the issues of discussion. AGRECOL members Thomas Becker and Oliver Karkoschka coordinated the many workshop participants who helped moderate the various sessions, while Gudrun Soergel, the treasurer of AGRECOL, handled all the administrative work. The many people who prepared case studies and other presentations for the workshop are not mentioned here by name, as this would be repeating the list of contents of this book. We extend our thanks to all.

We thank also David Frost and Marcus Haffner for the language editing and layout, respectively, of this volume.

We are particularly grateful to the donor organisations listed on the last page that provided the funds that allowed us to bring people together in Bonn for this international workshop. In so doing, they have all made an important contribution to generating ideas and enthusiasm for seeking local alternatives to sustain rural livelihoods and the global population.

Ann Waters-Bayer, Chairperson
on behalf of the Board of AGRECOL.

# Bonn Declaration

With the objectives of revitalising agriculture towards sustainable food security and contributing to endogenous development in rural areas, we came together for the International Workshop

***"AlterOrganic - Local Agendas in Organic Agriculture for Rural Development"***

hosted by AGRECOL and held in Bonn Königswinter, Germany, from 21-24 October 2002. We comprise farmers and representatives of farmers' groups, NGOs, universities and research centres, organic certification agencies, and advisory groups, from more than 20 different countries[1] .

***Sharing the belief that***

- the Organic Agriculture approach is the most appropriate strategy for sustainable utilisation of natural resources for food production, and
- the world-wide movement of Organic Agriculture is dominated by the values, norms and interests of the North,

***We agree to:***

***(1)*** Increase our own efforts and invite all potential stakeholders at local level to embrace Organic Agriculture as the optimal proven model of agriculture which can contribute to sustainable rural development;

***(2)*** Take responsibility for the continued development of strong, participatory, self-reliant and locally adapted Organic Agriculture movements from the grassroots levels in the South;

***(3)*** Establish and maintain a close South-to-South collaboration between Asia, Africa and Latin America;

[1] These countries comprise: Albania, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cameroon, England, Germany, Ghana, India, Iran, Kenya, Rep. Korea, Lebanon, Nepal, Netherlands, Peru, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe.

***(4)*** Put efforts into developing national and regional organic standards in Southern countries and, based on this, we call for a restructuring of the International Basic Standards and Codex Alimentarius for organically produced food to create a more fair organic world;

***We call upon:***

***(5)*** Northern and Southern governments and other policy makers to acknowledge, through their acquaintance with the accumulated empirical evidence, the potential of the organic approach in enabling longterm food & nutritional security and ecologically sustainable agricultural production in the South;

***(6)*** Regulatory institutions to implement policies and regulations for the development of local, regional, national and international markets which would ensure that all commercial interest groups operate within such a development framework as above, one that would not be detrimental to the rural farming communities or the natural resources of the South;

***(7)*** Southern governments to focus efforts on the preservation and protection of their genetic resource base and to ensure that the rights of ownership of farmers and livestock holders, to their crops and livestock breeds are recognised and rewarded; and to document and protect the indigenous traditional knowledge and agrobiodiversity which forms the basis of Organic Agriculture in their respective nations;

***(8)*** Southern governments to acknowledge and support the farmers and NGOs involved in Organic Agriculture as pioneers of disseminating sustainable development concepts and practices, and also to be involved themselves in taking responsibility for the promotion of Organic Agriculture through public extension networks, research institutes, universities and formal education institutes, the media, and other channels;

***(9)*** Southern governments strongly to consider, in the process of establishing or improving their regulations for Organic Agriculture, the opinion of local Organic Agriculture organisations and to incorporate them into the decision making process at national level;

***(10)*** The International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM) to continue its effort to adapt the International Basic Standards based on the variety of agro-ecological and socio-economic specifications of different regions of the world.

24 October 2002, Bonn Königswinter

Workshop Participants
AGRECOL Working Group
Organic Agriculture in Rural Development (OARD)
www.agrecol.de

# I. Opening and Welcome Addresses

1. **Opening Address** *(Gabriele Stoll, AGRECOL)*
2. **Opening Address** *(Sang Mok Sohn, OARD Steering Committee)*
3. **Welcome Address** *(Klaus Budde, BMVEL)*
4. **Welcome Address** *(Anne Boor, IFOAM)*
5. **Welcome Address** *(Peter Rottach, Brot für die Welt)*

# 1. Opening Address (Gabriele Stoll, AGRECOL)

This we know
the earth does not belong to man
man belongs to earth.
All things are connected
like the blood which connects one family
Whatever befalls the earth
befalls the children of the earth.
Man did not weave the web of life
he is merely a strand in it.
Whatever he does to the web
he does to himself.

(Chief Seattle, 1854)

Chief Seattle said these wise words on the connectedness and relationship between men and the earth 150 years ago. Today, we find ourselves in a situation where the relation-ship between men and the earth has developed and turned to extremes which Chief Seattle may not have imagined. The Darwinist paradigm still dominates the relationships between men and nature, between social organisms, between the North and the South - even in the sphere of Organic Agriculture.

The earth does not belong to men, men belong to the earth. What does this tell us about Organic Agriculture, what does this tell us about the theme of our workshop? What does this tell us about our future vision of Organic Agriculture, about the way we create this future vision. What does the inherent relationship between the earth and men signify for the relationship between people, between social organisms, including the social organisms in the sphere of Organic Agriculture?

Organic Agriculture has grown out of a conscious effort by inspired people to create the best possible relationship between the earth and men. Since its beginning, the sphere surrounding Organic Agriculture has become considerably more complex. A major challenge today is certainly its entry into the political arena, its entry into an anonymous global market and the transformation of organic products into commodities.

The network of AGRECOL was initiated in the early nineteen-eighties by a group of dedicated development workers and researchers in tropical agriculture and rural

development. Out of this group, the AGRECOL Association, which is organising this workshop, has emerged. Today it comprises 60 professionals active in rural development.

AGRECOL has a twenty year history of promoting Organic Agriculture in an international context. Already in 1983, the Information and Networking Centre for Ecological Agriculture in the Tropics was established in Langenbruck, Switzerland. Shortly after, AGRECOL had its first contacts with Gunnar Videgard who was then secretary of IFOAM and in the following years, the relationship between AGRECOL and IFOAM was very close. From 1986 on, the AGRECOL coordinator, Mr. Mathias Zimmermann, was member of the IFOAM World Board in which he represented the interests of Developing Countries until 1990. For the IFOAM Conference in Santa Cruz in 1986, AGRECOL managed the first sponsorship programme for participants from Developing Countries. Also for the next two IFOAM Conferences, 1988 in Ouagadougou and in 1990 in Budapest, AGRECOL managed the sponsorship program. Today, the Information and Networking Centre in Switzerland no longer exists . It has been replaced by two regional NGOs in the South, by AGRECOL Afrique in Thiès, Senegal with Bassoum Souleyman, who is also attending this workshop, and AGRECOL Andes, a foundation in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Throughout these years, Organic Agriculture in the development context, has always been at the heart of the AGRECOL Association. In 1998, a national workshop "Zwischenernte: the Role of Ecological Farming in Development Cooperation" was also held in Bonn. With AlterOrganic as an international workshop, AGRECOL has taken up a particular challenge which Developing Countries are facing today: The increasingly international dimension of Organic Agriculture and - specifically - the impact of this international dimension on local development.

This workshop has been prepared by the AGRECOL working group on Organic Agriculture in Rural Development (OARD). The group has taken great care to identify key problem areas which Developing Countries are facing in the promotion of their organic sector as well as important experiences from Developing Countries as stimulants for focused and resultoriented discussions. They have prepared the ground for this workshop and they are now challenging us to use our insights and experiences for the formulation of more appropriate approaches and frameworks for Organic Agriculture in Developing Countries.

I would like to welcome all of you to AGRECOL´s international Workshop on "Local Agendas in Organic Agriculture". And, I wish you inspiring and creative discussions during this week.

## 2. Opening Address (Sang Mok Sohn, OARD Steering Committee)

Dear delegates from the Ministry of Agriculture, from Bread for the World and from IFOAM, distinguished guests, dear organic friends from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. On behalf of the Steering Committee and the AGRECOL Working Group Organic Agriculture in Rural Development I extend a warm welcome to all of you. Herewith I declare this International Workshop on Local Agendas in Organic Agriculture to be opened.

If I may, I shall briefly sketch the importance of this workshop. We, organic groups from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe, feel that, despite the great achievements of Organic Agriculture, development is unbalanced and there is room for reorientation. As we all know, Organic Agriculture in the South is dominated by the interests, values and norms of the North. Therefore there are many complaints even in the organic world. Many things are unfair and there is a need for change in the near future.

Ladies and Gentleman, this is the reason, why in early 2002, local NGOs in the South have been invited by AGRECOL to participate in the OARD Working Group. Around 80 member organizations from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe joined this Working Group. By E-mail dialogue, the so-called E-group exchanged experiences, analysed shortcomings, and tried to identify solutions. Today, we are meeting in Bonn-Königswinter and we are getting to know each other.

Everybody here, who has travelled a long journey to Germany is to contribute his /her ideas and his/her efforts to Local Agendas in Organic Agriculture for Rural Development. In this workshop, we will share ideas and - hopefully - initiate appropriate measures in order to overcome identified constraints.

Before I finish my opening address, I would like to thank first of all AGRECOL and especially Dr. Kotschi. We, all the members of OARD / AGRECOL, appreciate his initiative and effort. We also would like to thank the various donors. As you know, this workshop was only possible with the financial support of various organizations: The International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM), Church-Organizations (EED, Misereor, Fastenopfer), Organic Agriculture Associations in Germany (NATURLAND and DEMETER), the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and even the trade sector represented by the company Lebensbaum has contributed. Last but not least, I deeply thank all those who helped AFRECOL and the E-group to organize this workshop. Without their friendly support we would not be here.

May this event help us not only to present good results at the end, but also to deepen our working relationship and become friends for the mutual benefit of further cooperation. Thank you very much for your attention.

Organic Group gardens in Kwazulu-Natal, South-Africa.
(Foto: Berthold Schrimpf)

## 3. Welcoming address (Klaus Budde, BMVEL)

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am delighted to welcome you here today as participants in the International Workshop AlterOrganic on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture. As an introduction to the topic, I would like to give you a brief overview in the following, of the development of Organic Agriculture in Germany.

At the end of 2001, 3.2% of agricultural holdings farmed 3.7% of the utilized agricultural area in Germany according to the principles of Organic Farming. Hence, we could record a 15.8% growth in the area compared with the previous year. The number of processors and importers in the organic sector has increased, by over 20 %. Germany is by far the largest purchaser of organic products in the EU.

Organic Farming represents a particularly resource-conserving, ecologically sound type of management that meets animal welfare requirements. It is also characterized by a clear-cut body of regulations and transparent production processes. These are positive attributes and are beneficial for society as a whole, and they are increasingly demanded by consumers. Therefore, Organic Agriculture will be substantially expanded in Germany and we are using a range of instruments to promote such an expansion:

- more information and transparency for consumers,
- improved regulatory framework,
- better financial compensation for the ecological services delivered by farmers,

- better support for the processing and marketing of organic products,
- increased support for research and development,
- improved transfer of knowledge and technologies in practice.

Let me briefly illustrate some important measures to you.

### *The state Eco-label*

The label acts as a key signal of the agricultural re-orientation. Since the announcement of the Eco-label on 5 September 2001, over 600 businesses have declared the use of the label for over 12,000 products. This is quite an impressive result. The label has thus been successfully launched on the market. It has met with a highly positive response on the part of industry and consumers.

Three key requirements have been crucial for success. The label is simple, non-bureaucratic and open to all interested parties, including goods from third countries. In terms of facts this means that

- production, processing and inspection are based on the standard laid down in the EU Organic Farming Regulation. The label can be used to mark any food if it has been produced and monitored pursuant to the provisions of the EU Organic Farming Regulation and if at least 95% of the ingredients have been grown organically,
- its use is voluntary ,
- the label can be used in addition to existing logos or brands,
- time- and costintensive award procedures and charging for licences or user fees were dispensed with.

The label provides consumers with transparency and reliable guidance and helps them to recognize organic products at a glance. It represents a trustworthy source of information directing many consumers when they make their purchasing decisions. The producers benefit from the resultant demand pressure. They face enormous growth opportunities in the German and international organic markets which should be tapped into. The processing and trading sectors eventually are provided with an uncomplicated label that does not interfere with competition and that contributes to safe supply in sufficient quantity all year round.

### Reorientation of agricultural support

A new course has been set in structural support as well. Thus, the Federal Government/Länder Planning Committee for Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection (PLANAK) decided to reorient rural development support on 6 December 2001.The main elements of this reorientation are:

- the resumption of the promotion of investments into land-related stock farming respecting animal welfare requirements as part of an agricultural investment promotion programme.This is to lend support to those farmers distinguishing themselves through special services for animal welfare;
- specific support for investments in the Organic Farming sector;
- substantial increase in the premia for conversion to Organic Farming and maintenance of Organic Farming;
- improved support for the processing and marketing of organic and regionally produced goods.

### Organic Farming Act

The more Organic Farming is expanded, the greater are the requirements for the enforcement of legal rules.To this effect, the Organic Farming Act was passed.This Act is, in particular, to safeguard more uniform and efficient inspection of organic products.. For this purpose, the Act encompasses rules governing

- the implementation of the organic inspection system by private inspection bodies as well as their tasks and duties vis-à-vis the competent authorities,
- the pooling of executive functions at the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food,
- criminal and regulatory offences to protect consumers from the fraudulent use of indications referring to organic production methods in labelling and advertising.

### Federal Scheme for Organic Farming

To further improve the overall conditions for Organic Farming, a Federal Scheme for Organic Farming, with a funding of EUR 35 million, has been drawn up for 2002 and 2003.The overall objective of the scheme is to contribute to sustainable growth based on a well-balanced expansion of supply and demand.The scheme is based on the following principles:

- not to support production directly alone, but to invest in knowledge development;
- strengthening Organic Farming through comprehensive information for all stakeholders;
- making the entire organic value-added chain transparent;
- harnessing modern media and
- ensuring the sustainable, long-term impact of the measures.

Based on the identification of problems and the development potential, the scheme envisages support measures where growth can be boosted efficiently by closing gaps in support. Bearing this aim in mind, the Scheme incorporates various measures for all parts of the production chain: agricultural production, recording and processing, trade, marketing and consumers. Add to this the crosssectoral fields of technology development and transfer and research and development.

The scheme focuses on the one hand on training, educational and public information. It also promotes research, the development of new technologies and the practical implementation of the acquired insights.

Ladies and Gentlemen, a lot is happening in Organic Agriculture in Germany as well as in Europe. I am convinced that Organic Agriculture has great potential in the Southern countries as well. May this workshop help to advance Organic Agriculture in your countries. I wish you a lot of success, fruitful and constructive talks as well as a pleasant stay here in Königswinter.

Farmers of the Irula tribe drying the minor millets.
(Foto: Keystone)

## 4. Welcome Address (Anne Boor, IFOAM)

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends and colleagues. I am very glad that this workshop is taking place. My congratulations go to AGRECOL for selecting the subject "Local Agendas of Organic Agriculture in Rural Development". Organic Agriculture in the industrialized countries is growing by 25% annually, but a similar growth in Developing Countries is hampered a range of different factors. This is not the place to elaborate on constraints and shortcomings. However, there is ample evidence that the promotion of Organic Agri-culture in the South is extremely important and must become a top priority. For this reason, IFOAM welcomes the opportunity to be able to support this workshop through the I-GO Programme.

IFOAM, the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements, unites more than 700 organisations worldwide in the effort to promote Organic Agriculture

in its full diversity. Our goal is the adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the principles of Organic Agriculture. We try to achieve this through,

- the exchange of knowledge and expertise in Organic Agriculture among our members as well as information of the public.
- the representation of the organic movement in policy making fora.
- the development and revision of the international 'IFOAM Basic Standards of Organic Agriculture and Processing', and
- the guarantee of organic quality worldwide: the IFOAM Accreditation Programme ensures equivalency of certification programmes.

Our members are producers, processors and traders, environmental and consumer organizations, certification and inspection bodies. Further members are organizations active in research, extension and education. Most of our members are from the private or non-governmental sector, with only a few from governmental organizations.

About half of IFOAM members are from developing and CEE countries, where up to 90% of the population lives from agriculture and animal husbandry. We are convinced that Organic Agriculture has a key role to play in enabling sustainable rural development, by combating soil degradation and food insecurity and thus poverty.

It is for these reasons that IFOAM set up the I-GO program. Its goal is to strengthen Organic Agriculture mainly in Developing Countries. I-GO is funded by HIVOS and the Dutch Fund for Biodiversity, which is also managed by HIVOS.

In order to achieve its aim, I-GO is engaged in activities at the global, the regional and the national level. Our activities comprise six areas:

- the harmonisation of Organic Standards and Guarantee System at the international level, by still allowing appropriate regional variations.
- the development of social responsibility and Fair Trade within organic production.
- support for training and capacity building for the regional development of certification bodies and standards.
- lobbying for Organic Agriculture in Developing Countries.
- strengthening IFOAM's structure and capacity building.
- the local development of Organic Agriculture and marketing in Developing Countries.

The AlterOrganic workshop addresses at least three of the six subjects mentioned. Its importance cannot be over-emphasised. It may widen our perception, it may update or complement existing methods and conceptions and, it may contribute to the lobbying for Organic Agriculture in your countries. With this in mind, I wish you all the success necessary for the coming days.

Farmer is the Irula tribe carrying home a basket of harvest minor.
(Foto: Keystone)

## *5. Welcome Address (Peter Rottach, Brot für die Welt)*

I am addressing this conference on behalf of the Catholic and Protestant Churches in Germany. Both churches are supporting an environmentally friendly agricultural production through their development institutions like MISEREOR and Bread for the World. Our emphasis is on Sustainable Agriculture rather than on Organic Agriculture, because

- our goal is self-reliance in food for marginalized, resource-poor and food insecure people rather than the marketing of agricultural goods,
- we do not want to add more production constraints on already hampered farmers, and
- there is no need to convince resource-poor people to refrain from chemical inputs.

Globalisation and liberalisation of markets are likely to present new conditions to marginal farmers: Allow me to mention a few: high potential areas are benefiting to the detriment of disadvantaged regions, an increasing middle class in the cities represents a growing demand for high quality food (e.g. organic food) and, increasing global competition aggravates the difficulties of poor farmers to make a living from agriculture.

Looking at this trend, my question is: what can Organic Agriculture offer to resource poor, marginalized farmers? There seem to be a number of advantages compared to conventional agriculture.

- high labour intensity and less mechanisation offer additional employment opportunities,
- organic as an added value (expressed by premium prices) - makes transport more economic,
- the method is less dependent on external inputs,
- it balances low productivity with higher financial returns

At the same time, I see a number of disadvantages:

- the market is limited and there is a high level of competition,
- inspection/certification is costly, and
- a high level of education is required among farmers.

This comparison is by no means comprehensive. Nevertheless, it brings me to the conclusion that Organic Agriculture has a potential even for poor farmers in Developing Countries and could help to overcome some obstacles to sustainable food security in hunger-stricken rural areas. It may be that Organic Agriculture will not become "the mainstream" of agriculture, but it offers scope for economic improvements among wide sections of society.

In order fully to tap the potential of Organic Agriculture, Southern farmers should get easy access to the markets of Western, industrialised countries. So far, the EU regulation on organic food imports is not conducive at all to attract a growing number of farmers. The whole system of inspection and certification is far from being transparent and feasible.

So, there is a case for lobbying the European Union in Brussels. We as organic farmer associations and as development institutions should seek a stronger cooperation in order to achieve better results for our partners in the South. But there are also other ways to cooperate closely. Many of them will be discussed at this conference. I am looking forward to the results and to strengthened linkages in the follow-up process. I wish this conference a lot of success.

# II. Introduction

# Re-thinking Organic Agriculture in the South

(Johannes Kotschi)

Why AlterOrganic ? The catch-word of our workshop may suggest two things: Organic Agriculture should be altered or, alternatives to Organic Agriculture need to be found. Why is this an issue, at a time when Organic Agriculture is appreciated as a strategy beyond any doubt? Before answering this question, I would like to review briefly the strong points of Organic Agriculture.

### Arguments for Organic Agriculture

- optimising input - instead of maximizing output
- can Organic feed the world ?
- standards create consumer confidence
- standards generate innovation

Input/Output. There are several strong arguments in favour of Organic Agriculture. One is the basic principle of giving priority to the optimal use of inputs (including externalities) instead of the maximisation of outputs.This includes the concept of production in cycles and the use of renewable resources. OA clearly aims at sustainable use of natural resources (soil, biodiversity, water, nutrients and energy), and, as ample evidence suggests, it is highly successful in doing so.

Yield. But can Organic Farming generate adequate yields? Until now, almost no research has been conducted in the South which compares conventional versus organic. Accordingly, this question can only be answered on the basis of personal observation and experience. In general, Organic Farming is quite competitive. It is obvious that it cannot reach the same physical yields on high potential soils as conventional farming,

but, with decreasing soil fertility, Organic Farming is catching up. On marginal soils it often surmounts conventional yields. Comparing both methods economically - for instance net income and risk of production - Organic Farming is often superior to conventional agriculture, and the steadily deteriorating terms of trade for agriculture will strengthen its competitiveness. This applies in particular to poverty stricken smallholders. For most of these Organic Farming might be the better option, if appropriate know-how and market access became available[2].

Standards. A third aspect which has contributed to the success of Organic Farming are the rules which have to be respected. Unlike Sustainable Agriculture, Organic Farming must adhere to detailed standards on production and processing[3,4]. Compulsory standards create confidence in organic food among consumers. Furthermore, strict application of standards demands that new ways of managing agro-ecology have to be sought. This has made Organic Farming a generator of innovation in agriculture. The development of methods in biological pest control for European fruit growers is a good example, and many of the technologies developed so far have since become part of the agricultural mainstream.

These arguments give Organic Farming high credibility and are part of the success story. The growth rates in European market share within the past ten years are impressive[5].

### *Conflicting Objectives ?*

- North:
  Increase international market share
- South:
  Contribute to endogenous development and revitalise agriculture towards sustainable food security.

Objective. Organic Agriculture is not an end in itself. It is most of all a strategy which follows certain objectives. Nowadays it is often discussed in terms of market share, premium prices and import regulations. This reflects the objective of Northerners. Consumers, traders, certifiers from Europe, North America and Japan demand green tea from China, coffee from Mexico, or cotton from Tanzania, food or textiles produced organically for the North. They aim to increase the international organic market.

[2]Kotschi, J. (2001): Poverty alleviation and food security - can Organic Farming help? Entwicklung und Ländlicher Raum. 11-13. Frankfurt.
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[5]ITC, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (1999): Organic food and beverages: World supply and major European markets. Geneva.
[6] Van Elzakker, B. and A. Tulip (2000): Not aid but trade: export of organic products from Africa. In: The World Grows Organic. Proceedings 13th International IFOAM Scientific Conference. Basel. 567-570.

Needless to say that farmers in the South also wish to market agricultural produce and, if possible, to achieve premium export prices . But this is not possible in many cases, and next to marketing there are other motives as well, such as risk minimization, sustainable production, satisfying subsistence needs, etc. This applies in particular to smallholders. And, the overall objective from a Southern perspective is to contribute to endogenous development and to revitalise agriculture towards sustainable food security.

Looking at the two objectives, we have to ask: are they compatible and can a booming market in the North also propel agricultural development in the South[6] or are they rather conflicting? A number of constraints indicate the areas of conflict.

### *Constraints from a Southern perspective*

- focus on export
- only relevant to better-off farmers
- certification is very costly and inappropriate
- northern standards and procedures impair indigenous development

The extension of Organic Agriculture in Developing Countries is dominated by values, norms and interests of Northern countries. This is evidenced through a number of aspects.

The extension of Organic Agriculture in the South is stimulated by cash crops. They are premium priced and produced for an international market. Subsistence-oriented food production is often excluded from Organic Farming and sometimes the revenues from organic produce are even re-invested in pesticides for food crops[7]. This is supported by the EU regulation, which allows partial conversion, and many farms have a two-tier production system: organic for cash crops and conventional for subsistence production[8]. To grow the latter organically is considered too expensive. As a consequence, a comprehensive re-orientation of the farming system does not take place.

Only a few get access to the international market. It is an option for the upper strata of farming communities, for those with better education, with higher means of investment, with the wish to improve their already existing market production and with the readiness to develop or adopt new technologies[9]. There are hundreds of local initiatives, mainly smallholder, which strive for export production. But, as they are una-

[7]Rottach, P (1998): Biolandbau ist kein Modell für den Süden! Bioland 4/98: 10-11.
[8]Schmidt, H.P. and M. Haccius (1998): EU-Regulation "Organic Farming" - A legal and agro-ecological commentary on the EU´s Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2092/91. Weikersheim.
[9]Kotschi J (1998): Development of Organic Farming in Chinese Poverty Areas. Backstopping Mission Report. GTZ. Eschborn.

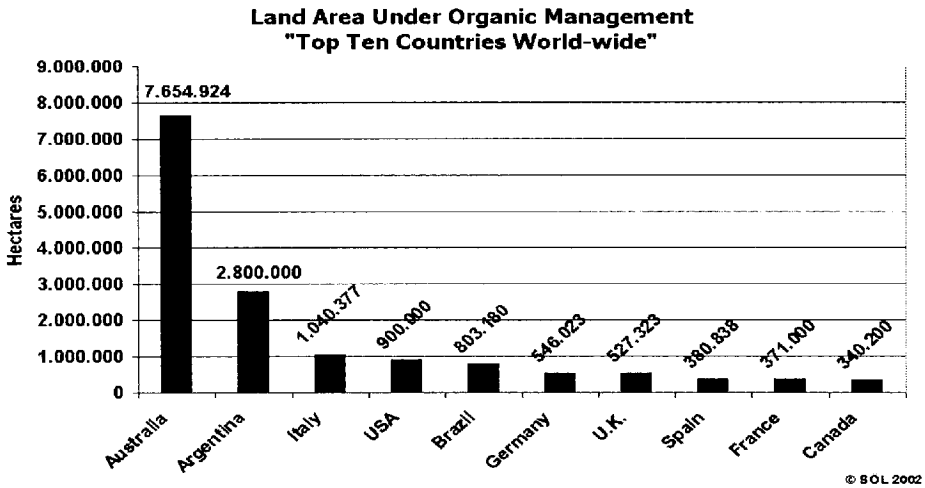
ble to provide sufficiently large quantities, to offer uniform quality or simply produce something, which is not in demand, they cannot be considered. They may have an urgent need for advisory support, but as they have no access to export there is, in most cases, no access to advisory support. The poorer strata may only profit from OF technologies which have become part of the mainstream, or work de facto organic, because conventional inputs are not available.

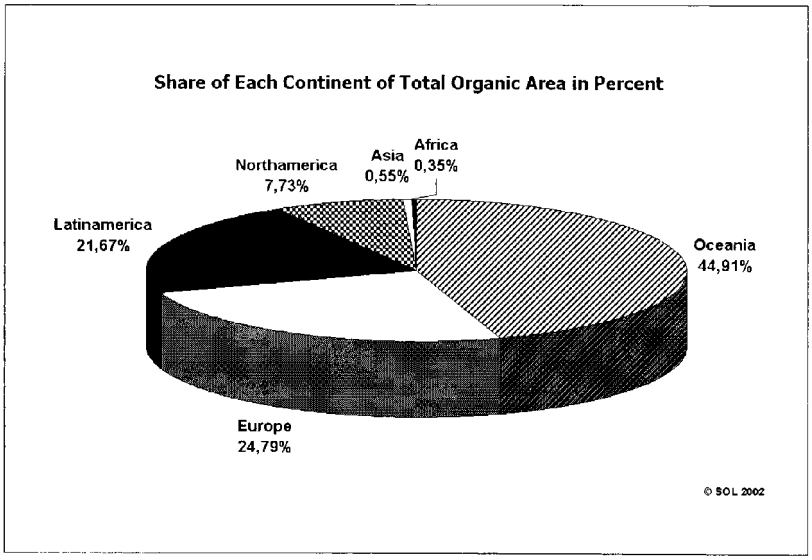
The costs of certification are high[10] and when all the fees for inspection and certification have been paid, quite often there is not much left from the premium margin. As prices are generally decreasing, this problem is aggravating.

Standards as well as methods and procedures of certification are often copied from the North. It is common practice, for instance, that the EU regulation on Organic Farming is adopted. Such laws and regulations from consumer countries impair the development of their own national standards. Independent concepts related to the specific ecological and socio-economic conditions of the respective region/country are thus ignored or not even developed[11]. The same applies to the transfer of technologies which, in many cases, are inappropriate and prevent full utilisation of the potential of participatory technology development.

In general, the needs and the potentials of farmers and farmer groups in the South differ significantly from Northern settings, and there is too little awareness about this difference. The enthusiasm about the increase in Organic Trade in the North has diverted attention from this problem, with the result that the potential of Organic Agriculture as an innovative force in rural development is under utilized.

***Organic Agriculture in Developing Countries is almost negligible***






Accordingly, and related to the global scale, the impact of Organic Agriculture in Developing Countries is almost negligible. The Asian and the African share of the total organic area world wide is 0.55% and 0.35% respectively[12]. And the 22% of Latin America as well as the 45% of Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) represent mainly large scale extensive animal husbandry. The case of Argentina is a typical example. Smallholders demanding support in ecological agricultural methods are barely considered in all four continents.

### *Objectives of this workshop*

- to raise awareness of the constraints
- to work out proposals for cooperation
- to plan concrete steps

With our workshop we intend to contribute to an endogenous development of Organic Agriculture and to increase its importance as a tool to revitalize agricultural development as a whole. Our specific objectives are: to raise awareness about the abo-

[10]Walaga, C (2000): Organic Agriculture Trade: State of the Art in Africa. In Quality and Com-munication for the Organic Market. Proceedings of the Sixth IFOAM Trade Conference. International Federation for Organic Agricultural Movements. Tholey-Theley
[11]Schulz B (1998): Auswirkungen der EU-Verordnung zum ökologischen Landbau auf die Entwicklung von Anbauverbänden in Lateinamerika. In: AGRECOL (1998): ZwischenErnte, die Rolle der ökologischen Landwirtschaft in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Bonn 6.-8. Oktober 1998. Tagungsband. Göttingen.
[12]SÖL (2002): Organic Agriculture Worldwide. Statistics and Perspectives. Stiftung Ökologie und Landbau. Bad Dürkheim.

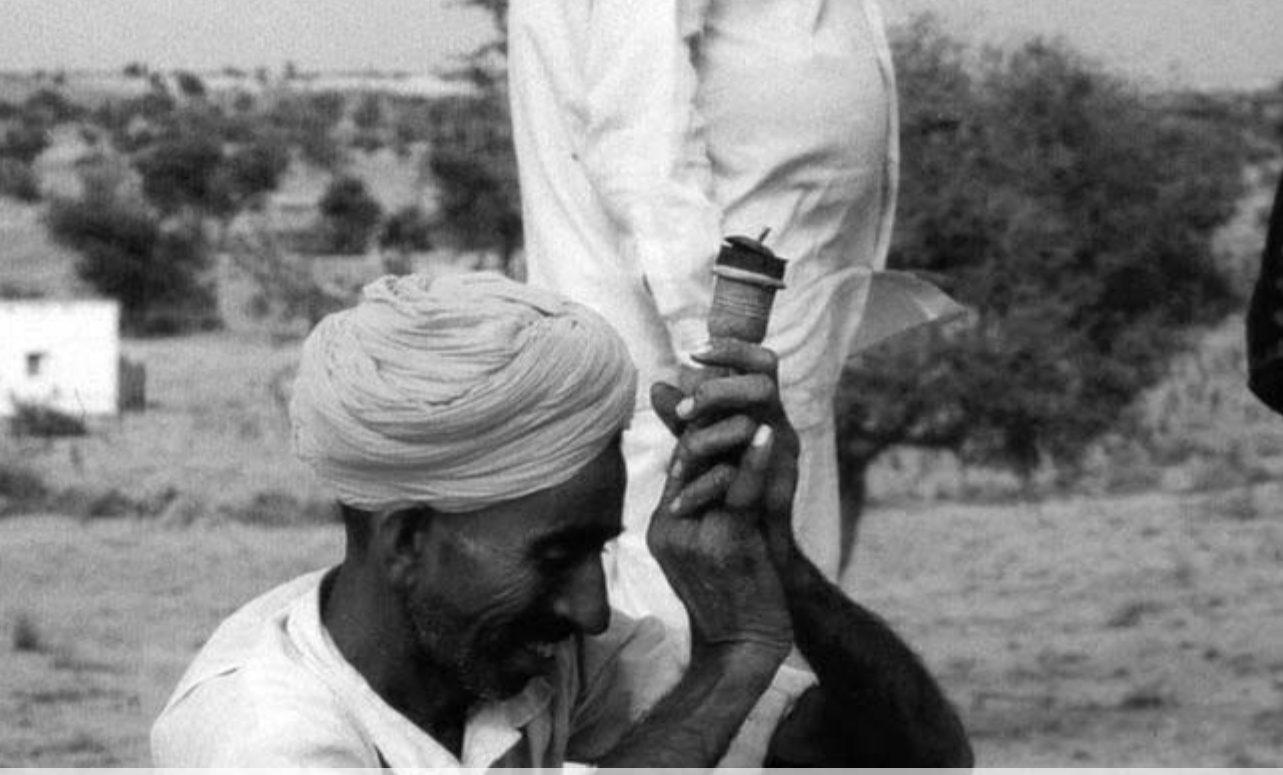
vementioned externally - imposed constraints, to work out proposals for a stronger role for Organic Farming in development cooperation, and to plan concrete steps to put these proposals into operation.

I believe that, in a way, this event is quite unique. For most conferences, seminars, and symposia on agricultural development in Germany, there is little representation by Southerners. This time it is different, the majority here (almost two thirds) is from the South. But it is not only representation that matters. Our group has planned this event together. Almost a year ago, local NGOs from all over the world were invited to participate, and an E-group with 80 professionals was established. Case-studies were elaborated and planning of this workshop has been done jointly. Members of the group from more than 20 different countries are meeting here in Bonn-Königswinter for a South-South dialogue. So far, we perceived each other as a name and an E-mail address. Now there is the chance to meet and get to know each other face to face.

This brings me to attitudes. Thorough problem analysis is important; but we must not confine ourselves to analysing and deploring problems and shortcomings. Let us be ingenious and let your fantasy flourish. Have visions on how to find solutions, produce ideas on how to continue with your work. Use the group to find a partner and to start a joint venture.

We are not having a Seminar, a symposium or a conference, where you can just listen to speakers and - maybe - pose a question. It will be a workshop, and there is ample space to listen, but it is you, who are the speakers, it is your knowledge, your experience and your ideas that count. This is a great chance, but also a big responsibility. My vision would be that this workshop is only a beginning of a fruitful cooperation between you and your organizations. Make AlterOrganic a success!

Harvesting Amaranthus in Vagapanai village in the Nilgiris, Tamil. (Foto: Keystone)



# *III. Technology Development and Advisory Services*

1. ***Keynote: Developing Technology in Organic Agriculture*** ***(Chesha Wettasinha)***

2. ***Keynote: Advisory Services in Organic Agriculture - Rather Food for Thought than State of the Art*** ***(Berthold Schrimpf)***

3. ***Case Study: Spreading the Good Word - Knowledge Development Strategy for Organic Farming*** ***(Bala Chandran, Ecofarm, Kerala/India)***

4. ***Report of the Working Groups***

# 1. Keynote: Developing Technology in Organic Agriculture *(Chesha Wettasinha)*

Organic Agriculture is not simply "agriculture without chemicals". It is much more than that. Organic Agriculture is an ecologically-sound, socially just, economically viable, and therefore sustainable form of agriculture. This means that Organic Agriculture strives to maintain the ecological balance in the farming system and utilise the resource base in a sustainable manner, whilst paying keen attention to socio-economic aspects of production. Nutrient recycling, optimal use of available resources, diversification, site specificity are important ecological aspects of Organic Agriculture. Socio-economic aspects such as food security, Fair Trade, capacity building etc. are no less important. As such, developing technology in Organic Agriculture needs to pay special attention to all these aspects.

Most participants in this workshop are probably well versed in Organic Agriculture. This is sometimes understood as prescribing ways and means of managing crops and livestock, e.g. by setting rules and certifying production processes and products. From our experience we have to conclude that it is an exception that preconceived and top down technology development really works. Farmers themselves have managed to develop techniques in cropping and livestock husbandry and traditional farming is by no means static. However, conditions for smallholders change rapidly and farmers often do not have the time, resources and knowledge to adapt quickly to the changing world. Here, I wish to draw your attention to developing technology with farmers, also referred to as participatory technology development (PTD). If we take a closer look at the phrase "developing technology with farmers" it becomes clear that the use of the verb expresses continuity. Technology is used in a much wider sense than just a farming technique or tool – it includes methods, systems, attitudes or even mental constructs. "With farmers" implies that farmers are joined by others who support them; certainly not that farmers are excluded from the activity. So we are talking about a participatory process in which farmers and outsiders are innovating, adapting, creating methods/tools/techniques/systems etc. for Organic Agriculture.

In this presentation I wish to examine the importance of developing technology with farmers, key aspects of this process and outline some important aspects of this approach. Many of the illustrations I share here are from my experiences in a development project that was operational from 1991-2000 in an agricultural settlement in Sri Lanka. Developing technology with farmers was a key element in the strategy for moving towards a more sustainable agriculture.

### Why develop technology with farmers?

For centuries, farmers have been at the forefront of technological development . Many varieties of crops and animals, cropping techniques, tools for farming and systems of farming used up to now are the result of tireless labour by innovative farmers and farming communities throughout the world. It is only in more recent times that farmers have somehow been overlooked and distanced in technology development, even though the greatest impact of these innovations are borne by farmers themselves. As agriculture has undergone more modernisation and industrialisation, outsiders in the form of research and development personnel in agricultural institutions throughout the world have taken on the role of developing technology. Unfortunately, in most cases, these outsiders have preferred to work in isolation and then pass on their findings to farmers in the form of recommendations. The role of farmers has, in the process, faded into obscurity.

Although these recommendations have attempted to remedy certain issues or problems, they certainly have not been blameless. The purely production focus has led to serious environmental consequences. The use of large quantities of external inputs has excluded many poor farmers and caused ecological imbalances in farming systems. Recommendations have not provided solutions to the site-specific situations of farmers. All in all, agriculture has become far from sustainable, causing environmental stress and jeopardising the livelihoods of millions of small farmers around the world.

Within this context, the need for developing technology with farmers gains more ground, supported by the following reasons:

- finding site-specific solutions,
- recognising and building on the knowledge and experiences of farmers,
- reviving and strengthening creativity, innovation and problem solving capacity,
- weaning farmers away from dependency and fostering selfesteem and confidence (that is very top down – I would say supporting farmers in their attempts to get away from dependencies, and to
- ensuring ownership of the technology (by whom?),
- ensuring that development efforts are sustained long-term (economically-viable, ecologically-sound, socially just, culturally appropriate, adaptable etc.).

### Key elements in the process of technology development with farmers

Several key elements can be identified in the developing technology with farmers:

- understanding the situation, including resources, problems, opportunities, etc. – a thorough understanding of the situation is indeed a key to success. Many different tools can be used to analyse the situation, including agro-ecological, socio-economic, historical and political aspects;
- looking for things to try – analysing the situation leads to the identification of issues and problems that need to be solved. Often this tends to be a long wish list, which then has to be prioritised according to criteria selected by the farmers themselves;
- experimentation (planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation) – once farmers decide what they want to try out, planning begins. Having a good plan most always leads to systematic implementation. What to monitor, when and how, is discussed at the onset of the experiment and the data so gathered is used for evaluation.
- sharing the results – farmers share their findings with other farmers, thereby ensuring the spread of successful technologies.

These elements form an iterative action-reflection-action process, which when internalised by farmers can be used in a wide range of situations. In fact, many of the farmers in the project in Sri Lanka considered the ability to apply this process in solving their problems as one of the most valuable aspects of learning.

### Organisational strengthening and institutional development within the farming community

There are many important aspects that need to be given attention if the PTD process is to be successful and sustained. From my experience in the project, I wish to put them into four large categories. There are certain overlaps between these categories, and not all of them may be relevant, but they do provide an overview.

Whilst farmers can certainly make progress on their own farms through PTD, there are many instances in which their chances of success are much greater as a collective. In fact, it is almost a necessity for small farmers to survive in today's world of open markets and free trade. When farmers are organised they have more bargaining power, better possibilities to access services, develop self-help capacities and are, in general, stronger. As such, PTD goes hand in hand with organisational development and institutional strengthening, and can be done in many ways:

- supporting existing forms or creating new forms of organisation: can range from a variety of small groups to associations, federations etc. They can be set for up for

purposes such as marketing, labour exchange, and water management or have a multifunctional character.

- building linkages with support services – having links with external agents such as credit institutions, marketing bodies, veterinary services is vital for farmers to carry out their agricultural activities. This is often easier (and also cheaper) if farmers are able to access these services collectively.
- building local capacity to sustain the process – farmers need knowledge and skills, and the right attitude, to be able to manage their organisations, build linkages, lobby for services etc. Leadership, management, financial administration, advocacy, conflict resolution, etc. are essential in this context. Based on interest, availability, talents, etc. different people can be trained to take up different tasks. (e.g., we worked with resource farmers, farmer extensionists and village-level facilitators. Resource farmers were usually farmers who were strong in a given technical area (livestock, nursery management etc.) and were willing to share this knowledge with other farmers. Farmer extensionists were those willing to promote the PTD approach with others. Village-level facilitators on the other hand were willing to spend time in organising and supporting village-level institution building.)

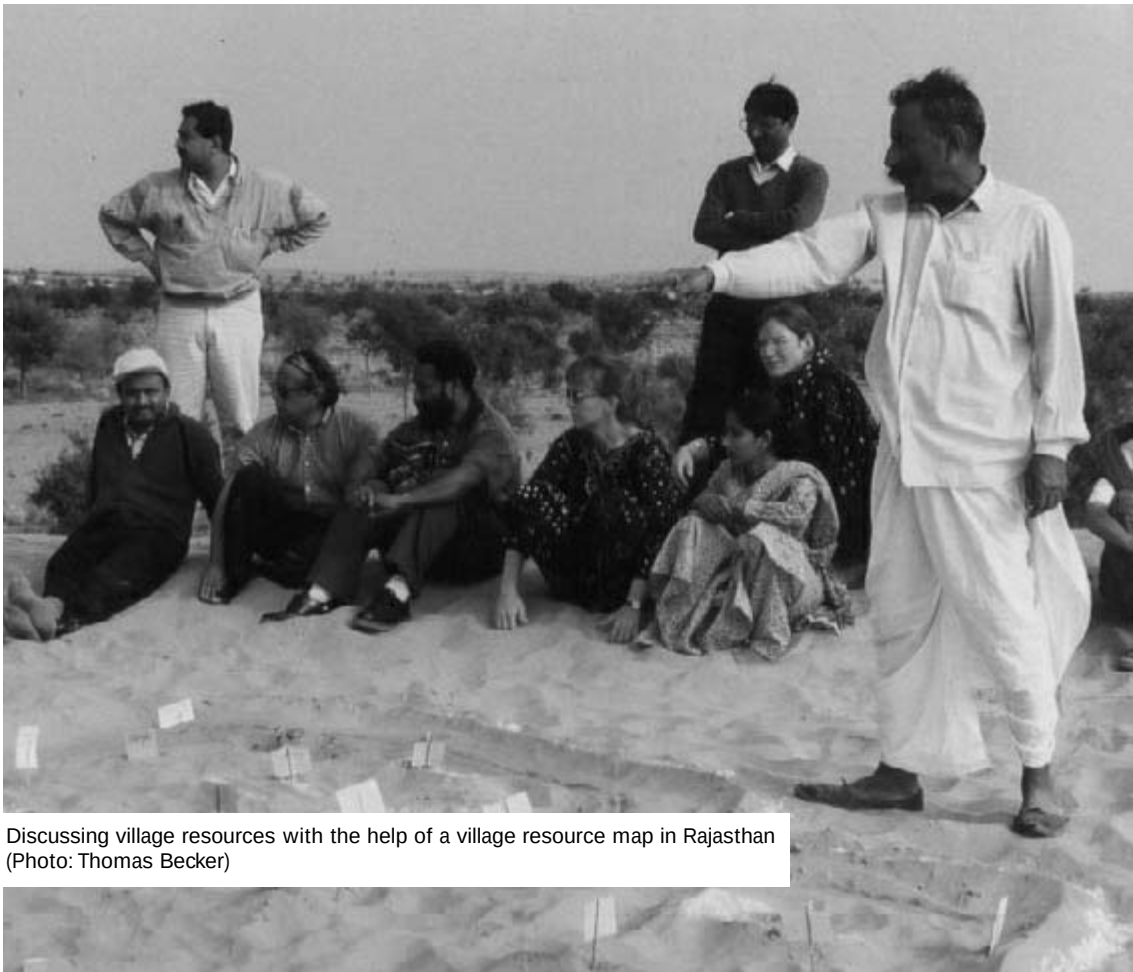
### *Building the capacity of field staff (knowledge, skills and attitudes)*

External agents (agricultural extensionists, development workers, field researchers) who are supposed to work together with farmers in developing technology also require special capacities. Many experiences show that this is a formidable task, and one that calls for a change of attitude among such external agents, which certainly cannot be brought about by a few training courses. Instead, it needs a focused and consistent process of capacity building, which demands considerable time, energy, patience and creativity.

- training: based on training needs assessments, training programmes are designed and conducted for field-based staff. Often, these are fine-tuned to meet the requirements of the specific situation. In the project we had five basic courses that were given to field extensionists: PRA, PTD, farm planning for sustainable farming, community mobilisation and organisational development. Apart from classroom sessions, each training course had a strong focus on practice, which stimulated trainees to gain some hands on experience immediately. At the end of each course, the trainees developed field assignments, which were then implemented in their day-today work.
- backstopping: Trainees are often not confident in trying out what they learn, and often come up against obstacles that they find difficult to surmount. Backstopping is intended as a sort of post-training coaching to build up confidence among trainees in applying newly gained skills in their specific work situations. It also provides opportunities for mutual learning among trainees. This can be done in a

variety of ways, individually or as a group, and has to be developed together with the trainees.

- training of trainers: any organisation involved in field-level research and extension activities needs to be able to train its staff in PTD on an ongoing basis. If in the beginning training capacity is hired in, this has to be replaced by the training of in-house trainers. It is important to identify potential trainers and provide them with training of trainers' courses and support them to become fully-fledged trainers.
- development of appropriate training material: alongside the training of trainers, it is also essential to invest in the development of appropriate training material in the local language(s). Such training material should carry examples, cases, illustrations, games, etc. that the trainees can relate to easily.
- managing field staff involved in PTD: field staff involved in developing technology with farmers move away from being teachers and begin learning together with farmers. This means that they take on a different way of interacting with farmers, and a different way of working than before. If PTD is to be continued field staff need to be supported by their superiors/ managers. For instance they should be allowed more flexibility in organising their work, their work should be monitored differently, etc. Thus managers too need to be supported in changing their way of managing field staff.



Discussing village resources with the help of a village resource map in Rajasthan (Photo: Thomas Becker)

### Documentation and sharing

Documentation and sharing play a key role in strengthening and furthering PTD. It can be at different levels and for different audiences. Documentation can take various forms: case studies, farm maps, posters, photographs, drawings and cartoons, video recordings, songs, etc. Sharing can be done in various settings: during farm visits, group meetings, village gatherings, workshops or seminars, conferences, etc. Documentation and sharing leads to:

- creating a base of local information: systematic documentation of the experiments being carried out by farmers leads to the creation of a local information base. Such a database can be very useful for farmers as a source of reference. It can also be used for sharing the experiences and knowledge with others.
- impacting a wider audience: once information is documented, then it can definitely be brought to a wider audience. Useful technologies can be shared with other farmers. The information can be used to stir the interest of other stakeholders and create awareness among field staff of other organisations, and those in different locations.
- bringing the message to higher levels, particularly policy makers: if a PTD approach is to be sustained, it is often necessary that those involved in policy making recognise and accept it. Succinct documentation shared at relevant events can indeed play a vital role in embedding PTD into policy.

### Networking and advocacy

Networking is intrinsic to PTD and is essential for the exchange of information among larger groups of stakeholders. Networks can be as varied as those who form them and can cut across many different layers of stakeholders, depending on what they set out to achieve. Networking can be:

- for mutual learning through sharing of experiences: a network can be a very appropriate forum for mutual learning. It could have a narrow focus, e.g. a network of poultry farmers, or a broader basis, e.g. a network of Organic Agriculture practitioners. In each of these networks, people share and learn from each other in an informal way.
- for sharing resources with like-minded organisations: networks bring together like-minded people and organisations which have their own resources which could then be shared with a wider audience. A trainer from one organisation could help out in another and vice versa. In this way a network can help to make the best out of scarce resources.

- for bringing more actors into the discussion: networks have the capacity to start small and grow by getting others involved. For instance, the PTD network in Sri Lanka started with 3 field-based projects involved in sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. Later more organisations joined, both governmental and local and international NGOs, and this extended the PTD approach to a variety of actors like researchers, trainers and policy makers.
- for building stronger alliances, particularly for policy advocacy: networking helps to build up strong alliances and pressure groups which can lobby for PTD, especially in the policy arena.
- for scaling up: consistent networking and policy advocacy creates conducive conditions for scaling up PTD. We experienced this in our work in Sri Lanka. The government agency that was the counterpart to the project began to pay more attention to the aspect of technology development by farmers and included PTD into its agricultural extension policy, thus allowing extensionists to follow a PTD approach in their day-to-day work with farmers.

### *Conclusion*

Neither top-down preconceived solutions nor traditional farming are the way toward organic and sustainable agriculture. Technology development in Organic Agriculture has to be determined and carried out by farmers, with assistance from external agents and through a participatory approach. This alone will offer a chance to combine traditional and external knowledge which will lead to innovations that benefit the farmers, that are simple to undertake and are adapted to their physical, social, economic and cultural conditions. However such an interaction would depend on external acceptance of the knowledge of farmers and farmers trusting in the knowledge and skills of external agents.

Raking hay on an ecological farm in Zimbabwe. (Photo: René Fischer)

# 2. Keynote: Advisory Services in Organic Agriculture – Rather Food for Thought than State of the Art

(Berthold Schrimpf)

During the past 20 years, the "official" advisory services in Developing Countries have undergone radical changes in paradigm, approach and methodology (T&V, FSR; R&D, various participatory approaches, micro finance, micro enterprise, privatisation concepts, etc.). This concerns governmental as well as para-statal institutions, no matter whether they are closely linked to research or operating independently from technology development. But there is one thing, which has hardly been taken up by them: This is Organic Agriculture. What is the reason for this? Is the subject too far away from the knowledge base of professionals, are there conflicting interests with the commercial and governmental sector in agriculture? Allow me just to put the question, without answering it.

### Stakeholders supporting advisory work

Alternatively to this, there are three groups of stakeholders supporting advisory work in Organic Agriculture: Non Governmental Organisations, farmer groups and Organic Trade:

- NGOs are increasingly confronted with requests to support Organic Agriculture and they can respond favourably to those requests because: a) their donors abroad may favour Sustainable and Organic Agriculture and are willing to make funds available, b) they have access to international expertise in OA, which often cannot be found in the region or the country itself.

- farmers in urgent need for advice are organising themselves. They practice the Farmer-to-Farmer approach. Some have formed large co-operatives and employed advisory coordinators. There is an increasing tendency towards Organic Agriculture that originates from sustainable or ecologically oriented agriculture that focuses on improving local livelihood systems. This type of advisory service is mainly to be found in Latin-America.

- international traders, who – being in need of products - take the initiative. In order to secure a contract-based production, they quite often support farming communities by pre-financing advice in production (and also certification and marketing).

There is Organic Trade and there is Fair & Organic Trade. The latter is aiming at fairer producer prices and tries to support the poorer strata of farmers (e.g. in Latin America, organic coffee growers at present receive 20 % premium from the Organic Trade sector and 100 % premium from Fair Trade).

### *Rationale and focus on advisory work*

The three players mentioned above have a different rationale; accordingly, they have a different focus in their advisory work. The following features may explain the main differences.

The systems perspective: The primary aim of farmer groups as well as NGOs is to assist in improving the living conditions of single households as well as the community as a whole. Therefore, they focus on entire farm and household systems and on how they can contribute to the rural community as a whole. Contrary to this, the Organic Trade sector, driven by an increasing demand for organic produce, is focusing mostly on single farm products and concentrates on improving production systems.

The technology approach: NGOs and farmer groups use participatory technology development. The farmer-to-farmer approach initiated and managed by farmers guarantees ownership to a high degree and appropriateness in advisory processes. NGO driven advisory services aim to be participatory, but do not always succeed. Organic Trade is often confined to transfer of technology. The technologies applied are primarily there to satisfy existing standards, not to find optimal, situation specific solutions. Advisors commissioned by Organic Trade, are often completely new to the region, lack awareness and know how on PTD and do not have the time for such processes. Organic Trade has to seek quick results.

The market orientation: The trade sector and to some extent also NGOs are export oriented. Their advice is for the production of premium priced cash crops for an international market. With both, there are only very few examples where organic production for regional or local production was envisaged. The focus of many farmer groups, especially in Latin America, has been to address local and regional markets in the first place. With export and premium prices becoming more and more an issue, donor-NGOs have stepped in to support farmer groups and this development has stimulated an intensive debate among the stakeholders about which route to follow.

The market orientation has consequences for the social strata of the target group: primarily those farmers who are advised are those who produce internationally marketable crops. This implies: high and homogeneous quality and sufficient quantity. This excludes per definition the "poorest of the poor", the more subsistence oriented hou-

seholds. For this reason all advisors are tempted to work mainly with the upper strata: the larger and wealthier farms and such a trend may be strongest with the trade related advisory services.

The risk component is another important aspect: NGOs and also, to a smaller extent, farmer groups, are normally sponsored by national and foreign donors. They can give advisory services for free and there is no immediate need to market organic produce. Trade related advice is pre-financed from the expected crop which is to be sold in the future.

In summarising, we can find a diverse landscape of advisory services in Organic Agriculture.

### *Achievements of the present advisory systems*

Now, which are the achievements so far? Advisory work has had a very positive impact in developing organic agricultural systems in various cultural, socio-economic and ecological settings:

- the number of producers / producer groups and area under organic production has increased considerably;
- new technologies now exist that have been able to reduce pesticide input dramatically. It has been proven that important export crops (e.g. cotton, coffee, vegetables) can be grown with alternative pest management and without chemical plant protection;
- increased biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources (soil and water) is demonstrated by many examples;
- there is ample evidence that OA has achieved an increase in farm productivity, income and a more balanced diet and thus contributes actively to food security;
- there is a significant build-up of OA-know-how in Developing Countries.

All three pathways of giving advisory support have their merits in this development. At the same time, it has to be stated that all these success stories are on a very small scale and there seems to be little perspective for scaling up. This brings us to the weaknesses of advisory services.

### Weaknesses of the present advisory systems

Despite all these achievements, we have to face up to the fact that so far, OA as a driving force for rural development is almost negligible and, advisory work has not succeed in scaling-up beyond a niche market for some better off farmers. What are the constraints and weaknesses?

There are, first of all, the advisors' arguments in favour of Organic Agriculture. It is common practice to convince farmers with the premium prices argument. This, however is a fallacious argument: only a small group of wealthy farm-families may benefit from it and with a very uncertain perspective. Experience from European markets suggests a drastic decrease in premium prices in Developing Countries in the near future. There are many more arguments for Organic Agriculture, which for many of the rural community may be much more important:

- the use of locally available resources, a reduced dependency on external inputs and lower production costs,
- sustainable use and improvement of the resource base (soil, water, biodiversity),
- increased diversity of farming systems (crop / livestock integration, crop rotation, inter-cropping, etc.) provides a high degree of risk reduction,
- improved nutrition and less exposure to intoxication of human beings,
- recognition of traditional farming knowledge in combination with new technologies,
- production for a local market, which is more predictable and steerable by the producer.

If such arguments would be given higher importance, a much wider range of farming communities could come on board. It is also worth mentioning that OA in the North developed over a period of more than 40 years without the driving force of premium prices.

The one-sidedness of arguments favouring OA has implications for the extension messages. The premium price argument is linked to a few crops for export, to Northern concepts of Organic Agriculture, including their standards and certification systems. Consequently, little consideration is given to many important aspects which could improve the living conditions in rural areas considerably. For example:

The perception of farming activities in a holistic manner is neglected. Approaches which enable farmers to convert their total farm to organic would allow much more for synergy effects, but they are rarely found. Instead, the production of a single export crop is promoted, whereas the rest of the farming system stays under a conventional regime. It may even happen that pesticides are bought from organic sales to meet the problems in subsistence production.

Ecological concerns are often excluded. For instance soil erosion is prevalent on many organic tea farms. In doing so, OA principles are not only neglected but significantly violated. The development of local and regional markets is slowly becoming an issue but so far has gained little attention. Such markets could reduce the producers' dependency on a single purchaser.

Another aspect is the methodology of advisory work which often lies behind the present state of the art. In most cases, advisors consider themselves to be the expert. They have the answer in their brain, and the ready-made technology simply has to be extended. Technology Transfer should not be simply condemned. Undoubtedly it has had a favourable impact. But this impact is overestimated and gives little consideration to the prevailing local situation (e.g. indigenous knowledge, value systems, traditions and beliefs, etc.). Participatory learning and action, as a general principle in which external technologies are to be integrated, is still a foreign attitude to many advisors.

In talking about extension methods, the model farm approach needs special mentioning. It is still favoured by many as an essential extension tool to promote OA – despite a long list of highly expensive failures. I believe this tool of advisory work is bound to fail. The model farms are never real, but represent an artificial situation. Technicians managing the farm may be employed and paid, resource allocation (availability of land, access to water) may not be representative, etc. etc.
Another weakness is the conflicting mandates of advisors. Advisory work in its pure sense should always give first priority to the interest of the client. Advisors commissioned by a trader face conflicting interests when the interests of the farmers do not coincide with those of the trader.

This brings us to the qualification of advisors. The number of resource persons in situ and their knowledge base is growing rapidly. Nevertheless, many of those with a formal education in agriculture are exposed to serious constraints in becoming a fully fledged advisor in OA. The educational system has made them specialists with little ability to go beyond their own discipline. For them, interdisciplinary thinking is an asset very difficult to acquire. Also, they may have brilliant scientific knowledge but little experience in practical farming. This however is a pre-condition for understanding a systems-approach such as OA.

Last but not least, a major weakness of OA advisory work is the low level of funding it has been able to secure. NGOs alone are not the answer for scaling up. Most of them are dependent on donor funding from the North and have a rather limited area of operation. On the other side there are traditional public extension services promoting high input and increasingly GMOs - such a strategy is hardly compatible with the promotion of OA under one roof. Experience from many countries suggests that Organic Agriculture is spreading faster in areas where they are not present.

### Conclusions

First of all, there is a high demand for Organic Agriculture among farmer groups and there is an even higher potential to increase this demand. This trend as such is very encouraging.

In reviewing all my previous statements, I can see two main conclusions, which lead to concrete action: We need a drastic increase in human resources development and we need increased funding for advisory services in Organic Agriculture.

Human resources development. It is people that matter. Attitudes, arguments, extension messages, they are transported by advisors, may they be farmers, rural development field staff or scientists. Generally, more OA advisors need to be equipped with comprehensive knowledge in OA and in the skills of participatory approaches. They have to be able to start their work with farmers and communities from where the people are at and to facilitate local processes based on peoples' knowledge and culture. Besides it is important for organic advisors to:

- have sound knowledge of agro-ecology and its implication for the locality,
- know principles of marketing (locally and international),
- know principles and procedures of national and international inspection and certification,
- be able to carry out sound farm planning, not only in terms of crop rotation, animal husbandry etc. for the whole farming organism but also in financial terms,
- have practical farming experience
- be able to acquire new knowledge with little effort (this will increasingly be done through the Internet).

Organic farmer in Kwazulu-Natal showing her innovations to her agricultural advisor, South-Africa.
(Foto: Berthold Schrimpf)

As it stands, OA advisors needed are more like Jack- Of- All- Trades in a very positive meaning. Being able to work with people in a holistic and participative manner is of paramount importance, while having specialist knowledge in some of the a.m. fields is desirable and sometimes even required. It seems obvious that there is no, or only very little space in Organic Farming extension for specialists or experts with a narrow field of expertise. Obviously, the requirements for OA advisors are quite demanding. At the same time, if they took farmers really for what they are: professionals in their situation and their respective micro-environment, this would lessen the burden of advisors and make their work more effective.

Procurement of funds. Organic Agriculture is not only an economic activity. It should have an equally important focus on natural resource management and on food security. Both are public concerns. Consequently, the extension of OA is a public task and advisory services have to be publicly subsidised. However, at a time when public funding for agricultural advisory services is getting scarcer and scarcer a lot of innovate thinking is required to find new ways for financing advisory services in OA. For me it is obvious that there is not the only or one solution, but a patchwork which is needed. Funds may be, or even have to be, multilateral and public as well as private (by trade or through fees from farmers themselves). Advisory services may be run by farmer groups and farmer co-operatives, public advisory service providers, service mandate systems or entirely commercial. However, despite the fact that there is no »ideal« advisory approach for OA that suits each locality and every situation, in my opinion the farmer-to-farmer system, being hands-on, multidisciplinary, based on mutual trust and cost effective seems to be the most promising one to scale up OA.

### *Main questions for our workshop*

There are many questions waiting for an answer:

(1) How should public funds be made available for OA advisory work?
(2) Should public funds be given to advisory services, or to the farmers directly who in turn can buy in the needed advisory work?
(3) What are the pros and cons of financial participation of OA advisory users (increased accountability?)
(4) Can round tables provide more site (regional) specific answers?
(5) What is the potential for traditional public extension services to shift from supporting high input and GMOs to supporting the scaling up of organic production on a larger scale? Are there other agencies that could lead this development in a sustainable manner?

(6) What are the necessary steps to obtain the many organic advisors needed for upscaling; who are development practitioners at home with participatory approaches, come from a background of interdisciplinary thinking with a broad understanding of OA, have a lot of practical farming experience and have good personal communication as well as good computer skills, etc.?
(7) What local, regional, national and international information sources (and worknets) should be used or even be established, by whom and in which way to support OA advisory in a scaling up process?

Let us try to answer at least part of them during the workshop. Thank you very much for your attention.

## 3. Case Study: Spreading the Good Word - Knowledge Development Strategy for Organic Farming *(Bala Chandran, Ecofarm, Kerala/India)*

Located in Southwest India, Kerala is a narrow coastal strip bounded on the northeast by Karnataka , by Tamil Nadu on the east and by the Arabian Sea on the west. The state is about 580 km long and 130 km wide at the widest point. Temperature ranges from a minimum of 19-26oC to a maximum of 27-37oC. Rainfall ranges from 1943mm–3667mm. Though one of the smallest states in India with a geographical area of 38863 km2 (1.18% of the Indian Union), Kerala has a diverse physiography: a range of altitudes from sea level and below to 2690 m ASL. It is divided into three distinct natural zones: lowlands, midlands and the highlands. These form parallel belts running across the length of the state from North to South. The lowlands are the low-lying coastal belt on the west, densely populated (1385 p/. km2), where rice and coconut are the main crops. The highlands consist of the Western Ghats mountain range which form the eastern part of the State. Rubber, Spices, Coffee and Tea are the major crops in the highlands. The midlands, a varied terrain of small valleys and hills in between has a wide variety of crops including rice, tapioca, banana, plantain, coca, clove, nutmeg, ginger, pepper, areca nut, cashew, coconut and rubber, etc.

In spite of its relatively small size and high density of population, Kerala accounts for several important agricultural commodities: Pepper (95% of India's production) Rubber (92%), Cashew (85%), Cardamom (70%), Ginger (60%) and Coconut (43%).

Other than plantations and paddy fields, rural Kerala abounds with homestead farms that have an astonishing variety of crops. There is a predominance of perennial tree crops, very small operational holdings (average size 0.36 ha.), and mainly rainfed farming .These are the particular features of Kerala's agriculture.

### *Description of the Problem*

Despite a tradition of eco-friendly agriculture, the advent of the Green Revolution in Kerala in the late 1950s brought in high-yielding hybrids and modern farming. This led to a loss of crop diversity and an increase in pest infestations, followed by a massive rise in the use of chemical fertilisers. Farming had to rely totally on external inputs. Some of the major problems faced by agriculture in Kerala are:

- decreasing share of earnings from agriculture
- diminishing importance of agriculture as a means of livelihood
- shift from short term annual crops to long term cash crops and tree crops which have a lower potential for employment
- decrease in the area of cultivable land
- shortage of farm workers
- fragmentation of land
- pollution due to chemical pesticides and fertilisers, etc

In this bleak scenario, the farming community in Kerala would hesitate to shift from ex-isting practices. The gap of 30 - 40 years has created a hiatus in the knowledge of traditional agricultural practices that were thoroughly organic. In addition to the loss of native breeds, other resources such as green manure or plentiful water that were available in the past have become rare or non-existent. Extension services provided by the agricultural department and the research development of the agricultural universities are inadequate and do not generally encourage Organic Agriculture. No major research has been done on Organic Agriculture in Kerala, and until very recent times, it was not considered as an alternative to modern agriculture. Attempts to document indigenous traditional knowledge on agriculture have been scant. The younger generation of farmers, though willing to take up organic Farming, is unable to get sufficient guidance.

### *Potentials*

In 1998, ECOFARM undertook the first ever comprehensive study of Organic Agriculture in Kerala. The initial survey brought out interesting results. Organic farmers, though low in numbers, were widely spread across the state. A few localised

associations and movements were vigorous in the promotion of Organic/Natural/Ecological Agriculture. There were small pockets where traditional agriculture prevailed and the skills and techniques could be documented. Though several indigenous breeds had become extinct, a few could be nurtured back. The educated young farmers were open to new ideas and many had evolved farming ethics of their own. Organic Farming existed in three distinct categories viz., a) traditional farming; above 20 years b) fully organic; above 5 years and c) transitional; 1- 5 years. Site/agro-climatic zone specific, farmer-associated research, combined with specific Organic Farming knowledge input from external agencies could be developed at several organic farms. Most of the farmers in the study were eager to share their knowledge and experience with others. The initiatives such as Integrated Pest/Nutrient Management (IPM/INM) by the governmental agencies, advocated a via media approach of reduced chemical inputs. Instances of the ill effects of pesticide/fertiliser pollution were becoming too numerous to be ignored. The study by ECO-FARM evoked interest in the research community and the first doctoral research in Organic Agriculture has been taken up in the Kerala Agriculture University. Organic restaurants have been set up in some cities, which have enhanced the interest of the public in organic food. To sum up, the climate is ideal for organic culture to grow and flourish.

### *Constraints*

In spite of the conducive atmosphere, the development of Organic Agriculture faces several constraints. Concerning knowledge development, the hardest task is to change the mindset of the principal stakeholders such as the farmer, scientist and the government agency. Participatory research and training is almost non-existent. On one hand, the scientists retain their expert knowledge; on the other, the farmers with their small, fragmented holdings are not brought together in the process of development and dissemination of sustainable agriculture technologies such as IPM. Questions on the productivity and profitability of Organic Farming have to be answered with direct evidence. Another important question is on the availability of organic inputs such as seeds, manure, and water and pest control. The transitional stage from modern to Organic Agriculture is a difficult one to pass through without financial support. The presence of the chemical pesticide/fertiliser lobby and its politics is a hindrance and most viciously effective; as patrons and donors, scientific research and governmental decisions are at their behest. The constraints are many, and are in every aspect of farming.

### *Conclusions*

No amount of theoretical rhetoric can convince the farmer to make a volte-face; the solid evidence is the farms themselves. It became the task of NGOs to take up research to assess the viability of Organic Farming as a model for sustainable development. The approach by ECOFARM was to conduct a state-wide survey of Organic Farming and after a two-stage screening, identify representative organic farms and to conduct a year-long detailed case study of the farms. In spite of the financial constraints, exhaustive qualitative and quantitative data were collected. A detailed profile of each farmer was prepared - a plan of the farm, description of major cultivars, farm income analysis based on labour and manure inputs and harvest output, etc., are the main features. The farming philosophy, ecological history of the land, the process of transition from conventional to Organic Farming, management of land fertility, crop, power & water, pest, animal husbandry and harvesting, processing and marketing of crops formed the bulk of the qualitative data.

Adaptation of Organic Farming techniques is combined with time-tested, indigenous practices of crop rotation, multiple cropping, pest control and manuring. While most farms exhibited a high diversity of crops, some others due to the peculiarity of their cultivation area, had monoculture .The problems faced by the farmers as well as their recommendations were recorded. The farm income analysis showed that Organic Farming is economically viable. The cost of production was very low, while total yield from the diverse crops was substantially higher.

### *Farmer´s recommendations*

The farmers gave the following recommendations:

- Awareness programme for both the producer and consumer.
- Development of model organic plots with institutional support.
- Financial support during transition.
- Assuring availability of quality organic manure at reasonable prices.
- Development and maintenance of organic manure sources within the farm.
- Supportive role of the government in marketing, subsidies and loans.
- Guilds of skilled and experienced persons to guide new entrants to Organic Farming.
- Alternative markets for organic produce with no intervention of middlemen.
- Processing of organic produce as a key area of development.
- Grading of organic produce.
- Establishment of public warehouses for storage of organic produce using organic methods.
- Assurance of better prices for organic produce.

- Restrain large-scale commercialisation trends of organic produce.
- Creation of networks of organic farmers to facilitate exchange of ideas, technology, inputs and experience.
- Reduction of environmental pollution.
- More studies on Organic Farming esp., on the marketing aspects.

The major hurdles identified for Knowledge Development are: Ignorance or reluctance of farmers to convert to OA, lack of support from external agencies, small land holdings, agro-climatic variation restricting uniform practices, lack of efficient network of OA practitioners and, a loss of traditional knowledge.

To overcome these hurdles, the right lessons should be imparted to the farmers and the right environment should be provided to practice OA successfully. The elements of the curriculum should be :

- Organic enrichment of land
- Crop combination for the specific region
- Biological pest control & manure
- Self - sufficiency in organic inputs
- Resource conservation techniques
- Storage & marketing facilities

The underlying principles for support structures should consist of the scientific validation of Organic Agriculture, farmer level R&D, documentation of indigenous knowledge, conservation of crop genetic resources and the restoration of environmental health.

In conclusion, knowledge development of Organic Farming in Kerala or any other Third World country where agriculture has been a way of life for several hundred years, should primarily focus on the preservation of indigenous breeds, restoration of environmental health and documentation of traditional agricultural practices.

Model plots need not be newly created; instead, the existing successful organic farms can serve the purpose. External input of OA knowledge would complement the farmer's knowledge base. Adequate financial support should be provided to the farms, which are recognised as the model plots.

Just as the colour of soil changes, just as the rains lash a little more or little less, just as the winds sing or howl, so do crops and farming change. These nuances are visible only to the farmer who was born, bred and bound to die in that land to which he belongs. The outsider can only teach the farmer the principles behind each phenomenon and each decision; an intellectual rationalisation of the farmer's instinctive

gesture. Field experience shows that there is not much to teach the farmer; like the forests that would regenerate and cover the parched land if only man would let it be, so would the farmer.

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## 4. Report of the Working Groups

The main statements made and agreed upon during the group-work were divided into opportunities, challenges and lessons learnt and finally conclusions were drawn.

### Opportunities

Through Organic Agriculture, farmers have multiple sources of information. These include not only official advisory services, but also fellow farmers, traders, and, in the case of animal husbandry, butchers, etc. It also needs to be stressed that OA is knowledge intensive in contrast to conventional agriculture which is more external input intensive.

Women are strong and important actors in OA. Particularly in smallholder areas, many men seek off-farm employment, and women, who are left, need to carry on the farming, often with very limited resources.

Modern Information Technology as a tool for information management greatly facilitates the dissemination and exchange of information, and should therefore be used

where feasible. However a combination with printed (conventional) information is desirable, since not everybody has access to modern information technology

Coming from a holistic background, OA recognises traditional knowledge & skills, cultures and way of life. Although traditional knowledge does not have answers for all problems (which modern science also does not have) it is rich and offers alternative solutions to those proposed by scientists. Recognition of the value of traditional skills, and respect for the indigenous culture and the way of life by outsiders is a prerequisite for starting joint learning and technology development.

In order to understand the basic resources of farming systems, their problems and opportunities, participatory technology development is necessary. It is important that outsiders try to see them not primarily from a national or regional perspective but also through the eyes of a farmer.

As challenges and opportunities are site-specific, advisory services in OA draw upon a diversity of approaches, those which are promoting rural development are especially important

The current crisis of conventional agriculture is a chance to promote OA. Being environmentally friendly it should be supported by the Government. Increasing recognition by the government presents opportunities to access funds for advisory work. There is evidence that the increasing recognition of the high quality of OA products

Organic farmer who developed and adapted a hoe on wheels for himself and his neighbors
(Photo: Berthold Schrimpf)

by consumers (healthy food) has in many cases resulted in a higher level of demand and often also a better price for the products, thus enabling farmers to contribute financially to advice. Also, direct support by consumers/traders of OA advisory is practised. As OA holds a diversity of benefits (e.g. its contribution towards nature conservation and biodiversity), it is promoted in many international programmes like the United Nations Programme Man and Biosphere (MAB).

### *Challenges*

Ensure ownership of technology and process of technology development by farmers. OA can be wrongly perceived as a blueprint which holds answers for various site-specific problems. Only if farmers are "the owners of the process of development" and thus fully involved in planning, decision making, implementing, monitoring and evaluation changes for the better can development be achieved in a sustainable way.

Strengthen the existing organisations/institutions of the farming community before creating new ones - liase with the existing local institutions and seek support. Very often new ideas, approaches or programme are implemented through newly created "project committees - e.g. organic farmers clubs", neglecting the existing structures. The newly created structures tend to collapse once outside support has ended. Thus the challenge is to empower and liase with existing structures, so that they can take OA into consideration and promote it.

The entire production-to-consumer-chain should be addressed and not only production. To produce organically is only a first step, value adding and marketing is in many cases even more important and needs due consideration.

Food security first. Farmers are easily persuaded to convert to OA by higher prices for their products. But these are often linked to a few export crops. Consequently, little consideration is given to many important aspects which could improve farmers livelihood systems and increase food security.

OA advisory work seems to be very ambitious as it not only needs sound knowledge and skills in various sectors (e.g. Organic Farming principles, marketing, business development), but advisors also should have a 'peoples' attitude' being able to work in a participatory and holistic manner. And while there is no state of the art of OA, there is a huge amount of new knowledge coming up, almost every month, and the advisor has to be able to move with the changing situations. This requires well planned and managed in-service training.

Women in agriculture as promoters of: organisation, skills, and socio-economic development. Even though women are important and strong actors in OA they are

often neglected and special attention has to be given to include them in planning, decision making, implementing, benefiting and evaluation.

Integration of OA farmers into the village mainstream. Even though OA is increasingly recognised, farmers practising it are, in many cases still outsiders in their community.

Intensify OA research at all levels, scientifically investigate the deeper qualities of OA. While conventional and alternative research work has been intensified considerably in Europe in the recent past, this is still lacking in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Also aspects of the deeper quality of OA should be given due attention.

Scaling up: can the existing advisory services, traditionally run by Government, promote OA?

### *Lessons Learnt*

When promoting Organic Agriculture it is important, that not only production is considered. Additional aspects, which are important, are:

- The relationship between personnel of the organisation, which promotes OA, on the one hand, and farmers on the other hand
- Organisational and legal aspects, including government support
- At the community level: the relationship between farmers and consumers.
- In local markets, consumers are often fellow farmers.

With respect to technology development it is necessary to initiate interactive experimentation and action learning - there are no recipes, neither for production techniques nor for organisational development. Site specific solutions have to be developed. Model farms, where new technologies are developed or demonstrated have utterly failed.

Premium prices overshadow more important arguments, such as local marketing, attitudes of producers towards ecology, etc. Furthermore the single product demand created by export orientation is a threat to holistic organic farm development

Export orientation of OA favours better-off farmers and this can reverse its potential role in poverty alleviation and does little to increase local food security.
To avoid the export trap efforts should be directed towards the development of local and regional markets

Advisory services should not only concentrate on agricultural production, food processing and marketing but should also deal with the management of natural resources in general.

### Conclusions

- The farmer to farmer approach in agricultural advisory services is both efficient and cost saving.
- Contributions by farmers (financial or in kind) add to ownership and accountability and therefore increase the likelihood of success.
- OA should be part of agricultural education at all levels. It should be included in general agricultural curricula.
- OA education should be hands on and inter-disciplinary.
- The development of local markets is a precondition for leaving niche production.
- Services in OA need to be suitable for women farmers.
- Knowledge development has to be seen as collective process and not as something well meaning advisors and scientists can do alone.

# IV. Standards and Certification

1. Keynote: Standards Development *(Bo van Elzakker)*
2. Keynote: Internal Control Systems (ICS) - a Chance for Smallholders? *(Birgit Wilhelm & Fred Fürst)*
3. Case Study: Inspection and Certification in North-East India *(E.M. Koshy, AOFG)*
4. Report of the Working Groups

# 1. Keynote: Standards Development *(Bo van Elzakker)*

Good morning, I would like to talk about standards development and the role of standards in developing Organic Agriculture. I am from the Netherlands, I work with a consultancy called Agro Eco, and I am also quite involved within IFOAM where I am the President of the Accreditation Programme, the programme that is accrediting certification bodies. I have been working for a short time as a farmer. After one year, I had enough of pulling weeds and I decided to become inspector, after three years I got tired of asking the same questions all over again and I decided to become an advisor and I am still very happy with that. I studied tropical agriculture and I have now worked in the tropics for 20 years. So that's a little bit about my background.

### *Why do we need standards?*

- To define, what you are doing
- To achieve common understanding
- To create group identity
- Form the basis for marketing and organic labelling

When we talk about standards, you really have to think carefully and ask, why standards? Of course, when you tell your wife, that you are doing Organic Farming, she will ask you, what does that mean? Standards are needed first of all as a form of definition of what you are doing. Actually, it is quite helpful, when you start with Organic Farming in your country, that you use this as a production guideline and that you actually describe how you produce, say organic rice, organic vegetables, etc. And here you have to look at farm systems not so much at individual crops.

A second need for standards is that it comes in very handy; to develop a common understanding on what Organic Farming is. When you work with others should it be NGOs, governments, churches, etc. it is very important that you talk about the same thing. And quite a lot of people still think that Organic Farming means no chemicals and that is it. That is not enough and that needs to be clarified through the standards.

Another important role for standards is that it provides a group identity. It may seem a strange reason, but especially in Latin America there are quite a number of groups that actually convert to Organic Farming as a political move. It is a break- away from the established system: they break away from the middlemen, they break away

from the dependence on agrochemicals, on credits etc. and they very much rally around the flag of Organic Farming, whatever it is, but Organic Farming then creates group identity.

Last but not least, the standards are needed when you are marketing organic products, especially when you label products as organic. And that means that you have to comply with all kind of requirements, which are different, or slightly different, for the different markets.

You see, if you look into the four points, you start with the definition and the production guidelines that explain how you want to do things, and, in the end, you have minimum requirements in a rather ugly document saying that you have to do this and that and otherwise it is not organic.

### *Type of standards*

- Public (government) regulations
- Private (certifier) standards
- Industry (buyers) standards
- Voluntary standards
- Production & processing standards, and certification criteria = norms

There are all kinds of standards and perhaps after this talk you will be very tired of standards. There are public regulations, there are private standards set by the private sector and there are industry standards. I will come back to that later. We have to keep in mind that we talk about so called voluntary standards. It is not mandatory for anyone to be an organic farmer, it is a free choice. You submit yourself voluntarily to a standard. Of course if you want to market something as organic, you had better be organic, you had better comply with the organic regulation when there is such a regulation, but the organic regulation as such is a voluntary standard. You decide for yourself that you want to go into Organic Farming; you decide voluntarily that you want to market your produce as organic.

When we talk about standards, we do not only talk about farm standards, or production standards, but also about processing standards and certification criteria. So looking at the European regulation, the production standard is a few pages, there are many pages on approved inputs, and then there is a whole document about the policing of the standards. The policing of standards is often more important than the production standard. Taking production and processing standards and certification criteria together, we call them the Norms in the IFOAM language.

### Private Standards

- Originally farmers, now certifier's standards
- Linked with marketing label, the guarantee
- IFOAM is common ground
- Welcomes participation from South
- Industry self-regulation
- Work on harmonisation (MLA)
- Opportunity for continuous development

Let me start with private standards. Organic Agriculture was started by farmers and it is very much carried along by farmers. It was farmers who were defining Organic Agriculture for themselves and very much on a regional basis. The French, the Germans, the Swiss, the Americans, they all had their form of Organic Agriculture, where farmers were setting their own standards. After a while standard setting and certification had to be separated, so these farmer standards became certifier standards, which were linked with the marketing labels (e.g. Naturland, Bioland, Demeter, etc). The label became necessary to convince consumers that the product is guaranteed organic. IFOAM is the common ground for private standards, where everybody comes together. It is the IFOAM membership who decides on the standards. I learned during this workshop that there is criticism that the IFOAM standards are very much North centred, that there is not enough space for, say, covering the paddy systems or arid situations. IFOAM welcomes very much more participation in standard setting processes from the South. The IFOAM system influences standard setting around the world. It is an important reference for regulations. It includes also the criteria on how to do certification. Inspection and certification is done by commercial certifiers or non-profit certifiers. IFOAM has also an accreditation programme that accredits, approves, and supervises the certification bodies. Looking at it as a whole, it is an industry self-regulatory system. So if everybody would participate in this system then there would be no need for regulations.

Within IFOAM´s accreditation system there is work on harmonisation and, as there is more and more disharmony, harmonisation is becoming increasingly important.

Working with private standards is an opportunity to express what Organic Farming ought to be. Standards do not only stand for an environmentally friendly farming system, as it is perceived by governments, for example in Europe as well as in the U.S. But to other people Organic Agriculture is much more; I am coming to that later. And you can express this and develop it further within the private standards, not so much in the public regulations.

### *Public regulations*

- EC regulation, USDA rule, Japanese law
- More than 50 countries but few implement
- Contrary to WTO TBT
- Disharmony, political issue
- Codex Alimentarius is the common ground
- Be aware of quality, residues, labelling, packaging regulations as well

The three major markets in the world, the EU, the United States, Japan, all three now have a regulation, their own law on Organic Agriculture. There are actually more than 50 countries that are working on an organic regulation. But that does not say much. It is very easy to develop a standard, but it does not mean anything. A regulation is only worth something, when the government is supervising the implementation of the standards. So I would say that of the 50 countries that have a law, it is the three mentioned above, and perhaps one or two more that implement it. The problem is, that each country writes its own regulation, depending on their own law system, their own history. This, however, is contrary to WTO rules. The WTO has an agreement preventing barriers to trade, which says: if there is an international standard, governments should adopt the international standard and not develop their own. The fact that every country is developing its own standard creates enormous problems for international trade. Different national organic laws provide a lot of disharmony, quite a lot of problems between Europe, the U.S., and Japan etc.

The problem is that the acceptance of organic products from other countries becomes a political issue. The EU accepting US organic products is simply on the long list of arguments that have to be dealt with in, say, the continuous trade war, or the general trade agreement between the two countries. This is not very good for the integrity of organic products. For the governments, the Codex Alimentarius is the international standard, the common guideline to base their regulations on. Within the Codex Alimentarius they are still working on animal husbandry, but you have to understand that this is a forum for governments. Government representatives discuss and negotiate with other government representatives. There is a place for NGOs like IFOAM. It has an observer status, but it is only included for consultation. IFOAM cannot take part in decision-making.

Just one last remark on public regulations. If you want to export your produce, there is a whole lot of regulations you have to comply with and the organic regulation is just one. There are quite strict regulations of quality, grading sometimes, there is a quite strict regulation on pesticide residues, don't forget, organic products may have pesticide residues, very often old ones. For example there have been considerable problems with DDT residues in tea from India. There may also be a very strict regulation on labelling and on packaging, if you are exporting a final product.

### Other Standards / Codes

- Industry codes/management systems
  - Eurep Good Agricultural Practices
  - HACCP
  - ISO 9000 & 14000 series
- Other private standard initiatives
  - Fair Trade
  - Social accountability
  - Biodiversity (bird friendly)

In addition to private standards and public regulations there are also what you can call industry requirements. For instance, management systems are required. If you are exporting fresh fruit and vegetables into the EU, more and more supermarkets insist that your product is not only organic, but also complies with and is certified according to good agricultural practices like Eurep GAP. Some criteria are easy to meet in Organic Agriculture. Others, which are not dealt within the organic standards, have to be considered in addition. If you are in food processing, HACCP is very important. Also ISO 9000 or 14000 series are important; companies will ask you whether you have such a management system in place. And if not, you better start working on it.

It is also important for the development of Organic Agriculture that there are other private sector standard initiatives like Fair Trade, Social Accountability and there are different biodiversity and nature conservation standards. And actually, if we want to include social aspects, or biodiversity in Organic Farming, it is quite interesting to look at those standards, which are already there.

### Why do we have to maintain private standards?

- To assure ownership of the private sector
- Public regulations give away ownership
- Varying degree of influence, consultation but no decision making power
- 'Unreliability' of government agencies
- Fear over weakening of standards

Why is it necessary to maintain private standards? Some people say: now there is a regulation and we need not bother any more. The government has taken care of it and that should be sufficient. In addition, the close farmer-consumer relationship does not

exist any more. Now it is anonymous, tremendously complex and very international. A lot of organisations are involved and there is an enormous distance between farmers and consumers. Nevertheless, we have to be very much aware of the beginning, the farmer consumer relationship. Because if you want to start Organic Agriculture in your country you have to keep that in mind. In my opinion, the private sector is where the ownership of standards should be. The problem is with public regulations. Once they are there it is the Ministry of Agriculture that deals with this regulation and decides how to change it. So you more or less give away your ownership. The government will ask you for support when they set up their regulation. And there are varying degrees of formal and informal influence. At its best, you will have a consultative status. But organic grass root organisations never did have a decision making power. And, there are a number of examples showing that the standards were pushed through the government regulation into a direction which was not wanted by their initiators. IFOAM for instance opposed certain changes in the EU regulation and North American groups fought certain aspects in the US-regulation. Their opposition was just wiped off the table. The government decides for itself.

The fact that government agencies are often unreliable is another important aspect. Not that they cheat you, but it happens quite often, that after having built up a very good relationship with a government official, there is a change of staff and you have to work with somebody completely new and usually unexperienced. You have to build up again a new relationship and create knowledge in the ministry. In general there is quite a fear within the organic movement, that standards will be weakened within the regulations: That there will be more and more allowances.

It is also important to maintain the private standards, to enable Organic Agriculture to develop further. OA is not only an environmentally friendly production system as I feel it is defined in the EU regulation. And "environmentally friendly production" has not reached a final stage. A continued development requires the grass root level, primarily the farmers. I would not even call it a participatory approach. It is a farmer approach, developing locally adapted techniques - the techniques, farmers can understand, can manage. This is very important, because once you and the NGOs are gone and they do not understand what they are doing, they will not continue doing it. Organic Farming is very much about farmer empowerment. Especially, when farmers are organised. This allows for more direct marketing links, an internal support organisation etc.

A very important aspect is also that the farmers get a fair reward for what they are doing. You see that historically prices are getting lower and lower and it is still continuing. It is important to have more direct marketing links. Take pineapples from Ghana as an example: the farm gate price of the pineapple is only 6-7 % of the retail price here in Europe. Such an unequal distribution of added value applies to quite a lot of products.

***Organic Agriculture is not only a production system but also ...***

- A farmer (participatory) approach
- Locally adapted, no 'foreign' technologies
- What farmers understand and can manage
- Farmer empowerment, farmer organisation
- Fair reward for work done, risks taken
- Health, nutrition, education, culture
- Community, rural development

Organic Agriculture is also about ensuring good health - the health of the farmers and the health of the environment. It is about nutrition, education, about farmers learning to do things themselves not being dependent on other people telling them what to do. It is also perhaps about culture: social development, rural development and a better life. For the farmers and actually for society as a whole. I think that this aspect is not sufficiently recognised in the organic standards. Therefore it is very good to look at standards development in your country. My argument is: you have to do it yourself. Do not count on the government.

But it is certainly not something you can do alone. It requires a national platform, a whole group, with all the stakeholders involved. This platform is also needed for other activities. If you want to do local marketing, you need various producer groups that can offer the consumer a range of products, etc. The national platform is also very good for exchanging information, for the organisation of training of trainer courses, for publications, etc.

***How to develop standards***

- You have to do it yourself but not on your own,
- It works only on national level, a platform with a wide stakeholder consultation,
- Must comply with international standards
- Translate to local realities and applicable for all
- Write guidelines for farmers and consumers.

Standards should be applicable to all. It is no good to write standards only for smallholders. It has to be democratic and applicable to all. As to my experience, in countries where Organic Agriculture is just starting, the coming together of NGOs, some of the traders, some of the processors, to write national standards, is a very good exercise. It is building team spirit and consensus. However, your national standard has to comply with international standards. As you see, there are already plenty of standards around, and if you have in your country two or three different standards it becomes

messy. It is really important not to have a simple local standard and an elaborated export standard, but rather one elaborated standard, which can be translated to your local situations, for people who cannot read and write.

Standards have a legal language; it does not read very well, and half of it is not applicable to the specific situation. Therefore "translation" on two or three pages is necessary for your project, your producer groups. You can also write guidelines for your farming systems. That can really be very helpful. Do not stare at the regulation - the big thing that can be confusing. Make your own simple standard compliant with the big thing. Simple regulations are needed for the farmers. They are not very good readers, and nobody reads the standards for fun. And, there is another group: the consumers. You have to give the consumers a rather simple message on Organic Agriculture. But not too simple. Very often Organic Agriculture is explained as no chemicals, and this is of course not true. I hope you agree on this. And this brings me to the end of my speech and to my questions for group work. Thank you.

***Guiding questions for group work***

(1) Is traditional agriculture 'no chemicals', and organic by default always organic?
(2) Why market as organic?
(3) Why work with governmental agencies?
(4) Would national platforms work?

# 2. Keynote: Internal Control Systems (ICS) - a Chance for Smallholders? *(Birgit Wilhelm & Fred Fürst)*

Whenever a farmer or a farmer group wants to sell their organic produce to the European Union, they have to submit to inspection at least once a year according to the EU organic regulation 2092/91 and every single farm has to be inspected.

There are approximately 350 farmer groups with close to 150,000 smallholders who produce up to 70% of organic products imported into Europe (IFOAM 2002[13] ). For smallholders who farm only very small acreages but are organized in a cooperative with sometimes more than 2000 members, who are scattered over an area of up to 10,000 square kilometres, it is impossible for an external inspector to perform such a task rapidly enough and to an acceptable cost.

Long before government regulations, some15 years ago, smallholders in Developing Countries in cooperation with certification bodies and OA associations such as NATURLAND "…have been developing systems to assure compliance to organic standards as a group. Different forms of quality assurance systems of smallholder groups have developed over time with respect to the nature and size of the operation, ranging from tens to thousands of individual producers." (IFOAM 2003[14] ).

### *What is an Internal Control System ?*

An Internal Control System can be considered as a documented quality assurance system that allows the external certification body to delegate the annual inspection of the individual group members to local inspectors within the certified group.The main elements of an ICS are:

- A group internal regulatory system has to be established, defining the criteria, standards and internal procedures, which guarantee the quality of the organic production;

[13]2nd International Workshop on smallholder certification, February 2002
[14]IFOAM´s position on Internal Quality Assurance Systems and Group Certification for Organic Production and Processing. March 2003

- There has to be qualified personnel with clearly defined responsibility, able to run the total quality management programme (supervisors, inspectors, committee members etc.);
- The group must have adequate data processing and communication facilities;
- Farmers and internal inspectors have to be trained.
- Physical farm inspections by internal inspectors have to cover 100 of all registered farms. They have to prove the compliance of the production activities with the requirements laid down in the internal regulation and document the results. Good qualification of the internal inspector is a pre-condition for the success of an ICS.
- The results of the inspection should be evaluated by external inspectors and the evaluation must be documented.
- For all steps of product flow (purchase, transport, stocking, processing, sales) a thorough documentation is required.
- The examination of the internal quality control system is performed by the external inspector primarily on the basis of the data produced by the small farmers' organisation. Its quality and reliability are tested at random by repeated on-site inspections and interviews with randomly selected farmers (3-10% or more of the total number of farms and depending on the functioning of the ICS).

The character and elaboration of this process may vary according to local conditions and the individual set-up of the smallholder organisation. An example from Mexico may illustrate the functioning of certification based on ICS.

### *The case of inspector José Reyes*

*José Reyes is on his way to Tomalá village where he will inspect the coffee farmers as part of the internal control system. Jose Reyes is a local inspector. He has been trained by an EU-accredited certification body. He has also taken part in a training course provided by a private and IFOAM-accredited certifier (Naturland). At his visit to the farmers he will document all necessary information in detail, to establish that the inspected farmers are complying with the EU-regulation and the Naturland standards. He is contracted to do this work by a coffee co-operative with approximately 300 members, which has been working according to organic standards for six years. Inspector Reyes reaches the Tomalá village after a two-hour walk. Mr Ignacio Avalo, one of the farmers to be inspected today, is already waiting for the inspector in front of his house. Mr Reyes and Mr Avalo go straight to the coffee field. Mr. Avalo converted his coffee field to Organic Agriculture five years ago. Every year he has an internal inspection, conducted by an inspector from the producers' association that he has belonged to for many years, however, this is the first time that Mr Reyes is Mr. Avalo's inspector. Mr Reyes checks the growth of the coffee plants, the variety planted, and, looking at the organic manure around the coffee plants, he asks what kind of fertilizer Mr. Avalo is using. The ins-*

*pector records in the inspection check list every bit of information given and any observations made. The checklist also helps to ensure that nothing is forgotten.*

*Returning to Mr Avalo's house, the farmer explains how the coffee is processed. A depulping machine driven by hand squeezes the pulp from the coffee beans. The inspector requests and then checks all the invoices of sales and purchases made by the farmer. Mr Reyes also looks carefully around the surroundings of Mr Avalo's house to be sure that everything is kept in order, that there is no garbage lying around and no indication of prohibited agricultural inputs. Finally a field map, which was drawn-up by previous internal inspectors showing all the fields cultivated by Mr Avalo, is amended. After the three hour inspection he heads off to the next farmer. This time it is only a one-hour hike.*

Mexico is the largest supplier of organic coffee. The Mexican smallholders were some of the first farmers to convert their production system to organic, and today more than 50,000 ha are cultivated according to organic standards. Some of the cooperatives now have fifteen years experience in organic certification, and are fully aware of the difficulties involved in fulfilling all requirements and the conditions necessary for certification.

### Strengths of ICS

The introduction of such an internal inspection system requires a lot of effort, time, considerable internal development work, and restructuring and investment by the small farmers and their organisation. This effort is rewarded. The majority of the smallholder organisations that established internal quality control systems considered it economically viable later on. "Situated in the locality, ICS can manage a higher and better surveillance regime than external annual visits. Internal control visits are often performed more than once a year, in many cases up to three times. The local organisation knows the agricultural conditions and local culture better than external inspectors and certification officer/committees based outside the country" (IFOAM 2003[15]).

In addition, the ICS is regarded by many farmer organisations not just as a system for implementing certification of the members, but also as a useful instrument for improving their internal structure and organisational system. A successful business requires a good quality control system, and the ICS performs this role. For this reason the spot-check rate of external inspections should be seen only as one of the integral parts of an ICS. And, the complete ICS gives a general overview of structure and organisation of a smallholder group.

[15]dto.
[16]Dto.

### Constraints in using ICS

The requirements for inspection and certification of organic production of smallholder groups have risen drastically with the implementation of EU Regulation 2092/91. A large number of the cooperatives have complained that more and more paperwork has to be done, which in the end has nothing to do with the organic production of their coffee. The cost of inspection and certification has increased accordingly, but the product prices are falling. Coffee, for instance, has fallen to its lowest level in 40 years.

Another problem is a lack of harmonisation. "While the growing recognition of group certification is encouraging, differences between regulations and approaches can still pose devastating burdens on under-resourced small operators and defeat the purpose. In the European Union, member states decide on import authorisations and may set their own requirements. Different competent authorities have set different requirements for group certification. (…) Differences between major importing markets e.g. EU, US and Japan will only serve to further complicate an already complicated situation, especially for groups who export to several different countries.

(In addition,) certification bodies also have different approaches to group certification, e.g. what an internal control system should include as well as inspection protocols for such situations. These varying approaches often make it difficult for one certifier to accept another certifier´s certification, leading to double and sometimes triple inspections and certifications" (IFOAM 2003[16]).

A third important issue is the question of ownership of ICS. In this respect two target groups can be distinguished:

A) Farmer Associations well organised and with an active internal system (main ly the innovative groups from Latin-America with a 10 years history of ICS). They have their own standards and their own control system, which reflect ownership.
B) Producer Groups supplying a buyer, with no internal organisation so far (quite often the case in African countries). The rules and regulations are external, often proposed or demanded by the buyer. External regulations and structural requirements are being imposed; the mobilisation unique local qualities and internal ideals - an original intention of ICS - may diminish over such an imposition.

How to react adequately on the demands of group B, is - so far - an unsolved question. If the ICS structures are imposed from outside, and the producer group is unable to develop them on their own, an ICS will be functional only as long as the trader or exporter maintains the necessary structures. Another need to develop structures inter-

nally is given by Fair Trade organizations, which accept only farmer groups, who have done so. Last but not least a growing domestic market will require certified food and the respective certification cannot count on support from the exporters.

### Conclusions

One of the most important prerequisites for successful development in the international organic certification of smallholder organisations is the concept and implementation of a functional and well-organised Internal Control System (ICS).

The ICS is in most cases a step-by-step development process between smallholder organizations and certification bodies that can take several years. The implementation of an ICS is an ongoing process, even experienced groups will continually improve their ICS.

If an ICS system is installed externally, e.g. by an exporter, it can work very well. However, there is a high risk that the ICS system will not be any more functional once the exporter is no longer buying the products and therefore does not maintain the system with personnel and financial assistance.

## 3. Case Study: Inspection and Certification in North-East India (E.M. Koshy, AOFG)

India being a large country in landmass has had several phases of agriculture revolution with mass involvement enabling the country to feed its growing population. The bulk of the poor farmers and poor village population live in the rain fed and hill slope-farming areas. The highly capital intensive infrastructure and development program in agriculture has not really benefited the small, marginal and tribal farmers in food security, income generation nor in poverty alleviation.

In North East India (NEI) hill slope farming is practised between the Barak River and Bhramaputra river plains. However, these river plains are flood prone during the mon-soon seasons on a recurring basis. The NEI area is mainly populated by ethnic tribes-people . The population of NEI as per 2001 Census of India is 38,495,089 and the geographical area is 255,026 sq. km.

About 65% of the population/families/farmers are living below the poverty line. Agriculture is the mainstay and the economy is dependent upon agriculture production. Farmers follow conventional natural farming for crop production. NEI is blessed with good climate and rainfall. NEI is one of the biodiversity hot spots.

Traditionally farmers follow the system of slash and burn for crop introduction. Locally, it is called JHUM Cultivation. Of late, it is creating serious problems such as low productivity, soil erosion, drying up of perennial water holes and streams, etc. The increased growth of population and the needs of the families are driving them to clear large hill tracts for crop introduction and the jhum cycle is reduced from 25 year to 5-7 years. This is preventing natural regeneration of vegetation and the slopes are exposed to wind erosion and land degradation.

The areas are growing all types of crops such as: spices, food crops, fruits, vegetable, medicinal plants, aromatic plants and herbs. A wide variety of orchids are available in the forests of NEI. Traditionally, the farmers use certain plants and their flowers and seeds for pest control and largely they use the green vegetation for FYM to increase soil fertility. Surplus marketable crop production is yet to materialize in the area. While, going in for marketable surplus production, the natural resources may be protected with judicious application of management systems. Soil and water management and retention of green cover is very important for our area. The wealth of flora is to be protected and this wealth is going to help us in the promotion of Organic Farming.

AOFG is conducting a major study on the use and application of flora for pest control and the improvement of micro-nutrients in the soil. The villagers and farmers complain that these days they do not get the traditional medicinal plants to treat small injuries, stomach pain, fever, malaria, rashes on the skin etc from their village forests. This is because of the indiscriminate jhum cultivation. Several and unknown varieties of flora are fast disappearing from the area at an alarming rate.

The cases of Orissa, Uttranchal and Andhrapradesh are similar. The vast rainfed and semiarid regions of these states are having the same fate and similar problems. The farmers are poor and go for conventional and natural farming.

The promotion of Organic Agriculture is one of the solutions for Sustainable Agriculture and rural development. AOFG has created a networking of NGOs to promote this activity. Our products have wide acceptance in our areas as well as outside NEI, but with in the mainland . A multi functional NGO group under the networking of AOFG is vigorously promoting several activities to attain the goal of Organic Farming in rural development. Gender involvement is highlighted and three women NGOs are part of the networking. Activities include crop production, processing, marketing, infrastructure development, HRD, etc. Animal husbandry is one of the important activities in Organic Farming. Small land holding farmers are our targets. AOFG is assisting one NGO in setting up a model demonstration and training centre for crop husbandry, medicinal, aromatic and herb raising nursery and a model animal husbandry farm. The demonstration program and training facilities for the farmers will create a conducive atmosphere for the promotion of OARD.

AOFG has been in touch with some of the Organic Certifying Agencies operating in India such as SKAL, IMO, ECOCERT, NATURLAND and SGS International. We held discussions with all of them for our NGOs working in the area of agriculture. The standards proposed by these agencies are not suitable to our area and our farmers. Some of the standards and specifications are very good. Our problem is that most of our farmers are illiterate and too poor to meet the costly expenses of certification. Further, our products are for the local market. We have so far not developed a plan for export-oriented production. But, we wanted to put our agriculture production to Organic due to its goodness and nature friendly mode and to conserve the natural resources. AOFG also held discussions with FiBL, Germany and Switzerland in developing and establishing an Organic Certification Agency to benefit the rain fed farming and hill slope farming areas. We are interested in and we promote group certification. The bulk of the production and the producers are small and marginal farmers so we are only interested in group organic certification . We are also interested in the development of local markets and OA.

The Government of India so far has not taken up Organic Farming under its policy for agriculture promotion and food security. In India Organic Farming is promoted

mainly for export to other countries. However, currently under the 10th Five Year Plan, Organic Agriculture is accepted as one of the promotional areas of agriculture production. Presently, it is at the initial stages and we hope, at a later stage it may be accepted as one of the important sectors for crop production and productivity.

For the past three years, AOFG has been working on the promotion of Organic Agriculture and certification to ensure credibility for production and marketing. India itself is a vast market. The growing urban population and the middle class population is increasingly looking for quality food. Preference is emerging for organic products. While working on this subject with the farmers, AOFG realized the basic reality that Organic Certification is dominated by the North. Europe, Canada, USA and Australia are in the forefront. They have established norms and standards which are simply not tenable to the honest common farmers of India, especially from the hill slope farming and rain fed areas. The Government's drive for Organic Farming is driven with the motto of Export and Export earnings. Probably, in the case of spices and condiments, this may be correct as such it is simply not cultivated and produced in the Developed Countries. After having attended the IFOAM Harmonization Conference (2002) in Nuremberg, AOFG realizes that the numerous rules and regulations imbedded in Organic product specifications can be applied as a tool to eliminate the agriculture products of Third World countries from Developed Country markets. (Look carefully at the WTO parameters and regulations and the open market policy on Agriculture products).

### *Main questions*

(1) Why is a costly inspection and certification required for the small and marginal farmer, instead OA can be promoted in the context of nature conservation and productivity coupled with the development of local and regional markets.

(2) The current EU standards and standards of Developed Countries are highly documentation oriented, how can the common farmer in India benefit from such standards and certifications.

(3) How can we promote OA among the common farmers with assured market base.

(4) The food product standards and CODEX are limited to export and the local Indian markets are still operating with unhygienic storage, display and sales. In this context, how we can promote OA products from farmers to the valued customer.

(5) How can the inspection and certification on organic be harmonized with local realities, traditional practices and farmers' sincerity. And how can this aspect be synchronized with harmonization on international standards.

# 4. Report of the Working Groups

### Standards development

International standards are often not applicable to our situation, which means, they are too costly, and do not consider our local situation. However, standards as such are necessary and the development of standards by small unities, is the first step to be taken. In doing so, one should resist the temptation to comply with international regulations right from the beginning. One should also refrain from copying standards from somewhere else. Only the development of own standards allows for the inclusion of locally specific conditions: ecological situation, cultural values etc.

Such standards should be rather simple at the beginning, but should allow an extension later on to an internationally accepted level. A commitment to standards development of not only the producers, but other stakeholder (producers, traders and agricultural advisors or researchers) would be desirable. Standards development may be started by small groups but should lead to regional and even national platforms on standards development.

Recommendation: New IFOAM International Basic Standards are needed for a fair organic world. The next IFOAM Asia conference could be a proper platform to discuss the national standards.

### Certification and Alternatives

If there is close producer - consumer relationship which makes production, processing and marketing transparent to the consumer, the decision to buy a product can be based on trust and does not require any certification. Such a close relationship requires that both producers and consumers live nearby or next to each other. This applies

most successfully when local communities buy local products. In most cases, however, there is no direct link between producers and consumers.

Simple "Guarantee-Systems" can be an alternative to an internationally accredited certification, which may be too sophisticated and too costly. This applies in particular when organic produce is marketed locally.

In a similar way to standards development, guarantee systems can and should be developed locally, i.e. by small groups. In doing so, a challenge is then to achieve mutual recognition between different groups and their different guarantee systems. The establishment of guarantee systems is primarily an organisational task and requires organizational know-how.

### *Internal Control Systems*

The method of using Internal Control Systems has enabled hundreds of farmer groups access to an international market. The initial investment for the establishment of an ICS is high. Later on, it operates with much lower costs. Generally, it can be considered as a useful tool to link smallholders to markets. Lessons learned so far are:

- The group of smallholders doing group certification should have sufficient homogeneity
- Internal regulations should be developed by the group itself with the help of internal inspectors, but not imposed by the latter,

Inspection of rice fields in Thailand (Photo: Detlev Kalus)

- Members should control each other based on the regulations developed by themselves,
- The inspector should look at the group as being one unit and not visit each smallholder,
- The certificate is obtained by the group not by the individual. Therefore, marketing has to be done by the group.
- The group follows the standard of the certifier of their choice, but some adaptation of standards to their own situation must be possible.
- If one farmer defaults, this can affect the entire group.
- ICS demands, that the group is strong and well organized; a high level of group organisation is needed.

However, the development of ICS is only at the beginning. It needs to be simplified (less, instead of more, paper work). It requires support from outside and should be designed jointly with certifiers. At the same time, it should be based on decision making within the group and take care of group specific aspects. Cultural and organisational aspects of the group should receive stronger consideration.

Food sellers on a local market.
(Photo: Wolfgang Bayer)

# V. Development of local markets

1. Keynote: Development of Local Markets *(Frank Schreiber)*
2. Case Study: The BioFeria - an Experience that grows better every Week *(Silvia Wú Guin, Grupo Eco-Lógica, Lima/Perú)*
3. Case Study: Maweni Farm - Developing Markets through Organic Products *(René Fischer, ZOPPA, Zimbabwe)*
4. Report of the Working Groups

# 1. Keynote: Development of Local Markets

## (Frank Schreiber)

### General aspects

Most organic products from Southern countries are exported, mainly to Europe, the United States, Japan and Australia. Only a few countries are trying to develop local markets and their sales are still rather small.

In South Africa specialized stores and supermarket chains sell organic products. In Asia, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong present high growth rates for their local organic markets. India has an interesting demand for organic products in their large cities. Also in other countries like Malaysia and the Philippines local markets are developing.

Latin America is experiencing a strong Organic Agriculture movement, mostly for export. In some places, national commercialisation channels are widely diversified while markets are still very small. In most countries, vegetables and fruits are sold in supermarkets, in specialized shops and at farmer markets. However, processed food is hardly available except in Argentina. And, as there are only a few Latin American countries with national regulations for organics, most of them have no certification for locally marketed produce.

### Three examples from Latin America

Argentina has at present a cultivated organic area of 2,8 million hectares (SÖL, 2002). Motivated by the interest of simplifying exports to the EU, Argentina developed a national law for organic products in 1992. Besides export oriented production, it also encourages national sales. The main market is Buenos Aires. Organic products are available in supermarkets, specialized shops and home delivery services. Despite a long tradition in local marketing of organic products, many producers do not assume it as a main task. Present economic problems show that the national market is not yet consolidated.

Brazil with approximately 0,8 million hectare of organically certified land, has the longest tradition in Latin America. Ideas of Organic Farming arrived with migrants from Europe in the first half of the last century. Local markets were established paral-

lel to the development of suitable production technologies. Today an estimated 30% of production goes to local markets. The most important places are the big cities in the South such as Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Curitiba. Marketing is carried out mainly by producer associations, their street markets and their retail systems. Clients are well-educated people with regular and higher incomes. The growth rate amounts to 10% per year.

Peru has at present 27 000 hectare certified organic. The capital Lima with 8 million inhabitants is the only market place. For more than 20 years NGOs have promoted Organic Agriculture as a measure to protect natural resources. Marketing only became an issue when many farmers had already converted to Organic Agriculture. Since 1998, a consortium of farmers, farmer associations and NGOs manages the commercialisation of organic products. As there are no competitors, organizational and educational work and development of alternative sales channels have become quite effective. A shared vision among most of the producers is the creation of a commercialisation net for organic products, adapted to consumer requirements and the possibilities for the small farmers that are involved. First initiatives are sales points, farmer markets, home delivery service and the introduction of organic products into a supermarket chain. The NGO Eco-Lógica Perú estimates the sales potentials at 400.000 US$ in 2003.

### *Local Markets - who is interested ?*

First of all, it is the producers not the consumers who care for a market. And concerning the marketing potential and possibilities producers see it differently, depending on the size of cultivated area, their number of farm labourers and their access to advisory support. According to their structure, every producer opts for a different commercialisation strategy and not all are interested in local markets.

Agro-industries. In Southern countries large investments in agriculture are mostly made for export-production (both for organic as well as for conventional). Such agro-industries rely on the export of well-paid cash crops to the North. Quite often, production fulfils only the minimum criteria of Organic Agriculture in order to obtain the certification. These enterprises mostly substitute chemical products with organically approved ones. As they are profit oriented, they are only interested in the marketable export products and not in other crops or by-products of agricultural production (green manure etc.). Since customs tariffs in Northern countries protect national processors, Southern-based agro-industries have no stimulus to export processed products.

Agro-industries have no interest in serving national markets as a second outlet. Their organization and infrastructure (packaging, storage, transport) is designed for export and is not able to take care of the small demands for small national markets.

They may also not comply with specific national laws (labelling, etc.), which would increase costs. Also, in most cases, a national market hardly exists and considerable investment is necessary to establish it. Educational work would be necessary to create consumer awareness and involvement. This takes time, costs money and requires alliance with partners, which enterprises are not willing or able to invest.

Small farmers are better prepared to market organic products in the country. Their alternative is to sell their products as conventional with conventional prices that do not cover certification and production costs. They are interested in optimising their whole farm system and diversification is an essential factor to reduce risks. In doing so, they offer a range of products, and as local market markets demand a range of products, an assortment is necessary. Their production output does not reach exportable quantities, except for niche products of high value. Remoteness and lack of transport facilities favours conservation and processing of their products. Processed products have a demand only in the national market due to the particularities of national preferences and the obstacles to export.

Producer associations are often created to collect larger product quantities for export. Even though they have markets for their products, associations are a union of individual farmers that work under similar characteristics as the already mentioned individual farmers. This means that they could be interested providers of sub-products of their exportoriented production. Often the production unities have surplus family labour, which can process or conserve raw products. At the same time, producers in associations can complement each other in production, which can lead to continuity in supply and diversity of products. Both are indispensable to build up a reliable clientele.

### *Potentials and risks of local markets*

The great potential for local/national organic markets is represented by local consumer elites. They are the people who have sufficient money to buy expensive products. Due to their higher educational level, they know about the danger of uncontrolled use of pesticides and residual poisons in food and they are aware of the necessity to preserve the environment. Middle-aged housewives, often with children form a main part of such consumer elites.

Secondly, luxury hotels are very interested in organic products. In many cases they are run by an international management, which aims to comply with international standards. Therefore, they are looking for trustworthy and reliable providers of food of best quality. Their cooks are mainly trained in Northern countries and they are aware of the desires of international guests.

Another potential group of consumers are professionals in the health service. For instance medical doctors, who have experienced poisoning in the countryside due to the inappropriate use of pesticides, and they opt for organic products to protect health.

The consumer elite is represented by civil servants, government employees and business people. They have received a good formal education and have an environmental awareness. They live in places with good schools and universities and with good access to information and, at the same time, they are exposed to high pollution and health hazards. Their motivation to support Organic Agriculture is often both protection of health and protection of the environment. The news about food and agricultural scandals in Europe ("mad cow disease" and others) also reached Southern countries. Many conscious consumers share the idea that if things like these happen in Europe, they could easily happen in Southern countries too. These consumers become involved and can be induced to buy organic.

As organic products are sold mostly to elites, appropriate sales channels are required: delivery services, weekly markets in residential areas or sales points near places where people spend their holidays. As the resources for publicity are limited, not all potential consumers are reached by promotion measures and not all of them are able to plan their foodstuff needs beforehand. For those, more "immediate" consumers, it is necessary to offer organic products in supermarkets, where they are available every day.

For local markets clear criteria to define "organic" are necessary. They have to be developed and made transparent to the consumers. This applies in particular to Developing Countries with no laws to protect Organic Agriculture, because every one feels free to offer pseudo-organics. In such a situation the definition of quality criteria, the creation of a simple certification system and the elaboration of an own label helps farmer groups to position themselves before the government intervenes through legislation and government regulations. Such an intervention is bound to come and may create conflict with already existing farmer groups and organisation (for instance concerning compatibility of their standards and certification systems with the demand of export markets). But by having their own system already, they are in a much stronger position.

Risks. The potential of the national market depends highly on the development of national economies for both consumers and producers. Since organic products are more expensive than conventional ones, there is a decreasing demand for organic food in periods of economic insecurity or recession. This applies in particular for a middle class household, that can take substitutes easily when income decreases.

Such a situation is worse for the producers. They cannot react immediately to economic struggles. If they have to sell their produce with a conventional price, the reve-

nue does not cover certification and production costs any more. In order to survive, they are in danger of abandoning Organic Agriculture, to use mineral fertilisers again to increase yield and so loose their certification. On such a case it is difficult to return to organic production and certification after the economic crisis is over.

The absence of a law on Organic Agriculture is another obstacle. As long as Southern countries do not create laws to protect Organic Agriculture, all efforts to strengthen organic farmers' negotiation capacity can also be used unfairly by providers of pseudo-organics to place their products as "organic" (at lower costs).

### *Constraints and potentials for national market development*

Consumers. Many clients do not like to visit weekly markets nor to get their products by a delivery service only; they do not want to receive "on top" all the philosophy and esoteric burden at the moment they decide to buy food, neither do they want to figure in a database.They prefer to buy products anonymously, fast and whenever convenient in a supermarket. Others do not necessarily care about organic quality, but they are looking for an attractive and tasty product. When these consumers have enough money to buy organics, they can become attracted by good quality. However, the product in the supermarket has to come with all its information, it has to be packed in a visually attractive way and the price should not exceed 20-25% on top of the conventional one.

Educational work has to be done permanently so that sooner or later even "quality buyers" can be won as "militant organics". Since the characteristics of organic production are nearly unknown in Southern countries, diffusion work has to be done; this is the most important task for the development of a national market for organic products. Also, it is necessary to develop an organic label, especially if there is no national law that guarantees product quality to consumers, and helps - as an umbrella - to make Organic Agriculture and its products well known. In many cases, Europeans, North Americans and other people who have been living for some time in the North have a stronger relation to the principles of Organic Agriculture and are more convinced. They figure as pioneers as consumers but also as providers and extensionists of information.

Direct marketing channels have a high potential for education and awareness creation. The contact to clients makes their behaviour and wishes well known to the producers. This information is very valuable to improve commercialisation strategies, whereas quality is not as important as in supermarkets. In selling their produce directly to consumers, the producers have the opportunity to explain their way of production and the reason why the visual appearance of a certain product is not fully convincing.

Weekly markets are a very suitable occasion for education and advertisement. Here, it is possible to get an auditorium for ecological themes and with little additional costs. Specialists can be invited for informal talks about a specific subject (this sometimes allows the promotion of the "cultural" event in the mass media). Producers put up posters (about the production, processing or production zone), agricultural input (plants, tools) or even animals to make their work comprehensive and tangible. Excursions to farms can be offered.

Producers. The most important task when working with producers or producer associations is to help them to become well organized. Not every good organic farmer is a good seller, nor are all good sellers good producers. Organization always leads to specialization and this implies that revenues have to be shared and that partners have trust and confidence in each other.

***Further aspects are:***

- Self-created structures for participative production planning should sustain regular and sufficient provision for different commercialisation channels.
- Only a regular and broad offer can cope with the economic and political power of retailers (oligopolistic circumstances). Individually it is nearly impossible to get a fair deal.
- Because of high prices, consumers expect additional benefits. In selling through retailers, best quality is required, packaging has to be very attractive and differ from other products. A label for organic products should appear on all packages and homogenize the assortment.
- As long as the characteristics of organic products are not widely known, prices should not exceed 20 % to 25% above conventional products.
- In the same way that producers avoid risks by diversification, they should diversify their commercialisation channels. Since most of the local elites do their shopping in supermarkets (Peru: 79% of "organic"-buyers buy food in supermarkets), organic products have to be there, but when business with organics increases, supermarkets will not accept strange labels and implement their own organic line.
- Diversification of commercialisation channels also complies with the requirements of consumers.
- Publicity in mass media is important, but information should also always be available with the product. At the beginning the help of a professional promoter at the retailer is needed to make the products known. This person has to be well trained for his task.
- In order to get publicity support from other parts related to Organic Agriculture, it is necessary to look for alliances. Contacts with NGOs, international networks, health related organizations (insurances, private hospitals, nutritionists, wellness

magazines), committees for defence of consumer rights and specific governmental initiatives are most beneficial.

- Promotion can be done, free of charge, on regular TV or radio programs. In these cases it is important to bring a headline, "news", to draw the attention of the producers. At the same time, the skills of a professional or well-prepared person are needed to present the subject in an interesting way.

### *Main questions for group work*

(1) How can external certification be replaced by self-control in Organic Agriculture for local markets?

(2) How do the "social-justice" criteria in organic regulations help in the development of local markets?

(3) What services should provide an umbrella organization for the development of local markets?

(4) How can popular sectors of population benefit from organic products? How can big farmers participate in local marketing?

## 2. Case Study: The BioFeria - an experience that grows better every week

(Silvia Wú Guin, Grupo Eco-Lógica, Lima/Perú)

### Background

Eco-Lógica Perú was founded in November 1998 as an association of small-scale ecological producers. Their goal is to develop the local market for organic products. At first, it had ten members: four individual producers, three organizations and the strong support of three NGOs. At the moment, since April 2002, it comprises 16 individual producers or producer organizations and four NGOs.

On December 4th 1999, Grupo Eco-Lógica Perú started to organize a market for organic products in Miraflores, a central district of Lima. Many of the people that live in this district are foreigners and have buying power. In this district we can also find a very important Peruvian movement of alternative lifestyle (music bars, artists, art galleries, vegetarian restaurants, etc.).

From December 1999 to February 2001 Eco-Lógica organized the BioFeria in Miraflores every first and third Saturday. Since March 2001 the BioFeria is also organised on every fifth Saturday. From March to September 2002 Eco-Lógica achieved the organization of the BioFeria in the district of San Borja every second and fourth Saturday. In consequence, Eco-Lógica organized the BioFeria on all Saturdays. Nevertheless, two circumstances impede the organization of the BioFeria in this district. First, the school playground, where the BioFeria functioned, will be occupied by a sports competition for three months. Second, the municipality rules do not allow the organization of this kind of events on the street.

### The strategy

The importance to have a strategic partner. The organization of an event like the BioFeria, requires coordination with a local partnership because it is a public event. Eco-Lógica Perú tried to contact many municipalities but only two of them responded in

three years of hard work. The main point is to find the right person inside the municipality involved with the care of the environment and social welfare.

The market place: an opportunity to disseminate the organic concept. Peruvian consumers do not know about organic products, for this reason Eco-Lógica Perú works hard to disseminate organic concepts among the consumers so they can clearly identify them. Peru does not have a national organic norm and the supermarkets take advantage of this situation offering "pseudo-organic" products.

From the very beginning, two types of stands were allowed at the BioFeria: Stands for selling organic products and stands for the dissemination of Organic Agriculture concepts, environmental care and healthy nutrition. In their stand, the producers themselves have to inform their clients about what kind of production techniques they develop, how they access the certification programme and all that the consumers want to know about.

Moreover, Eco-Lógica Perú invites specialists to offer informal talks in every BioFeria.

### *The Bioferia and its rules*

Organic Certification. The main rule to participate at the BioFeria is to own the organic certificate. However, if a producer does not have it but an organization supports him, it is possible to accept participation at the BioFeria on the condition that the producer must be registered in a certification programme within 3 months (for agricultures) or 6 months (for food processors). When the BioFeria started only 20% of the producers owned an organic certificate, nowadays 97% of the producers are certified. Eco-Lógica Perú helped the producers to get the organic certificate, creating a certification fund by charging a participation fee for every BioFeria to those producers interested in organic certification.

Everyone has a task. Another important rule is that everybody has to do his or her duty in the BioFeria. Early in the morning, a group has to load the tables, chairs and information boards from the pick-ups, another group has to put the flowers and other group has to hang the signs for each participant. At the end of the BioFeria a group must store the tables, chairs and other materials and another group must clean the floor.

How much is sold. The participants have to fulfil registers of sales. These documents allow Eco-Lógica Perú to monitor the development of the market. All the information is introduced into Excel-sheets and the most important data is calculated. A report of each BioFeria is prepared by the manager of the BioFeria.

"May I sell what I want?" and the necessity to organize the offer. The BioFeria rules established that, in view of the fact that the organic market is too small in Peru, no more than two producers can sell the same product at the same time. At present, the participants have organized themselves in 'Groups of interest', where aspects of product varieties, offer volumes, prices, are discussed and agreed between them.

### *Important features of the Bioferia*

How many producers are involved? 30 producers, more or less, participate in the Bio-Feria, but many of them participate as a representative of their organization. In consequence, more than 1200 families participate indirectly with their production at the Bio-Feria. For approximately 80% of them the sales at the BioFeria are their most important income For some this is the only channel where their organic production is valued and sold as organic.

Start of supermarket sale of certified eco-eggs of Eco-Lógica Peru. The producer premium for eco-eggs was 280% compared with conventional eggs. (Photo: Frank Schreiber)

The majority presence of women. Women have an important presence in the BioFeria. At present, a woman manages the BioFeria, and many producers are women and have their proper place . It is fully recognized that women have better abilities to communicate concepts and ideas, also they have good abilities to keep the accounts.

The sustainability of the BioFeria. The BioFeria was possible thank to Dutch external finance. Now, the BioFeria has achieved its sustainability without external finance. The operative costs (administration, service of installation, promotion and depreciation of materials) are covered by the participation fee.

### *Positive effects of the Bioferia*

The participants recognize that the BioFeria has positive effects on their commercial activities. They mention, for example, that they have new commercial channels such as restaurants, hotels, natural food stores and persons who want delivery service. In this case, the BioFeria is a way to inform the consumers about the operation of a delivery service in Lima called BioCanasta, a small scale enterprise manage by four members of Eco-Lógica Perú.

Another positive effect is the increase in the variety of products. At the beginning there were only fifty or sixty products, but the consumers pressed to increase this number. Today, the BioFeria offers more than three hundred organic products (fresh and processed), all with organic certification .

Another important effect is the possibility of the direct contact between producers and consumers. This contact permits a feedback among them improving the quality and presentation of the products and, involving the people in ecological agriculture.

Eco-Lógica Perú receives visits from producers all over the country that are interested in its experience. This experience has been presented at several events in Peru and other countries.

Eco-Lógica Perú is invited to offer interviews in radio and TV programmes. Moreover it has had a formal proposal to appear every week in a TV programme with a big audience. From time to time some newspapers publish articles about our work,.

# 3. Case Study: Maweni Farm - developing markets through organic products

(René Fischer, ZOPPA, Zimbabwe)

### Introduction

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in central Southern Africa. A central plateau, 1000 - 1500 m. above sea level, crosses the country SW to NE. In this cooler area, 800 - 1000 mm of summer rain falling in just 4 months, Dec-March, create favourable growing conditions. The lower parts of the country are dry and hot, suited for cattle and game ranching and irrigated crops.

The traditional, well adapted and diversified farming practices based on a variety of crops such as cassava, taro, sweet potato, rice, traditional small-grain crops, such as sorghum and millet, intercropped with cowpea and cucurbits have been marginalised through the age of colonisation.

Traditional farming practices were replaced by high input monocropping which - white dominated - commercial farming developed successfully. After independence in 1980, Zimbabwe became an important tobacco and cotton exporter and more recently, on the back of tobacco know-how and profits, cut flower and fresh vegetable exports grew rapidly.

Driven by vibrant agriculture and livestock industries, Zimbabwe has developed remarkably during 20 years of independence and was well under way to industrialisation. Millions of subsistence farmers adopted the use of hybrid seed and chemical fertilisers. Despite the resettlement programmes of the early nineteen eighties and African farmers' increased involvement in commercial maize, cotton and tobacco production, historic racial imbalances in land ownership remained largely unresolved and recently became the centre of political controversy, which led to the "fast track resettlement programme". The whole agricultural sector including allied industries is changing dramatically and these changes have not spared Organic Agriculture. Irrational fiscal policies cause growing disparities between the prices of produce and the cost of industrial farming inputs. Ever increasing prices and scarcity of inputs, make abun-

dantly clear that "modern" methods are unsuitable for subsistence farmers, while their traditional, sustainable, farming practices have been lost.

Zimbabwe's organic/ecological farming sector does reflect the typical segregation of the conventional farming community. There are some large commercial organic[17], export oriented operators joined (not exclusively) in ZOPPA[18] and there are small, agroecologically oriented growers who were inspired by donor funded NGOs, such as Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre, Jekesa Pfungwa, PELUM[19] and AfFOrResT[20]. ZOPPA, the association as well as individual members, have been assisted from as long back as 1994 by donors, mainly with the aim of entering the vast and promising organic export markets.

Even though Zimbabwe's farmers have proven to be open to innovations, Organic Farming has been surprisingly slow to expand and this has frequently been attributed to

- Conservative attitudes and a 'lager' mentality on the commercial side
- Lack of resources, business savvy and market access on the small farmers' side.
- Lack of interaction between the two groups

To illustrate some of these problems, I would like to tell about my own experience as an Organic Farmer and Mary Kabelele will talk about the agroecological group.

### *Organic conversion of Maweni Farm*

I purchased Maweni Farm in December 1999, a few months before the beginning of farm invasions which led to the controversial fast track resettlement programme. The previous owners had about 15 head of cattle grazing freely all over the property. Maweni Farm is situated near Ruwa Growth Point, 20 km east of the capital Harare's City Centre and 8 km from the International Airport. Land and structures comprise 20 ha of mainly coarse white granitic, acidic (pH 4.5) sands (>90 %) with numerous rocks strewn in, and several dwellings, garages and livestock sheds.

Water supply, which is critical in sandy soils where 800 mm of summer rain fall in just 4 months, Dec-March, consists of:

- Seasonal streams feeding several ponds and an old quarry.
- Two boreholes, of which one delivers 5000 litres/hour, the other much less. Theft of pumps is a serious problem, which escalated during farm invasions.

[17]Parrot, Nicholas, 2002, The real green revolution, IFOAM Ecology and Farming No. 30, p..5
[18]Zimbabwe Organic Producers' and Promoters' Association.
[19]Participatory Ecological Land Use Management, a national and regional facilitator and lobby group
[20]African Farmers' Research and Training

Frost during the dry winters and slow warming up of soils in spring are other critical climatic factors. My soil and climate are quite typical of communal areas, where the small holder farmers live, and of commercial tobacco growing areas.

### *Initial plans and experiences*

Fresh vegetables. Being near the airport and a shanty town, I wanted to concentrate on export crops. In the first year I planned to grow fresh vegetables for export through Hortico, a large producer that exports their own and contract growers' vegetables and wanted to develop organic product lines. Hortico has a sophisticated packhouse where 900 workers pack fine beans, runner beans, peas, baby corn, baby carrots etc., ready for European supermarkets, under strict hygienic control.

Soon after we had started, Hortico decided to shelve their organic plans because of difficulties with farm invasions and problems in synchronising production with the demands of European customers who mainly wanted runner beans year round.

When realising there were problems with HORTICO, I started to grow smaller quantities of fresh veggies and supplied them to Willowmead Junction, a specialised veggie shop, appx. 50 kg once a week.

Soil type, frost in winter and water resources are severely limiting vegetable production, so retailing or direct selling can offer increased income from limited product quantities.

Market stall on a local biological market in Peru.
(Photo: Frank Schreiber)

Protea cut flowers for export. I always liked protea flowers and when a neighbour who was growing them suggested that they would help me get off the ground by marketing our flowers jointly, I decided to grow this crop - which is suited to well drained soils - in order to have a perennial alternative to the fresh vegetables.

An initial lot of 1500 Leucospermum "Safari Sunset", 1500 "Inca Gold" and 1000 Protea "Sylvia", planted in March 2000 developed well and produced first flowers in December. Disastrous losses occurred when planting rooted cuttings obtained from a neighbour in November at the onset of the rains.The chosen protea varieties, which are known for their disease resistance, do quite well under organic management. Major problems are soil borne fungus diseases such as phytophthora, rhycoctonia and fusarium, which strike in the beginning and towards the end of the rains, when temperatures and humidity are high. I am trying to control these through green mulch, currently desmodium and in future various aromatic herbs.

I am exporting my proteas (18000 stems in 2001) through Zimflora, who sell rooted cuttings and give technical advice in return for an exclusive marketing agreement. Commissions charged decrease with increasing volume and I was advised to plant at least 8,000 plants per variety.

While I was initially certified by Ecocert under Hortico and they paid for it, I am now independent and the inspection for 2002 cost US$ 600.-. This cost is only bearable if I can sell all my products at a premium price. On the local market the European certificate is of limited use, the premium price is based on customers' confidence. Certification only makes sense for export products.

### *Potentials and constraints*

At the end of two years, the first of which was characterised by excessive rains (1200 mm) and the second one by lack of rain (500 mm), I was looking forward to a positive cash flow from my winter vegetables, but due to lack of water I had to suspend vegetable production temporarily. Despite this minor setback, I have established several parts of a diversified farming operation:

- A practical cropping pattern and rotation for year round supplies of fresh vegetables.
- The vegetable patch is rotated in a low input dryland cropping programme, which includes drought tolerant rain fed crops such as sorghum and cowpeas and 2 - 3 year fallow crops such as Rhodes grass and pigeon peas. One year is not enough to accumulate organic matter in my extremely sandy soils and repeated establishment of fallow crops is costly and counterproductive in terms of organic matter build-up.

- Ponds store water and since they are fed by a stream, mud accumulating at their bottom can be collected to incorporate in compost and improve my sandy soils.
- Draft oxen are firmly integrating livestock and crop production. They accumulate organic matter from the grazing areas for crops. They are a renewable, yet labour intensive form of farm power.
- Tractor implements are useful to establish fields, contour bunds, etc. but now I am mainly using the grass cutter and all other work is done by oxen.
- Beekeeping supports crops and diversifies and intensifies farming without putting undue strain on land- and financial resources.
- A market for organic flowers is developing, it is, however, difficult to meet the requirements of the initial fits and starts.

The constraints experienced during my start up as organic farmer may have been aggravated by our political confusion, they include:

- Organic Farming is skills intensive. Developing and adapting skills in diversified fields such as crops, livestock, beekeeping, landscaping, etc. is demanding, both technically and financially.
- Where specialist support and finance are available, an organic system can be established faster. Without specialist and financial inputs, the system evolves and diversifies slowly.
- Setting up such an operation on a small area is adding strain in that it is difficult to hire specialist skills to be applied on small areas and instead the few people working on a small farm have to be Jacks of Many Trades.

Lady, selling her mostly organically grown herbs in Georgia.
(Photo; Berthold Schrimpf)

- Coarse sands pose several constraints: Poor fertility and water holding capacity, termites and ants instead of earthworms, very abrasive on implements.
- Weed control creates a conflict between Organic Farming and conservation tillage. Under mechanical weed control it is difficult to establish a zero tillage system, yet herbicides are not allowed in Organic Farming.
- Agroforestry would be desirable, but the common leguminous shrubs suffer through dry, cold winter and occasional frost.
- The persistent threat of theft severely limits crop and technology options
- Critical mass and consistency of deliveries are serious market challenges to a small operator, particularly so when retailing directly or supplying to a new, fickle market.
- The cost of organic certification for the European Market is only justifiable if all products of my small operation are exported.

### *Solutions*

After experiencing the limitation which water supplies put on my vegetable production, I now see the phasing out of the vegetable outgrower scheme rather as a blessing in disguise and I realised the need to add value to my vegetables by marketing them directly. Since I struggle to offer a variety of vegetables, it would be sensible to get other growers involved, with the aim of establishing a local organic market. PELUM, Fambidzanai and ZOPPA have joined forces to this end, each one with their own interests and capacities.

- The ecological operators see a need to enable their producers to generate income from their environment friendly products.
- ZOPPA's members have experience in processing and (export) marketing, but would like to have an alternative local market and widen the range and volumes of organic products.

So far we have undertaken several initiatives to develop a local market and offer small producers access to export markets:

- A survey to assess the organic sectors in various countries in the Region is planned
- Documenting success stories of Organic Farming (Mary Kabelele) just completed
- Developing a local organic standard (starting from EC 2092/91) and a simplified local certification system is initiated.
- Establishing linkages between big and smaller operators is planned.

### Main questions for group work

(1) Sense or nonsense of air freighting cut flowers or fresh vegetables from developing to industrialised countries. Are fresh exports a long-term income generating option or are we banking on the whims of fickle markets?

(2) Are there successful examples of linking small and big organic operators and what are the criteria for their success?

(3) Which are suitable strategies to establish sustainable crop rotations on fragile soils in dry climates? Organic Farming and zero/conservation tillage systems are easy to adapt to the higher rainfall areas of the tropics.

## 4. Report of the Working Groups

### The need for national and local markets

At first a very basic question can be asked: is it really necessary to market organic produce as organic. The answer is yes and not only to get a higher price. Organic marketed products create awareness among consumers, an awareness which changes consumers habits, which is indispensable to change agricultural practices towards sustainable land use and the production of healthy food. This change can only be achieved jointly by producers and consumers.

The second question is how organic produce can be marketed. The export of organic products to mainly Northern countries has been an important entry point for the promotion of Organic Agriculture. At the same time, as this sector is growing, the constraints of this unilateral market strategy become increasingly visible:

- There is growing competition in organic produce on the world market (for instance for coffee and cocoa);
- World market prices are not stable but very fluctuating; as a general trend it can be observed that prices are decreasing;
- There is, in most cases, no free market on choosing a suitable certifier, as traders often "bring along" their certifier. Recognized certification bodies in the country are often missing;

- Small-holders and smallholder producer groups are disadvantaged or cannot be considered; their quantities may be too small or too heterogeneous in quality, their produce may not be interesting enough or it may be too perishable (e.g. vegetables) for an international market;
- Mainly unprocessed produce is exported; added value through processing is left to the importers and thus lost to the country.

All this shows evidence that a marketing strategy relying entirely on export goes along with high dependency of the producers on often only one trader/importer. It carries a high risk, excludes a priori many smallholders and many of their products which are not suitable for export and, last but not least, limits the revenues from production.

This calls clearly for local, regional or even national markets and not only for smallholders and smallholder associations. It could also represent an important outlet for agro-industries national markets and complement their exports.

### *Characteristics and potentials of national markets*

At present, in most Southern countries, organic markets are niche markets limited to big urban centres. There are only a very few consumers with an awareness of ecology and health, who demand organic food. And the few who may want to buy organic food do not find the produce indicated as always organic and of high quality. Often, there is no guarantee system, no attractive packing, and sometimes even the quality is poor. In other words, there may be a few organic producers, but they do not have the

Harvest of certified ecological Proteas, Leucadendron in Zimbabwe for sale as cut flowers. (Photo: René Fischer)

ability to market their produce appropriate. A strategy to develop national markets has to consider both the need, a) to build up a consumer group and b) to qualify farmers to offer attractive organic products. Important items of a strategy are:

Create a consumer elite. Social groups with higher incomes, with superior education and with an awareness of ecological problems are the most important group to address; Families with children are of particular importance. People who know organic markets from other countries and who have a different life style may act as "front runners" or "early innovators".

Public campaigns. Specialised magazines, radio and TV programmes are very suitable media to raise awareness of ecological needs and health issues ("present interesting proposals for mass media to get invitations or special campaigns"). The creation of alliances with organisations related to ecology (environmental groups), to nutrition (consumer organisations) or to health is an important step to broaden the platform of stakeholders.

Organisation of producers is of paramount importance, especially, if there are many smallholders. They have to be trained in various aspects of marketing (including packaging, labelling, commercial negotiation, etc) and they have to be given advice on how to set up a low cost guarantee or certification system and to develop commercialisation strategies. Farmers in producer associations or cooperatives can use their organisation to exchange experience, jointly to guarantee continuous supply and a diversity of products.

### *Main conclusions*

- At the beginning, organic products are for local elites,
- The local market cannot be developed without a guarantee or certification system,
- Social justice criteria do not fit the argument about local markets,
- Marketing requires professionalism and time; both are not necessarily available to farmers,
- It is difficult to convince big farmers to produce for a local market.

### *Main recommendations*

- National markets require some kind of certification or guarantee. But international certification is too expensive and a less costly system has to be found;
- Market research should focus on consumer interests and habits; secondly, but also importantly, farmers need a market information system on prices and their fluctuation;
- Awareness creation and educational campaigns should be carried out with professionals in this field (communication specialists);
- More attention and support has to be given to the organisation of farmers into effective marketing cooperatives or associations.
- Supermarkets should be given special attention among the marketing channels.


Organic fair organized by a network on eco-farming in Colombo, Sri Lanka. (Photo: Saminathan Vaheesan)

# VI. Support to Governments

# Keynote: Support to Governments *(Gunnar Rundgren)*

Before coming to the title, maybe something about what I am doing. I am the president of IFOAM. That is not a job, although it takes half of my time and it is unpaid. I also have to earn my living at something and I do that as a consultant in Organic Agriculture Development, mainly in Developing Countries and in Eastern Europe for a private limited company called GROLINK, of which I am the director.

### *The role of IFOAM*

Concerning IFOAM, I know Ann has already presented the I-GO programme to you, and I am very glad that IFOAM, through the I-GO programme, was able to support the initiative of AGRECOL. I want to underline that IFOAM is engaged in Organic Agriculture in all kinds of forms in all kinds of aspects of organic. A little too often I hear misunderstandings of what IFOAM is promoting or doing and why IFOAM is not doing this and why IFOAM is doing that. I think it must be seen in the light of the enormous diversity of our membership, because we have 700 different member organisations in more than 100 countries and they come to us and ask us to do different things. Sometimes we say yes and sometimes we say no. When we say no, it may be because it may be a bad idea, because we do not have the resources, or because it is not our role.

It think it is important to understand that IFOAM is an international federation of organisations, so people come together on an international level to cooperate over what they think needs to be done internationally. That means that IFOAM will always have a certain bias for activities and programmes that are relevant at the international level. Take the issue of standards and certification for instance. People ask, why is

IFOAM not engaged in local marketing, where you do not need any standards? The response is: You don´t need IFOAM for that. You do not need its permission, its endorsement to work in local market development. That has been done by organic farmers all over the world all the time. What do people need IFOAM for is to hammer out differences on the international level, in standards, when people in one country want to sell to another country. They are getting problems, they are not accepted in that country. There comes a major role for IFOAM and that's why IFOAM spends so much energy and time on international standards, accreditation, etc. It does not at all mean that IFOAM is discouraging, neglecting or rejecting local marketing development.

I do think that IFOAM has been bad in expressing its endorsement and support of local marketing, but that has changed quite drastically in recent years. I think we are making that clear to everybody, we really think this is a very good idea, but again, the role of IFOAM for that is a little more less clear. Why do you need IFOAM to sell your vegetables to your neighbours or in the local community? You don´t need IFOAM for that. But we can convene workshops, seminars, conferences also on local marketing and IFOAM can be a very important channel for giving good examples, floating them around among yourselves and others. But be realistic on what you can expect from IFOAM, an organisation which is not very big, not very powerful and not wealthy. Please come to us with what you want to do, but have a realistic eye when you do that. And that is probably giving a lead into the topic I was supposed to speak about: Support to governments.

### *Cooperation with governments is no one way traffic*

I was actually very frustrated about this title. Normally people want support from governments and here you have support to governments. But – the same as with IFOAM - it is a double way. actually. If you do not give, you cannot take. If you want to get something out of IFOAM, you had better invest your time and participate in IFOAM. And, with governments as well, it cannot be a one way traffic, you cannot only get help and surely, you cannot only help them, without getting something back.

I think when we speak about this support to governments you also need to question why you should bother at all. Why should you support them and, also, why should they support you? One of the groups here said that it's important to sort out the role of the government and this is exactly what we have to clarify and that is of course not a universal role. It is quite different in China, in India, in Argentina or in Cuba what the role of governments can be over a ten year horizon. Things are changing in most countries.

Also, many people do not see the multitude of roles of the government. There is a role in general policy framework, the role for regulations and enforcement of regula-

tions, there is the role for infrastructure, the taxation, in some countries extensive redistribution of income as with the social welfare systems in Europe. You have educational roles and you have a lot of governmental programs. Finally, the government is a service provider including in agriculture for instance in research and in extension. Such services can also be provided by the private sector. It is debated in many countries: Who is providing these services in the best way and how should they be organised? Of course you must analyse your country and understand the role for your government that you want to support and what role do you want them to have.

### *Do you need an organic regulation ?*

I want to start with one topic, because you have been speaking about certification and standards. I want to start with the role of organic regulations, meaning a regulation in the market place saying who can claim that a product is organic or not. I will start that discussion by letting you follow my personal history in the organic sector very briefly. I started Organic Farming in 1977 on a small farm in Sweden. We still farm the same farm. The first five years we sold our products as conventional to the supermarkets or as organic to local consumers. We could tell them it was organic. Then we created a market cooperative and organized 15 other growers, we sold together under an organic mark. After some time we realised that the buyers and the consumers were asking for some kind of verification of that the products we sold were organic. I was asked to look into that.

This led to the foundation of the certification body KRAV and I became the manager of that body for eight years. So we created a third party, an independent certification body, we created standards, etc. etc. All this development was done without any government involvement. Sweden became a late member of the European Union in 1995 and until 1995 Sweden had absolutely no government involvement in the organic sector.

This leads me to organic regulations. They have been around for a while, but not as long as the organic movement, which existed much earlier. It is not the regulations that create organic. So it started sometimes in the early nineteen eighties with regulations in Austria, France, followed by Denmark, Spain and Finland and also in the United States there were regulations quite early, not on the federal level but on the state level in California and Oregon. Then the European Union adopted this regulation in 1991/92. In studying the development of the organic market in a number of countries it is interesting to note that there is absolutely no evidence that an organic regulation has had any major impact on the market. If I say this to the EU guys they get crazy. They believe that through creating a regulation they have created the organic market. Nothing could be further from the truth.

If you look at the EU, the growth in the organic sector in the EU in the 4 years before the organic regulation was 107%. After the introduction of the regulation, the growth rate dropped to 60% and then again it got a little more speed in the following three years when it went up to 70%. But in this period a lot of subsidies were introduced. In reality subsidies played a much bigger role than the market regulations have done. If we look at two Nordic countries – both of them are actually very strong in organic – Sweden and Denmark. Organic was very small in Sweden but it existed. Denmark was a pioneer in organic regulation, because they had a big scandal when a bio-dynamic farmer sold 1000 t of bio-dynamic wheat from 2 ha. That triggered a regulation, when the government said this is not acceptable. So they implemented a regulation and the effect on growth was zero, in Sweden with quicker growth there was no regulation. Sweden implemented subsidies and farmers responded quite soon and growth took off. Then Sweden became a member of the European Union and after that growth has not been very exceptional. Today, the share of Organic Agriculture in Sweden is higher than in Denmark. You can see the same in France, also a pioneer in setting organic regulations in 1985. It had absolutely no positive influence: Organic Agriculture in France didn't develop at all between 1985 and 1995. I do not say regulations are negative but please don´t think that you need an organic regulation to develop the organic market. The US had no regulation, but it has the biggest organic market in the world. In Japan they claim that when they introduced regulation the organic market has been reduced by 25% or so. This is not only because there was fraud before, it is also because many Japanese farmers did not want to be certified. They dropped out of the system. In the U.S. there are more then 10,000 organic farmers, who are not certified, and from 21st October 2002 they are no longer allowed to sell their produce as organic despite the fact that they are organic. They asked for it in the US and the Europeans also asked for it. And many of you are asking for it in your countries.

I sincerely think you should think 5 times before you go to your government and say, please give us a regulation. What really is the reason? If it is only for export, ok that may be fine, but history shows that it makes very little difference. There are imports to the European Union from more than 90 countries, only 6 of them have been approved by the EU. For all the others it really does not matter whether they have a regulation or not. And finally, the big thing with this is whether your government is going to implement and enforce the regulation. In fact it is very typical, especially in Developing Countries, that there are many regulations on the shelf. As long as they are not implemented they will not help at all to facilitate market access, and if implemented their usefulness is often questionable.

If you need the regulation for the domestic market, then there is another discussion. But I sincerely doubt that there are many Developing Countries where there is such an apparent need to ask your government to make a regulation for local market development.

### *Help to set up an agricultural agenda*

Coming to other policy areas, agriculture has a strong, often negative impact on the environment. The list is long. There is pollution of drinking water through nitrates, phosphates and pesticides. Air is polluted by emissions of methane, ammonia, nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide, soil is being eroded and biodiversity is being lost. Last but not least there are enormous costs caused by health hazards through pesticide residues, nitrate in drinking water and as well as micro-organisms and other disease agents (e.g. BSE). All this affects society in a way but is not reflected in the price of the product. In Europe and in the U.S. the external cost of agriculture is estimated to be in the range of $200(US) per ha p.a. I think this a very good starting point when you want to interact with your government and explain to them why they need to change the agriculture policy. You must give them reasons, it is not enough that organic is good. You have to explain to them why it is good. It is good for food security, it good for the environment. And I want to go quite rapidly through a number of policy measures that promote sustainability and Organic Agriculture at the same time. That is my top list for the government if I want to help them to set the agenda. And that is the main help you should give to the government: to set the agenda for change.

Start to recognize what is existing. I do not subscribe to the idea that traditional farming and indigenous farming is not organic and has no value. There are many good examples of non-certified Organic Agriculture that should be recognized and reconfirmed, not only by IFOAM but by your own government, if they are good agricultural systems and not backward. Your governments should define a policy for sustainable agricultural development and incorporate organic in that. Ok, many governments have some very general and broad statements on sustainable agriculture, but you also need to define a strategy on how to implement such a policy, otherwise it is just the normal political fluff. Then you need some kind of support mechanism. But let's be realistic. There is no way that any developing country is going to implement subsidy systems as in the European Union. You should not even ask for it. It does not work here and your government can't afford it. In Europe 2% of the population are engaged in agriculture, and the Europeans can afford to subsidize both conventional and organic farmers with quite a lot of money. Many of your countries have 50% to 80% of the population engaged in agriculture. It just does not work to ask for subsidies.

On economics, it is very important that depletion of natural resources is much more reflected in the calculations for agriculture as well as the value of environmental services and things like that. It is very important, to make this and the implications of agricultural policy understandable on a high political level.

### *Promote the polluter – pays – principle*

Another thing is the Polluter-Pays-Principle. It means that somebody who is harming the environment is liable for the cost of that pollution. This is a well accepted principle, but it has never been implemented in agriculture. On the contrary: in Europe and in the U.S. polluters are subsidized. They get paid for pollution, and in many of your countries as well. Your own governments, the World Bank and others are subsidizing pesticides through all kind of programmes. They should raise taxes on pesticides and fertilizers instead of subsidizing them. Many of these subsidies are hidden. In Tanzania, for instance, people get vouchers for inputs instead of money in their pocket. And the only way to get value from it is to buy pesticides or fertilizers. In Uganda, the cotton farmer gets paid less for their cotton because the money is taken from the price of the cotton and used to buy pesticides that is then given to the farmers. This is also a hidden subsidization. Based on the polluter-pays principle, such inputs should be taxed instead. And then we need to stop subsidies for using limited resources such as irrigation water. Water is subsidized all over the world. It is the worst in Israel and the U.S. but also the governments in many Developing Countries are engaged in all kind of irrigation schemes. They may be even useful for smallholders, but sorry, people have to pay the cost for this. And, as soon as you subsidize you get an overuse of the good.

And then of course we have all these things that do not apply so much in your countries but very much in Europe – all the subsidies of production. Looking at these figures, there is an enormous level of subsidy in the EU and in the U.S. as well. That is very harmful here and it is even more harmful in the Developing Countries because surpluses are produced in the North that are dumped in the countries of the South. In contrast to that, most Developing Countries are doing the opposite. They are unfairly taxing their agriculture economies in order to subsidize other sectors of the country's economy. Maybe that is something they have to do, because agriculture is so important, I don´t know, but this is creating very unfair games for you in international trade and it is also distorting domestic development in Developing Countries.

### *Re-think market development, research and extension in your country*

On the market side, there are all kind of strange programmes and incentives that distort what people are producing. Very little priority is given to food crops in most Developing Countries. Whether we speak about development projects or about research or about extension, very little attention is paid to food crops. And, very little attention is paid to developing local and regional markets. There is a lot to do. It is not the government that is going to do it, but it can create a nice framework for that. Especially here we need to promote sustainable consumption patterns in how we consume in our countries. That does not necessarily mean a no to import to these countries, but we surely need to look at how and why things are consumed.

There are many problems in research, technology development and extension. One is that there are not enough resources in Developing Countries. In industrial countries maybe 2-3% of the agricultural value is re-invested in research. In most of your countries you are down to 0,5% or less that is really re-invested into research. And an additional problem is that research is increasingly privatised, dependent on company funding. And companies don´t see any real value in promoting research that is trying to strengthen farmers use of local resources. It is not because they are evil but because the can't earn any money from it. For that kind of research we need public funding, we need a public agenda. I also think as a general trend, the link between research,

extension and the farmer is very weak. Researchers are sitting in the universities studying what they think is interesting to study whether it is relevant or not for the farmers. In India for instance most research is done on irrigation farming despite the fact that most farmers are on dry lands, etc, etc.

The extension service in many countries is really in a bad shape. I don´t have a good solution. It is quite clear that you need to reconnect with the farmer, do farm based research and extension. But who is really going to pay the bill? Most governments in Developing Countries cannot afford to pay extension services very well. Accordingly a market oriented extension service is increasing. That will then be linked to export projects. That means that the people who do farming for export get good extension services, but the others don´t. They get the qualified staff, the others don´t. Here a I see a big problem and I do not see how solve it.

Finally all aspects of an agricultural policy come down to access to resources which is a much bigger issue than just organic. It is about equity in society, who has access to land, access to water, access to credit, who is owning the genetic resources, etc. These are general issues but they are important for organic.

### *Create a strong national platform!*

Whatever you want to do in your country, may it be certification, standards setting or influencing agricultural policies, you will only be successful cooperating with your government if your Organic Agriculture movement is in a strong position. Experience suggests that national movements are not able to cooperate well enough. They have been weak and fragmented. They could not unify their ideas on what is organic in their country. How many countries have developed their own national standards? Everybody is complaining about it, but what is the problem? To gather the main actors, to sit down for a number of meetings in a row and write down the standards? Nobody is stopping you from doing that! What is stopping you in most of cases is that you do not cooperate well enough in your own countries. And then people go to the government trying to solve problems they can't solve them themselves. That is exactly the reason why Europe has a regulation. You should not think that the consumers asked for it. Now when it is here everyone say it is there to protect the consumers. But the lobbying to get an organic regulation was done by the organic farmers' associations, because they could not cooperate. They did not trust each other, so they called in the government to sort out the differences. They were fighting, they were at each other's throats. IFOAM itself was very instrumental in getting the EU regulation.

Whatever you do with your governments, you must do it on the basis of strength within yourself and within the organic movement. If you approach the government from a fragmented sector where everybody runs with his own agenda to the government, that will not be very successful lobbying. Therefore, the starting point should always be to create a strong national movement, a platform or a network, however you may call it. A forum, where people engaged in the organic sector speak with each other and first sort out the differences and then go to the government.

Without such a platform you will not have any really good influence on the government, you will not get much support from them. Similarly, you will also have much less influence in IFOAM and get much less support from IFOAM. I see that all the time: it is the countries that manage to establish a good strong national movement that can use IFOAM for their purposes in a good way. They can also create very strong regional groups, because they have a strong basis at home. If you don´t have that basis it is very difficult to make progress regardless of whether we speak about market development, certification, government policies or influence on IFOAM standards. You need to really build your own national platform. Thank you.

# ANNEXES

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## Annex I: Additional Case Studies

### Technology Development

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# 1. Technology Development in the Manipur Hills of India (R.S. Ngamreiwung, JAFAS)

The Jhumia Farmers Society (JAFAS) is working in the two districts of Manipur hills, viz: Ukhrul and Chandel. The area is populated by indigenous tribal communities. The area is part of the great Himalayan foothills. The mainstay of the tribal community is farming on the hill slopes. The traditional method of slash and burn (Jhum cultivation) is practised for crop production, and annually a certain area is selected and then they move on to a new area for the same practice of crop production. The traditional method of jhum cultivation is creating lot of environmental problems of late for the green cover, crop productivity and the overall food security of the area. The problem arising out of jhum cultivation is heavy soil erosion, loss of soil fertility and micronutrients, soil moisture, and spreading of wasteland. The hill slopes where the cultivation is practised is in the range of 20% to 42% slope. The rainfall is 2300 to 2600 mm per annum. The monsoon season starts from the middle of May and continues until September. But, we have the benefit of the eastern monsoon triggered from the Bengal area of the Indian Ocean and the area gets occasional showers in every month. The area experiences a maximum temperature of 350C and a minimum of 40C. The area produces both subtropical and temperate fruits, vegetables, and other food crops. The area is rich in medicinal, aromatic plants and herbs. The people use local medicinal plants to treat many of their problems. For example, they use the "SINGKONA" plant as a local remedy to treat malaria.

Generally, the area is farmed conventionally, but in one way, the farming is organic by default. For better crop production and harvest the farmers practice several methods. The burning of the jhum is one method of eliminating germs and bacteria. The ashes also reduce the acidity of the soil and improve soil fertility. The problem is heavy rain and soil erosion. The farmer's traditional knowledge of land management, moisture conservation, seed storage, and storage of harvested crops is not accepted and promoted with scientific management. Modern agriculture with its useful techniques can be integrated with local knowledge in promoting productive farming to assure productivity, prevention of crop diseases, pest attack and wastage during the storage period. Lack of organised scientific manpower integrated with the farmer's traditional knowledge is the main problem in our area.

Jhumia Farmers Society (JAFAS) has initiated a specific study of seed storage by the farmers in two villages (Shangshak and Koso). Shangshak has a population of 410 families with a population of 2,350 souls. Koso village has a population of

150 families with a population of 925 souls. The village has more than 12,500 hectares of land. More than one third of the land is under green cover and natural regeneration of vegetation is taking place. However, about 4,000 to 6,500 ha are classified as jhum wasteland and are prone to degradation. Several areas are now covered with gullies and surface soil has been eroded.

The farmers in the village use their own seeds and seedlings for crop production. JAFAS has been studying the farmers' seed storage techniques for the past three years and assisting them in improving the system. The study is involves ginger rhizome, turmeric field storage and t home storage of rice. The farmers traditionally dig a pit 5 feet long and 3 ft wide to a depth of 4 feet. The bottom portion is paved with pebbles and covered with dry grass. The clean healthy ginger rhizome is neatly packed in the pit and another layer of dry grass is spread on the top surface to protect from any form of disturbances. This is done soon after the harvest and the stored seed is used for the next crop. A similar practice is adopted for turmeric. In the case of rice, the seed is kept in circular or square type bins made out of bamboo mats and poles. The roof is covered with thatch. The cylindrical bins are 6 to 8 feet diameter with the height of 10 feet. No moisture penetration or attack by rodents and other pests is affecting these storage facilities.

JAFAS has studied the subject and assisted the farmers in the proper construction and enlargement of these stores. Earlier, the capacity of these facilities was minimal. We could help the farmers in adopting bigger sizes to accommodate large quantities. All the materials are locally available and no treatment is required before sowing these seeds/rhizomes.

***Main Questions:***

- How can the traditional knowledge of storage be synchronised with modern scientific storage systems?
- What is the alternative to farmers keeping their own seeds and planting materials?
- Whether the external supply of seeds and seedlings can be depended upon by the farmers in remote and hilly regions where the climate during the monsoon season is very difficult for the movement of transport?
- When the farmer is using his own seeds and seedlings, can it be certified as truly organic?
- Can we develop local standards for seed storage, which would be acceptable to others, who buy the harvest?

## 2. The Asian Research Network of Organic Agriculture (ARNOA) (S.M. Sohn, RIOA, Dankook University)

The ARNOA (Asian Research Network of Organic Agriculture) was established in November 2001 during the IFOAM-Asia conference. Delegates from 16 Asian countries participated in ARNOA; Korea, Japan, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Philippine, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Each country has their country coordinator and there are 6 members on the ARNOA Steering Committee.

The objective of ARNOA is to promote and encourage research in all branches of Asian Organic Agriculture and to facilitate the cooperation of scientific activities, education and knowledge transfer on an Asian scale by means of various publications, events and scientific structure.

Not all of the Asian countries were so happy with IFOAM Basic Standard and Codex Alimentarius guidelines for organically grown food, since these reflect only European and American Organic Farming methods, but not Asian Organic Farming which has small farm units and is practised in paddy fields.

For example, Organic rice cultivation has been practised in Asia for thousands of years and continues to this day. Most countries have their own techniques and methods unique to each country's topography and climate. Unfortunately, these highly specialised techniques for Organic Farming were not reflected in the most recent finalised edition of the Codex Alimentarius guidelines for organically grown food. It is the contention of us scientists, who work directly in the field of Organic Agriculture, that there is a strong need for Asian countries to be represented more accurately in the Codex. The first step to reach this goal is to draft a revised copy of the Codex that deals specifically with Asian topography and climate. In order to draft a copy that represents the diversity of Organic Farming in Asia, we feel it necessary for all countries represented in the revised draft to be present at the 1st International Conference on Asian Organic Agriculture, where we plan to unveil and deliver the draft revision of Codex guidelines that reflect Asian rice cultivation.

ARNOA will bring together representatives of organic researchers and various organic disciplines from all over Asia. ARNOA is open to anyone involved in Organic Agriculture and sustainable development. This includes farmers, researchers, advisors, food processors, traders, certifiers, policy makers as well as consumers.

"The Development of a Standardised Method for Organic Rice Cultivation" was chosen as the theme for the 1st ARNOA Conference to highlight the necessity of revised Codex Alimentarius guidelines and IFOAM Basic Standard for organically grown food. Also, we feel that specific details regarding Asian climatic & crop cultivation conditions, small organic farms, and any other issues relevant to organic rice cultivation, should be included in the new Codex guidelines.

The ARNOA meeting, conference and symposium will explore issues regarding the need for guidelines for organic rice cultivation and practical applications of Organic Agriculture specifically in relation to Asian climatic and topographic conditions. These issues will be discussed in specified sessions, workshops and panel discussions in order to help us draft and deliver a revision to the Codex guidelines and IFOAM Basic Standards on organic rice cultivation

The homepage of ARNOA is at www.anseo.dankook.ac.kr/~ecnet/arnoa/index.html and the 1st ARNOA conference on organic rice cultivation will be held on 12-15 November 2002 in RDA / Suweon and in Dankook University/ Cheonan, Korea.

***Main questions:***

- How to raise the funds for the international research cooperation and network activity (such as publications, seminars, workshops, training courses etc) among the member countries, especially for Asian research network system?
- The current Codex guidelines for organically grown foods and IFOAM Basic Standards basically reflect upland conditions not paddy field conditions. How can Asian organic farmers practice the current Codex and IFOAM regulations in paddy field conditions?
- There is a strong need for Asian countries to be able to represent their soil, topography and climatic conditions more accurately in the Codex and IFOAM regulation. How can we develop drafts that represent the diversity of Organic Farming in Asia? How to follow the procedure?
- CGIAR is an umbrella organisation for agricultural research. Many countries would provide a research fund to ARNOA if we were somehow connected to the CGIAR system. This would mean that ARNOA could be recognised as responsible for Organic Agriculture research in the region. How to connect ARNOA to CGIAR in the future?

# 3. Success Stories from Zimbabwe (Mary Kabelele, PELUM)

## 3.1. Description of the region

Zimbabwe, with a population of about 12 million, has 80 per cent of its people dependent upon agriculture. Rainfall ranges from less than 500mm to 1000mm per year over its four ecological zones. The country is land locked, situated in southern Africa between 15 and 22 degrees S latitude. It is a beautiful country; its peoples have accomplished wonders with their world-famous music, sculpture and traditional crafts. It is also home to Victoria Falls, one of the world's natural and cultural attractions.

The staple crop is maize, while cotton, burley and Virginia tobacco, citrus fruits, wine grapes and sugar cane are the primary cash crops. Tobacco is the largest export earner in the economy. Livestock remains a major commodity.

Over the past decades, the country had both commercial and subsistence farming with the majority of commercial farmers being whites. The government is at the moment embarking on a land redistribution programme which is aimed to provide land to the black majority so that they can also participate in sustainable development.

## 3.2. Rationale

With the rising costs of farm inputs like seeds, fertilisers and pesticides, smallholder farmers are finding it increasingly difficult to sustain their subsistence farming efforts, despite the fact that farming is their way of life – for food security and income. It is hoped that the introduction of Organic Farming could provide a solution to the problem for the majority of the smallholder farmers, and hence contribute substantially towards rural development.

In their efforts to promote Organic Farming and marketing, PELUM Association, ZOPPA, Fambidzanai Permacultural Training Centre and other organisations – mainly NGOs in the country, had as one of their activities taking stock of existing farming technologies through documentation of success stories. It is envisaged that the documentation of the success stories shall on one hand help to docu-

ment the adoption of the technology in the rural areas but also serve as a tool for its further spread by presenting/showcasing successful practices so that they are available for promotion through various media. Also, this documentation describes in detail how the local producer is utilising his/her natural and other resources and in which way the available resource mix may have contributed to the adoption of the technology. Fourteen smallholder farmers participated in the documentation exercise for three days. Four stories have been appended.

From the cases presented, the following were indicated as motivation for their involvement in Organic Farming:

- Use of natural resources available in their areas, enabling them to avoid buying fertilisers and other chemicals, which were becoming more and more expensive.
- Declining soil fertility due to heavy and inappropriate use of chemicals
- Improved taste of vegetables and fruits

During the sharing of success stories, smallholder farmers reported that organically grown food tastes better compared to conventional vegetables. The majority of the farmers at the workshop also shared their experiences in the use of herbs for treatment of various diseases. They shared their experience of how some of the herbs grown helped to treat some HIV/AIDS related diseases. It was observed that people infected with AIDS improved their health when they were taken to rural areas where less processed food was eaten. Participants agreed among themselves to continue with their research into the use of herbs and to report their findings at the next networking workshop.

Organic Farming is more or less like traditional African farming, and therefore it revives in a way the dying indigenous knowledge. The indigenous knowledge systems were eliminated during colonial time and replaced with the so-called modern technologies. It is now with the introduction of farming systems like Organic Agriculture and Permaculture that farmers are realising the importance of using their indigenous knowledge.

In our success story workshop we unfortunately failed to include farmers of the Zambezi Valley Organic Cotton Project. This project was based on the "Development through Trade" approach put forward by the EPOPA programme which is primarily a business strategy in which small scale farmers link with an exporter in order to export organic produce. This "Development through Trade" approach was combined with the "Learning through Discovery" training given to farmers by AfFOResT and the strategy to train Farmer Field Workers (FFWs) who would then train other farmers through Farmer Field Schools (each having at least ten farmers). Though the project as such did not succeed because the

"Development through Trade" approach forced a pace on farmers that was unrealistic and did not strengthen the farmers' organisational capacity, organic cotton growing technology was developed and some farmers continue practising it successfully.

### 3.3. Potentials of Organic Farming Development

Potentials for Organic Farming and marketing in Zimbabwe are high. With the rising cost of living, agricultural inputs increasingly becoming more expensive and farmers are increasingly becoming aware of the importance of Organic Agriculture. Farmers are willing to spend their time learning about Organic Agriculture and applying the knowledge and skills learned. They have also indicated their commitment to share the knowledge with other farmers. They are ready to promote it also to solve the rising unemployment problem, especially among youths.
The support of NGOs for sustainable agriculture has strengthened the organic movement and permacultural development in the country. However, there is a need to have supportive policies in Organic Farming and the marketing of produce by all stakeholders.

### 3.4. Constraints of Organic Farming Development

Constraints pointed out include limited information especially research findings, on the topic in the country. Other problems are lack of - and also the high cost of - transport for smallholder farmers. The level of involvement in Organic Farming by most smallholder farmers is at the initial stage. They are threatened by high costs of inspection, certification and lack of market and marketing information.

### 3.5. Proposed solutions

Possible solutions could be capacity building of institutions; research institutions, universities and NGOs that assist smallholder farmers to enable them cover wider areas in the country. It would also be necessary to promote organic produce through consumer education and by linking commercial farmers with smallholder farmers as a way to strengthen smallholder farmers.

### 3.6. Main questions:

- How could we form a network of information sharing for smallholder farmers in Organic Agriculture? Also between north and south?

- Agricultural crops are developed after years of research. At the moment, universities, research institutions and government extension service do not seem to have a great deal of interest to promote Organic Farming. Without the involvement of the learning institutions and the government to support Organic Farming, the growth of Organic Agriculture can be very slow. For countries where Organic Agriculture is at an advanced stage, how did they manage to work with the three organisations/institutions?
- Consumer education is vital for people to make informed choices on the quality of food they eat, and in so doing, help to promote the market for good quality food. How are others carrying out consumer education?
- How could we develop and make use of resource materials on Organic Agriculture?
- How do we develop local markets for organic produce? How do we get information on international markets to motivate growing farmers?

### *Annex 3/I: The success story of Plaxedes Kaseke*

I am Plaxedes Kaseke. I live in Gosha Village Chikwaka Communal Lands in Goromonzi District along Mtoko road. From Harare 55 Km peg, 5 Km from Juru growth point turn right in Mashonaland Province. My neighbours and some people in my village are still using fertilizers and chemicals. Only a few people are practicing Organic Farming methods. People who live in Juru growth point mostly come to buy herbs and organic vegetables. They say they taste good.

Before I was trained as an organic farmer, I used to buy some fertilizers and chemicals, but since 1999, I was trained in Organic Farming by Fambidzanai. I found it cheaper because I use available resources and my children are very healthy. I am able to cure different diseases using herbs apart from organic gardening. I also grow different crops in my field using organic methods such as Kenyan styles, double digging, fertility trenches and mulching which helps to conserve moisture.

Organic Agriculture is a holistic production management system, which promotes and enhances agro-ecosystem health. Also, in many ways Organic Farming resembles the traditional farmers use of indigenous knowledge and locally available resources.

As an organic farmer, what I noticed is that healthy soil gives rise to a crop that can stand better against pest and diseases. Even to healthy babies. Poor soil fertility and poor pest and disease management reduces yields. Also I practice early planting to optimise rainfall, like this year it led me to better yield. Also rotations, balanced application of manure, the use of resistant varieties, knowledge of the

growing season of natural enemies, planting trap crops such as milkweed, scouting for pests and diseases are key to success in Organic Farming. Early use of natural enemies, early spot treatment with herbal sprays, timely harvest and adequate weeding are also very important.

Do you know that I have farmer's friends such as frogs and locusts that also feed on aphids, which destroys my vegetables? My field is 2 hectares, I plant all my different crops such as maize, rows of acacia tree for nitrogen fixing in the middle then ground nuts, cowpeas. I can intercrop them with finger millet at the end and pumpkins and beans.

The size of my garden is 1 acre. I grow different vegetables such as cabbages on fertility trench beds and tomatoes even on double digging beds and then I mulch again to conserve moisture. I always buy hybrid seed from the shop. I am not able to grade seed myself. I then plant maize, groundnuts and finger millet during mid October.

After harvesting, I use vertiver grass to protect maize from weevils. Our ancestors also used dried finger millet and wood ash inside in the granaries to protect maize from weevils, so it is a cultural method. On vegetables I used to spray herbal sprays such as Paw-paw leaves, Lantana camara, tomato leaves then spray on the vegetable the following day. Dilute before applying. Another important thing now is that I have improved my living standards. During last year, I harvested I tonne maize, 6 x 50Kg groundnuts, 1 x 20Kg beans, 1 x 20 Bambara nuts and 3 x 20kg finger millet. As we know that this year there is a drought some neighbours are coming to buy maize at $700.00 per 20Kg. So I am very happy. I earned nearly $14000.00. I also sold some different herbs and I received $14,000.00, for my vegetables I received $3,500.00 per month and for tomatoes I received $2,100.00 for 3 boxes.

Some vendors at Juru growth point come and buy vegetables from my garden and my neighbours. Last year I bought a wheelbarrow. It is worth $10,000.00. My husband and my children were very happy. It is now a tool I am using to carry manure in my garden.

My slogan is "Organic Farming is Farmer Farming " Use available resources, know your friends, and use available resources. Rotate crops, intercrop and then do balanced manuring. "Use available resources".

I am very proud of myself. I am a small organic doctor because I am able to treat different diseases like a woman who had a cracked breast; I just crush saskonia leaves then applied them to the breast. I treated 2 women who had cracked breasts. I use it for backaches especially for women. I treated 6 women with

backaches, lemon bovina for flu, and sweet violet for sexual transmitted diseases (STD). Crush the leaves and add water in a cup then drink after 10 to 15 minutes. Many prostitutes at Juru growth point come to my home. I treated about 12 including men with lemon balon for headaches and opening minds for school children.

I stayed for some years not knowing that mint is a very useful herb not just a flower and is used to open minds for school children and also to treat head- aches and stomachache. Also you can use it to make tea. My kids like herbal tea because they say there is a good taste in it. Again people with HIV AIDS who had sores are treated with comfrey leaves. Squeeze out the juice and apply on the sores.

As a dairy farmer, I don't have to buy medicine to dose my dairy cows. I just crush mango leaves or wormwood leaves to dose my dairy cows, which is cheaper for me. Fertilizers and chemicals are very expensive; I cannot afford to buy them.

Imagine our ancestors' life span, they ate wild fruits and cultural foods like finger millet, sadza, cultural relish and added peanut butter. They were very strong and healthy. Comparing today's people here in Zimbabwe people are dying in their 20s and late 30s. So it will be wise for you to start using cultural farming methods for them to survive more years.

Some of the problems facing us as organic farmers are that at first some people were opposing us ignoring and laughing at us saying Organic Farming takes a long-term process, yet conventional farming doesn't take long. They are now coming to beg organic vegetables and herbs saying they taste good. Some come and steal. They actually know that they don't harm them. My future plans now are to teach each others, going into their gardens doing practicals, giving them some herbs for a start, and telling them their uses, drying some vegetables and herbs and selling them in supermarkets. Also I would like to go overseas to spread Organic Farming and teaching people there.

My general thoughts and experience has shown that farmers find it very difficult in the first few years of production to attain the conventional system. This is mainly because of the different agronomic practices that take time for the farmer to master. Also, management of pests and diseases is not very easy, it requires farmers to be trained and for them to have experience. Most farmers say Organic Farming is very difficult also there is a lot more work to be done than in conventional farming. Some people are lazy; they do not want to work hard.

My family and I benefit a lot from Organic Farming. I can make herbal tea from different herbs, selling them. I also use herbal sprays on my vegetables and I put

liquid manure on vegetables and crops as fertilizers. I keep livestock for meat such as hare, rabbits, pigs and chicken. I also get manure from these livestock. As I know that in Organic Farming nothing is thrown away.

I just spend my money paying school fees for my kids and clothes - not wasting money buying fertilisers and chemicals. People in my village usually come to my house for some ideas and to buy some herbs. People are practising Organic Farming mainly in gardens. They saw the importance of Organic Farming and what t need to be done to promote Organic Farming is that I should raise some awareness, holding workshops and also giving them herbs freely to start with. Visiting them in their homes teaching them, doing practical work. Now lets use Organic Farming methods for a better healthy life.

### *Annex 3/II: The success story of Eunice Katapa*

My name is Eunice Katapa. I am forty-five years old. I am a married woman with five children. I live in Chikwaka rural area, 55 kilometres from Harare. I started growing organic vegetables and herbs in 1997. I was trained to be an organic farmer by the Jekesa Pfungwa organisation. My aim was to feed my family first and sell the extra produce to my neighbours. Before using organic methods, I was growing vegetables using fertilisers, which cost more. Fertilisers don't enrich the soil. They kill some tiny creatures that help to fertilise land. I started using Organic Farming, which was very cheap and very simple.

My garden has an area of seventy metres by seventy metres. It has clay soil.This type of soil needs plenty of water and sufficient manure. I have seasonal cropping. I grow crops according to climate. Like from January to March, I grow tomatoes, beans, carrots and rape. February to July, I grow sugar loaf, spinach and onions. August to September, I grow butternut and cucumber. August to December, I grow okra, paprika, green pepper and maize. This seasonal cropping helps me to know what people around my garden like. They can get what ever they want in time. In other words my organic vegetables will be on demand all the year round.

Another organic method I use in my garden is crop rotation. I do this to keep my soil fertile. Where there were cabbages and tomatoes, next time I grow beans, onions and carrots. For cabbages and tomatoes are heavy feeders, they take much from soil. Carrots, beans and onions are light feeders, they enrich soil. This method of crop rotation helps to prevent pests and diseases so I don't need money to buy pesticides. I just rotate my crops.

There are so many ways to kill a cat. Another method I use in my garden is intercropping. This organic method means growing different types of crops in one bed. I grow beans, onions, and vegetables like spinach and herbs. I have the advantage of not wasting land. From a small portion I harvest more. At the same time I have got a balanced diet. There is no kwashiorkor in my family nor in the local people. This method makes the land fertile and prevents soil erosion.

As for spraying vegetables, I am no longer using pesticides. Most pesticides are harmful. Some cost more money. Nowadays some are not available in shops. So for spraying my crops in the organic garden I am now using herbal sprays such as garden rue, tephrosia, paw paw leaves and roots. Pound leaves of garden rue and tephrosia separately; soak leaves separately with 4 litres of water, for one night. Dilute 1-4 cups and spray and harvest after 3 days. Take paw leaves and roots, pound them then soak overnight. Dilute 1-2 litres water and spray. After twenty-four hours all aphids will be dead. I also grow vegetables, tomatoes, garlic and marigold in one bed. Marigold and garlic protect aphids from vegetables, they have a certain smell.

I believe that a nutritious organic diet is the key to managing life with HIV/AIDS. I grow several different types of herbs. There is no medicine in rural areas. So I have confidence and knowledge to use herbs. I grow garlic which cures people with high blood pressure, lemon grass cures skin disease and cancer. Myself I am forty-five years old I drink herbal tea. I am very fit; I look younger than my age, also my brain is very sharp. Rosemary is the herb that if you drink it as tea you don't get old. Sweet basil is best for cooking. So I am an organic farmer as well as a herbal doctor. I treated many people with sores in their mouth with comfrey. It is also taken as vegetable.

I sell my vegetables at Juru growth point and to local people. I write signposts to direct people where my organic garden is. I also advertise my organic vegetables at churches, even at funerals. I gave them a few bundles to taste, tell them the cost of one bundle and let them know the difference between organic vegetables and vegetables grown with fertilisers.

Every month I open and close my cashbook. The cashbook is my guideline, which shows me that this month I have sold so much. I use daily sales records. On 15.07.02 I sold 30 bundles rape at $ 50 per bundle and got $ 1500. I also sold 4 x 20 kg tomatoes at $ 500 per 20 kg and got $ 2000. 20 bundles onions at $ 200 per bundle = $ 4000. Total amount of my daily sales were $ 7500. Last month I recorded 12 daily sales Total amount of last month $ 60,000.

Growing vegetables and herbs organically has changed our lives. Knowing how to use herbs has helped me talking about HIV/AIDS more easily. I feel I can go into someone's home, and discuss a person's health, because I have something to offer.

Organic vegetables are very tasty; people around our area like them. They say they have no stomach pains, which they felt after eating vegetables grown with fertilisers. As an organic farmer I have seen many changes. I face the future with strength and ready to meet the rapid changing needs of all gardeners in Zimbabwe. People are now starting Organic Farming in their gardens. I also help them with advice on how to make composts and all organic methods. To promote Organic Farming I have decided to let every one know more about it. Even in churches, meetings or at funerals, and at women's clubs. I hope to form a group of organic farmers in my place so that those farmers would teach Organic Farming to others.

### *Annex 3/III: The success story of Manfold Biriyati*

Chinamora Organic producers are situated in Chinamora Communal lands of Goromonzi District, Mashonaland East province north of the capital city Harare. It started in 1996 with three farmer field workers who had been trained at the Zimbabwe Institute of Permaculture, under the influence of Zimbabwe Women's Bureau. With the aim of poverty alleviation and soil fertility improvement, I quickly embraced Organic Farming so as to improve nutritional quality foods, products without the aid of artificial fertilisers, chemicals, pesticides, fungicides and growth regulators and without genetic manipulation of living organisms.

In the past years before I was introduced to this sustainable method of farming (Organic), I was using fertilisers, pesticides and dangerous chemicals which used to cause headaches, stomach (diarrhoea), flu and much other bodily harm. Because if one gets upsets, one can easily drink poison/dangerous chemicals and die. In my garden and field dangerous chemicals were the main inputs used.

Organic Farming is farming in harmony with nature, using my own natural resources. In order to enforce soil fertility I had to make compost-using manure. I was introduced by farmer field worker Florence Chikwere who had been trained at Z.I.P research under AfFOResT. I then received training in 1999 as a farmer field worker for a month at AfFOResT. My garden is full of Permaculture designs e.g. water harvesting beds. At the same time I am using S.T. Rong, which means susceptible tolerant and resistant method of three-row bed style and seed inventory system. At present moment I am doing this in region one, which is dry. My garden has loamy sand soil, which also was very poor due to crop production with

artificial chemicals, which were used before. I am working very hard to improve my soil texture through composts, cow dung, chicken manure and natural resources, double digging and minimum tillage. I use agroforestry, the planting of leguminous shrubs and trees, to add nitrogen to the soil fertility and mulching and green manuring to ensure permanent ground cover. The climate in my area is moderate.

From the small portion of land I was using I have gradually improved my farming methods and expanded up to half an acre. Now that I am producing high quality vegetables, onions, beans, peas and salad rocket moss parsley and other herbs, fruits and organic maize. I intercrop maize and herbs, pigeon pea for nitrogen, cowpea and leucaena trees. Vegetables with herbs like milkweed and onions. I am also making herbal sprays from herbs e.g. cattle urine, datura and many others.

At the present moment I am having a lot of advantages with my produce. Mixing crops in a small area of Organic Farming. I harvest my produce throughout the year. I eat healthy foods with vitamins and required nutrients, while the soil fertility is well maintained. I am also benefiting from exchange visits and workshops while at the same time, I share ideas with others. I am also using herbs as my medicine for local people, that is rosemary, lemon verbena, lemon grass, red and black mint, garden rue, garden dill, garden fennel and garden sage, borage and many others herbs. Diseases like headaches, diarrhoea, heart problems, blood purification, restoring of eyesight, B.P and many others.

I am now marketing salad rocket and moss parsley at La Dolce Vita in Avondale, green fruits and vegetables, onions and herbs at Five Avenue Classic Supermarket, Holiday Inn Hotel. I market green herbs and vegetables. Vegetables are costing $70.00 per small bundle, all herbs at $70.00 per bunch. I have also contracts with them, so that every Tuesday will be marketing day, and I did a food-processing course with Ranch House College. I even market my dry produce like Oregano to King Pie, Five Avenue Hotel and Organic paprika makes a good price e.g. 1kg powdered, well packed paprika for Z$3000.00. I sell my herbs to local Zimbabweans, and to people who want to learn from me with the aim of gaining knowledge. I even charge them $1,000.00 per hour. This caused us to drop what I call 50% marketing levy, 20% monthly subscription fee to Chinamora Organic producers. I even had some students who were doing research from the University of Zimbabwe.

My dream came true of a sustainable method of farming when it becomes profitability to me and my family leaving me with a cash of at least $5000.00 - $8000.00 a week, but only buying consumption food not fertilisers or dangerous chemical. I am only having a big problem in transportation from one angle to the

other. With this I am now urging Zimbabweans to practice this type of farming that we knew, but neglected for many years. I will expand organic to other Zimbabweans through shows and where people are gathered if possible, though this is time consuming. This will spread the marketing of Organic Farming world-wide. By doing so and adhering to organic standards through ZOPPA, we will learn the IFOAM regulations and become real organic farmers.

### *Annex 3/IV: The success story of M.T. Gumbo*

My name is Mtyiyeni Tyeza Gumbo, I am based in Matabeleland, an arid region. We receive low rainfall almost every year. My project is in Bulawayo at Khami Water works Box 1353 along Khami road from the city centre, it is only fifteen kilometres from town.

It is now two years from the time I heard about Organic Farming at a workshop organised by Vulingondo, Jekesa Pfungwa. I was taught about the best ways to farm without spending large amounts buying in inputs like fertilisers and chemicals. I learnt about Organic Farming that uses available natural resources and is less expensive compared to conventional farming.

Before I was introduced to Organic Farming, I used to buy chemicals and fertilisers at exorbitant prices. I did not bother about soil structure improvement. There were very little profits as all funds could go into input expenditure. There was a time when after spraying using chemicals I could feel dizzy and sometimes vomit. I used to suffer from diseases like flu, coughing continuously because of chemical use and fertilisers.

The continuity of workshops in traditional farming forced me to divert into Organic Farming. It is a type of farming where one uses available natural resources without using fertilisers and chemicals.

Organic Farming uses manure, humus, and dried leaves to improve soil fertility. It uses herbicides to control pests and diseases.

Using this knowledge, I started to practice it in my small garden. It is about half an acre in area, divided into three rows for horticultural crops; field crops and the other part are for herbal side. I use the intercropping system as this serves my scarce land and also controls soil erosion. It also helps to improve soil fertility for example by planting green beans - a leguminous crop - with some vegetable crops like cabbages and broccoli. I intercrop tomatoes with garlic because it helps to reduce pest and diseases like aphids and red spider mites. I sometimes practice crop rotation by rotating a root crop and a leaf crop. This also reduces

some diseases in my garden. Before using organic methods my soil was sandy loam but after implementing organic methods my soil structure has improved. I can now plant crops that used to yield less but now yield well.

There is an interrelationship between my garden and my livestock. Animals produce cow dung which I use as manure in my garden. I feed my animals from my crop residues as well. During hot and dry days I collect dry tree leaves and mulch my crops as a control measure against hot and cold weather. Mulching keeps my soil moist and saves me from watering frequently.

Because I am situated near the dam, I always plant crops that are frost resistant like peas and broad beans, during the winter season. Besides manure, humus, leaves and mulching grass, I also make some compost heap and pits as a way of storing food for my crops. Also using kitchen waste like bones and food leftovers help in improving the soil fertility in my garden.

I used to waste money in buying fertilisers and pesticides but from the time I started Organic Farming there are few expenses. The soil used to be poor and so resulted in poor crop production, but my soil has gradually improved through organic methods. I used to cough and easily be affected by flu, but through organic herbal spraying I now don't feel anything. Mulching has kept my garden moist almost all year round. I now use the same piece of land for more than one crop at a time. My crops are protected from cold and hot days through mulching. I am now harvesting disease and pest free healthy crops in my garden. I am saving a lot of money by not buying fertilisers and chemicals. I have already started teaching my neighbours about organic methods of farming.

May I ask all organisations in farming to start projects that are organically oriented? This could reduce poverty in the country, as most people don't have enough money to buy fertilisers and insecticides. This will really save time, money and their lives as well. There is a need for organic awareness in all institutions; this could reduce the random cutting of trees, burning of grass and killing insects that are helpful to organic farmers.

Though Organic Farming is more rewarding, the making of beds, raw material collection is tiresome. Sometimes you need to hire some casual labour. I sell my crops like beans, green mealies, garlic, and tomatoes to the local residents. I sometimes make contacts with markets and supply them twice a week with green beans. They are buying at ninety dollars for a kilogram of green beans when packed. My products are for both selling and consumption because the cost of living is too high. There is a need for organic farmers to set up their own association where we could discuss pricing and how we could export our products and the packaging system. We need to be taught about scale, grading

systems and to record our daily activities so that Organic Farming will be called a good success locally and internationally. Right now my garden gives me about Z$ 15,000 for a one seasonal crop like beans and vegetables.

## 4. Knowledge Development in Advisory Services of Nagaland, India *(P.Luikham, NEWS)*

The North East Welfare Society (NEWS) is working in the Kohima district of Nagaland State. The whole region is practising hill slope farming. The area has good climate good rainfall - 2,400 mm rainfall per annum. The hill slopes are between 20% to 42% and are prone to soil erosion, land slides and land slips. The increase in population has contributed to the reduction of forest and forest cover. The area grows subtropical climate and temperate climates agricultural produce. Fruit, berries, vegetables, plantation crops (coffee, large cardamom), food crops etc are abundantly grown in the area. The main problem is immediate market facilities. Middlemen are pocketing all the benefit and the farmers are left with a meagre income from their crops. The consumer is also not benefited. They have to pay higher prices. The area is practising conventional farming. Therefore, it is conducive to promote Organic Farming so that farmers do not apply costly synthetic fertilisers or pesticides. Hill slope slash and burn method is practised for crop production. One of the goals of NEWS is to control the jhum cultivation and to promote settled permanent crop production practices in the hill slopes.

Farmers are practising their own traditional methods for the conservation of soil fertility, retention of soil moisture and to assure crop productivity. The biomass available is used for creating fertile soil. The bio-products available in the area are used to control pest attack on crops. The storage of harvested crops is by local methods. Seed storage is done locally and normally seeds are not bought from seed companies. The common farmer depends on his own seed for crop production. The common technique adopted for irrigation is very interesting. Cultivation is carried out on the hill slopes, and the perennial streams are blocked at suitable points and the water is diverted into field ponds to irrigate the crops. Large split bamboos are used to carry water at difficult points. Annually, the system is repaired and maintained for further use.

NEWS has been promoting these techniques in 10 villages for the past three years and has found useful modifications. The Indian Council of Agriculture Research, Gaspani is helping us in improving the methods with appropriate scientific inputs.

The productivity is assured. During the onset of crop flowering, a form of fumigation is carried out around the large area of cultivation field at one or two locations. During the night a bonfire is lit a little distance away using the biomass. This proves very useful in controlling certain pests and insects that attack the crop.

The development of the farmers' local knowledge is supportive to OA. As explained, conventional farming is practised in the area. However, the way for conversion to OA is much easy than discussed. Local standards development is one of the areas that need attention. Under these standards, the local knowledge of the farmers can be incorporated. This will help the farmer and the application will be very easy. We can provide scientific input to local knowledge, which is cost effective, and thus have a better effect on assured crop productivity.

The area offers tremendous potential for the promotion of OA and OARD. Modern agriculture has never given importance to farmers' local knowledge. The farmer well knows the time to sow seed, crop health and the time of pest attack etc., The farmer is ready with his own solutions for such occasions. The modern farmer who promotes agriculture for a large income is not aware of such moments. Failure of this understanding is attracting remedies usually brought from outside and is costly. Our experience is that the farmer's knowledge is in tune with nature.

The farmer's knowledge is mainly confined to his village and his cultivation field. Wider propagation with suitable modifications can prove useful. Before starting to spread the knowledge it has to be scientifically analysed and modified for a specific area where it is going to be promoted. We have also seen failures in other villages due to re-modification of the knowledge not suited to the conditions.

We are in touch with several agencies for collaboration in promoting local knowledge for farmers' benefit. However, we are not successful due to several reasons. The educated have the problem of not accepting the farmer's plans. The farmer is the important factor in the promotion of OA and not the other way round.

***Main questions:***

- How can we popularise local farmer's knowledge in several villages with least expense in developing the technique in a scientific manner?
- Local knowledge is only one part of promoting OA. How can we add up additional requirement to OA?
- Advisory services require a number of trained people. How can we evolve a mechanism to promote OA on a larger platform?
- Promotion of local knowledge and crop production practice may clash with state polices and programmes including the trained agriculture manpower from universities. How do we overcome this particular situation?

# 5. Knowledge Development in Advisory Services in Manipur, India *(A.B. Singh, CDO)*

The Community Development Organisation (CDO) is working in the foothill areas of Imphal, Manipur State. The focus is Thoubal district, which covers geographical areas on the plains and in the hills. The livelihood is farming. The farmers practice conventional farming. The land holding is limited and the average land ownership is 0.25 ha to 1 ha. The available manpower is engaged in agriculture production. Due to lack of irrigation facilities, double cropping is not practised. The average annual income of the farmer/family is about Rs. 12,500 p.a. The average family size is 6.5. Climate is good and the area receives about 2,400 mm rainfall per annum.

CDO has promoted rabbi crops under the organised system of self-help groups. Currently, CDO is involved with 35 self-help groups (SHGs) from five villages. The rabbi production is mainly for oil seeds and vegetables. The SHGs have their own savings and these limited funds are channelled into the procurement of seeds/seedlings. The production is marketed at the local market as well as the district head quarters and state capital markets. The members of the SHGs do the marketing directly and no middleman is engaged. Therefore, the loss of money is saved and there is a better remuneration to the producers as well as sellers. Consumers are not over charged and the prices are the same as those of other products sold by sellers who collect the products through middlemen.

The production is carried out during the rabbi season (October to March). This time is marked by lower rainfall and all the streams flowing down to the areas become dried up. The farmers apply few techniques to retain the soil moisture and soil fertility. Soon after the paddy harvest, farmers used to collect large quantities of green foliage and spread them on the soil. The perennial streams are blocked at several points and the water is held in specific locations. The depth of the streams is well below 10 to 15 feet. Lift irrigation or pumping of the water to the fields is not practised due to lack of finance. They normally dig wells to an average depth of 15 to 20 feet in the field and draw water for irrigation purpose, mainly for life saving irrigation. The crop waste of the previous crops is put back to the soil. The green foliage acts as manure and is mixed with the soil at the time of ploughing. At times the green foliage spread over the soil after drying is bur-

ned. This is a general practice. Farmers are not looking for synthetic fertiliser or pesticides. Production is stable and up to the satisfaction of the farmer. Vegetable production in a plot of 0.25 ha provides an income of about Rs. 6,500/.- This is an income which was not available earlier. CDO encourages short duration crops and cultivation during the rabbi season.

The local knowledge in conserving the soil moisture for specific crops are interesting and CDO is studying the subject. The cultivation of 90 day duration mustard (Toria) is found suitable and does not require irrigation. At times, it requires simple irrigation during the flowering season. This is being done with the wells dug in the field. The cultivation of horse gram is another example where the field need not be ploughed. The cultivation of vegetables such as cabbage, leafy vegetables, potato, beans, chilli do not require much irrigation and the techniques locally adopted are sufficient for good production.

CDO is promoting the farmers' local knowledge. It is discussed in detail during the farmers' meetings in several villages. Local knowledge saves money and does not require costly external inputs for efficient production and productivity. Farmers keep their own seed for the next crop. By doing so, the farmer knows about his seed and its quality. On many occasions, farmers do not purchase seed from the seed companies. The reason cited is that they do not know enough about the potential performance of the seed purchased from the seed companies.

***Potentials:***

A number of local practices are found to be very useful. The retention of soil fertility and moisture conservation of the soil is very much in point. Besides improving the techniques by scientific development, it has to be re-modelled to suit large area practice. This could become one of the main aspects of OA in our area.

***Constraints:***

So far, organised efforts and organised SHGs could promote rabbi production. The unorganised farmers are keeping their land fallow during rabbi season. Reaching all these farmers is time consuming and a large number of people is required.

***Solutions:***

One of the adopted solutions is the SHGs. CDO is organising farmers SHGs in villages. SHG is an economic interest group; it saves money and provides the same to members for productive activities. CDO is interested in this sector for the promotion of OA.

***Main questions:***

- Local knowledge and practices are not accepted by the trained agriculturists. How do we integrate them?
- Local knowledge alone is not sufficient for year round crop production. How do we formulate a strategy and action plan?
- The bio-pesticides locally/farmers made need to be tested. How can the farmer or CDO get easy access to such testing facilities?
- How can we develop local markets when all products are produced under conventional farming system?
- How best we can produce OA products, which are accepted by the consumer as an OA product?

# 6. Knowledge Development in Advisory Services of Uttar Pradesh, India (S. Bhan, SMRWS)

During the last 30 years we neglected bio farming as our efforts were in the direction of the green revolution, using more chemical fertilisers, hybrid seeds and pesticides. This adversely affected the soil fertility as the soil microorganisms such as azotobacter, phosphate solubilising bacteria, rhizobium, azospirillum, etc. vanished. Initially we did get greater yields from chemical farming but gradually the yield and quality deteriorated due to the weakening of the soil. Therefore, we have to go back to Organic Farming by following local methods along with new technology for sustainable agriculture production in the years to come.

Over the centuries, farming communities developed a range of techniques to harvest every possible form of water from rainwater to ground water, steam to river water and floodwater. There are a large number of indigenous, advanced and combination technologies available for rainwater harvesting both ex situ and in situ for multifarious on-farm and off-farm applications. The traditional technologies which have been developed on the basis of experience gained and lessons learnt by the farmers are generally system proof, eco-friendly, low-cost, flexible and rely heavily on the utilisation of local resources, knowledge base and labour. Sumer Memorial Rural Welfare Society (SMRWS) is working in more than 45 villages in the district of Etha, Utter Pradesh in promoting indigenous technologies for sustainable agricultural production. We are promoting local knowledge in our discussions with villagers and they are adopting several of the techniques for better crop production.

The work carried out among the small land holding farmers has brought tangible results and the farming is based on organic principles. The promotional activities have contributed to the gradual development of the area, income generation to the families and poverty alleviation. The OARD is suitably visible in many villages where we have been working for the past three years.

***Main questions:***

- What steps we can take to model the development of traditional knowledge for natural resource management, which is an asset to the small and marginal farmers?
- How can we integrate traditional knowledge with modern scientific agriculture in areas of soil and water management?
- How can we determine the future of soil fertility and availability of micronutrients where the nature is not abundant with green foliage and biomass?
- The population explosion and the need for increased food requirement in quantity can be achieved with OA and therefore, should we focus on export?

# 7. Organic Agriculture for Rural Development in Nepal (S. P. Yadav, CWDS)

## 7.1. Introduction

This is a case study of Budhathoki village in the Kavre district of Nepal. The district of Kavre is situated just outside the Kathmandu valley towards the east. Budhathoki village is in Sanga VDC (Village Development Council) bordering Bhaktapur district within the Kathmandu valley. Sanga VDC has 890 households of which 630 are farming households. Budhathoki village has 45 farming households with small landholdings. Use of chemical fertilisers, mostly urea, and pesticides were the practices known to the villagers until 1998. A new approach (group approach) was introduced by agriculture extension from the Department of Agriculture under which a Seed Multiplication group was formed in 1997.

The Agric. Extension Officer of the district agriculture office of Kavre was given four days orientation training on Nature Farming and EM technology at the Demo. Farm and Training Centre of CWDS. It was in 1998that the concept of nature farming with EM technology was introduced to the group in Sanga VDC through the same trained agric. extension officer. Mr. Kedar Budhathoki tried the technology of EM but was not that much convinced. He, together with the secretary of the group joined the training program with CWDS in 1998. After the training, he applied the lessons of the training in making compost and later expanded into all the activities. At present, he is not only a full Organic farmer but a resource/trainer farmer to all those who wish to go for local resource based agricultural practices in order to reduce the dependency on the use of chemicals and high cost of cultivation practices.

## 7.2. Approach

The group approach of agriculture extension service of the government helped to bring farming people together to discuss t the problems and prospects in agriculture within their environment.

A proven technology of Nature Farming and EM technology was introduced through the established agriculture extension service system of the government.

The leading farmers were given basic knowledge of the technology through training and demonstrations, which made the group members more confident.

Besides the government, it was the assistance of NGOs like CWDS and projects like SSMP (Sustainable Soil Management Project), which helped to take the concept forward.

Mr. Kedar Budhathoki as the leader farmer within the group was nominated and sent for Nature Farming and EM technology training in Thailand in the year 2000, which further enlarged the scope and understanding of nature farming to the group.

The application of EM technology and practices of Nature farming has helped in establishing the village of Sanga as the centre of excellence and the village is named as EM Village.

It is not only the slogan and philosophy of SA but the actions and active participation of all at the ground level that has created the successful examples for all to follow.

### *7.3. Results*

The village is capable of managing their farming practices without the use of harmful external inputs like chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

All the (so-called) wastes from farming, poultry, livestock and households are being converted to useful resource as compost by the integration of EM technology and being applied back to the land.

Livestock urine is collected, treated with EM and used in the crops/farm as the source of plant nutrients and a proven repellent of pests and disease.

The group is recording the highest corn yield as established by the department of agriculture under the evaluation of corm seed multiplication program within the country.

Vegetable production has become a valuable enterprise, which was not in the previous cropping pattern. Villagers were buying vegetables from outside before the introduction of Nature farming & EM technology.

Poultry and livestock raising are the associated enterprises and a prosperous economic contributor to the family income for all and there is no any foul smell, which is generally the problem associated with these enterprises.

Due to improved soil conditions and suitable climatic conditions, this area is being developed as an orange growing area and the orange orchards are at the fruiting stage within three years of planting.

Before 1997, there was no outside assistance/intervention in the village but since then the village has established its status. There is now outside assistance and collaboration under which the once dry hill slopes of the village have an irrigation system capable of supplying water to the dry fields for vegetable and fruit cultivation.

Farmers are not worried about the price and availability of fertilisers and pesticides as has been experienced before. Farming is not at all dependent on external inputs as they are capable of managing and utilising the available local resources in the most efficient way.

Organic Farming, if handled correctly, is capable of producing more than the so-called high yielding chemical practices.

The village of Sanga has become known throughout the country as the centre of excellence in SA and EN technology and is visited by farmers' groups from different parts of the country under the extension program of the Department of Agriculture.

The village has been receiving international visitors interested in knowing the steps and examples of SA and related technologies in Nepal.

### *7.4. Conclusion*

Nature has provided enough to the universe for its sustenance and development if nurtured, handled and managed efficiently and diligently.

Agriculture is natural but man has created hurdles to make it more and more artificial and that is the root of all the problems and imbalances today's agriculture is facing, and so are the people all around the globe.

An impoverished farming community can be changed to self-sustained, economically/socially empowered through the integration of appropriate techniques and technologies and following the steps of acceptable/manageable approaches of development. Outsiders can help but Insiders must do the job - that is the theme of real rural development.

# 8. Developing Markets for Tribal Organic Products – Experiences from Nilgiris, India

(John Mathew, Keystone Foundation)

### 8.1. Description of the area

The Nilgiris are a part of the Western Ghats, a mountain range that stretches all the way down peninsular India. It is a diverse area with numerous flora and fauna, and goes up to a height of 2600 metres. There are a number of distinct tribal communities, which are a part of this system.

The project is located in South India, in the North-western part of Tamil Nadu, on the border of the States of Kerala and Karnataka. Land holdings are very close to the forested areas at middle elevations of 800-1000 meters. The area is in the humid/semi humid tropics.

### 8.2. Description of the problem

The Nilgiris consist of one of the most ecologically fragile areas in India. The hills are steep. Traditional forests have been depleted and are under further threat, because of the increase in large tea plantations and substantial destruction of natural vegetation by the Forest department, through introduction of exotic commercial tree plantations. Consequently, soil erosion is rampant. Tea and coffee plantations have replaced large parts of its original vegetation and marshes have been converted into agricultural fields. 50% (30,000 ha) of all cultivated area consists of tea plantations. Although no hard figures are available, it is common knowledge that conventional tea plantations make heavy use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides and reduce the water retention capacity of the soil. Such conditions have also brought attention to it and recently, it has been declared a hotspot under the Man & Biosphere Programme of UNESCO.

Keystone has begun work with these communities in 1995 and one of the primary concerns has been to provide support on the marketing front. Our entry point for work was bees - the Kurumba and Irula communities are traditional hunter-gatherers and slash and burn agriculturists. Honey hunting is an important part of their tradition and nearly 2-3 months in a year are spent in this activity.

The immediate concern was to help raise the procurement prices as the rates being offered by traders and middlemen was very low. Coupled with that was irregular payments and measurements. However, the tribal people slowly started trickling in with their products and pretty soon there were a whole range of products - coffee, pepper, mustard, silk cotton and bees wax.

All the food products were organic but there was no certification for these products. As with problems very similar to those small growers face in many parts of the world of high costs, accessibility, no documentation, etc., these same hurdles stood in the way.

### 8.3. Potentials

There is a tremendous market for these products within the country. Since these items are not produced in very large quantities, the potential to develop niche markets exist. More and more consumers are aware of the uniqueness and quality of such products and are willing to pay the extra premium for the availability of such products.

Presently, only the immediate local market in the towns is being addressed. Slowly, neighbouring towns and cities have the potential to absorb such products. Due to the local nature of the products and an association of the products with the area - there is an immediate appreciation of such products and the value of these products is recognised.

One of the main issues that need to be tackled is value addition. The first step that has happened with the effort here has been the first level of cleaning, processing, hygiene, labelling and packing. This has taken place. However, there needs to be many more levels of value addition so that these products take maximum advantage of low volume and high value.

### 8.4. Constraints

As soon as we started marketing honey, the local market appreciated it immediately - they knew it was genuine, unadulterated honey. The cool temperatures at this elevation meant that honey was a part of their traditional diet. However, for many other outside customers, they raised questions whether it was certified by AGMARK (an agriculture certifying agency of the Government). Their standards were for processed honey and not wild honey. These standards of moisture content (i.e. 18%) would have meant that we would have to heat the honey to reduce the moisture. This would also kill the bacteria, which meant a change in

the character of the honey. Honey naturally available in the tropical temperature has a moisture content ranging above 20% depending on the area, rainfall, humidity and other factors.

If honey is harvested hygienically, there are historical records, which show that honey can stay for years without getting spoilt. We have continued to market the honey without heating, on the basis of its quality. We do not mix different batches of honey and so are able to take advantage of different flavours.

For organic certification, we got in touch with a certifying agency, but again problems of cost, accessibility, migratory behaviour of wild bees became an issue and the matter rests there.

"Organic by default" - a definition that is applicable to most small growers. We tried again to certify these products but these problems remain:

- costs are too high in proportion to value of products sold
- fields are spread out and in different places
- no documentation
- ownership may not be watertight - land may be community lands

Another primary constraint that remains with smaller organisations is that focus has to be continually on procurement, quality control, and packaging, designing, labelling and continuing all the way to marketing. Since the volumes are lower, it creates problems that the effort put in is not commensurate with the volumes generated.

With the general downturn in raw material prices for products like coffee, pepper and many other agricultural products - finding a market for niche products, which will allow us to give higher procurement costs without compromising on quality, remains a concern.

Investment also becomes an issue - there are two issues here. Firstly, most equipment/machinery is always for larger volumes and one doesn't have access to information on how to get machinery, which is appropriate but also suit one's requirements. Secondly, it is difficult to justify costs to meet smaller volumes - it means payback periods go up.

### 8.5. Solutions

One of the immediate steps has to be some sort of quality check, which is applicable across a range of products and at least provides some assurance to the consumer about meeting basic standards. If this is not done soon, there will be a backlash from consumers and then all marketing will suffer.

We developed an internal monitoring system to check the quality of products where the 4 main features were:

- raw material
- processing
- packaging and distribution
- consumption & disposal

Though this did not specifically look at the organic aspects it was an attempt to control the entire process and put in place a system of checks and balances to improve the quality of products. However, due to lack of feedback and a continuous review, the system has fallen into disuse and we have not used it further to evaluate ourselves.

Another aspect that has to be looked at is the development of such markets. For all organisations, to look at markets, makes it a difficult job. Here, I am not talking of export markets but of own internal markets within the country. It will provide not only support for other products but also bring together products under a common umbrella.

### 8.6. Main Questions

Such efforts have left us with a lot of questions - what are the kinds of products we are looking at, what kind of standards do we want to set, on what basis, if different from world standards, why, is there scientific basis/rationale to our standards, if we want to start exporting, will this mark stand ground. The standards should take into account small groups who are very critical in such ventures, their economic viability is crucial and export procedures should be handled in such a manner that there is complete transparency and understanding between accreditation agencies and importing countries. It should not end up that producers have to get certificates from different agencies to send products to different places.

A similar effort has to be put in for developing a transparent but simple system in place to encompass the wide range of small growers around the world.

# 9. Marketing of Organic Produce as a Group – Experiences from Uganda (G. Kasozi, CETRUD)

## 9.1. Background

Small - scale organic farmers grow a variety of individual crops on small farms for subsistence and for sale. They have been commonly marketing their produce individually, selling it to merchants at the farm gate or taking it to the nearest local market, where prices are low and may vary widely over time. In addition, transport is expensive, and the roads are few and in poor repair, at the same the value of the organic products has been the same.

Farmers feel that marketing is a major problem. They feel that merchants control produce prices, or can buy produce at very low prices during the harvest season, transport it to another area and sell it at a large profit. Farmers started overcoming this problem when they started marketing their produce as a group
My paper will describe the experiences of Cetrud working with organic farmers and helping in marketing strategy, it will give advantages, disadvantages, procedures, problems and solutions and suggestions for discussion and it will be presented orally during the workshop.

CETRUD, the Centre for Environment Technology and Rural Development is a development organisation in Uganda in Africa, has helped Associations and women's groups in Uganda to grow and market organic vegetables and other products . CETRUD has distributed hortcultural and fruit seeds to Associations and groups of women; the seeds come from friends in Europe and America so it is a variety of different seeds that are on demand in many Hotels and supermarkets and those are the vegetables and fruits that were being imported in the country so through group marketing we are trying to fulfill the demand in the country. The farmers also grew several local types of indigenous vegetables, that we are also to market to both the local and international community in Uganda.

CETRUD has trained the farmers in various aspects of crop husbandry , the safe use of pestcides, harvesting and handling, packaging, record-keeping,labelling and loading. Every week, the farmers harvest the crops, sort them, and take them to a group consolidation point. After grading and weighing, the farmers receive a receipt, and the produce is taken by a farmer to a packaging shed for labelling, packing and sealing.

While it is still too early to see if this marketing system will be sustainable, the farmers are very interested in continuing it and learning further. The group is considering getting their produce certified as produced in an environmentally sound way , so it will fetch higher prices. This has been the main problem hindering us both in the country and Outside. It has hindered the export of our products.

### 9.2. Potentials

The group could sell organic products directly to retailers at a higher price, bypassing the merchants altogether with help of group organisation. They can provide a larger amount of produce and maintain a continuous supply to their customers. They are in a stronger bargaining position in relation to merchants and retailers.

### Constraints

- Marketing requires skills that farmers may have to learn through trial - and error. They should be ready to make mistakes and take on risks.
- Establishing a marketing system takes time. Farmers must be patient: they should not expect to become millionaires overnight.
- Setting up a marketing system may be difficult for a group of farmers to do on their own. An outside organisation such as an NGO may be needed to provide the skills and make the initial linkages with buyers.

### 9.4. Solutions

This section assumes that an outside organisation such as an NGO like Cetrud is helping groups of farmers to identify opportunities and set up a marketing system for organic crops. A similar approach can be used for other produce (Vegetables, milk, eggs, chickens, animals, flowers, honey etc). Many of the activities described below are continuous and happen at the same time.

(1) Get to know the market for a particular type of produce that the farmers already grow, or could grow, such as vegetables. See below for some questions to ask.
(2) Alert the farmers to the market situation, and discuss with them their interest in supplying particular types of produce.
(3) Select retailers (such as supermarkets or greengrocers) and explore their interest in trading with the farmer group.

(4) Help the farmer group and the retailers reach an understanding on the type of produce to be delivered, the quantity, quality and timing of deliveries. Have the group and the buyers sign a written agreement detailing their responsibilities and what happens if, for example, the farmers cannot supply the produce because of bad weather.
(5) Train the farmers in how to grow the crops, control pests and diseases, harvest the crop and handle it (for example, packing it into crates for shipment). This is particularly important if the crop is a new one. It is important to maintain good quality of the produce to assure a good price and the retailer's interest in the trade.
(6) Also provide training to the farmers in group organisation, crop planning, marketing and record keeping. Help farmers plan the dates of planting and harvest so they can supply the produce at the right time. They may have to plant a small amount of the crop every two weeks throughout the season to make sure there is a continuous supply ready for harvesting and shipping to the town.
(7) During the growing season, provide extension advice to the farmers and help them solve problems as they arise.
(8) At harvest, the farmers collect their produce in one place, grade and weigh it, pack it into crates, and load it onto a truck. Keep careful records of how much each farmer delivers.
(9) Transport the produce to the retailer in town. Representatives of the group should travel with the lorry and receive the payment from the retailer.

### *9.5. Main questions*

When trying to find out about the market for a certain type of produce the following questions arose:

- Where is the produce sold? Who sells it? Who buys it?
- What are the prices? Do they fluctuate during the year?
- Who already supplies the market?
- How much demand is there? Is it supplied already, or is there room for another producer?
- Can the market be supplied by the group of farmers? For example, is it possible to transport perishable produce to the town quickly enough so it arrives in good condition?
- Is the price you can get for the crop high enough to cover the farmers' costs and yield profit?

- Have the payment deposited into the group's bank account.
- Deduct a portion of the payment to cover the cost of the transport. A percentage can also go into the group's own fund, and to cover the NGO's costs. The remainder is divided among the group members according to the amount of produce they have delivered.

### 9.6. Additional issues

Corruption may be a problem. Keep careful records of all transactions, and make sure that these are transparent (everyone knows and understands them). Keeping the records should be the responsibility of several people, rather than just one. And this responsibility can rotate among the members so they can all keep check on the funds. Different group members can accompany the produce into town each week; this means that they will all become familiar with how the transactions work.

Pests, diseases and bad weather can disrupt crop production. The group should take precautions to avoid as many such problems as possible (for instance by using integrated pest management or providing additional inputs such as organic matter and irrigation water). The agreement with the buyer should also take the possibility of such problems into account.

Running a smooth marketing system requires co- ordination and management skills. The NGO should provide training and assistance to the group to ensure they have these abilities.

# 10. Local Market Development in Manipur, India

(T. Gangmai, CBS)

## 10.1. Description of the Region

Community Development Organisation (CBS) is a registered society working for rural tribal women. The project operational area is the western hill district of Manipur State, North East India. They are part of the great Himalayan foothills. Geographically the district is hilly terrain with a humid sub-tropical climate. Farmers practice hill slope farming. The tribal farmers continue hill slope farming by the traditional system of slash and burn methods for crop production, which is commonly called Jhum cultivation. Jhum cultivation is detrimental to the ecology, environment and crop productivity leading to land degradation, soil erosion, water and green cover. It can be classed as conventional farming.

## 10.2. Description of the problem

The operational area has a hilly terrain and farmers are semi-literate or illiterate. They are living below the poverty line and are unable to promote settled permanent cultivation due to lack of finance. Organic Agriculture proves to be a great boon to them since OA is an extension of the common and traditional from of agricultural practice without the use of costly external inputs like chemical fertilisers, chemical pesticides and modified seeds/seedlings. Communication facilities are very poor and the lack of agricultural infrastructure facilities and lack of finance hamper the production, processing and marketing of products.

The land use is mainly mono cropping due to lack of irrigation facilities. The use of land for multi cropping and the permanent use of land for agriculture production over a period of several years yet retaining soil fertility can be introduced in the hills as OA. This method can be adopted successfully in the abandoned jhum areas for additional production.

Field programmes should also be conducted involving farmers' groups for intensive awareness campaigns, educational training and extension in Organic Farming by applying local resources, the local know how of the farmers in respect of soil fertility, bio-pesticides from local sources, and natural resource management through traditional methods. The need to develop safe storage, preser-

vation, processing and marketing can be done with best standards, which are acceptable at the local, national and international levels. Development of local and regional markets for OA product is a tricky job and needs to be understood in the context of greater consumer awareness and acceptance. The greater acceptance by the consumers of OA products both in the form of fresh and processed food in the market can be a source of strength and support.

### 10.3. Potential

The areas we cover are hilly terrain and have a humid sub tropical climate. Active participation by the farmers is integral to our programmes. The society would undertake the study of existing land - use, cropping patterns and utilisation of natural resources with the view to replace them with possible alternatives. The society would measure the improvement and preservation of eco systems and natural resources in the area. OA would act as a catalyst for the socio economic development and rising health consciousness among the farmers living in rural areas. It would adopt, promote and implement appropriate soil, land vegetation, water conservation, management system, agro horticulture development, animal husbandry and improvement of existing jhum practice and poverty alleviation as a possible alternative solution to the present practice of shifting cultivation. The farmers are mobilised for undertaking plantation crops, horticultural crops, cash crops, condiment and species, medicinal and aromatic plants for better income and living. The infrastructure and habitat development together with facilities for food processing, storage, transport and marketing have to be arranged in a reasonable way. Local marketing is being developed with the co-operation of the farmers.

The honesty and sincerity of the farmers are the best potential to be accepted and acknowledged while developing the local market.

### 10.4. Constraints

Organic Agriculture products are safe and good and do not damage the ecology, natural resources, environment and health of the consumers. People are aware of OA products. Development of the local and regional market for OA products is a tricky job and need to be understood in the context of greater consumer awareness and acceptance.

Supportive infrastructure facilities for processed food, drying, storage and transport are required at the farmers' level for local market development. At this juncture organic certification would be a great boon to the farmers. The main hurd-

les are lack of an economic base and organised efforts at the village level. These create such atmosphere as CBS is working with for the past few years.

### 10.5. Our Experience

CBS with the help of 10 self help women's groups have promoted the marketing of vegetables and spices at the local market. Supply was enough also to send the products to the market at the State Capital, Imphal. The market development was involved with the local notified area authority in securing a proper place at the market. The products sold were of quality standards; fresh and priced at the normal level compared to other products. It has become a success and is continuing. The women producers and the saleswomen have been able to collect their money on the same day. The middleman has been eliminated and thereby the producer and seller could get higher prices without hurting the consumer by shelling out more money. The area always has three levels of middleman and they pocket more than 55% of the money when selling a product. Elimination of middleman has provided better returns. The women are happier and prefer to sell their products which are produced with less external inputs.

### 10.6. Main Questions

- The local market is always linked with local government authorities in providing suitable market sheds and infrastructure. The lack of awareness at this level could be a problem while creating an organised market linkage between producer, seller and the consumer. How this can be streamlined?
- OA local market is just the other side of the coin. How do we get greater acceptance of the OA products to the local consumer?
- In a conventional farming area what is it to be specially called OA products?
- Whether the OA production can be linked to improved income generation and home consumption?
- Can the involvement of women and self help groups alone be capable of creating a local market for OA products?

# 11. Local Market Development in Uttaranchal, India

## (S. Bahuguna, DBVS)

### 11.1. Description of the Region

Due to the specific geographical, population, natural and ecological conditions of the region, the government of India created a separate hill state known as Uttaranchal by dividing it from the bigger state of Uttar-Pradesh. The State of Uttarachal has twelve districts geographically mainly hilly and mountainous. The Ganges and Yamuna rivers, which are the lifeline of Indian culture and tradition, emerge from this region. One of the districts, Chamoli, t has boundaries with Tibet and has immense geographical, historical, religious and cultural importance. The famous Valley of Flowers lies in this region.

### 11.2. Agricultural activities

At the individual level, several factors need to be considered when choosing the crops to be raised on a particular field. These include soil type, likely weather conditions, resources at hand, previous crop, market conditions, domestic needs etc. There is also a desire to increase crop production and income, to maximise employment for the family and return on the investment, and to meet the household needs for grain, fodder and other commodities. The most significant and guiding factor in the matter is the farmer's own experience. Thus the cropping pattern of an area is the result of the farmer's trials and experience in respect of farm practices. It represents the complete picture the farmers needs; land potentiality, economic-conditions and the farmer's knowledge.

Farmers are commonly blamed for not shifting from their traditional systems and modes of farming. While this charge is correct to a great extent, at the same time it would important to probe into the causes of such an attitude on their part. People in general are mostly guided by their experience and their inability to bear the risk discourages them from being adventurous. The hill farmer's capacity to take risks by adopting innovations is still lower. Therefore, they take an unusually long time to be convinced in such matters. They have little faith in agriculture extension personnel because the advisors are not familiar with the hill environment. This is partly a correct assertion. Another significant factor is the role of women in hill agriculture. The women generally do all agricultural operations including ploughing. But it is the men who are given all sorts of training irrespective of the subject and with no consideration as to who is to implement the

advice and suggestions. Thus, the innovations by and large remain apart from the actual workers. All these factors deserve serious considerations on the part of policy makers, planners, extension agencies and the people.

### 11.3. The role of Dev Bhumi Vikas Sansthan

While keeping all these factors in mind the DBVS has initiated an innovative programme in the development of oil seeds in which two oil seed crops were introduced in five blocks covering around eighty villages in the district of Chamoli. In fact, Groundnut was introduced for the first time and the results are very encouraging. The soybean has been traditionally cultivated, but the innovative practices adopted and propagated by the DBVS has improved yields by more than 50%. Today the entire needs of the local people for these products are being met from local cultivation. Therefore, people need not buy these agricultural products from outside the region. In this innovative programme the DBVS took the assistance and involvement of various departments namely GB Pant Agriculture University, Pant Nagar, National Oil Seeds and Vegetable Board the State and District Agriculture and Horticulture Department and other agriculture scientists. The enthusiasm shown by these departments resulted in making the groundnut and soybean very important and promising crops for the future of Uttaranchal.

The Five blocks adopted for experiment were Dasholi, karanprayag, Ghat, Narayan bagar and Tharali.

### 11.4. The Objectives

The following main objectives were taken in to considerations and acted upon in the programme.

- To introduce groundnut crop in various locations of the district suitable for its cultivation;
- To increase production of soybean and groundnut by the use of improved agricultural technology;
- To create scientific awareness among the farming communities;
- To persuade the half hearted small and marginal farmers to adopt improved methods of crop cultivation.
- To replace less economic crops in traditional cropping patterns with more remunerative and eco-friendly crops;
- To bring the farmers into direct contact with agriculture scientists/specialists and to assist them in resolving their field problems and doubts;
- To raise economic-conditions and improve the living standard of poor peasants in the hills.

### 11.5. Strategy and Action Plan

For the successful implementation of the programme and to achieve the objectives, the following strategies were adopted.

a. Providing essential inputs like seeds, fertilisers, bio-fertilisers and plant protection, natural means and devices and to encourage their use for scientific and traditional crop production.
b. Supply of all essential inputs to the selected farmers as per their requirements;
c. Planning and conduct of various types of crop demonstrations with the objective of showing the importance of various inputs in scientific crop production;
d. Dissemination of improved technology to the farmers by conducting training, goshties, field days meetings, individual and group- contacts with farmers, group-discussions, sightseeing programmes for the farmers and visits by scientists and specialists to their fields;
e. Educating farmers about scientific crop production with the help printed literature, press release and other mass media.
f. Creating awareness and interest among the farmers for various components of scientific crop-production;
g. To convince the farmers to avail the facilities regarding plant protection chemicals, fertilisers and technical know-how provided by the State Government in each block;
h. To introduce Rhizobium culture and P.S.M. Bio-fertilisers in hill areas in order to reduce the traditional practise whereby the women folk carry the fertilisers on their backs.

DBVS has introduced the crop and the local market has developed in its own way due to non-availability of such materials in the area. Currently we are involved in the promotion of OA as integral to activities.

### 11.6. Main Questions

Local need based OA production can find its own market and therefore, why do we have to promote special efforts on market development?
Should we focus on farmer's education for the promotion of OA together with development of standards and markets?
Does the population, consumer interest and the need of the area determine the market or should OA marketing be focused to the big cities?

# 12. The Local Market in Bulgaria - Beginning and Perspectives (S. Nikolova, AGROLINK)

## 12.1. Description of the Situation

Although Bulgaria is relatively small in size (110,912 km2), it is rich in biological diversity due to its highly varied climatic, geologic, topographic, and hydrologic conditions. These conditions allow Bulgaria to support a biota that includes 94 species of mammals, 383 birds, 36 reptiles, an estimated 27,000 insects and 2750 species of vascular plants, and more than 6,500 nonvascular plants and fungi. Bulgaria thus ranks among the most biological diverse countries in Europe.

Agriculture is an important sector in the Bulgarian economy as reflected in its high share of economic activity; 17% of GDP and 26% of employment in 1999. During the transition decade the sector has played an important role as a social buffer to rising levels of unemployment. With the relatively low level of labour productivity in agriculture and the need for further restructuring, one of the high priorities of the Bulgarian government is to accelerate the pace of development of off-farm employment opportunities for those leaving agriculture. A dual farm structure is emerging in Bulgaria, similar to that in several other central and eastern European countries. Most of the agricultural land is farmed in large private commercial or co-operative units, while a smaller, but significant amount of land is operated as subsistence units. Bulgaria is a net exporter of agricultural and food products, albeit at a much reduced level compared to the pre-reform period.The level of support to agriculture over the period 1986-1999 indicates that Bulgarian agriculture was heavily supported in the pre-reform period, like in all other Central and Eastern European countries, but was taxed during the transition period, up to and including 1997. With the removal of the implicit tax on agriculture in 1997, the sector has been operating in a fairly neutral policy environmental in recent years, notwithstanding the inefficiencies of the downstream food-processing sector and infrastructure deficiencies

A great threat to biological diversity and human health intensified over the last decades. Not only industrial development, but also agricultural production contributes to this. Moreover, over-exploitation of economically valuable species affects many ecosystems and habitats. It is clear that throughout the country environmental friendly policy is necessary and very important in agriculture. It is

also important to raise awareness of the impact of industrial agriculture on biological diversity and human health.

The capital Sofia is situated on a plain surrounded by not very high mountains on all sides. The biggest and highest one among them is Vitosha. Its highest summit is 2290 m and its area is 26 600 ha. Vitosha is the oldest natural park in the Balkans; it was declared a protected territory in 1924. The mountain biodiversity is characterized by 1500 plant species, 52 endemic types, and threatened plant species – 4 by the Bern Convention, 28 in the Red Book.

The residents of the capital city love their mountains; they and the visitors and tourists often go there. Vitosha is preferred mostly. The foot of the northern mountainsides is densely populated by small villages and weekend homes. Its infrastructure is well developed– roads, skiing facilities, hotels and restaurants. The situation of the southern and western parts is quite different. Unlike the northern and eastern regions, they are not included in the Sofia municipality regulation plans. The public transport is regular but the prices are higher than those of the city routes. Meanwhile, the outermost village of Yarlovo is only 50 km from Sofia. The nature and landscape are extremely well preserved due to the lack of industrial, hotel and restaurant development. During the socialist period (1944 1989) when large-scale machine-building and chemical plants were built in Sofia, the migration from the nearby villages including the southern and western ones resulted in a three to four-fold decrease in the rural population.

At the moment the population consists predominantly of elderly people. The village of Rudartsi is the exclusion, as this is a weekend houses area for Sofia residents and there are relatively more young people. In the last several years a process of restoration of land ownership and industrial privatisation has begun; the local people have received their land back but they do not know what to do with it because of forgotten skills and lost traditions. Meanwhile, due to ineffectiveness of industrial production and the re-structuring of industry the new owners discharged many of the workers. Some of them are former or current residents of the villages in the southern and western part of Vitosha. Most of them keep their houses or maintain their relations with the villages as their parents live there. Since land ownership was returned to many inheritors, they became owners of small land lots situated in many different places. This situation is characteristic of all mountain regions, including Vitosha.

Having returned to the villages, some of the people have begun agricultural production. However, in most of cases it is ineffective and uncompetitive. Because of the high altitude, mainly potatoes and cereals are grown – wheat, rye, barley

and fodder for domestic animals. The principles of crop rotation are not applied; people rarely use consultation services. A factory for potato chips was built nearby and most of the producers work to meet its needs.

Cows, sheep, poultry, pigs and donkeys are bred in the region. Before 1989 there were 3 big state co-operative farms with 25 000 cattle. After these co-operatives were closed down, the cattle were sold. However, due to the low effectiveness of the new farms most of the animals were slaughtered. Now their number has decreased three to ten times. Few of the farmers have more than 10 cows and 30 sheep. In almost every house there are 1-2 cows and some 10 sheep. In general, the break in tradition and the change in the methods of production – from state-co-operative to private ownership – is the reason for the lack of coordination and cooperation among producers.

### *12.2. AGROLINK´s Programme*

Facing this situation, AGROLINK Association decided to try and create a Community Supported System for organic products and to promote local market development. Organic Agriculture in Bulgaria is still in its initial stage. Organic production accounts for 500 hectares in the country. Half of it is wild harvesting. The entire production is for export; it is mainly herbs, spices (SKAL) and greenhouse vegetables (Oekogarantie – Germany). Politicians, as well as NGOs, share the opinion that organic production has to be for export as it is more expensive and cannot be sold on the domestic market. AGROLINK Association conducted market research in 2000, which found that there are opportunities for the sale of organic products in the big cities – Sofia and some Black Sea resorts. In Sofia, there are many representative offices of multinational companies, embassies, and people who have worked or who have visited countries with developed Organic Farming. The research revealed that a large enough group of people have a different life style from the rest of the consumers in the society. They seek information about the origin of food and want to buy food with no chemicals. In the recent years due to loose border controls, agricultural products with questionable quality and lower prices have been imported from the neighbouring countries of Macedonian, Greece and Turkey. Regarding food safety, the lack of clear and sufficient information on the quality of products troubles these consumers. Yet they do not know where to find this information, nor where to find reliable products.

AGROLINK Association was awarded 2 grants by the Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation and the TIME Ecoprojects Foundation to establish a CSA system. The first stage was the elaboration of a strategy for sustainable development of the southern parts of Vitosha. Consultants in biodiversity, agriculture, stockbreeding,

and alternative tourism participated in the strategy development. The present situation of these areas was described in great detail, as well as the historical past, the problems and the limitations for development. Strategic tasks are set through SWOT analysis, agro-ecological characteristics, and soil maps. Alternative cultures are introduced for expansion of the types of production. During the work on the strategy local people were identified who had the willingness to work in the organic way so that a producers' network could be set up. The strategy was presented and accepted by local residents, the local governments, and representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Environment and Waters, and the Ministry of Economy. A similar strategy was commissioned by the municipality of Pernik and was developed by the Association. This strategy is for some western parts of Vitosha where there are villages in this municipality.

We understood that people were distrustful of the agricultural perspectives. During discussions, opinions were expressed even in favour of the creation of "science-oriented and modern" productions as though on CD in the yards of the houses, for the construction of new skiing facilities and tracks in the regions where nature and landscape are completely preserved. In spite of these attitudes we discovered 4 producers and 1 private cooperative farm that agreed to work with us. We planted potatoes, beet, peas, and together with the co-operative we selected sage, Salvia officinalis. We purchased bio-compost produced by Californian worms. To fight the Colorado potato beetle we ordered the production of Bacillus Thuringiensis at the Agrarian University. Unfortunately it lacked the necessary effectiveness and did not work . We urgently bought Nimazal. The problems we faced were that the producers expected the biological devices to work the in same way as the chemicals. The trust gained with great difficulties between us and the producers was at stake, particularly after the failure with Bt. Much effort was needed to keep the relations. The mistrust comes also from the unwillingness to risk new and unfamiliar methods; moreover in Bulgaria there are no others who work to establish the producer – consumer network.

The peas were deep frozen and sold to 4 families and 2 private restaurants situated at the foot of Mt. Vitosha. With regard to the restaurants, German tourists had visited one of them and had inquired about the origin of the food. We understood this, and we used this crucial fact during negotiations with the management. The other restaurant was next to the first and so our argument was that the competitor was taking first place. Now we are to sell the potatoes, the beet and the sage. We have entered into an agreement to sell the herbs to a company licensed by SKAL, as it is grown on a small area of 1 hectare. Later a small processing facility will be constructed in the co-operative itself.

The setting up of the producer - consumer network will be assisted by the publication of a magazine and a special leaflet, which will be disseminated in a forthcoming food exhibition in September, as well as in embassies, companies and at all possible public events. For now 10 families, 1 company – UPS, and 1 restaurant are involved in the system. An Internet site is under construction and will be started in September. It is intended for on-line registration in the system, and for the promotion and advertising of Organic Agriculture. We have found that young people have a stronger attitude about consuming such food, and this is related to care for the environment and the protection of nature at Vitosha. The web site will be attractive to young consumers.

### *12.3. Conclusions*

Our conclusions are that we need to work with small family farms. We need not work with producers who might have the necessary equipment but lack the attitude to work with the additional care necessary for Organic Farming – constant observation, manual operations. Regarding the consumers, the problems are related to the terms in use in Bulgaria. Because of the great backwardness in Organic Farming development, the growing demand for safe food by the consumers, and the legislation which has been lacking until very recently, many producers put the label "ecologically clean products" on the products' packaging. An enormous part of the society does not know the principles of Organic Farming and which food could be indicated as organic. An opinion exists that it is sufficient for production to be in unpolluted area in order to be considered as "ecological production". Unfortunately the ignorance about Organic Farming is at the highest levels – among officials in the Ministry of Agriculture and scientific workers. A regulation concerning Organic Agriculture was only adopted last year. . It is in accordance with the Regulation EC 2092/91. However, it contains the term "biological" production, which in turn creates mistrust in consumers. They link it to the biotechnologies and genetic engineering. Although insufficient, the information in the Bulgarian media about biotechnologies and genetic engineering is more than the information about Organic Agriculture. Hard work is necessary with media to raise public awareness. Unfortunately, the environmental NGOs' lobby in the media is very weak and much effort is needed in this area.

AGROLINK Association plans to work for the enlargement of its producer's network in other regions around Sofia, not only around Vitosha, and to diversify the types of products – vegetables, honey and fruits. At the moment we are negotiating with the Sofia municipality to receive municipal land in order to build a Demonstration farm. The activities there will be aiming at:

- Training of farmers.
- Training of pupils, students, ecologists.
- Growing of own production and direct sales.
- Small tourist site.
- Carrying out scientific research experiments to find own solutions to production problems.
- Inclusion of the Demonstration Farm in the tourist sights of Sofia.

We strongly believe that the Demonstration farm will help the creation of the local market through increasing the knowledge of producers and consumers.

### 12.4. Main Questions

- What arguments do you use to convince producers to produce organic products?
- Which way for the sale of products is more effective – on-site at the farm or in the town, through direct sale from the storehouse or to the house door?

# 13. Standards Development in Manipur, India

(Victor Keishing, MATA Foundation)

MATA Foundation is a public charitable trust (NGO) established for the socio economic and cultural development of the deprived and backward developing communities and weaker sections of the society living in the hill regions, especially North East India. MATA Foundation is working among the indigenous tribal communities of the Manipur hills. MATA Foundation is promoting local marketing avenues for the agriculture products of the tribal farmers. The long term goals are food security, sustainable agriculture, Organic Farming, animal husbandry, natural resource management, watershed management in shifting cultivation areas, income generation, promotion of traditional local knowledge for sustainable livelihood, agro-processing, agro-business development and marketing.

The hill areas are blessed with good climate and rainfall - 2,300 mm to 2,600 mm rainfall per annum. The hill slopes are between 20% to 42% and are prone to soil erosion, land slides and land slips. The area grows subtropical and temperate climate agricultural crops. Fruits, berries, vegetables, plantation crops (coffee, large cardamom), food crops etc are abundantly grown in the area. The main problem is immediate market facilities. Middlemen are pocketing all the benefit that farmers produce. The consumer is also not benefited. They have to pay higher prices and the farmer gets a meagre amount of money for the crops. In view of this difficulty, MATA Foundation is promoting agro-processing in the areas for spices, fruits, vegetables and food crops. Processed food, fruits, vegetable have markets. The area is practising conventional farming. Therefore, it is conducive to promote Organic Farming. Farmers do not apply costly synthetic fertilisers or pesticides. Hill slope slash and burn methods are practised for crop production. One of the goals of MATA is to control jhum cultivation and to promote settled permanent crop production practices.

We understand the importance of OA in marketing the processed products. OA products are sold at the city markets. Certification is one of the important factors. Since the area is under conventional farming, MATA is promoting certain standards in seed storage, seedlings, land preparation, sowing, and harvesting by the farmers. The standards are basically a modification of what the farmer has traditionally practised. The seeds are normally owned by the farmer himself/herself. On most occasions the farmer selects his own seed from the existing crop. The

good quality seeds are specially collected, stored in good conditions. The local methods are good for storing many of the seeds/rhizomes. Examples are maize, paddy, millets, oil seeds, berries, nuts etc ginger and turmeric etc.

The main standards being promoted are supplementary to the traditional systems practised by the farmers. We are trying to promote the system for increased quantities. Land preparation is mainly focused on less soil erosion and no loss of soil moisture. The plotting of cropping land is still vague in the area. All families in the village cultivate their crops in one large area and individual plots are marked simply and this is accepted by all. Since crop production is a practice fully involving all villagers in one area, the standards in respect of plot and other related matters are not so necessary. Most of the cropping is mixed, for both families needs and for selling. All of the farmers follow one pattern and therefore, individual specification is not very relevant. The important factor is for one large plot for each village to have various means of production that maintain soil fertility and crop production. MATA has been very successful in 45 villages in promoting common standards of crop production, quality and productivity. The crops are ginger, turmeric, large cardamom, coffee, orange, pineapple, maize, paddy, passion fruit, banana, papaya, etc.

The adopted standards and specifications are discussed among the farmers, specifically among the total population of the village and are simply adopted with modifications by the farmers. Therefore, it is applied in total and has the full agreement of the villagers.

We have seen the standards developed by Organic Certifying Agencies. Naturland and SGS specifications are not very relevant to our area. Even though the farmers cultivate in their individual land holding, it is part of a larger area. The farmers use green foliage in the form of ordinary compost and pest attack is controlled with bio-pesticides produced by the farmers themselves from local resources. Many of the standards and specifications from outside are not relevant. What we feel to be important is location specific standards harmonised with standards adopted regionally and nationally.

The area has potential to promote its own standards in OA. Adoption of standards with different physical backgrounds will not be useful and could be counter- productive in the promotion of OA. MATA is working in this direction and with additional inputs we can come up with compatible standards commonly adopted as benchmarks in Organic Production.

The traditional system of crop production and the profound involvement of the village is the hurdle in the promotion of settled cultivation and crop production. Therefore, we are promoting the improved system of jhum cultivation, which is

easily adopted by the farmers. Whatever we say and do, ultimately it is crop security, productivity and income matters that are essential, coupled with assured marketing possibilities.

### Main Questions

- Crop production for livelihood and additional income from agriculture for families will only be realised through assured market. The hill terrain with low population density does not constitute potential markets. In this context, how can we only promote local marketing?
- The conventional farming modified is OA. How do we get a specific mark as OA in traditional areas?
- Taking agriculture products to big cities and regional markets ensures better income. How are we able to reach such markets without primary processing, local storage, and efficient transport?
- OA products are demanded in cities. The reason for this is that the products supplied from adjoining city farming areas are laced with heavy dose of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides. In a large country like India, how can farmers from remote villages reach the city markets?
- Without breaking the link between farmer and a chain of middleman, city store and consumer the product cannot be market competitive. How do we reach a competitive level considering the heavy overhead costs of storage and transport?

# 14. Standards Development in Assam, India

## (Majumdar, NEEDS)

The North East Development Society (NEEDS) is working in two districts of Assam State. The geographical area is both hills and plain areas. Part of the district of Nagaon is affected during the annual flooding of river Bhramaputra. The area gets about 2400 mm rain per annum. Most of the crops are grown in the area. Sub-tropical climate is prevailing.

The farmers are small land holding cultivators. NEEDS is working in 65 villages for the promoting of income generation and livelihood support programmes. Immediate markets for the farmer's produce are a big problem in the area. NEEDS is organising product procurement and transportation of the raw materials to a state capital market at Guwahati. We started this programme two years back and found the operation is beneficial and useful. A steady income of Rs. 8,000/- has been added to each family due to this marketing arrangement. The products transported are lime, orange, ginger, turmeric, pineapple, maize and mustard. Seasonal vegetables are also marketed during the rabbi season. The summer season crops provide good benefits to farmers.

Good potential is available in increasing the production and supply of these items. We are promoting traditional farming with low external inputs. Of late we are promoting OA as an integral part of production activities. Since, we are promoting OA products with out any certification; we are developing our own standards in production, packing and transport. One of the important factors we have noticed is that the consumers look for competitive prices and are not much concerned with packing and display. Currently, we are not directly supplying to the consumers in the town. We are also not maintaining our own store for sales. We supply the product to the wholesale dealer and he is not much concerned with proper storage and display. We do not know how to tackle this problem.

The common standard, which we are promoting, is with a norm of production practices and not the finer lines of organic standards suggested by the certifying agencies. As of today we are not in need of organic certification to sell our product. It is accepted as naturally produced and therefore, accepted as organic pro-

duct. The faith of the consumer is evident. The product coming from a particular area is fully understood by the consumers. The consumers believe that the product supplied by NEEDS and its farmers are naturally produced and organic. This faith is giving lot of importance to our market strength. We are also not demanding more money at this moment.

NEEDS is at the moment not capable of entering into the export market. There is the question of export demand for organic certification from reputed companies. We are in the process of further developing the standards compatible with standards acceptable to all. This may take some time.

***Main Questions:***

- How can we make identification of OA when the whole area is under conventional farming?
- Local markets do not demand organic certification. Only the unknown big city market demands organic certification. How far that is relevant while developing OA local market?
- OA production may be understood as the need of the hour and why should it be linked with marketing alone?
- Can we get in line with the regional importance of taste and acceptance with OA products?

# 15. Getting accredited - a challenge but an opportunity for prosperity to the organic growers in Nepal

(Umesh Lama, UMN)

## 15.1. Description of the Region

Nepal is a landlocked country sandwiched between two giant countries by population, China and India. It occupies 147, 181 square km, which accounts for only 0.1% of the earth. The country currently has 23 million population with more than 61 ethnic groups having a mixture of customs, languages and religions. The main occupation of the country is agriculture in which 88 % of the total population is engaged.

It is a beautiful country with fertile plains; terraced fields and green forests, all set against a background of snow capped Himalayas. However it is also one of the poorest and least developed nations in the world, with 45 % of the population living in desperate poverty.

Since 1950, the pattern of life including agriculture is gradually changing to produce a varied livelihood for its people. The past 50 years have seen an explosive growth of foreign influence through both tourism and foreign funded development projects (including agriculture/forestry projects). Culturally and socially, the consequences have been profound – particularly in the urban areas. This has resulted in rapid urban drifts as poor farmers unable to make a living in their ancestral area due to population growth coupled with low productivity of land, flood into the urban areas.

Over the past decades, the majority of the farmers in the accessible urban areas where motorised access is available have been practising chemical farming using imported hybrid seeds. The indigenous crop species have therefore been either replaced to a great extent or are eroded gradually at an alarming rate. The rural farmers of Nepal still practice subsistent agriculture. The collection and sale of

wild mushrooms and a limited amount of organic fruits and vegetables to the local market is the way of earning cash income. Nepali farmers have developed many sophisticated systems to farm steeply sloping lands and to provide irrigation water to the fields. There is a rich tradition of agricultural practices to draw upon through promoting or maintaining truly sustainable agriculture systems.

### *15.2. Problems of Organic Agriculture*

It is apparent that the quality of organic products is very important. Farm products without any certification ensuring quality by the recognised forms cannot be sold in the national and international markets. Further the volume of farm products is also equally important. Since Nepal is characterized by subsistence farmers, the farm products are limited which means that there is no big volume of products for sale as a surplus to the out-side market. This is also one of the challenges as to whether to commercialise the organic products in the years to come. The most important organic products of Nepal so far are fruits and vegetables including mushrooms of both cultivated and wild species.

There are no local certifying agents for these products, which makes it difficult to sell even in the local market. There are some organizations such as the Nepal Permaculture Group and its member organizations e.g. INSAN, JPP and ECOS-CENTER but they do not hold formal authority to certify these products. There are no standard norms being set for the above products especially for vegetable and fruits. The selling and buying takes place in limited cases for local consumption, which is based on mutual trust and understanding. In the past it has been realized that the standard as being set specially for organic mushroom by some international agencies are very strict, hence proved to be very difficult to meet in view of the local scenario.

For instance a Swiss company considers buying mushrooms if they are transported by means of porters, road transport and ships but not the airplane. This is not a problem with the types of mushrooms which are grown in urban areas, but this impacts mainly on the remote hill farmers who collect and transport their products using helicopters or other privately owned small aircraft. There seems no choice than this as the area lies in isolated remote parts where road infrastructure is still a dream. In this case if one has to meet the transport criteria or standard being fixed by international companies then portering to road head is essential but an expensive option. On the other hand the group of collectors should get recognized and the products certified every year using the international agency like BCS (a well reputed German Company). It has been learned that a representative of BCS company who visits the site requires daily allowance of 500 US $ per person in which transportation costs are extra. The visit to the remo-

te mountains are often delayed caused by irregular flights due to weather conditions which means that there could be many additional 500 $ in the cost of mushrooms. This will surely result in substantial increases in the cost of organic mushrooms. Therefore it raises the question whether the product (which at present costs approximately 100 US $ per kg) can compete on the international market.

In view of the above the following questions need to be addressed in order to promote local and international markets in relation to the organic farm products.

### 15.3. Main Questions

- Are there other Developing Countries facing the similar problems (transport criteria), if so what have they considered to over- come these problems?
- Can respective Governments be a part of a solution by encouraging local groups through partly subsidizing the transport cost and VAT and through facilitating legal procedures as required specially in the process of exporting the goods?
- Can professional forum like AGRECOL work as a pressure group to create pressure on certifying agencies to consider reducing their fees?
- Can local organic inspectors be trained and developed to promote local certifying agency? If so where is the training fund coming from?
- Can we build the capacity of local certifying agency and can they become accredited and recognized agencies? Can local agencies at first have to certify the organic products followed by verification and acceptance by the international agencies like BCS and NASA?

### 15.4. Potentials of Organic Agriculture

- Big demand for organic mushrooms specially Morels in the international markets. There have already been some established contacts with some of the related international companies.
- Wild mushrooms are commonly available; they do not need special management to sustain the harvest in the forthcoming years.
- Increasing the number of farmers for cultivable species of organic mushrooms, there is possibility that these can also be exported.
- The organic fruit/vegetable farmers are gradually increasing in numbers; there is possibility that they can be turned into commercial growers.
- Naturally there are 75 % hill farmers who practice Organic Farming.
- The promotion of ecologically sound agriculture has become the strategies of many NGOs and INGOs working in Nepal.

- There are initiatives taken in the area of conservation and development of indigenous crop species. The indigenous varieties do better even with the traditional system of Organic Agriculture.

### 15.5. Constraints of Organic Agriculture

- Difficult terrains, remoteness and isolated settlements
- Lack of physical infrastructures in the mountains.
- Small land holdings
- Absence of local organic inspectors and certifying bodies.
- Lack of appropriate storage facilities
- Lack of big capital for investment in international trade dealing
- Limited knowledge, coordination and networks in related field

### 15.6. Possible Solutions

- Capacity building of the local organic growers both in leadership and technical fields.
- Lobbying and advocacy work to win the trust of government and other related agencies in the respective countries.
- Training for local inspectors and establishment of local certifying agency.
- Develop linkage with the international market for organic mushrooms and fruit & vegetables.
- Increase area under Organic Agriculture.
- Facilitate access to credit services by linking the local groups to banks and micro-finance companies as appropriate.
- Subsidy in transportation cost by the government and other donor agencies to the poor and marginalized groups.
- Use of local certifying agencies or have bigger cut in the fees charged by the international certifying agencies.

### 15.7. Conclusion

Nepal is an agriculture-based country. This means that rural development can only be achieved if primary emphasis is given to the agriculture sector. Positive changes can be seen if the agriculture system is strengthened and the livelihood improved through increased production by adapting eco-friendly affordable technologies, particularly Organic Agriculture. The mobilisation, development and utilisation of the local resources hold prime importance. There is possibility

to involve marginalized farmer groups in the production and sale of organic vegetable/fruits and mushrooms of the both wild and cultivable species to substantially increase their income. But in a true sense, success of this largely requires special attention in accessing/ linking the said groups with the local and international markets and to the local credit services. Advocacy and lobbying to respective Government and related agencies are also equally important. Development of local inspectors and promotion of the own local certifying bodies for accreditation or recognition from all levels is essential to sustain the idea in long run.

# Annex II: Workshop Programme

Monday, October 21

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| 9.00 | Opening of the workshop<br><br>► Gabi Stoll, AGRECOL<br>► Sang Mok Sohn, OARD-Group<br><br>Welcome addresses<br><br>► Klaus Budde, BLE<br>► Peter Rottach Bread for the World<br>► Anne Boor, IFOAM |
| 10.00 | Organic Agriculture in Third World Countries – State of the Art<br><br>► Keynote (Johannes Kotschi, AGRECOL)<br>► Regional working groups |
| 12.30 | Lunch break |
| 14.30 | ► Working groups continued<br>► Interactive presentation of working group results |
| 16.30 | Technology development in Organic Agriculture<br><br>► Keynote (Chesha Wettasinha)<br>► Plenary discussion<br>► Presentation of case studies on technology development in different groups |
| Evening | Share Fair |

Tuesday, October 22

Creation of advisory services and development of local markets

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|---|---|
| 9.00 | ▸ Keynote: Advisory Services (Berthold Schrimpf, AGRECOL)<br>▸ Keynote: Market development (Frank Schreiber, Grupo EcoLogica, Peru) |
| | Coffee break |
| 10.45 | ▸ Presentation and discussion of case studies in different groups<br>▸ Working groups on advisory services and local markets |
| 12.30 | Lunch break |
| 14.00 | ▸ Working groups ctd.<br>▸ Presentation of working group results |
| 16.30 | Sight seeing around Bonn |

Wednesday, October 23

Standards and Certification

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|---|---|
| 9.00 | ▸ Keynote: Standards development (Bo van Elzakker, Agro Eco)<br>▸ Keynote: Inspection and certification (Birgit Wilhelm, Naturland) |
| | Coffee break |
| 10.45 | ▸ Presentation and discussion of case studies in different groups<br>▸ Working groups on standards and certification |
| 12.30 | Lunch break |
| 14.30 | ▸ Working groups ctd. |
| 16.00 | Coffee break |
| 16.30 | ▸ Presentation of working group results |

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|---|---|
| 17.30 | Support to Governments |
| | ► Keynote (Gunnar Rundgren, President of IFOAM)<br>► Plenary discussion |
| Evening | AGRECOL Reception |

Thursday, October 24

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|---|---|
| | Agenda for Action |
| 9.00 | Introduction (Johannes Kotschi)<br>Regional working groups |
| 10.30 | Coffee break |
| 11.00 | Regional working groups ctd. |
| 12.30 | Lunch break |
| 14.30 | Presentation and discussion of working group results |
| 16.00 | Coffee break |
| 16.30 | Closure of the workshop (Wolfgang Bayer, AGRECOL) |
| Friday / Saturday | Study Tour »Marketing of Organic Food in Germany«<br>(Berthold Schrimpf, AGRECOL & Marion Buley, GTZ) |

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***AGRECOL** is a non-profit association and supports ecologically sound land use in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The members of AGRECOL have strong professional links to development co-operation. They work with government agencies and NGOs, in education and research, or as consultants.*

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