

Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in West Africa (KHWA)

KHWA is part of the Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa (KCOA)

KCOA is a collaborative country-led partnership that aims to scale up adoption of organic and agroecological farming practices through a network of five Knowledge Hubs in Africa. Within KCOA, the implementing organisations have three main objectives: to improve access to knowledge on organic agriculture and agroecology; to strengthen the technical and professional capacity of multipliers; and to foster networking and strengthen relationships in the sector across the continent.

Context and challenge

Organic agriculture (OA) and agroecology are a group of practices and theories that emphasises the efficient management of natural resources and the autonomy of producers. It is based on the traditional knowledge of the populations and is enriched by scientific knowledge. This format limits the use of external inputs and excludes particularly polluting and harmful chemical. It promotes a food system that is beneficial for consumers and the planet. Since the 1990s, organic agriculture (OA) has been developing in Africa through the support of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and farmers' organisations. Nevertheless, access to knowledge and the consolidation of organic value chains remain as major challenges for its development in Western Africa.

Project Overview

Project name	Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in West Africa (KHWA) – one of the hubs within the KCOA project
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Senegal (Hub base), Mali, Benin, Nigeria and Gambia
Implemented by	GIZ in cooperation with ENDA Pronat and partner organisations (see map below)
Duration	2019 – present

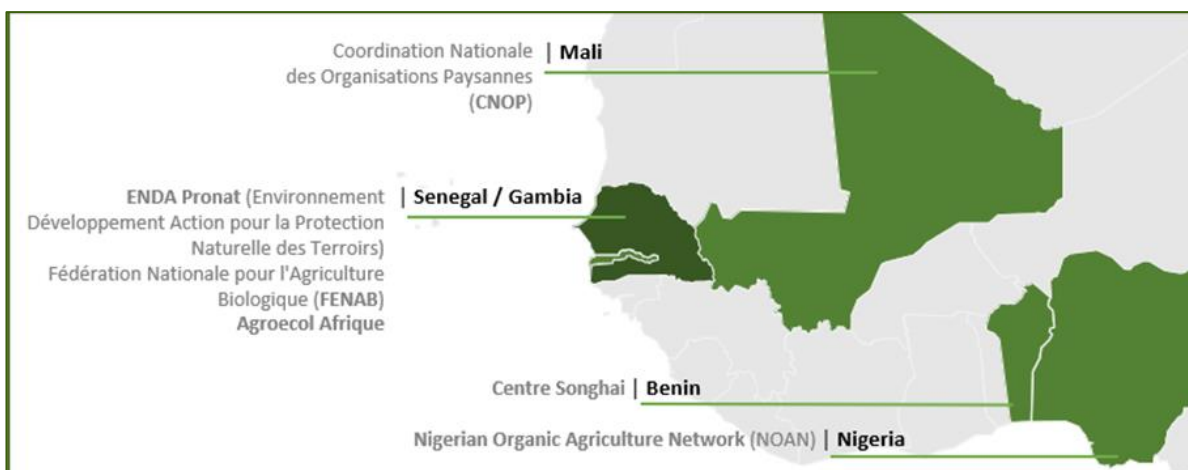
KHWA approach

The objective of the KHWA is to better integrate and promote local organic farming approaches and practices in agricultural systems. More specifically, it aims to:

- › Provide support to ecological intensification of agriculture by making knowledge about local, contextual and specific production methods more accessible;
- › Improve productivity while protecting natural resource and increasing resilience in face of global constraints;
- › Improve the availability of high quality, nutritious, organically produced food, especially through dietary diversity, with a focus on young children, women and vulnerable people;
- › Strengthen existing or develop new local, regional and international markets for organic products, making it available to communities and increasing their reach through international and local certification systems.

To support these goals, in all countries the implementing organisations identify NGOs, producer organisations and other stakeholders in the organic agriculture value chains to come together and form a national steering committee. This committee is responsible to provide orientation, bring cohesiveness between the hub's network, and to ensure a high-quality implementation process.

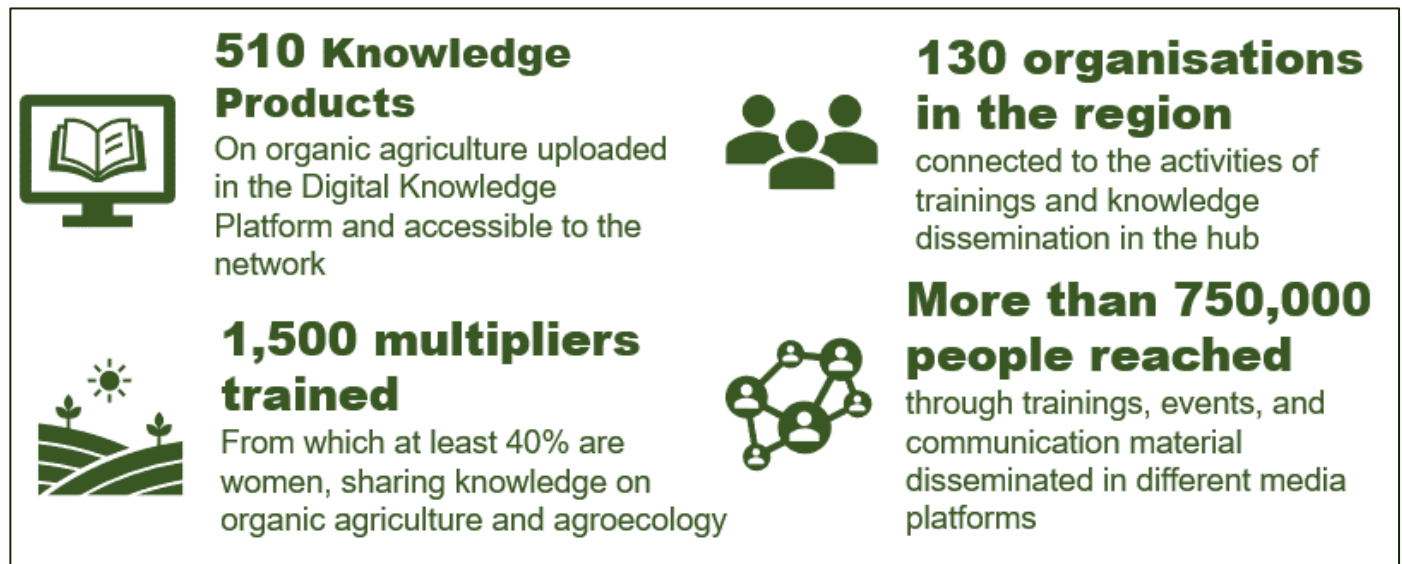
KHWA reach



Success Factors: Networks

Senegal is a country that is committed to agroecological transformation. In May 2019, the government declared agroecology and sustainable agriculture to be a priority for the next years. Representatives from agriculture, local grassroots organisations, municipalities, non-governmental organisations, academia, and the private sector joined forces to form the alliance “Dynamics for an agro-ecological transition in Senegal” (in French: Dynamique pour une Transition AgroEcologique au Sénégal, DyTAES). The alliance is shaping political dialogue, drawing up action plans and, because of this multi-stakeholder’s approach, is enhancing the presence of Senegal as a prime example of a successful agroecological transition in Africa. The alliance is coordinated by ENDA Pronat, the managing organisation of the Knowledge Hub West Africa (KHWA-KCOA). Alliances such as this are also important to boost the connections of different stakeholder, providing a space where dialogue, from producers to consumers, is enhanced. Moreover, in face of an ever more present food crises, organic agriculture and agroecological systems also enhance the resilience and opportunities for farmers and communities, as they are not dependent on imported chemicals such as pesticides and fertilizers. The virtuous cycle created, strengthen local markets and local agroecological value chains, guaranteeing higher and more secure income generation and jobs, while promoting a just transition.

KHWA expected outcomes



Story from the field: Organic Weekends

The Senegalese organisation Agroecol Afrique, one of the KHWA members, organises the Organic Weekends. This initiative brings together the various actors from the entire organic value chain in the region and serves as a stage for their commercialisation and networking with other organic and agroecological actors. Until now, four Organic Weekends have been organised, receiving over 140 exhibitors and around 3,700 visitors. In total, 23 tonnes of organic products have been sold in the events. Ndeye Binta Dione, a farmer and multiplier from KHWA, shared that the financial returns are also very relevant, and the market constitutes an important place of networking for her and the farmers she works with. Binta considers that the Organic Weekends are crucial to raise public attention on agroecology, to sensitise multiple actors on ways of production that increase human and environmental health, and to contribute to the long-term development of communities.



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