



Organization and Implementation of a Common Space for the Promotion of Local Products in Côte d'Ivoire: The Case of the Boutique Paysanne

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Authors' contributions

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the implementation of an institutional innovation carried out in the agricultural world. By questioning the aspects relating to the creation of the common space for the promotion of local products, the identification of members, the development of the operating and governance strategy, the implementation of this space, monitoring and administration of advice to cooperators, the author aims to present an innovation that contributes to the empowerment of women processors of local agricultural products. This requires both primary and secondary data to be collected. The

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results obtained draw their source from the field survey which used techniques (documentary research and semi-directed interview) and a tool (interview grid) for data collection. The data collected was analyzed using rational choice theory.

Keywords: Organization; implementation; common space; promotion of local products; empowerment of women processors.

1. INTRODUCTION

Faced with the changes that have marked the agricultural and agri-food sector, the question of local products and their promotion has become important. Public and private actors are increasingly committed to promoting these products on the basis of their territorial specificity and local know-how (Lamani, 2014). The promotion of local products necessarily involves production, processing and marketing. It aims to improve the nutritional quality of locally available foods and to encourage production, processing and distribution models that respect health and limit impacts on the environment and to reduce losses and waste in the value chain (Fortie, 2019, Cormier and Roussel, 2009, Berti, 2020).

In this momentum of development and promotion of local products, there was the establishment of Short Circuits (CC) which aim to reduce the distance between producers and consumers. In short circuits, producers can sell their products to consumers in different ways: off-farm, in neighboring places of consumption such as

farmers' markets, in stores owned by the farmers themselves, at festivals and food fairs, through farm delivery systems or via a single commercial intermediary (cooperative stores or local product boutiques, specialized stores, supermarkets, etc.). Such are the cases of Szekszar in Hungary and Brin d'Herbe in France (ONUDI, 2020, Bai, 1990, Boy, 2010).

In the context of Ivory Coast, one of the strategic reflections led to the creation of the Simplified Cooperative Society (SCOOPS) called La Boutique Paysanne (LBP). The Boutique Paysanne is a national showcase which ensures the promotion, valorization and distribution of Ivorian agricultural products resulting from artisanal processing (Fiamor, 2011, Chamberlain, 1999). Based on these observations, this study aims to describe an innovation which consisted of organizing and implementing a common space for promoting local products.

This article includes methodology, results, discussion, conclusion and bibliography.

2. METHODOLOGY

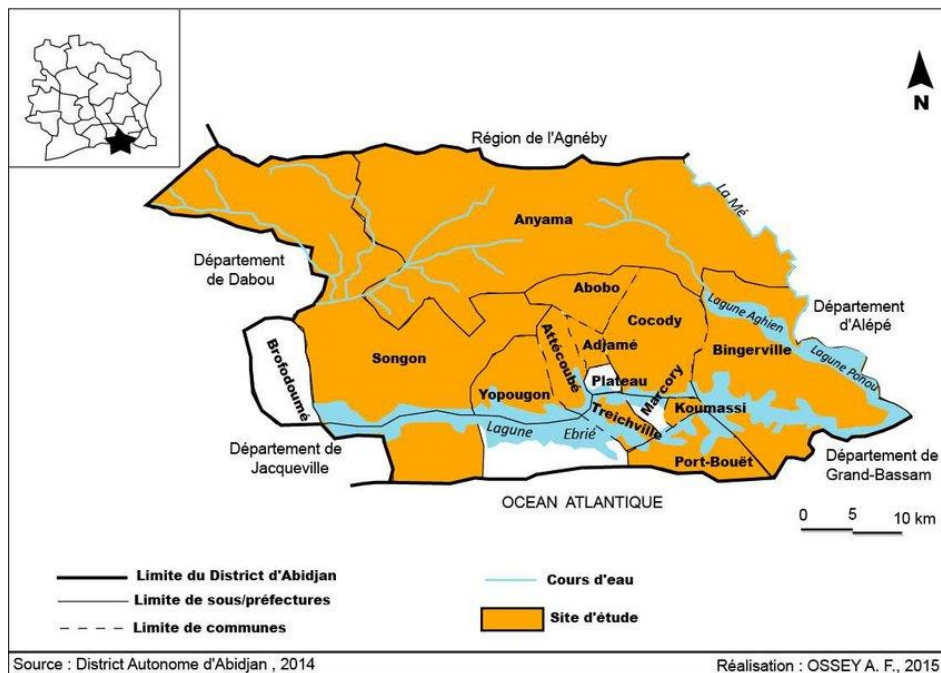


Fig. 1. Map of the study area

This study took place in the city of Abidjan precisely in the commune of Plateau. This choice is justified by the fact that it is the implementation site of the Boutique Paysanne (LBP) and therefore the place where we can meet all the actors (cooperators and administrative staff) of said organization. Secondary data from this study were obtained through documentary research. As for the mobilization of primary data, it was done using a qualitative approach. From a qualitative perspective, we opted for the sample technique by reasoned choice which ultimately made it possible to interview fourteen (14) people. Concerning the data collection technique, we used the semi-structured interview. Regarding the data collection tool, we used the interview grid. Thematic content analysis was essential to analyze and interpret the data collected in the field.

3. RESULTS

After analysis of the data collected, the results presented below were obtained. It follows that the idea of creating a common space for promoting local products was born from a field observation by the President of the Board of Directors (PCA) of the LBP. The pilot phase of this project was launched in the commune of Yopougon in 2016 and lasted one year. After a year of experimentation, the project was relocated to the Plateau commune, precisely to the National Chamber of Agriculture of Côte d'Ivoire. At the start of the project, the cohort was made up of 20 processors - producers but over time the number of members increased to reach 300 processors and 1800 producers. The validation of LBP products involves a laboratory analysis carried out by a committee composed of agents of the chamber of commerce. Cooperators are recruited during events and through networks. Their membership after validation of the products is invoiced and a monthly amount is imposed on them. As a formal structure, the task of each member of the LBP is well defined. In terms of governance, the LBP is a cooperative society with a board of directors headed by a PCA. As for the follow-up of the cooperators, it proceeds by consignment and provides them with advice which allows them to increase their turnover.

3.1 Organization of the Common Space for Promoting Local Products

3.1.1 Creation of a common space for promoting local products

The creation of the common space to promote local products is an idea of the PCA of said store.

This is clearly conveyed in the words of the director of LBP who declares:

It must be said that the idea was born from Doctor Lago, herself a Chamber of Agriculture agent. This is an observation that was made from his various tours and the realities that the populations were experiencing. In fact, it turns out that in the agricultural world there is a lot of post-harvest loss. So what should be done to reduce these losses? It was about finding the strategy which is transformation. With this first aspect settled, we now had to find a space where we would promote and market the processed products and that's where the idea of creating the farmer's shop came from to resolve the second aspect.

Through his words, it emerges that the idea of creating the common space for promoting local products was born from a field observation by the PCA of LBP. The observation is that there were many post-harvest losses so it was necessary to find a palliative to first transform the products in order to preserve them as long as possible. Then create a promotion-sale space for its processed products. This decision by the PCA to create this common space for promoting local products is part of the theory of rational choice.

3.1.2 Implementation of the common space for the promotion of local products Yopougon

The pilot project of this common space for promoting local products was launched in the commune of Yopougon in 2016. This idea is clearly explained by the director of the LBP in these terms:

After a year, the test was the pilot project it was in Yopougon next to a market. We know how to tell the consumer is interested in which product since we know that the same products are in the store and are on the market. And it was to lead them to make a difference. A product which is processed and packaged which is healthy and which is protected compared to a product which is sold on the open market and which had no guarantee because we do not know when we transformed it there is the wind, flies so we had to see the difference and we saw that people are interested in local products for those who have a notion of hygiene and health. There was a launch activity with the

presence of the president of the National Chamber of Agriculture. They made the opening and the approximately 20 members who made up the team at the time and the administration at the same time. This type of cooperative is a cooperative with a board of directors. There is a PCA and his office is how the HQ¹ in Yopougon started in 2016.

It appears from this speech that the pilot phase of the project took place over a year. It was marked by an official launch of the activity in the presence of sector authorities and members of the Boutique Paysanne in the commune of Yopougon in 2016. This pilot phase made it possible to know that consumers are interested in processed local products. and take ownership of innovation.

3.1.3 Implementation of the common area for promoting local products in Plateau

After a year of experimentation, the project was relocated to the Plateau commune, precisely to the National Chamber of Agriculture of Côte d'Ivoire. This is recounted by the director of the LBP as follows :

So after a year we moved the store and we went to the Chamber of Agriculture which wanted us to be within the Chamber of Agriculture of Côte d'Ivoire. In Yopougon there were sponsors, here I know the sponsors, but I know that in Yopougon there is the president of the chamber of commerce who put his all into it, the members and their contributions. They were able to set it up like a simple shop and it wasn't that big. But when we came here the very French embassy which participated in the establishment of the chamber of agriculture. There is the Ministry of Agriculture, it must be said that it was the fallout from Yopougon which made it possible and it was these people who came when there really was the very official opening with speeches followed by the inauguration and it was something big. It was here who contributed to the setting up of the store on the plateau here on May 20, 2017.

Through this excerpt from the speech, it appears that one year after the pilot phase carried out in the commune of Yopougon, the project was transferred to the National Chamber of

Agriculture located on the plateau. The official opening of the LBP took place on May 20, 2017 in the presence of several authorities.

3.2 Identification of Members

3.2.1 Starting cohort

Initially, the project began in the commune of Yopougon with a maximum of twenty (20) processors – producers or producers. This appears clearly in the words of the director of the LBP who expresses herself in these terms :

And we started off on a project to see the importance of creating a space to transform. It started in 2016 in Yopougon in a small store with no more than 20 processors (processors — producers or producers). As Madam she did a lot of tours and through these very activities in Abidjan she was able to identify certain processors to be able to start the activity and it was a question of connecting the processors and the producers in relation to the raw material and she was sufficiently imbued to know who was qualified and had the capabilities to be in such a position.

This extract from the speech shows that the starting cohort of the LBP was made up of 20 processors – producers or producers. The structuring of this cohort was based on the knowledge that the PCA had of each of the members involved in the project.

3.2.2 Evolution of the cohort

The Boutique Paysanne began its activities with around twenty processors but over time the number of members increased. This is perceptible in the words of the director of LBP who advances:

This is how, through word of mouth and all the publicity that we did around it, many processors came to be represented. It's word of mouth because a transformer is in a network. In any case, most of those I received here, I heard about the store and therefore I want to know how to reference my product.

It emerges from this speech that the evolution of the LBP cohort took place by word of mouth because each of the cooperators is integrated into a communication network which made it possible to boost the size of the cooperative.

¹ HQ means Headquarters

3.2.3 Current cohort

Through the network of cooperators and all the advertising focused on LBP, the current cohort is around 300 processors and 1,800 producers. This appears in the words of the director of the LBP who declares :

This is how, through word of mouth and all the publicity that we did around it, many processors came to be represented. That's why today we find ourselves with 300 processors and 1,800 producers.

This speech shows that the network of cooperators and the advertising done by the LBP itself allowed the cohort to be made up of 300 processors and 1,800 producers.

3.3 Operation and Governance Strategy for the Common area for Promoting Local Products

3.3.1 Space operation strategy

The validation of products for entry into the LBP is carried out by a committee composed of agents of the chamber of commerce. This is perceptible by the words of the director of the LBP who declares : « *there is a committee which is set up to validate the entry of products at the store level, once it is validated you make your membership* ». She goes further by saying that the validation is based on an analysis carried out in a laboratory.

Yes and with the agents of the Chamber of Commerce because you need the opinions of different people to be able to bring a product here. It requires that these products have a laboratory analysis for validation because hygiene is a priority. Once the products are accepted, you sign up.

Through these assertions, it appears that the validation of products, which requires laboratory analysis for their entry into the LBP, is done by a committee composed of agents of the chamber of commerce. The LBP stock manager intervenes to clarify the method of recruiting cooperators and the taxes linked to this service. It provides details on these aspects as follows:

With regard to recruitment, if for example outside in an event or a fair even on the networks we have seen a supplier or a structure which makes products which

attracts our attention which is already well presented what remains to be known is the taste of the product, but when we see the packaging if we are already interested we can contact them. Now generally those who come to us when they come we have selection criteria. We first look at how the product is presented. We try as best we can to add our little touch by expert, expert, but we have a very little experience and depending on the products here which come out the most as the products are presented we try to bring a little correction to the presentation of the product and this is what they must show to our hierarchical superior and to people well authorized to do the tasting and then after the control of the products. Regarding the quality, when this is validated that we have accepted the product we now place the order and then we ask for that before placing the order and we must pay for our membership to the store which is in the amount of 50,000 CFA franc. Generally, there is a monthly payment of 5000 CFA franc when you come per month.

The director of the LBP adds in these terms :

There is a monthly payment of 5000 CFA franc which is taken or paid by the supplier as shopping costs because we certainly do not pay for the premises now, but there are internal charges which must be lifted. Electricity and water bills and everything related to communication through our site, our Facebook page. You see that communication has a cost today you really need funds to be able to support these expenses each month and there are people who also work here who need to be paid, the staff so there are all these charges and membership allows you to pay these charges. We are in management, we are in accounting, inventory management, the cash register and there is the one who takes care of the layout of the shelves. These are the ones we have as members of the store for the moment. It's a work relationship, everyone has their role to play and it's coordinated by management and accounting takes care of everything related to finance at the store level. Now the one who manages the stock is the one who manages everything related to ordering and delivery and problems with customers. The shelfist fills the shelves while monitoring everything that has an expiration date on the shelves and

the cashier records everything that is on sale to take stock at the end of the month.

After defining the tasks of each member of the LBP, the stock manager intervenes again for her role within said store.

Concretely, I check the products, the suppliers' stock, that is to say every month when they send. When we take stock of the purchases and we say and each supplier has their payment slip. Such supplier we paid 20,000 CFA franc at the end of the month we send them by email and subsequently they can know the stock that remains in relation to the bulletin they received for the month. They can know how many products are released. I am responsible for the reports, placing the order, checking the products at the expiration date.

Ultimately, these assertions made it possible to show that the validation of LBP products requires a laboratory analysis carried out by a committee composed of agents of the chamber of commerce. Suppliers are recruited during events and through networks. Their membership after validation is invoiced and a monthly amount is imposed on them. As a formal structure, the task of each member is well defined.

3.3.2 Space governance

The LBP is a cooperative society with a board of directors. This regime was chosen during a meeting with the members of the office based on the idea put forward by the PCA of the structure. This is clearly stated by the director of the LBP who expresses herself as follows:

An office was formed and the idea was born. We choose a regime on which we want to build. It is based on the data that governs this corporation that the office was formed. Since we said that it is a cooperative with a board of directors, it was an AG² which made it possible to form the office and it was put in place. It started with a general secretary, there is a treasurer, a PCA, vice-presidents, a supervisory committee because that is what the law says regarding cooperatives with a board of directors. All these members must be present for your cooperative to be recognized. Yes there is a contract, but we

call it a letter of commitment because we are not a Mauritanian store, it is a house that is alive so we must nourish it. We feed it with promotions, events and exhibitions so we involve the processors.

From this statement, it appears that the LBP is a cooperative society with a board of directors headed by a PCA and which regularly organizes promotions, events and exhibitions.

3.4 Monitoring and Advice from Cooperators

3.4.1 Monitoring of cooperators

At the LBP level, the inventory manager proceeds by deposit-sale. This is evident in his following remarks :

Normally we do a consignment sale. We place the order and what the customer sends are products that were released in the current month which are taken into account in the same month. That is to say, I give an example if in the month we ordered 100 chili powders now in the month if 10 chili powders were purchased this takes into account the payment that we will make in the same month. If we exceed 30 and we sell one more we take it into account for next month.

This assertion shows that LBP proceeds by consignment that is to say when suppliers send the goods, they receive their earnings based on monthly sales.

3.4.2 Advice for cooperators

At this level, we will highlight the sales techniques offered to cooperators, the capacity and resilience rate of cooperators, their level of satisfaction and the turnover of cooperators.

- **Sales techniques conveyed within the Boutique**

Various sales techniques are offered by the LBP to sell the products of the cooperators. Among these techniques, there is the approval of sales prices and the importance of the presence of suppliers to better explain the merits of the products. This is perceptible in the words of the LBP stock manager who expressed herself in these terms:

² AG means General Assembly

For example on prices we ask them to approve the prices, that is to say that the prices they make outside must be the same price. Because when they send their products here themselves, they are selling their own products and we also do our part. On the set here if there is a customer he calls them and the contacts are on the products. So if a customer calls them I take a product from the farmer's shop. I want to take with you, I don't want that, you did it. The supplier must say I have this product at the store it is better to take it and in any case they do it for 1000 CFA franc at the store I also do that for 1000 CFA franc and you are in the area it is everything we ask of them and as I said at the start to promote it at the store. We don't work like supermarkets when it comes to paying. To promote you have to pay, to set up a stand you have to pay, it's free. We ask them at least every month you see him yourself doctor PHC³, every month he is there every Tuesday and Thursday. This boosts his sales and, as a naturotherapist, explains his products when he is there. He talks to his patients and you see that these are products that we must consume. These are products that are made in an artisanal way. We don't get to know each other very often so it's more interesting that you yourself come from time to time even if it's not you who started to grow you don't have the time you can hire salespeople to come, the train and then put them on the ground to speak.

Speaking of the presence of cooperators, K.M. of LBP expresses himself as follows:

Indeed, the sales techniques suit us. You see that I am there on Tuesdays and Thursdays, that's the idea that came from Mrs. Yabro and Ms. Koffi. Since people come, food is easier to explain than illnesses to Mrs. Yabro. Sometimes it must be said that it is a little complicated. They found a strategy to find a naturotherapist who will be there at least twice a week and be able to receive these somewhat complicated cases if we can help them with their diet. The advice we get from Mrs. Yabro is to stick to get things done. The director said it, Mrs. Yabro is there for us so personally I prefer when they tell us something it is up to us to follow them. They give us advice and they

are the ones on the ground. The reviews that visitors make or that a visitor says that he cannot read a label so there is a product where the label is not good, it leaks. They let us know. So she tells us where you take the products and the bottles, be careful so we really get advice from them.

These assertions show that techniques such as the approval of sales prices and the presence of cooperators within the LBP are proposed by the agents of the said store. Such decisions aim at the search for profit and are part of the theory of rational choice.

• Capacity and resilience rate of cooperators

One of the pieces of advice from LBP leaders is to ask cooperators to be much more present within said store to promote their products. This was the case of this cooperator who increased his days of presence at the LBP. This is perceptible in the words of the cooperator, K.M.:

In the first year we waited at the beginning, we started with once a week and after analysis Mrs. Koffi and Yabro decided that I should be present 2 days a week. So I started this, we are in the second year of twice a week.

It appears from this speech that one of the cooperators increased the number of days of presence at the LBP at the request of the director and the inventory manager. This cooperator decides to act this way because he has a good reason to do so.

• Level of satisfaction of cooperators

The cooperators are satisfied with the management of the LBP, in particular with the assistance and advice received. This appears in the words of the cooperator L.P. who declares : « Yes, I am very satisfied with the services of the LBP. The LBP is a showcase that allows us to be known and boost our turnover »." The cooperator K.M. joins the previous one in these terms:

I am satisfied because she put a team together. And this team and us there is a frank collaboration. Collaboration still allows, I was going to say, to be more credible. We are dealing with rather mature people and they know how to approach the operators that we are, how to approach each other and

³ PHC stands for Pharmacopoeia Hospital Center

still there are harmful if a product is dirty how to do it. When visitors arrive, I'm not the manager, I'm at the checkout. Everyone is in the oven and at the mill and they get it all from the director. And as she always says, she is at our service. She works for us so she has her strategy that she puts in place for what I would say is exceptional work. I am very satisfied for someone who cannot sell 10,000 CFA franc and with advice manages to sell for 100,000 CFA franc. Personally I am satisfied because a business that you do and you do not have people to guide you and a business that people guide you and you feel that you are in a family and then things move forward through grace of God.

D.R., LBP cooperator adds this: « *I am very satisfied with the services of LBP because my turnover has increased* ».

From these statements, it appears that the majority of LBP cooperators are satisfied with the services offered by LBP because it allows them to be known and boost their turnover. This can be explained by the rational choices made by everyone throughout this process of creation, implementation and operation of this common space for promoting local products.

- **Growth in turnover**

It appears from the analysis of this table that more than half of the suppliers noted an increase

in their years figures over the determined period. This is perceptible in the words of one of the cooperators (D.K.) who expressed himself as follows:

I came to the store here the first year, it was very difficult for me. The accountant can say it was very, very difficult for me because people were confined to everything that had to do with food. The therapeutic side came gradually at my level and we had to find strategies to get people to consume and treat themselves with plants. So it's little by little. I had an entire year where sales did not reach 10,000 CFA franc throughout the year. I had a year where the turnover could not reach 50,000 CFA franc. It is very difficult to find customers and with Mrs. Yabro and ourselves planning. This is how the turnover began to climb constantly.

From this extract of the speech, it appears that turnover has been increasing since the implementation of a sales strategy with the members of LBP with one of the cooperators including that of the company PHC. Indeed, the latter put into practice the advice received from LBP agents.

4. DISCUSSION

The LBP is a cooperative society with a board of directors headed by a PCA and which regularly organizes promotions, events and exhibitions with the aim of marketing and promoting

Table 1. The turnover figures of some companies members of the LBP are presented over three (03) years (2021, 2022 and 2023)s

Categories	Business	Turnovers 2020-2021	Turnovers 2021-2022	Turnovers 2022-2023
Flour	Vita céréale	0	118 400	170 250
Sauce	SOCEBE	3 616 295	3 173 250	2 659 200
Cosmetic	Bel Emmanuel	0	280 000	468 330
Accessory	LACEWORA	28 125	73 125	26 250
Appetizer	OXIMUM	2 149 640	1 896 050	1 865 975
Breakfast	MARIFE	56 600	553 550	850 375
Chocolate	CHOCovi	178 950	1 509 800	2 187 825
Textile	AFRICA FANY	0	60 000	182 500
Agro-therapy	DYATOURA& CO	2 381 675	2 111 750	1 126 575
Naturomotherapy	Pharmacopoeia Hospital Center – PHC	154 000	3 841 360	4 672 700
Accompagnement	SION SERVICM	1 124 145	2 168 040	1 078 650
Spicy	Ets KAO	1 898 170	1 748 475	1 387 750
Work of art	Musée de Grand-Bassam	4375	136 000	162 000

Source : survey data, March 2024

processed local products. Lamani (2014) partially shares this thesis by presenting the types of governance and the actors mobilized in the olive oil sector. For him, Spain, Italy and France have adopted designations of origin based on the demands of olive growers. The approach is collective and voluntary. On the other hand, Greece, Turkey, Tunisia and Algeria are adopting administrative management and control procedures to comply with legal rules and international standards. We have described the latter as "top-down" approaches, because it is the public organizations which encourage the use of quality signs in order to promote local oils potentially generating added value without having to intervene directly through financial support linked to surface area or yield. An approach which is partly explained by government choices and partly also by the level of mobilization of stakeholders. The strategy adopted in Morocco for the implementation of the "Tyout-Chiadma" PDO constitutes a theoretical-practical model. Along with this, UNIDO (2020) confirms the results obtained from this study by presenting success models of local products sold in farm stores and boutiques. For the author, in Costa Rica Don Cayito is a family-owned coffee farm in Santa María de Dota (Costa Rica), region well known for quality coffee, due not only to the characteristics of both the soil and climate of the region, but also for the know-how and production experience of local coffee producers. The coffee plantations are located between 1650 and 2100 m above sea level in a magnificent landscape of steep slopes. In search of this high quality standard, Don Cayito began processing his farm coffee into a micro-coffee grinder in 2009.

Being on site, the family can ensure appropriate monitoring of the work on the farm, dividing the harvest into batches and micro-lots according to the variety of coffee and the process applied (washed, honey or natural). Shortening the value chain was a need, in order to make the particular quality of coffee better known to both end consumers and professionals, and increase added value. Don Cayito coffee is sold not only abroad (mainly in the United States and Japan), but also in Costa Rica, through an online store and at the farm store, where it is possible to taste and dine. buy Don Cayito coffees. In the case of Hungary, the Szekszard includes food producers and experts from the Szekszard wine region. It applies to any individual local farm or business in the region. The main objective of the program was to connect local producers and consumers through an outlet and community business for

local products. In addition, the program aimed to bring together and highlight the variety of local agricultural products of this region, already well known for its wine, promoting products such as salami, flours, honey, paprika, sunflower oil, jams and cheese. The program includes a quality assurance mechanism and a brand to promote local food. Requirements and quality criteria are constantly monitored through participatory methods and include the identification of local producers, as well as the social and ecological quality of production and packaging. Local farmers are encouraged to qualify for the food label and benefit from visibility on a dedicated website. The program also launched a regional branding initiative in the local community food store, which is applied to all staple and seasonal products in the region. The Szekszard local food label is a registered trademark for all the different types of food available in the region. This allows local farmers to make direct sales of their products and have a secure market outlet. For France, Brin d'Herbe is a group of 20 farmers who have been selling "cottage" and "organic" products for 20 years in two stores on the outskirts of Rennes. The main products are meat (60% of turnover), fruit and vegetables, bakery, dairy products, cheeses, eggs, honey and cider. Their market can be quantified at around 1000 consumers per week. The store opens three days a week. The turnover is 1.5 million euros per year. To manage the store, farmers are organized into a specific form of association which allows them to maintain their identity and operational autonomy vis-à-vis consumers, and at the same time to define a common space of coordination. This aspect is also a regulatory requirement, so that the store can be classified in the "direct sales" category. They hire people to work in the store but the presence of at least one farmer is guaranteed (to improve exchanges with consumers on the products). Farmers have a working time schedule (linked to the turnover of each producer). The more products a farmer sells in the store, the more time he has to invest in the store. Each type of work (communication, repair, etc.) is evaluated the same way. In general, everyone devotes one day a week to the store. Photos of all associated farmers are displayed in stores. Prices are set by each farmer, although there is internal communication on pricing policies. However, there is not much overlap between farmers when it comes to the products sold, so in-store competition is avoided.

Furthermore, the idea of creating the LBP comes from a field observation of the PCA of the said

structure. The project started in the commune of Yopougon in 2016. After a year of experimentation, it was relocated to the commune of Plateau, precisely to the National Chamber of Agriculture of Côte d'Ivoire. Its initial cohort was made up of 20 processors - producers but over time the number of members increased to reach 300 processors and 1800 producers to date. This result is corroborated by Grandval, F. and Dibié, A.-N. (2012) who mention that Martine Kaboré, president of the Rimtereb Som association, had in mind to bring together widowed and needy women around income-generating activities. The Rimtereb Som Association was then created in 1994 on the initiative of a group of 17 women and today includes 403 members carrying out a diversity of activities: the weaving of loincloths, the production of soumbala (local condiment), cleaning work, etc., the main one of which is the production of shea butter and cosmetic products derived from it. Officially recognized in 2001, the association began to invest in local markets, seizing opportunities for one-off events and fairs. In 2002, the association created the brand "Takam Cosmétiques". The object of its activity is the production and marketing of shea butter and cosmetic products: soaps, ointments, creams, shampoos, etc. From 24 boxes in 2002, 25,000 boxes were sold in 2010, and 30,000 in 2011.

5. CONCLUSION

This work aimed to present an innovation that contributes to the empowerment of women processors of local agricultural products. Analysis techniques, tools and methods were used to achieve this objective.

It appears from empirical data that the idea of creating a common space for promoting local products was born from a field observation by the PCA of the LBP. The pilot phase of this project, which lasted one year, was launched in the commune of Yopougon in 2016. After this experimental phase, the project was relocated to the National Chamber of Agriculture of Côte d'Ivoire located in the commune of plateau. The initial cohort was made up of 20 processors - producers but over time the number of members increased to 300 processors and 1800 producers. For the validation of products authorized to be sold at the LBP, a laboratory analysis is carried out by a committee composed of agents of the chamber of commerce. Regarding the recruitment of cooperators, this is done during ceremonies and through networks.

Their membership is billed and a monthly amount is imposed on them. As a formal structure, the LBP imposes a very specific task on each of its employees. In terms of governance, the LBP is a cooperative society with a board of directors headed by a PCA. As for the follow-up of the cooperators, it proceeds by consignment and provides them with advice which allows them to increase their turnover.

From this, the LBP positions itself as an important tool for the empowerment of women processors. She thus appears to be a model to recommend for the empowerment of women. From this experience, we can say that it is necessary to think about innovations that can contribute to female empowerment.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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