

Making sense of agroecological living labs' emergence processes and their diversity.

Experiences from the CGIAR Initiative on Agroecology

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- **Question:** Has the **nature and characterization of the emergence process of the agroecological living landscapes (ALLs)** influenced the functioning and performance of the ALLs in terms of fostering actual transdisciplinary co-design?
- **How we proceeded:** We developed and applied a **framework & 4-point scoring system** for 3 main dimensions related to ALL emergence:
 - 1) How did country teams mobilize the **6 Principles of Engagement** developed by the CGIAR Agroecology Initiative?
 - 2) How are the ALLs **functioning**?
 - 3) What can we say about the **performance (results)** of the ALLs so far? (results not presented in this poster)

Our approach in the CGIAR Initiative on Agroecology

Co-design of innovations

Research to action



Holistic

Context-specific

Agroecological living landscapes (ALLs)

Territories or landscapes for **multi-stakeholder** engagement in which AE **innovations** can be identified, **codesigned**, tested and adopted by its members.

ALL's boundaries depend on the **functionality** of the territory / landscape and can consist of administrative or political entities (e.g. a county), a value chain, environmental factors (e.g. a watershed), or the area of action of actors willing to engage in AE transition.

8 countries

Burkina Faso, India, Kenya, Laos, Peru, Senegal, Tunisia, Zimbabwe

The 6 engagement principles for developing ALLs

01	02	03	04	05	06
Build on existing relevant & functional multi-STH spaces and mechanisms	Aim for inclusiveness, diversity, representativeness & legitimacy of stakeholders	Ensure there is "real" willingness, interest & motivation from each member	Ensure capacity building and collective learning are at the heart of the ALL's functioning	Ensure the collective agenda is "sufficiently" demand-driven	Aim at gradual "local" ownership, empowerment and leadership over the collective agenda

Scoring system for the 6 engagement principles on a scale of 0-3

	0	1	2	3
1. Build on preexisting spaces	ALL built from scratch, AEI brought them together for the 1 st time	Some ALL members already worked together, typically informally	Several ALL members already worked together in a more systematic way	An existing multi-stakeholder space hosts the ALL
2. Inclusiveness, diversity, legitimacy	A majority of ALL members were hand-picked by the AEI	Some ALL members were hand-picked by the AEI based on bilateral relationships	Some diversity covering diverse & legitimate STH groups, combining targeted & self selection	Wide diversity of ALL partners, many of whom self-selected or peer-selected
3. Willingness & motivation	No apparent or deep-rooted motivation other than expected material benefits	A few motivated stakeholders, while a majority has a "wait & see" attitude	Several stakeholders are motivated and willing to take part, while a few have a "wait & see" attitude	Most stakeholders are highly self-motivated and pro-active in contributing to the ALL
4. Capacity building & collective learning	Not part of the ALL agenda	Some limited CB and learning spaces, mostly around AEI implementation	CB ambitions are present, including self-driven ones	Explicit and systematic CB in different dimensions
5. Demand-driven	Agenda was set and activities defined from the outside by the AEI	Validation of pre-set agenda and space for minor adjustments	The agenda combines pre-set and co-created elements	Most ALL objectives, activities and ways of working were discussed and agreed on
6. Local ownership & empowerment	Leadership 100% assumed by AEI, with no plan so far to change leadership structure	Some ALL activities & processes co-led by local stakeholders, but key decision taken by the AEI	Some co-leadership of key decisions & activities in the ALL emerging and encouraged, but without an explicit plan or strategy	An explicit pathway for local leadership, strategic decision-making and empowerment designed from the onset and being implemented

Assessing ALL functioning

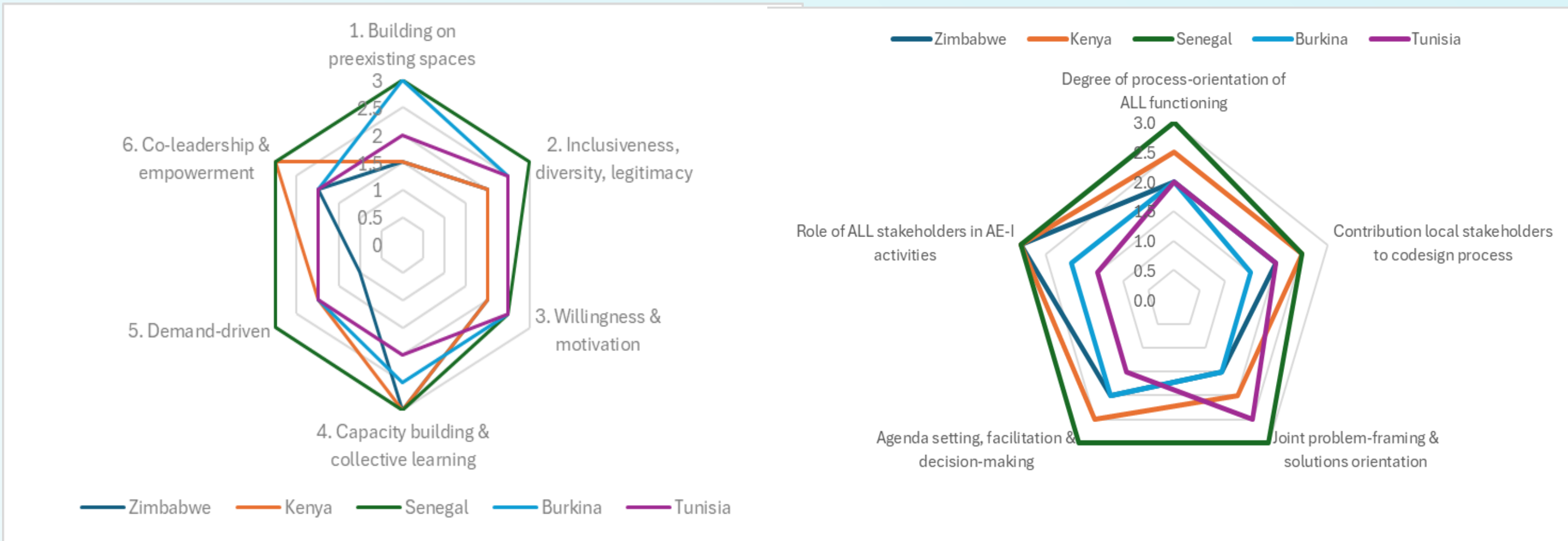
Scoring system for assessing ALL functioning on a scale of 0-3

	0	1	2	3
Degree of process-orientation of ALL functioning	Mostly implement pre-defined work plan	Some flexibility & adjustments in how work plan is implemented	Initial scope of activities and work plan pre-set, but planned spaces exist for validation & adjustment	The work plan is (re)defined periodically through an iterative and participatory process
Role of farmers and other local stakeholders to codesign process	Researchers fully control the codesign process and are the main contributors of content	Researchers largely control the codesign process & are a major contributor of content	Researchers dominant and a major contributor, but there are clear spaces for local stakeholders to voice their ideas & interests	Researchers and local stakeholders participate in the codesign process in a balanced way
Joint problem-framing & solutions orientation	No or very limited joint problem-framing and explicit focus on finding solutions for jointly identified problems	Some efforts in problem identification with stakeholders, but no concrete focus on solutions	Decisive and structured problem & solution identification, but limited testing of solutions	Decisive and structured problem & solution identification, testing & reflection
Agenda setting, facilitation and decision-making	Researchers fully in charge of de facto ALL agenda setting, facilitation and final decision-making	Researchers largely in charge, with other stakeholders being mostly limited to validating proposed options	Researchers somewhat dominant in setting agendas and facilitating encounters, but with structured involvement of other STH in decision-making	Local stakeholders fully in charge de facto or de jure of ALL governance, own the facilitation process, and are decisive in key decision-making
Role of ALL stakeholders in activities actually proposed by AE-I such as vision-to-action, codesign, etc.	Local stakeholders are mostly passive	Few local stakeholders are active, while a majority is fairly passive	Several local stakeholders are active and contribute significantly	Most local stakeholders are very active and contribute significantly

Scores obtained for 5 countries of the Agroecology Initiative

a. Engagement principles

b. ALL functioning



Conclusions

Our qualitative assessment reflects that ALL emergence, functioning and performance is being influenced by different factors:

- The Initiative's **overall maturity & readiness** to understand & pilot an ALL / codesign **approach & process**
- A **timeline & trajectory** that differed across country and may have started before 2022 (cf. countries building on pre-existing MSP and AE technologies)
- **Contrasting skills and team composition** across countries (balance between experienced & neophytes, biophysical & social sciences)
- As well as a **contrasting attention** to the 6 principles of engagement among countries

References

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