HIGHLIGHTS

Training on Agroecology 2026

Held in Morocco from 20 to 23 April 2026, the agroecology training brought participants together for four days of intensive, hands-on work and collaborative sessions, with all sessions delivered in French.

Financed by the European Union and co-organized by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), with the support of the Network of Agroecological Initiatives in Morocco (RIAM), the training brought together participating financial institutions: Banque Nationale de Développement Agricole (BNDA) Mali, Banque Nationale pour le Développement Économique (BNDE) Burundi, Crédit Agricole du Maroc (CAM) Morocco, Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations du Bénin (CDC Bénin), La Banque Agricole (LBA) Senegal, and Mécanisme Incitatif de Financement Agricole S.A. (MIFA S.A.) Togo.

The training led to several important outcomes, including **the signing of a Letter of Intent (LOI) between IFAD and CAM, the field testing of B-ACT by five PDBs, and peer commitments to advance the use of agroecological screening tools**.

The training aimed to strengthen institutional capacity, promote the integration of agroecology into financing strategies, and facilitate peer dialogue and exchange. Following the working group and technical training sessions on tools, it consolidated the Platform's transition from knowledge exchange to operationalisation.

Co-funded by the European Union

Day 1: Training in Rabat

Day 1 framed the business case for PDBs as anchor institutions of the agroecological transition, situating their role within national climate commitments (NDCs) in the six participating countries.

Held at the Palais des Congrès Bouregreg, the training brought together around 40 participants from the financial institutions listed above, as well as a broad range of local institutional and community partners including representatives from the Central Bank of Morocco, microfinance institutions and other international partners. Formally opening the training, the session centred on core technical training through three modules combining strategic framing, institutional experience, and practical implementation tools. Thierry Latreille, coordinator of the Agri-PDB Platform, opened the day by underlining the pivotal role of Public Development Banks (PDBs) in advancing the agroecological transition across Africa. His remarks stressed the shift from knowledge exchange to **operationalization**, with institutions sharing approaches to further embedding sustainability, resilience, and climate considerations into their financing strategies. This includes developing internal green frameworks aligned with national priorities, strengthening stakeholder engagement, and mobilising technical and financial partnerships.

The first module, delivered by Amine Zarroug, examined how PDBs can finance sustainable and inclusive food systems, particularly in contexts where private investment remains limited. Discussions highlighted their countercyclical role in bridging financing gaps, supporting smallholder farmers, and aligning investments with public priorities such as food security, rural development, and climate action. This was followed by an institutional testimony from CAM, which presented its evolving mandate, financing instruments, and experience in supporting agricultural transition and climate-related investments.

Jean-Christophe Duchier led **the second module**, offering a systemic perspective on global food systems and the rationale for agroecology. Despite the productivity gains achieved through the Green Revolution, hunger persists worldwide, while current food systems generate hidden costs exceeding $10 trillion annually, ultimately borne by communities and future generations. Against this backdrop, agroecology was presented as a viable and necessary pathway, capable of **maintaining productivity while reducing input costs, preserving natural resources, and strengthening resilience**. For financial institutions, the transition was framed not only as a development priority but also as a strategy for long-term risk reduction and portfolio stability.

The third module, presented by Olivier Pierrard, focused on **agroecological evaluation frameworks** and their role in improving decision-making. Moving beyond traditional financial analysis, the session emphasized the need to integrate environmental and climate risks into credit assessment processes. Participants were introduced to two complementary tools: the **Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE)**, developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which provides a farm-system diagnostic framework to assess agroecological performance and transition pathways; and the **Business Agroecology Criteria Tool (B-ACT)**, developed by the Biovision Foundation, which serves as a screening tool for banks and agribusinesses to assess the alignment of agricultural enterprises with agroecological principles. Together, these tools enable banks to better evaluate agroecological transitions, identify risks, and strengthen alignment with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards.

Overall, Day 1 confirmed strong demand for practical, tool-oriented engagement combining peer exchange, institutional experience, and direct application. It also laid a solid foundation for the next phases of the programme, focused on field-based application, peer learning, and stronger linkages with IFAD country-level operations.

> If we look at what we can do together on the ground, I think there are several possible entry points. We're working in the same space, in a way…everyone will bring their expertise, and sharing experiences is beneficial for everyone.
>
> *- Naoufel Telahigue, Regional Director for NEN*

The day closed with remarks from Naoufel Telahigue, Regional Director of the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division (NEN) at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). He highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration between IFAD, Public Development Banks (PDBs), and other development partners to better support small-scale farmers and mobilise resources for the agroecological transition.

Day 2: Field Application and Agroecological Assessment / (RABAT)

The first visit was to **"Direct Ferme"**, a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME).

Direct Ferme demonstrated how agri-processors can embed agroecological principles across sourcing, processing, and product standards, generating both greater supply chain resilience and price premiums.

As climate pressures intensify, B-ACT adds an agroecological lens to traditional credit assessment, measuring investments against the 13 principles of agroecology.

It reviews environmental, social, and economic performance; checks whether business models follow agroecological practices; and looks at how agri-businesses influence sustainability across their supply chains. Screening questions help detect risks, while the B-ACT dashboard produces agroecology scores, links them to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and suggests concrete actions to improve performance.

Overall, Day 2 reinforced a central operational lesson: financing sustainable agriculture requires sound, field-tested tools for evaluation. The mix of site visits, peer-to-peer exchange, and the practical application of B-ACT helped participants translate agroecological principles into concrete investment and management decisions.

Day 2 moved from technical sessions to practice-based work with partner farms and cooperatives, where participants explored agroecological practices and assessment methods together.

Facilitated by Rachida Mehdioui, President of RIAM, the visits aimed to operationalise the concepts and tools introduced on Day 1.

*The field programme continued with a visit to the smallholder farm “**Mama Ghaia”,** where participants engaged in a practical exercise using the B-ACT tool. During the session, participants applied B-ACT in context, considered farm practices in relation to agroecological principles, and explored how the framework could inform financing decisions.*

Day 3: Field Insights on Agroecology and Cooperative Approaches / (FEZ-MEKNÈS)

On the third day, the training moved to the Fez–Meknès region in the Middle Atlas, where participants engaged directly with field-level actors.

The day began with a visit to **La Pause des Bergers – Domaine Toumliline**, a small agroecological farm that has progressively adapted its practices to climate change over the past decades. The exchange was particularly rich, as the farm shared its business model, approach to resilience, and practical experience in managing climate-related risks.

Representatives from participating PDBs and financial institutions (FIs) showed strong interest in **better understanding the Moroccan financing ecosystem, including guarantee mechanisms, insurance schemes, and the role of mutual learning**. These discussions enabled participants to reflect on concrete solutions and consider how similar approaches could be adapted to their respective country contexts.

The group then visited Coopérative Tifrit, which focuses on soil health and promotes conservation agriculture practices, particularly semi-direct seeding. The cooperative benefits from a combination of government support and non-governmental organization (NGO) assistance, including access to machinery and technical advisory services.

These visits surfaced transferable financing-ecosystem features relevant to participating PDBs:

(i) *blended public-private guarantee facilities;* ***(ii)*** *parametric/index insurance for climate risk; and* ***(iii)*** *cooperative-anchored advisory services that lower transaction costs of smallholder lending.*

Day 4: Strengthening Collaboration and Visit to the SIAM / (FEZ-MEKNÈS)

The fourth day was marked by two major highlights, beginning with the signature of a Letter of Intent (LOI) between IFAD and CAM.

The fourth day was marked by two major highlights, beginning with the signature of a **Letter of Intent (LOI)** between IFAD and CAM. This milestone, marked by the presence of Naoufel Telahigue, Regional Director of NEN, represented an important step toward strengthening strategic collaboration between the two institutions. The second highlight of the day was the visit to SIAM, one of the largest agricultural exhibitions in Africa. Held annually in Meknès, SIAM convenes a diverse range of institutions and communities, including public authorities, financial institutions, private sector actors, cooperatives, and development partners. The exhibition serves as a key platform to showcase innovations, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and facilitate dialogue across the agricultural value chain.

The LOI reflects a shared commitment to advancing inclusive and sustainable agricultural finance, with a focus on knowledge exchange, capacity sharing, tailored financial solutions adapted to rural contexts, and the sharing of experiences among FIs across West and Central Africa.

Overall, the visit delivered valuable opportunities to learn from scalable, market-oriented innovations and sparked meaningful reflections on how similar models could be adapted and supported within participants' respective institutional and country contexts.

In collaboration with CAM, participants were divided into two groups and taken on a guided tour of the exhibition. The visit provided an opportunity for representatives of PDBs and FIs to engage directly with exhibitors and gain insights into practical solutions being implemented in the Moroccan context.

*Participants were especially drawn to **local specialty products and cooperatives showcasing value-added, locally anchored production systems**, which illustrated the power of collective organization in unlocking market opportunities and improving livelihoods.*

Across the four days, the training's value extended beyond any single module or site visit. Participants from BNDA Mali, BNDE Burundi, CAM Morocco, CDC Bénin, LBA Senegal, and MIFA S.A. Togo, alongside Moroccan and international partner organisations, spent four days working side by side, testing tools together, and comparing notes on shared challenges. What emerges is a community of practitioners who now know each other directly and can reach out as questions arise in their own institutions, arguably the training's most sustainable outcome, one that will continue to generate value long after the formal sessions end. This ongoing dialogue among peers also helps surface concrete next steps for each institution, and points to where the Agri-PDB Platform itself can best direct its support going forward.

Relevant Communication Materials

YouTube videos:

Video 1: Agroecology In-Person Training in Rabat, Morocco

Video 2: Agroecology In-Person Training (Morocco) - Field visits

Video 3: Agroecology Training Day 4: SIAM Field Visit in Meknès

Video 4: Letter of Intent Signing Ceremony: Agri-PDB Platform and Crédit Agricole du Maroc

Video 5: Agri-PDB Platform in Morocco training: Financing the Agroecological Transition | Day 1

Video 6: Agri-PDB Platform | Climate Finance and Agroecology Training – Highlights | Morocco 2026

Other:

Blog 1: Advancing Agroecology: A First Day of Learning and Collaboration in Rabat

Blog 2: Where Theory Meets Practice: Agroecology on the Ground in Rabat

Delegation visit to SIAM

Agricultural Public Development Banks (PDBs) | Platform
AgriPDB@ifad.org / agri-pdb.org

Hosted by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Via Paolo di Dono 44, 00142 Rome, Italy