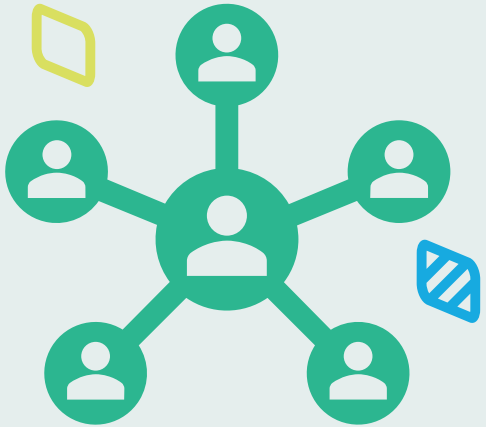
ENG BREAK-OUT Room

The Agroecology TPP DIALOGUES

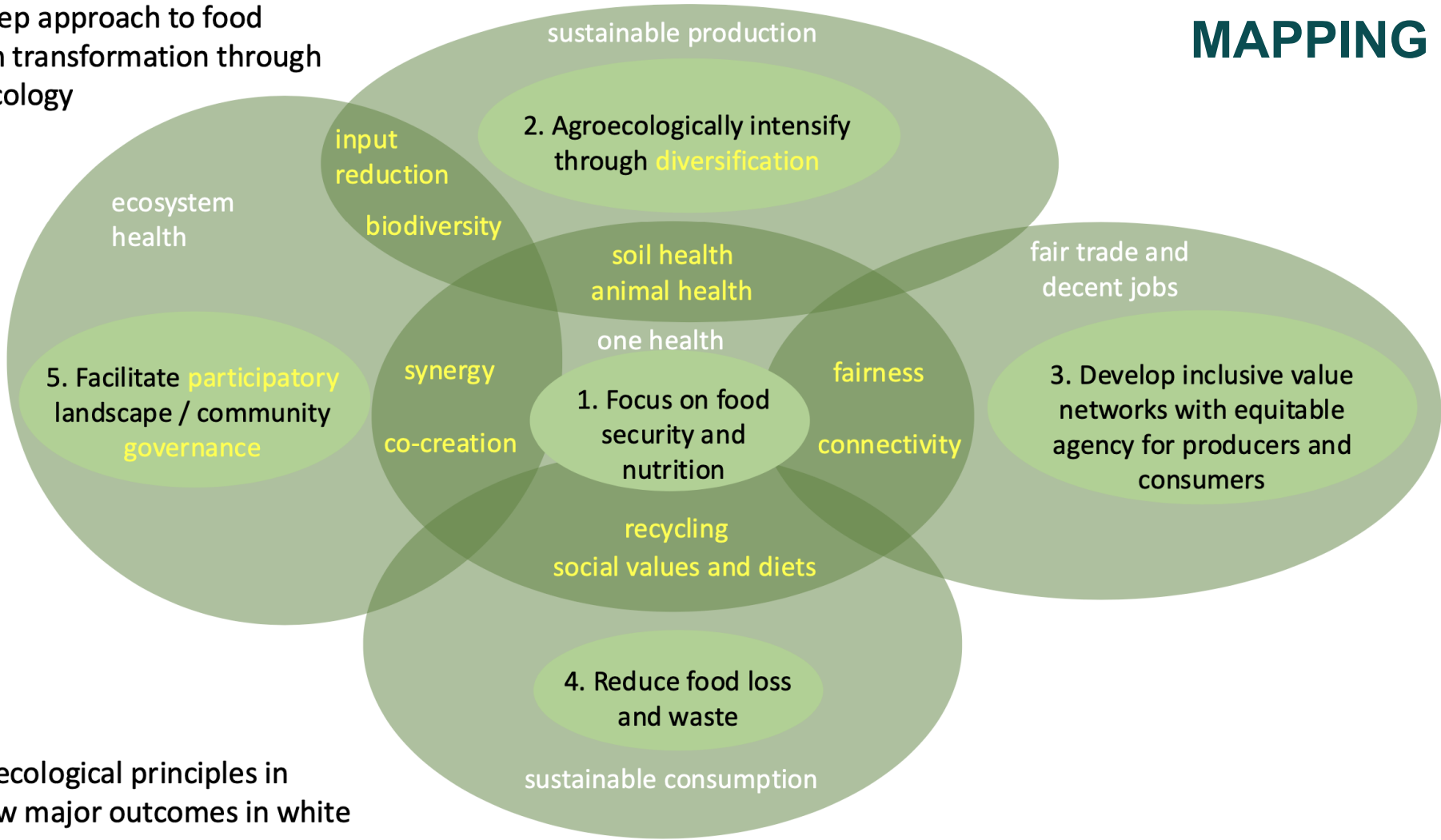


Facilitator: Fergus Sinclair

Critical discussion about Agroecological Food System Transformation

Five step approach to food system transformation through agroecology

MAPPING



Agroecological principles in yellow major outcomes in white

STRENGTHS

- Lots of energy and enthusiasm around the approach and its perceived transformative potential
- Shift to nature-based solutions and options, especially in the face of climate change; part of the strategies that the government is trying to promote (in Zambia), lots of support
- In light of food security & nutrition, pushing the agenda of diversification of farming from current trends in monocropping in Zambia
- This simplifies the 13 principles and 10 elements to make more accessible on what are entry points
- Show how 13 principles are tangible and can actually be operated; transforming a vision into steps so as to have milestones in between, with a focus on sustainability through markets
- Strengths may be Biodiversity conservation, Environmental sustainability, Climate resilience, Local knowledge and practices
- Encourage collaboration and ensuring knowledge sharing and innovation for sustainable agriculture (economics, social and environment)
- Looking at consumption linked to production in step 3 is strength with producers dealing with what consumer needs.

GAPS/Limitations

- Dietary energy balance; people don't have unlimited energy (need 4000kcal for a day's work in the field); issue of operational feasibility
- Providing access to some form of mechanization
- Linkages between diversification and community participatory (step 2 and 5) is a strength in that once the community are aware of importance of diversifying the crops for instance, they will produce more from different crops
- A gap to me is how to adapt agroecological approaches to specific local contexts, including soil types, climate variations, and socio-economic conditions....etc.
- Figure out how to balance market dynamics for farmers and what they choose to pursue (e.g. cash crops)
- One gap is the creation of evidence as there are few researches that show how agroecology transform lives of farmers in Africa. in Tanzania for example we need research that provides evidence to make needed adjustment on policies such as seed laws, inclusion and recognition of agroecology in agriculture master plan.
- Trainers trained in CSA, need more training in agroecology; need empirical/GPS data on land transformed
- Not being able to ask the right questions or the real problems; how is this initiative different from what has already been done?
    - Can't expect that smallholder farmers (<1 ha) will meet all the expectations of agriculture (food security, export, etc.); have we learned the lessons from 5 decades of agricultural research in Africa?

CONTEXT-EXAMPLES

- However, mechanization has to be individual owner/operators as is the case in Egypt, and can not be communal ownership through cooperative or government mechanization units as show by the lineup at Nigerian ADP of tractors out of service with only half the 10,000 operational hours. Also, note the impact of the Asian shift from water buffalo to power tillers some 30 years ago in the success of the green revolution
- in Tanzania for example we do need research that provide evidence to make needed adjustment on policies such as seed laws, inclusion and recognition of agroecology in agriculture master plan. i think we need more evidence and discussion with policy makers to appreciate the role that agroecology play in food system
- Zimbabwe has included agroecology as Pillar 8 of its National Agricultural Policy Framework (2019-2028). Right now farmers in drier areas is being urged to adopt traditional orphaned grains with government support but principles such as intercropping, rotations, cover crops and water harvesting ie basins, infiltration pits, dead end contours etc are being encouraged. Capacity for both production, processing, and markets are being promoted through Farmer Field Schools. Worries are on too much labour especially during harvesting and threshing which take too much time. Need to mechanise is a major challenge including digging water harvesting equipment.

LEVERAGE-POINTS

- Cambodia: often the problem is the solution. Indigenous rice varieties, indigenous knowledge/approaches, inter-cropping systems, but insufficient land/land rights so difficult to implement agroecological approaches.
- Rwanda: local coffee farmers/cooperatives unaware that they can bring change themselves. Building agency among local communities is essential for transforming food systems at the local level; engaging in co-creation on what they want for their future. Composting is an age-old practice but currently unaware.
- Getting community organized and translate agroecology approaches and technologies benefitting the producers and the consumers with the organization like cooperatives taking the middle ie. processing products, creating and serving as the market, assuring food and nutrition security (ie making food available, accessible, affordable and utilized)
- support more trainings and farm demonstration to enhance agroecology adoption
- collaboration with government agriculture project such as the world bank financing locally led solution in kenya

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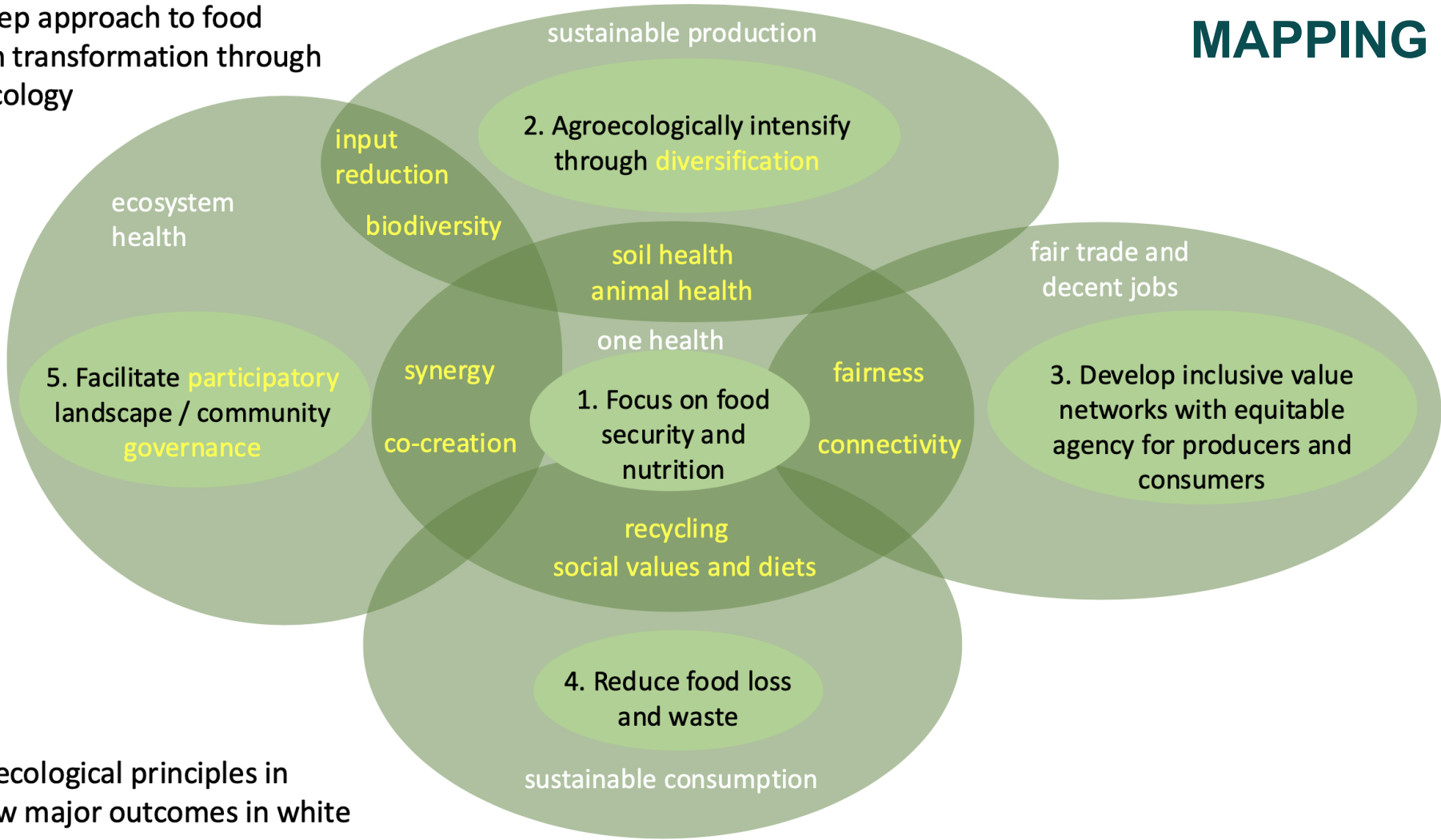
MAPPING IT ON THE 5-STEP APPROACH FRAMEWORK!

Five step approach to food system transformation through agroecology

MAPPING



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GOING FORWARD

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- This framework is helpful and gives a stepping stone; having more examples and how to adapt in different contexts; context-specific barriers identified to understand how/where this framework will work
- The inter-relations between the different steps also needs to be examined
- We need to see how this approach is different from others and how this steps can support other existing frameworks for transformative agroecology.
- There are some aspects that are necessary, particularly community governance, which is a wheel for all other aspects; this aspect can move other aspects for transformation
- Expand organized market access of agricultural products. providing logistics, and rural-urban, public-private, inter-community collaboration.
- Getting community organized and translate agroecology approaches and technologies benefitting the producers and the consumers with the organization like cooperatives taking the middle ie. processing products, creating and serving as the market, assuring food and nutrition security (ie making food available, accessible, affordable and utilized)
- How would one go about each of these 5 steps but it's crucial to learn why systems are currently the way they are; what are the processes for thinking through implementing the approach; trade-offs and synergies, collective learning process and who would be part of that is already a big question