

Collective approach to identify barriers and levers for intercropping at the value chain level

Problem

Many barriers farmers face related to intercropping, such as agro-industrial standards or consumer acceptance, are beyond their direct control and difficult to identify.

Solution

The causal tree method offers value chain stakeholders a way to identify the obstacles perceived in adopting intercropping and design potential solutions.

Benefits

By exploring the problem, its effects, the bottlenecks and possible levers, this method helps stakeholders understand the causes and consequences underlying the limited use of intercropping and reflect on how to address issues and drive systemic change.

Applicability box

Theme

Agroecology, Sustainable communities

Keywords

Socioeconomic development, Educational resources

Context

Value Chain

Application time

Start of project

Required time

4 hours

Equipment

Posters, pencils, sticky notes

Practical recommendations

1. Agree on the problem and its effects

“Intercropping is rarely used” and list its consequences: *Why is this situation problematic?*

2. Identify the causes

What are the direct origins and the indirect causes of this problem? For each value chain stage (production, storing/sorting, food processing, commercialisation, transversal), *what are the barriers?*

3. Prioritise the barriers

Ask the stakeholders to identify *what are the most important barriers, where are the bottlenecks and where is it crucial to act to unlock the value chain?*

4. Suggest actions

Where is each stakeholder able to act? What are the possible solutions to test?

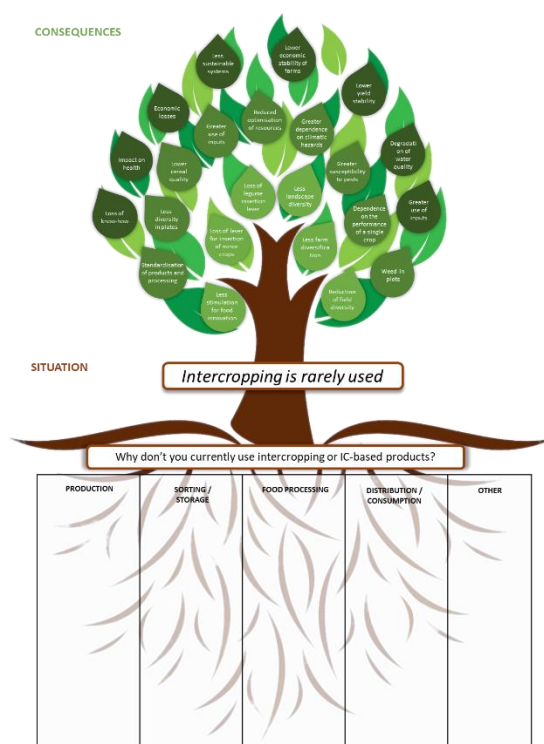


Figure 1: Causal tree template used by 32 stakeholders in CICS 4. Illustration: Fanny RAOUX, INRAE.

Further information

Weblinks

- (French) "Accompagner la conception et la conduite de projets multi-acteurs pour la transition agroécologique dans les territoires : propositions d'outils et de méthodes d'après les résultats du projet H2020 DiverIMPACTS" <https://share.google/M6QIQ9kPPMDjOmkIV>.
- DiverIMPACTS - Diversification through Rotation, Intercropping, Multiple Cropping, Promoted with Actors and value-Chains towards Sustainability <https://www.diverimpacts.net/>
- A workshop on "Barriers and levers to the adoption of crop associations" at the Agricultural High school of Flamarens (South-West of France) - IntercropVALUES
- Check the [Organic Farm Knowledge Platform](#) for more practical recommendations.

About this practice abstract

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IntercropVALUES aims to exploit the benefits of intercropping to design and manage productive, diversified, resilient, profitable, environmentally friendly cropping systems acceptable to farmers and actors in the agri-food chain. As a multi-disciplinary and multi-actor project, it brings together scientists and local actors representing the food value chain. It includes 27 participants from 15 countries (3 continents) from a wide diversity of organizations and stakeholders. The project will run for four years and started in November 2022.

Project website: <https://intercropvalues.eu/>