



Kingdom of the Netherlands



NEWSLETTER

SOIL VALUES PROGRAM

ISSUE 01 | 2024



CONTENTS

- ✔ **SOIL VALUES: AN ADAPTED RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE SAHEL TO RESTORE SOIL FERTILITY AND HEALTH**
- ✔ **A CONSORTIUM OF EXPERTISE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM IN THE SAHEL**
- ✔ **SOIL VALUES: A COMMITMENT BY THE NETHERLANDS TO IMPROVING SOIL FERTILITY AND HEALTH IN THE SAHEL**
- ✔ **DR. BIDJOKAZO FOFANA CONFIDENT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM**
- ✔ **FOCUS ON A CONSORTIUM MEMBER: INTERNATIONAL FERTILIZER DEVELOPMENT CENTER (IFDC)**
- ✔ **MAJOR EVENTS FROM THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM**
- ✔ **ECHOES OF THE INTERVENTIONS OF THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM**
- ✔ **RESOURCES RELATED TO SOIL FERTILITY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT**



SOIL VALUES: AN ADAPTED RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE SAHEL TO RESTORE SOIL FERTILITY AND HEALTH

The Soil Values program operates in a context marked by climatic and socio-economic challenges facing Sahelian countries, such as recurrent droughts, socio-political conflicts, desertification and the effects of climate change. Accentuated by insufficient investments and inadequate financing mechanisms, these conditions exacerbate the degradation of soil fertility and health and food security in Sahelian countries.

Soil Values aims to improve soil fertility and productivity of 2 million hectares of agricultural land in the Sahel, while strengthening the resilience and well-being of 1.5 million farmers, with a particular focus on women and youth.

The program's approach is based on integrated soil fertility management (ISFM) and participatory landscape management, in order to promote the adoption of agricultural practices favorable to soil fertility by farmers.

A CONSORTIUM OF EXPERTISE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM IN THE SAHEL

Soil Values is implemented by a consortium led by IFDC, in collaboration with core partners SNV and Wageningen University and Research (WUR), as well as knowledge partners, such as AGRA, the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), ISRIC – World Soil Information, and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI).



IFDC is a public international organization, present in 27 countries, that combines scientific research and interventions to enable smallholder farmers in developing countries to increase their agricultural productivity and generate economic growth while promoting sustainable environmental management technologies.



SNV is an international organization dedicated to promoting sustainable development in developing countries by providing support in the areas of agriculture, water and sanitation, and energy. The organization works with governments, businesses, and local communities to help improve living conditions and stimulate inclusive economic development.



WUR is a public research university founded in 1876 as the State Agricultural College in Wageningen, the Netherlands. One of the world's leading universities in the fields of life and environmental sciences, it is a leading international research university.

SOIL VALUES: A COMMITMENT BY THE NETHERLANDS TO IMPROVING SOIL FERTILITY AND HEALTH IN THE SAHEL

The Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) is a supervisory agency of the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for coordinating and financing the Netherlands' development cooperation policy. It pays particular attention to the alignment between Dutch policy and that of the European Union (EU) toward developing countries.

To develop and implement this policy, the DGIS collaborates with governments of other nations, international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, and the EU. The main areas of intervention of the DGIS include gender, health, education, sustainable economic development, and the environment.

The DGIS continues to support agricultural development by financing various projects and programs in Africa, including Toward Sustainable Clusters in Agribusiness through Learning in Entrepreneurship (2SCALE), the Agri-Food Program for Integrated Resilience and Economic Development in the Sahel (Pro-ARIDES), and more.

Currently, the DGIS aims to transform agriculture in the Sahel by investing in soil health and fertility through Soil Values. This initiative will contribute to ecologically sustainable improvements in food productivity and increased resilience of smallholder producers in the Sahel.





DR. BIDJOKAZO FOFANA CONFIDENT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM

Dear readers, partners, and stakeholders in the development of the agricultural world,

We successfully completed the official launch as well as the national launches of the Soil Values program, marking the beginning of 10 years of impactful interventions, collaborations, and innovations in favor of sustainable soil management in the Sahel.

Funded by the Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) to the tune of 100 million euros, Soil Values aims to improve soil fertility and agricultural productivity, with a particular emphasis on a regional approach to integrated watershed and landscape management and strategic interventions, mainly in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and northern Nigeria, along with Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire as strategic support countries.

Ignoring soil fertility and soil health could compromise the ecological balance of food production systems. In addition, improper use of fertilizers can lead to groundwater pollution, affecting all communities that depend on it. In 10 years, we will unlock the value of soils in the Sahel and transform agriculture into a dynamic force for change, empowering local communities. We aspire to a journey marked by resilience, learning, and shared commitment to sustainable development.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, our various partners, and the entire Soil Values program team.

Together, we will seize the opportunities that lie ahead, while building on the solid foundations laid by our partner institutions. Convinced that we will undertake this remarkable journey together, I hope that the coming decade will be rich in fruitful collaborations, conducive to a positive and lasting impact.

THANK YOU!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bidjokazo Fofana". The signature is fluid and cursive.

DIRECTOR OF THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM



FOCUS ON A CONSORTIUM MEMBER: INTERNATIONAL FERTILIZER DEVELOPMENT CENTER (IFDC)



2024, IFDC CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF STRENGTHENING SOIL HEALTH

Over the past five decades, IFDC has been a pioneer in promoting innovative and sustainable agricultural technologies that have transformed the lives of millions of people around the world. Since its founding in 1974, the organization has never wavered from its core mission: to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and agribusinesses in order to catalyze positive global change through the transformative potential of agriculture.

Over the years, IFDC has scaled several technologies, helping more than 100 countries increase their agricultural productivity through capacity-building programs, including the provision of agricultural equipment, training, and various types of support for agricultural sector stakeholders. Its teams work hard in collaboration with national, regional, and international partners to promote sustainable and resilient agriculture.

For its 50th anniversary, IFDC has committed to redouble its efforts to address current and future challenges to food security and soil health. Guided by a vision of appropriate agricultural, fertilizer, and soil health technologies that change human lives around the world for the better, IFDC is investing in initiatives such as Space to Place, which uses space technologies to provide accurate, on-demand agronomic information to farmers, and the 10-year Soil Values program, which aims to improve sustainable soil management in the most vulnerable regions.

IFDC is committed to working with partners around the world to promote sustainable soil management. Initiatives such as the African Union's Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health (AFSH) Summit demonstrate IFDC's commitment to a future where healthy soils are central to food security and sustainable food production systems.



MAJOR EVENTS FROM THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM



OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF SOIL VALUES PROGRAM A NEW ERA FOR SOIL FERTILITY AND RESILIENCE OF FARMERS IN THE SAHEL

On April 16, Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria, was the scene of a landmark event that brought together members of the Soil Values consortium, partners, and various agricultural development actors operating in Africa. More than 200 representatives from several national, regional, and international institutions took part in this major meeting. This event, which marked the beginning of a great venture for the benefit of agricultural producers in the Sahel, was marked by several stirring addresses.

The most notable were those of Dr. Kingsley Uzoma, representative of Vice President of Nigeria Kashim Shettima, who opened the event; Wouter Plomp, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Nigeria and representative of the DGIS; André de Jager, Managing Director of Sectors at SNV; and Henk van Duijn, President and CEO of IFDC. Their speeches highlighted the importance of this initiative to strengthen the resilience of agricultural producers in the Sahel.

Attendees from various organizations expressed their confidence in the ability of the consortium members to meet the challenges through active collaborations. WUR Professor Han van Dijk highlighted the university's continued commitment to working collaboratively to strengthen the knowledge of African organizations, institutions, and universities on soil health.



 [ARTICLE ON OFFICIAL LAUNCH](#)



MAJOR EVENTS FROM THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM



SOIL VALUES KICKS OFF IN BURKINA FASO, MALI, NIGER, AND NIGERIA

The Soil Values program Implementation Consortium conducted national program launches in Niamey, Niger, on May 13; Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on May 16; Kano, Nigeria, on May 20; and Bamako, Mali, on May 23.

These launches served to mobilize and inform national stakeholders in each country, while establishing a collaborative framework for concerted actions at the national level, fully aligned with program objectives and national priorities. During the national launches, the ministries of agriculture in the respective Soil Values focus countries reaffirmed their commitment to work closely together to achieve the ambitious goals of improving soil health and supporting agricultural development in Africa.

These local partners see the Soil Values program as a key component to ensuring food security. They expressed their confidence in IFDC and other consortium members to successfully implement the program and work together for a prosperous and sustainable future for agriculture in the Sahel.

In each country where it is implemented, the Soil Values program is firmly committed to continuing its efforts to generate lasting positive impact and achieve a shared vision of a future where communities thrive and ecosystems are preserved.

The consortium members reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with local partners to realize this vision, leveraging their expertise to achieve the program's objectives.

They also emphasized their strong belief in the need to strengthen partnerships to address the complex challenges of the agriculture sector in the Sahel.



[ARTICLE ON NATIONAL LAUNCHES](#)



MAJOR EVENTS FROM THE SOIL VALUES PROGRAM



STRENGTHENING TEAM SPIRIT AND DEVELOPING THE 2024-2025 ACTIVITY PLANS OF SOIL VALUES

Soil Values held its first strategic retreat July 1-5 in Lomé, Togo. This meeting brought together teams from the consortium institutions as well as the program's knowledge partners. After five days of work, the retreat had helped to improve mutual understanding of the fundamental principles and different approaches to implementing the program, to strengthen collaboration between the teams, and to develop a draft activity plan focusing on watersheds and landscapes, covering the periods from July to December 2024 and from January to December 2025.

The retreat was part of the flagship activities aimed at operationalizing the implementation of Soil Values after the official launch and the national launches. In this context, the Soil Values team worked to plan activities to be carried out during the second half of 2024 and during 2025.

The main activities that the consortium members and knowledge partners planned for the second half of 2024 can be grouped into four categories:

(i) baseline studies, including watersheds, technologies, and indicators; (ii) participatory community consultation workshops to define priority activities in accordance with the program objectives; (iii) strategic meetings to establish the framework for collaboration and leverage at the national, regional, and international levels; (iv) capacity assessment and development of a framework for collaboration with local, national, and regional institutions. The retreat also allowed all coalition staff to get to know each other and network for efficiency in the dynamics of collaboration. The team building activity organized in this context was valuable.



 [ARTICLE ON SOIL VALUES RETREAT](#)



SOIL VALUES PROGRAM AWARDED FOR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO PROMOTING TREES TO SUSTAINABLY IMPROVE SOIL HEALTH

The Soil Values program received a certificate of recognition from the Ministry of Environment, Water and Sanitation of Burkina Faso for its commitment during the sixth annual celebration of National Tree Day, held June 20-21 in Bobo-Dioulasso.

During this event, Soil Values participated in roundtables, and at its booth, team members informed the public about its interventions while raising awareness among visitors about the importance of trees on farms. Soil Values also contributed to the preservation of the environment by taking part in the reforestation of a five-hectare site, managed by the Provincial Directorate of the Environment of Houet in the Hauts-Bassins region, where more than 2,000 local trees were planted by National Tree Day participants.

Soil Values Program will continue to promote the reforestation of fragile landscapes and ecosystems through initiatives such as tree planting, agroforestry, and integrated landscape management to support livestock feeding in the Sahel.

 [ARTICLE ON TREE DAY IN BURKINA FASO](#)



SOIL VALUES AT IFDC WEST AFRICA OPEN DOORS

Open Doors events organized by IFDC offices in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Niger provided an opportunity to introduce the Soil Values program to various development stakeholders and partners. These events allowed audiences in these countries to learn about the program and share their views on its future interventions.



CREATE SYNERGIES WITH NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS FOR OPTIMAL RESULTS

Soil Values adopted a collaborative approach with the aim of strengthening and improving existing initiatives for soil fertility management in its focus countries. From February to April, with the support of the technical coordinators of Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria, this collaborative approach took the form of individual meetings with national projects and programs working on the resilience of food systems in the Sahel. Tangible points of synergies were jointly identified, which will be the subject of "win-win" partnerships in the years to come.

 [ARTICLE ON SOIL VALUES APPROACH](#)



SOIL VALUES CALLS FOR CONSIDERATION OF SOIL HEALTH IN AGRICULTURAL POLICIES IN AFRICA

Organized by the African Union, the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health (AFSH) Summit took place May 7-9 in Kenya and brought together farmers, experts, policy makers, researchers and representatives of international organizations, all committed to sustainable and productive agriculture in Africa. This meeting offered agricultural development stakeholders the opportunity to learn about the program and share their perspectives on its future interventions.

The summit provided an opportunity to strengthen strategic partnerships and create new opportunities for collaboration to improve food security and agricultural sustainability in Africa. At the end of the event, the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC, lead implementing partner of the Soil Values consortium), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the African Plant Nutrition Institute (APNI), and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) signed a coalition agreement marking their commitment to long-term collaboration.

The goal of the coalition is to mobilize the research capabilities and resources of these organizations to advance soil health through improved fertilizer management.

The summit highlighted the importance of effective and sustainable fertilizer management for food security in Africa.

The [Nairobi Declaration](#), drawn up by African Union leaders and published at the end of the summit, states that the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan and the Soil Initiative for Africa framework will serve as key guiding documents for mobilizing multi-stakeholder partnerships and investments.



[ARTICLE ON AFRICA FERTILIZER AND SOIL HEALTH SUMMIT](#)

RESOURCES RELATED TO SOIL FERTILITY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT

TECHNICAL SHEETS - INTEGRATED SOIL FERTILITY MANAGEMENT (ISFM)

AVAILABLE ON THE IFDC WEBSITE



<https://ifdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/FICHE-TECHNIQUE-1-GESTION-INTEGREE-DE-LA-FERTILITE-DES-SOLS-ET-PRINCIPES-DE-BASE-INTEGRAED-MANAGEMENT-OF-SOIL-FERTILITY-AND-BASIC-PRINCIPLES.pdf>

Facteurs qui affectent la fertilité des sols

Qu'est-ce qui rend le sol fertile ? (1)

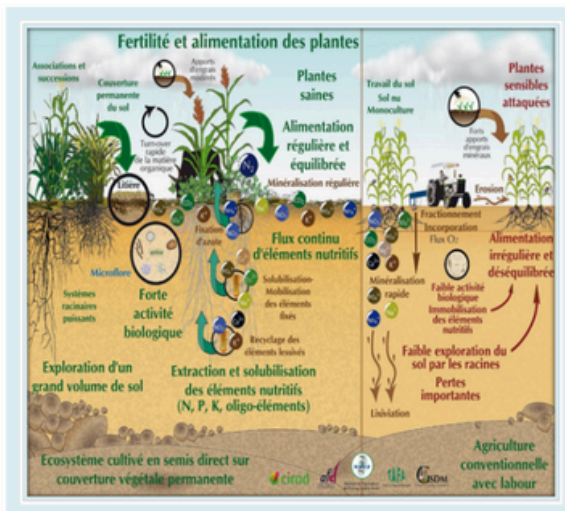


Figure 2 : Cycle de fertilisation et alimentation des plantes

Qu'est-ce qui affectent négativement la fertilité des sols

- Succession d'une culture par elle-même au même emplacement
- Succession cultures à système racinaire identiques ayant les mêmes exigences en éléments nutritifs.
- Surexploitation, par suite de fortes pressions humaines et animales;
- Déforestation ;
- Feux de brousse tardifs ;
- Erosion hydrique ;
- Absence de jachère cultivée ou améliorée (plantes de régénération) ;
- Absence de dispositifs antiérosifs (fascine, cordon pierreux, ligne de vèlver etc.).



Photo 1 : Feu de brousse tardif

Les effets conjugués de tout ce qui précède conduisent inévitablement à la baisse rapide de la fertilité des sols et partant à la baisse de rendements des cultures pratiquées. Cet état de chose pose le problème de notre propre survie ainsi que celle des générations futures. Ainsi chaque producteur agricole doit toujours tout mettre en œuvre pour restaurer ses sols en vue de maintenir toujours constant leur niveau de fertilité.

7. Technologies disponibles

Fertilisation minérale et organique

La combinaison des fumures minérales et organiques est fortement recommandée aussi bien pour les petits producteurs que pour les grandes exploitations. En ce qui concerne la fumure minérale, les recommandations en cours actuellement sont à revoir afin d'être conformes aux réalités actuelles (besoins des plantes des sols). L'utilisation des engrais doit être conforme aux conditions du sol et des engrais. Quant à la matière organique, on devra veiller à l'utilisation sur les exploitations du fumier, du compost ou gérer in situ les résidus de récolte.

Pratiques culturales et systèmes culturaux

Comme pratiques culturales, le mode de labour doit être approprié aux types de sol et il faut le contrôle des mauvaises herbes (sarclage, herbicidage etc), s'agissant des systèmes culturaux, les technologies suivantes sont généralement proposées :

Assolement / Rotation

Ce système permet l'utilisation rationnelle des éléments fertilisants du sol par les plantes successives. La rotation des cultures la plus conseillée est céréales/légumineuses. Il est conseillé d'avoir une bonne proportion de légumineuse dans l'assolement.

Une bonne rotation doit prendre en compte les aspects ci-après :

- la différence entre les systèmes racinaires des différentes cultures ;
- les exigences des cultures en éléments nutritifs ;
- la capacité d'enrichissement du sol par certaines cultures (légumineuses) ;
- le mauvais comportement des graminées sur défriche ;
- la non répétition sur une même sole des cultures de même exigence.



The agro-ecological pathway, which targets the practices of small food producers within landscape elements.



The inclusive market development pathway, which engages the private sector to provide financial incentives for soil fertility management.



STRATEGIC APPROACH



The enabling environment pathway, which aligns public sector institutions, policies, and governance structures to drive sustainable soil fertility management.



MAINSTREAMING SUSTAINABLE SOIL MANAGEMENT IN THE SAHEL

soilvalues@ifdc.org

ifdc.org/projects/soil-values

B.P. E 103, Badalabougou - East River
Street 33, Villa Lot 6 - Bamako/Mali
Tel : +223 44 90 01 22