

Establishing Geographical Indications without State Involvement? Learning from Case Studies in Central and West Africa

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Summary. — This paper addresses the debate on establishing GIs in weak national institutional contexts. It builds on evidence provided by six case studies in a project implemented by the African Intellectual Property Organization (French acronym OAPI) in Western and Central Africa: Oku white honey, Penja pepper, Ziama-Macenta coffee, Dogon shallots, Galmi purple onions, and Korhogo cloth. Thanks to OAPI's unique status and an appropriate methodology, three GIs have been registered. We notice a lack of sound and effective state involvement which can limit the successful development of GIs. We identify some decisive factors in successful collective action. © 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Key words — geographical indications, OAPI, Africa, Cameroon, Guinea, food quality

1. INTRODUCTION

Geographical Indications (GIs) are of growing political and economic relevance in the Global South. GIs are viewed as a way to reap market benefits from cultural identities, which are of increasing importance in a globalizing world (Ilbert & Petit, 2009), and are said to have a significant potential impact on development (Bramley, Marie-Vivien, & Bienabe, 2013).

For instance, the European Union has registered more than 14 GIs from emerging third countries (China, Colombia, India, Vietnam) and has received applications for nine more (India, Morocco, Thailand, Turkey) (European Union, 2014), whereas India alone has registered more than 200 GIs since 2003. However, nearly 10 years ago, Kerr (2006) wrote that the GI approach may lead developing countries wasting their limited resources chasing an illusive dreamy (p. 8).

Scholars and experts from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) argue that origin-linked food quality schemes are an appropriate rural development tool outside of Europe and a way to minimize the risks linked to globalization (Barham, 2003; Bowen, 2009, 2010; Bowen and Zapata (2009); Vandecandelaere, Arfini, Belletti, & Marescotti, 2009). Effective GIs could open a profitable market niche for southern producers on both domestic and more profitable international markets. GIs also offer a way to protect indigenous knowledge (Blakeney, 2009; Rangnekar, 2004), although they may also be a threat to local skills and genetic resources (Boisvert, 2006). In Africa and predominantly rural economies elsewhere, the development of GIs takes on strategic importance as a mechanism that enables agricultural development to be both environmentally sustainable and based on codified traditional knowledge.

In the wake of TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights agreement), specific legal frameworks have been progressively established by a large number of developing countries at both national and regional levels (Audier, 2008; Giovannucci, Josling, Kerr, O'Connor & Yeung, 2009; Marie-Vivien, 2010, 2012; Xiaobing & Kireeva, 2007). African countries are no exception. In West and Central Africa, the *Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle* (African Intellectual Property Organization [French acronym

OAPI])¹ has provided its 17 member states with a common legal framework for intellectual property (IP) rights since 1977. New regulations for the definition of GIs were adopted in 1999 (OAPI, 1999).

GIs in West and Central Africa are something of a paradox. Although consumers and producers make extensive use of place names to describe a wide range of products reflecting biodiversity, local production, knowledge, or social identities, and GIs have been instituted by the OAPI as a legal protection tool, no GI (except Champagne) was registered in this region before 2013 (Bramley *et al.*, 2013; Oguamanam & Dagne, 2014). What is more, at the time of writing, no national-level implementation plans are in place.

The scientific literature addressing the development of GIs in Africa, albeit still scant, echoes our concern about state involvement. Some authors assess the opportunities and risks represented by GIs in Africa; they focus on food commodities such as Ethiopian coffee (Schübler, 2009; Sereke-Brhan, 2010) or Ghanaian cocoa (Hughes, 2009; Oguamanam & Dagne, 2014), and consider GIs as a way to decommoify these products and thus hedge against market price fluctuations. The main aim of this literature is to evaluate the costs/benefits of the *sui generis* GI system compared to trademark schemes, or to assess the benefit of enhanced multilateral GI protection for African ACP countries (Blakeney, Coulet, Getachew, & Mahop, 2012). Some authors focus on origin foods and point to GI as a way to valorize them with benefits for local actors (Chouvin, 2005; Cormier-Salem, Juhé-Beaulaton, Boutrais, & Roussel, 2005; Cormier-Salem & Roussel, 2009; Roussel & Verdeaux, 2007; Tekelioglu, Ilbert, & Tozanli, 2009), but provide scant documentation of actual experience. To date, little

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literature has focused on the particular challenges of setting up GIs in countries where government regulatory capacity is weak, and none on setting up GIs in sub-Saharan countries. Further research is thus clearly needed into the role of the state in establishing GIs.

This paper aims to contribute to the debate on establishing GIs in Western and Central Africa. It builds on the evidence provided by six case studies conducted in the framework of the PAMPIG project (*Projet d'Appui à la Mise en Place d'Indications Géographiques* Support for the Implementation of Geographical Indications). The French Development Agency (French acronym AFD) has been funding PAMPIG, for which OAPI is the contracting authority, since 2008, and CIRAD² has been providing technical assistance since 2010 (Edou-Edou, 2009). The project methodology is detailed below. Three of the products concerned by the project have been registered as a GI (Oku white honey, Penja pepper, and Ziama-Macenta coffee), while the other three (Dogon shallots, Galmi purple onions, and Korhogo cloth) were evaluated but registration was postponed. As the first three GIs were registered very recently, their effects are not yet fully clear.

Our aim here is to build on the experience gained in these projects for the benefit of future GIs and to assess the role of the state in this process (in this paper we use “state” as national domestic state). We argue that establishing GIs without effective state involvement is possible and can produce at least some initial positive effects, as long as a clearly defined methodology is followed. However, the lack of a strong and appropriate legal framework and state involvement can be a limiting factor for the successful further development of GIs.

2. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

(a) *Local and origin products in Africa: a vibrant landscape*

Attributing the name of a place to a food or craft that presents specific features is and has been a common practice in many places and historical periods (Sautier, Bienabe, & Cerdan, 2011). In Western and Central Africa, the names of many local products refer to their cultural and/or geographical origin, and are often used all over the country of origin and sometimes in several other countries as well (e.g., *Sissili* shea butter from Burkina Faso and *kilishi*, a dried meat product of Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon). Like in the EU, the name of localities associated with local products may refer either to the place of origin of the raw material or to the cultural origin of manufacture (i.e., who does the processing and where) or both (Moity-Maïzi & Sautier, 2006). Although very few inventories exist, while assessing GI potential in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States, Barjolle, Renard, and Bernardoni (2013) found written documentation on 150 agricultural products whose quality was said to be linked to their origin. In 2011–12 a FAO/PISA project (*Programme italien pour la sécurité alimentaire* Italian food security program) conducted a thorough inventory in the small Guinean region of Kindia and identified 13 local products with a strong link to quality and/or place (Rupp, s.d.). If so many products were identified in such a small area, the number of origin-based products in Western and Central Africa is likely to be higher than reported in the literature so far.

The existence of local specialty foods and the challenge of achieving their formal recognition apply to both domestic

and regional markets. People’s taste for local foods persists when they move to town from rural areas. It is influenced by availability and price, but also by people’s cultural and professional identification with products linked to specific territories, one example being the Malian preference for shallots over onions. These expectations can be compared to the “new quest for identity” in urban areas identified in European countries (Amilien, 2005). In Africa, this quest for identity may reflect the feeling of a break between rural and urban areas, making some consumers want to (re)discover their roots and traditions through their food practices (Bricas, 2006; Carré, 2008).

However, local reputations can be misused or appropriated, when populations, knowhow, and products change location, and today both producers and consumers may be losing the guarantee that interpersonal relations previously provided for local products (Cheyns, 2006). In West Africa, the situation is exacerbated as rural-to-urban migrant families are gradually further removed from their village or region (Moity-Maïzi, 2006). In Africa’s big cities, these dynamics underlie the increasing search for guarantees of origin via distinctive markets and networks—and for other signs based on alternative quality conventions—that guarantee the genuine origin of products, as evidenced by the case of Penja pepper.

(b) *The role of the state in establishing GIs*

Much of the literature on GIs assesses the factors that determine their success, concentrating on economic issues on local versus global markets (Arfini, Belletti, & Marescotti, 2010; Barham, 2003; Benkahl, Boutonnet, & Fort, 2005). As suggested by Bowen (2010), even the literature that considers GIs as alternative food networks, and emphasizes how these unconventional markets are embedded in social relations, often fails to clarify the power dynamics underpinning the localization of food chains. Sonnino and Marsden (2006) warned that understanding alternative food networks requires paying careful attention to the institutional context as well as to the power relations along the value chain. Bowen (2010) recommends that the commodity chain approach, applied to GIs, should be used for any analysis of the national and global institutional and political context, as well as of agricultural policies. Comparing French and Mexican GI policies, Bowen considers that to ensure that local populations share the long-term benefits “the importance of strong national support for GIs should not be underestimated” (p. 233).

In Europe, GIs benefit from a strong institutional framework. In France, the failure of first the administrative decision, and then of the judicial ruling at the beginning of the 20th century led to the setting up of a dedicated body comprising both representatives of public authorities and professionals (National Institute of Appellations of Origin, French acronym INAO) (Marie-Vivien, Bérard, Boutonnet, & Casabianca, 2017). However this original private/public “sharing” of the role is now undergoing profound changes as reported by Marie-Vivien *et al.* (2017), in which the driving forces are the privatization of controls and increased roles for the European Union and the Ministry of Agriculture. The concept of a “state-oriented” European GI model is thus no longer entirely justified.

In Latin America, the experience of Café de Colombia, one of the largest GIs in the world (and the first third country GI registered by EU) “is a producer-led effort without direct influence of international roasters, donors, or government authorities” (Xiomara, Quiñones-Ruiz, Penker, Vogl, & Samper-Gartner, 2015, p. 434). The federated coffee system dates back nearly 100 years, but Café de Colombia was only

recognized as a denomination of origin in Columbia itself in 2005, as this was a precondition for being registered as a GI by the European Union, which finally happened in 2007.

The role of the state in promoting and recognizing GIs thus differs considerably from one country to another, and continues to change over time. Like Bowen (2009, 2010), many authors have stressed the importance of the political and institutional context in implementing GIs following their legal recognition; they argue that state support plays a key role in helping local populations benefit from origin-based schemes (Giovannucci, Josling, Kerr, O'Connor, & Yeung, 2009; Sautier *et al.*, 2011; Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009). In addition to providing a legal framework, the state monitors and strengthens legal protection against the risks of usurpation and confusing uses, supports collective action and organization, ensures quality control, and stimulates cooperation in defining a marketing strategy (Hughes, 2009). Larson (2007) argues that in developing countries, where "the institutional context tends to be weaker or underdeveloped with regard to fraud repression, intellectual property, and natural, biological and genetic resources," (p. 7) inadequate institutional support is a major concern for the recognition and establishment of GIs. Lack of an effective institutional environment can lead to insufficient, unfairly shared benefits or even counterproductive results (Barjolle & Sylvander, 2002; Larson, 2007; Rangnekar, 2004). For instance, in a study on a GI initiative for a Nicaraguan cheese, Mancini (2013) reported that "GIs can become factors of increased marginalization" and even a "mechanism excluding the poorest" (p. 295). She points out the weakness of the Nicaraguan institutional context, including a generic legal framework and general ignorance of GI potential, as the major reason the poorest producers are excluded.

Still, some examples show that strong state intervention is not always favorable. Problems may arise when the state does not support the GI governing bodies by approving their autonomy and clearly defining their responsibilities (Larson, 2007). Zhao, Finlay, and Kneafsey (2014) argue that a strong government GI policy may not allow independent bodies to play their full role. In the Chinese GI scheme studied by these authors, many functions are embedded within government or government-supported organizations, without the necessary independence. In order to ensure that all local producers can take advantage of the GI, the government proposes minimal GI standards, adopts lax issuing procedures, and implements weak inspection programs. As a consequence the GI label does not guarantee specific quality characteristics and consumers refuse to pay a higher price. Also in Mexico, where the legal definition of GIs is strong and longstanding, Bowen and Zapata (2009) show that the Tequila GI failed to benefit the local population and environment. In such contrasted contexts as China and Mexico, GIs failed to provide the expected benefits because of excessive state intervention limiting independence (China) or the bias of the state toward more powerful supply chain actors (Mexico).

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper is mainly based on extensive observation of and direct participation in the technical support programs provided by CIRAD to OAPI from 2004 to the present. The authors are part of a research team that provides support and training in many countries across the world. Shared and

multidisciplinary reflection on this ongoing experience is at the origin of this paper, which is also grounded in an extensive review of published literature, working papers, and empirical research on the production, trading, and consumption of local specialty products in Western and Central Africa (Moity-Maïzi & Sautier, 2006).

The OAPI launched the PAMPIG project in 2008, thanks to a €1 million grant from the French Development Agency, AFD. One of the goals was to register between two and five products as a GI, four of which had already been identified: Oku white honey and Penja pepper in Cameroon, Ziamacenta coffee in Guinea, and Korhogo cloth in Côte d'Ivoire. The project assessed two other local products as potential GIs (Dogon shallots in Mali³ and Galmi purple onions in Niger), whose registration was postponed.

The action plan for the PAMPIG project described in the *GI Applicant's Guide* (OAPI, 2011) clearly states the steps to follow in the process of GI recognition and registration:

For each of these products, the project conducts a diagnostic analysis of the production chain and identifies the people involved. It defines the steps required for registration of a geographical indication. It writes the terms of reference for local consultants who help producers' organizations in preparing the application dossier, especially marketing strategy, in preparing the formal code of practices and defining the geographical area, and establishing control modalities. Once the dossier has been completed, it is transmitted to the National GI Committee of the country concerned.

The PAMPIG project applied a method based on the conclusions of Siner-GI (a research project and network on Geographical Indications funded by the European Community) as expressed in *Linking People, Places and Products, A guide for promoting quality linked to geographical origin and sustainable geographical indications* published by FAO (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009). This guide presents a method to facilitate the positive impact of GIs on rural development by stressing some important issues to be addressed and implemented by and for the local actors:

1. Collective action and coordination between supply chain stakeholders. This must be an integral part of the entire process, from the identification and recognition of the product by enhancing community awareness, to developing marketing strategies and sharing the increased value-added.
2. Code of practices or specifications. Establishing local rules for using the GI is a keystone of the process, and has important social, economic, and environmental consequences. The code formally establishes the specific quality of the product linked to geographical origin, mainly by (i) describing the product, including natural resources and traditional practices, and (ii) defining the area of production.
3. Local guarantee system. Traceability and monitoring are crucial to the GI system and must be addressed when setting up a new GI.

4. RESULTS

In this section we describe the process that led to the successful registration of three of the GIs and explore three case studies in which registration was postponed. The main

Table 1. *Key attributes of the three products which have been registered as GI*

	Oku white honey	Penja pepper	Ziama-Macenta coffee
Place	Cameroon, North West Province	Cameroon, Center Province	Guinea, Forest Guinea Province
Reputation	Appreciated locally	Regarded as the best pepper by nationals, and as one of the best peppers in the world by international specialists	Recognized as a good coffee by local traders and some agronomic research specialists
Stakeholders: initial situation	Around 100 producers. One co-operative is processing, packaging, and selling "Oku honey". Some associations are supporting beekeepers	The largest producer is an international company. Other producers (200) are middle, small or very small. No collective organization. One company is importing and selling in Europe	Thousands of small producers. One small co-operative is following a quality strategy
Major constraints	Limited production potential and reputation. Low generic quality (smoke aroma, impurities, water content)	Low technical level of many producers. Usurpation of the name on national market. A trade mark is registered in France (monopoly of one importer)	Unknown on international market. Difficulty to guarantee quality of substantial quantities
2005 production	20 t	90 t	Negligible initial production of quality coffee
Potential production	Not available, but limited by the resource potential (20 km ² forest)	Much greater than the current situation if pepper is planted in place of other crops (coffee, banana, pineapple...)	Around 2,000 t
2014 production	20 t	130 t	18 t of quality coffee exported in 2013
Initial price (2008)	2,000 XAF/kg/	5,000 XAF/kg/	Following international price
2014 price ^a	4,000 XAF/kg	7,500 XAF/kg	A premium of 10% was obtained in 2013
Registration by OAPI	October 2013	September 2013	April 2014
Main limitations	Collective organization is not operational	Monitoring and quality control plan is not operational. As pepper plots are not identified and localized, traceability is not possible	As traders are not involved, pre-funding must be obtained by other means

^a Inflation is estimated to 15%.

characteristics of each product are listed in [Table 1](#), to compare and contrast the key attributes of each case.

(a) *Oku white honey*

Oku white honey is a very specific product originating from a small area in the North-West Province of Cameroon. It is obtained using specific techniques: the hives are colonized in the lowlands, then transferred to the mountain forest. White or light colored, with a fresh, lemony aroma and creamy texture, this honey is unique in Western and Central Africa. The link between the quality of the product and the area is easy to establish: the melliferous plants that grow in the protected and well-defined forest of Kilum-Ijim are the source of the product's singular characteristics. The name "Oku" has been used for decades and the product is highly appreciated by local consumers.

The British NGO Birdlife International has headed the protective Kilum-Ijim Forest Project, which is based on a participatory and community approach, since 1987. This project demonstrated that improving livelihoods and incomes can have an impact on conservation by helping to change local attitudes and behavior ([Abbot, Thomas, Gardner, Neba, & Khen, 2001](#)). The reduction in the surface area of the forest has been halted, and today the Kilum-Ijim forest covers 20 km² ([Penn & Gardner, 2000](#)). Yet it is under intense pressure, with fields starting just a few meters from the forest edge.

The PAMPIG project appointed several stakeholders and experts and coordinated the process of applying for registra-

tion of a GI for Oku honey: (i) SNV, an NGO with experience in local non-timber forest products, (ii) Guiding Hope, a Cameroonian company working exclusively on honey, certification, fair trade, and organic produce, and (iii) international experts who were called in for short-term missions relating to demarcating the zone, drawing up the monitoring plan, and setting up a sensory panel.

The Kilum-Ijim White Honey Association (KIWhA) was set up and is chaired by the head of the Oku cooperative, which is the main producer of honey for sale, which accounts for nearly a third of total production. KIWhA brought together beekeepers from the two mountain faces (Kilum and Ijim) and the three production areas (Oku, Belo, and Jakiri), as well as honey collectors, merchants, and forest protection officers. The GI was registered by the OAPI in October 2013. However, in February 2014, the collective organization behind the GI (the KIWhA Association) was not operational, with no board meetings held, no membership fees collected, and no list of members. Although Oku—where the KIWhA Association has its headquarters—shows no signs of vigorous activity, producers of honey in other production areas and the merchants outside the production zone feel that all the benefits of the GI accrue to Oku. Moreover, once every 9 years, Oku honey is not white but brown, because of a plant that only flowers every 9 years. This particularity was not included in the code of practices. In addition, some provisions in the code of practices, e.g., the need to use protective clothing, are not observed. These two details suggest that the code of practices was drawn up too quickly and with insufficient input from producers.

Nevertheless, some positive outcomes can be observed:

- The selling price has increased 100% in 5 years to reach 4,000 XAF⁴ for a one-liter pot (1.5 kg) in the production area. Based on 20 tons, this means income from Oku honey has increased from €40,000 to €80,000.
- The uniqueness of this honey is now recognized by the inhabitants of the whole region, whereas previously some local people considered the white honey defective because of its lack of color. Producers had to mix it with darker honey to sell it. “People asked: ‘What is this white stuff?’ fearing it was just sugar mixed with water. . .” Nowadays its distinctive features are appreciated across a broader territory.
- Demand is growing in large cities including Douala and Yaoundé; some traders are trying to meet this demand by using modern packaging.

(b) *Penja pepper*

Penja pepper has been produced on volcanic soil about 100 km from Douala, Cameroon’s economic capital for 60 years. Renowned in Cameroon, Penja pepper is also recognized by European connoisseurs as one of the very finest peppers in the world. It has a unique character combining animal aromas with a particularly fresh flavor in the mouth. Penja pepper is sold in one-kilo bags in Europe for around €120 per kilo of peppercorns as opposed to €20 for white pepper of unspecified origin. The pepper plant, *Piper nigrum*, is a vine grown from cuttings. Post-harvest processing requires abundant pure water.

It was only in the 2000s that Penja pepper began to acquire its international renown thanks to a French spice distributor. In the 2000s, *Plantations du Haut-Penja* (PHP) emerged as the largest producer, with 50 hectares and a specialized consultant to ensure best practices. PHP is a subsidiary of the French company *La Compagnie Fruitière*, whose main activity in Cameroon is the cultivation of 3,000 hectares of banana trees. In 2008, it was the only company exporting Penja pepper to Europe, where it sent about half of its production. The rest of its pepper and the pepper produced by other planters was sold in Cameroon, where Penja pepper was often mixed with cheaper, lower-quality imported pepper (referred to as “Dubai pepper”) and sold in bulk.

In 2008, when the GI project was set up, the different stakeholders had different concerns. Small- and medium-scale producers wanted access to best production practices and to break into the international market. PHP wanted to safeguard the reputation of the pepper originating from the Penja area, which was threatened by the arrival of new producers who were not familiar with best practices. They wished to achieve this by maintaining a quality standard. PHP also wished to develop other forms of relationship with its business environment. Both small producers and PHP wanted to combat the common practice in Cameroon of mixing their product with Dubai pepper. All these stakeholders felt dispossessed because a “Poivre de Penja” trademark had been registered in Europe.

The PAMPIG project entrusted the GI support mission to a Cameroonian consultancy, AgroPME, in partnership with GRET, a French consultancy. The application dossier set out the principles for demarcating the production zone (altitude and subsoil), but did not provide a map. Reference was made to a subsequent phase when plots would be precisely identified.

The GI group includes both small- and large-scale producers. There are several hundred members, who all pay a yearly fee proportional to the surface area on which they cultivate pepper. The group benefits from a dynamic management team

that is quick to take initiatives, as well as a salaried Executive Secretary. The appellation zone is divided into five production areas, each with elected delegates who organize meetings and training sessions, as well as acting as participatory communication relays. Referring to a sudden surge of interest in pepper growing, is not an exaggeration.

The GI group identified common needs, many of which are already or are in the process of being satisfied: boreholes and tractors to ensure sufficient water for the steeping process, drying yards, a sorting and packaging center, storage facilities, fertilizers, plant protection products, and so on. The group has managed to attract additional support from a variety of sources, including the government, and an exceptional ministerial authorization to import a plant protection product the group felt to be essential. The total funding represented by these various forms of support far exceeds the cost of the support activities funded by the PAMPIG project. The group has also been successful in attracting political support. The Minister for Agriculture attended the meeting to approve the GI application, and Penja pepper was one of the gifts given by the head of state to celebrate New Year 2014.

This GI has thus already had several positive outcomes. Production has increased by 50% from 90 tons in 2004 (MINIMIDT-MINADER, 2005). The producer price has also risen by 50%, yielding an annual turnover XAF 525 million (€800,000) higher in 2014 than it was in 2008. Good practices are shared, mainly benefiting small producers. As one producer put it: “Now, I know why the seedlings I planted many years ago are still not producing.” In fact, pepper reproduction is vegetative: any stem can produce a new plant, but only stems taken from specific parts of a plant yield high-producing plants. Several producers now export. Several distributors in Europe now use this appellation, even though an importer registered “Poivre de Penja” as a trademark in France in 2001. In Cameroon, the widespread presence of pure authentic Penja pepper on the national market presupposes the availability of cheap, light packaging making it possible to buy (for instance) 100 CFA’s worth of pepper. A sorting and packaging center is under construction. Using sealed plastic bags authenticated by a logo is the only way to combat fraud. Merchants have formed an *ad hoc* association with around 20 members and have pronounced themselves in favor of this approach.

However some limits of the GI process also surfaced. A monitoring plan was drawn up and internal monitors appointed and trained, as has a sensory panel. But the system is not yet up and running. The cultivation specifications to be respected by each producer are not yet in use, even though the producers understand their necessity. The appointed monitors are not fulfilling their function, but mainly because they do not dispose of the requisite means. Another key phase that has not yet been carried out is the drawing up of a geo-referenced map of plots, thus ensuring traceability. Jumping on the bandwagon, the Cameroonian government is now supporting this GI. The main risk ahead is a decline in quality with an increase in quantity. Traceability, monitoring of cultivation and processing methods, and quality control are clearly indispensable to avoid this risk.

(c) *Ziama-Macenta coffee*

Ziama-Macenta coffee is a high-altitude Robusta described as having a slightly acid taste with little bitterness and high aromatic intensity. It is cultivated around Mount Ziama, near Macenta, in the *Guinée Forestière* region, a traditional coffee-growing area located 800 km from Conakry.

Guinea's coffee output has been declining since 1958. A project (named RC2), to re-stimulate coffee cultivation was set up in 1989 by the government and by the AFD in which the *Institut de Recherche Agronomique de Guinée* Guinean Agricultural Research Institute (French acronym IRAG) played a key role. RC2 introduced improved plant material, drew up recommended technical operations, and helped the *Fédération Nationale des Planteurs de Café de Guinée* the Guinean Federation of Coffee Planters (French acronym FNPCG) to market the coffee. However, in 2000 the project was wound up, the price of coffee dropped, and the marketing fund dried up. In reaction, several dozen planters set up the Woko cooperative with the aim of devising a quality-based marketing strategy, drawing on the expertise of IRAG. The cooperative managed to establish a higher price on the local market, but only very small quantities were involved.

At this point the PAMPIG project became involved and applied the methodology described above, insisting in particular on three points: seeking an export outlet; involving more stakeholders than the Woko cooperative; and mobilizing local and international support and, in particular, the skills of IRAG. The support mission (2012–13) was entrusted to the *Institut de recherches et d'application des méthodes de développement* (French acronym IRAM), a French consultancy, which coordinated a team comprising the local IRAG branch, a marketing expert, and the *Maison Guinéenne de l'Entreprise* (MGE). In addition, foreign experts conducted short missions to demarcate the zone and assist with the monitoring plan. Finally, in May 2014, the Director General of OAPI presented the GI to the President of Guinea in Conakry, with a lot of media coverage.

Coordinating a large number of stakeholders and agreeing on the action plan was a complex process. An association named ADECAM that was set up as a result of training sessions and meetings conducted by MGE and IRAM, motivated both planters and collectors and drew up an application for a GI for “Café Zياما-Macenta”. One of the points that gave rise to debate was the name of the product. The IRAG researchers wished to use “Zياما Coffee” i.e., the name of the mountain which gives the product its specific qualities—but on the market, the product was known only as “Macenta Coffee”. As for many years, researchers and government officials had been discussing using the name “Zياما coffee,” they were afraid that the name “Macenta coffee” would not reward their dedication. The name Café Zياما-Macenta is thus a compromise. Another sensitive issue was the demarcation of

the production area. Two interlocking zones were finally selected, a narrow one for the production of the coffee cherries and a larger one for the post-harvest operations. The quality of the product is also related to production methods that have been carefully detailed in the code of practice, e.g., the use of traditional clones or of the five introduced clones, planting in the shade, appropriate pruning, harvesting at maturity, and drying the coffee in the correct conditions.

In this case, the main achievement of the GI process is opening up an international market for this specific product. In 2013, the first contract was signed with a European importer, Maison Jobin. Collectively, the producers were able to export a container (18 tons), but without receiving prepayment for the coffee. Prepayment for coffee is usually made by local traders at the farm gate, but none of them wanted to be involved in the GI. On the other hand, the PAMPIG mandate did not include loans, and so it was not able to grant one. The importer planned on buying considerably more in 2014, at \$2,175 per ton *versus* \$2,000 for coffee from undesignated areas. However, financing producers until payment by the importer remained an issue. Certification as a fair trade product was envisaged in early 2014, as this would have made it possible to obtain credit at preferential rates and to sell the product at an even higher price (\$2,275 per ton); however, funding for the certification audit could not be raised in time.

(d) Other case studies

Korhogo cloth, Dogon shallots, and Galmi purple onions were rejected by the PAMPIG project during the feasibility study, since the necessary assets were lacking and not easily supplied. The main characteristics of each product are listed in Table 2, which compares and contrasts the key attributes of each case.

(i) Korhogo cloth

Korhogo cloth is one of the emblems of Senufo (Côte d'Ivoire) culture, the motifs are recognized worldwide. However, some craftsmen are shifting away from traditional techniques: they use industrial paints and fabrics and draw innovative motifs in bold colors, while traditional motifs are sometimes used on fabric produced in factories abroad. It would consequently be wholly justified to restrict the name “Korhogo cloth” to the original products.

The 2002–07 crisis in Côte d'Ivoire has had major repercussions, including the gradual disappearance of the local tourist

Table 2. Key attributes of the three products which have not been registered as GI

	Korhogo cloth	Galmi purple onion	Dogon shallot
Place	Korhogo area, extreme North of Ivory Coast	Large parts of Niger	Mali, Dogon country, 700 km East of Bamako
Reputation	Well known throughout all West Africa, known worldwide	Name known in all West Africa 4–500,000 tons produced annually in Niger, half of which is exported	Name “Bandiagara jaba” is known and appreciated in Mali and some places of Guinea and Ivory Coast
Stakeholders	Dozens of painters	Very numerous producers National value chain association	Thousands of producers. Many competing or conflicting producers' associations, NGO, development projects
Major constraints	Because of the crisis in the Ivory Coast, tourist trade and trade links were disrupted. Painters in very precarious situation	“Galmi purple onion” is a variety name registered by many countries and cannot be restricted to onions produced in Niger or in part of it	Technical issues (packaging) Lack of standardized collective action
Production	Unavailable	4–500,000 tons produced annually in Niger. Proportion of Galmi purple variety, as well as production grown in Galmi area unavailable	40,000 t

trade and the severing of the trade links which had previously made it possible to sell cloth in Abidjan and abroad. In 2010, the cloth painters thus found themselves in a precarious situation in both Korhogo, where they sold the cloth, and Fakaha, where they lived and worked. The situation meant it was impossible to set up any collective action, for which lasting security and the re-opening of trade channels were essential. This is a borderline case in which the failure of the state impeded action.⁵

(ii) *Galmi purple onion (Niger)*

“Violet de Galmi” or Galmi purple onion is an implicit geographical indication used throughout West Africa for a pinkish-purple onion that is renowned for its particularly pronounced taste and its ability to thicken sauces. In fact, the denomination “Violet de Galmi” refers to two different things: (i) onions produced in Niger, where Galmi is located, and (ii) the Violet de Galmi onion variety produced in other countries in the sub-region. For some years now the Niger government and producers have wanted to restrict the use of this denomination to onions produced in Niger, and applied for its registration as a GI. It is the country’s main agricultural export, as half of the 400,000–500,000 tons produced each year are exported. It is therefore a socially and economically strategic product. A national trade association, the *Association Nationale de la Filière Oignon* (ANFO) is already operational. However, an intellectual property issue has made it difficult to obtain GI registration, since “Violet de Galmi” cannot be granted GI protection as it is also the name of a variety figuring in the *West African Catalog of Plant Species and Varieties*⁶ (FAO, 2008). This catalog states that “Violet de Galmi” is registered under this name in the national catalog of nine countries in the sub-region, meaning that its seeds may be produced and marketed within the region under this name, without this right being restricted to any group or zone whatsoever.

This case illustrates the need for coherent state action. A country cannot both allow free use of a variety bearing a geographic name, and simultaneously seek to protect the name as a GI.

(iii) *Dogon shallots (Mali)*

Some West African populations—especially in Mali but also in Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire—prefer shallots to onions, since shallots are better for thickening sauces and have a stronger flavor. Shallots have been grown for generations in the region of Dogon. Local practice is very-intensive, involving manual irrigation and bringing soil in from elsewhere, but results in high yields per surface unit. However, over the past 10 years there has been competition from “de Niono” shallots grown in the Office du Niger zone, where shallow earth and flood irrigation techniques make cultivation easier, meaning that double the quantity is produced, and at lower cost.

In 2008–09, a feasibility study for registering a GI for Dogon shallots found that they had a long-standing reputation under the name of “bandiagara jaba” (Chabrol & de Bon, 2010). A larger scale study in 2010 confirmed the specificity of Dogon shallots, and in tests, a significant number of consumers could tell them apart from “de Niono” shallots when cooked in sauces (Meyer, 2011). An origin-based quality label could thus be justified.

However, establishing a remunerative market for Dogon shallots involves technical problems: quality definition and the need for traceability (requiring packaging facilities). Social issues also apply: two rival umbrella associations, involving several thousand producers, exist in the Dogon region,

although in practice, there is little collective action. Numerous government bodies and NGOs found it difficult to give a coherent direction to their efforts. For instance, because agreement could not be reached on the location of a packaging facility, no facility has been built. Hence a genuinely regional product with a long tradition, arising from exceptional know-how, and with a good reputation, was unable to obtain a GI for one essential reason—the lack of collective, coordinated action needed to resolve marketing, specifications, and packaging issues (Fournier, Chabrol, de Bon, & Meyer, 2010).

5. DISCUSSION

The PAMPIG project proved that it is possible to register GIs in Africa without significant involvement of the state and/or national institutions, and within a reasonable time frame, by following the internationally recognized methodology cited in this paper. PAMPIG was funded by AFD, managed by OAPI, technical support was provided by CIRAD, and consultants did the fieldwork. Governments were involved only as “invited spectators.” They were consulted when the plan of action was conceived, and informed of support programs. States were involved in the setting up of National GI Committees, which had to examine the GI application before it was passed on for examination by OAPI, and which indeed were set up in around half the member states. With the exception of IRAG in Guinea, no national technical institution was associated with the support activities. Once the support program ended and the GI application ready or registered, some of the governments endorsed it and provided political support.

In this section we assess the extent to which state support was determinant in setting up and implementing GIs in the case studies and how state support intermeshes with different levels of institutional activity.

(a) *Above the state: the primary role of the OAPI, a regional institution*

In this context, the registration of GIs was made possible by the special status of OAPI and the mandate it received from its member-states to promote GIs. The OAPI system is highly original. OAPI is the common IP (Intellectual Property) office of its member states. A sole law—the Bangui Agreement and its annexes—is the common reference of the 17 member states, which do not have national protection systems. OAPI delivers all IP titles centrally, and these are valid in all member countries.

This system has major advantages. The states are divested of certain responsibilities that are pooled in a common institution where specialized skills can accrue. Furthermore, once the OAPI has granted the GI, this provides automatic, simultaneous protection in all 17 countries. Lastly, the OAPI can drive initiatives, align national policies, and represent the entire zone in dealings with the EU or other large markets, in intellectual property matters.

Despite the fact that the promotion of GIs is linked to economic development strategies that are not part of the OAPI’s official remit—this being the role of member states—at the Ouagadougou 2005 ministerial conference, the member countries mandated the OAPI to implement a project whose goal was to put Geographical Indications in place. OAPI found itself responsible for supporting producers and hence for intervening in the field. The PAMPIG project did, however, include capacity-building for about a hundred officials in all the

member states and called on member states to (i) set up a National Committee for Geographical Indications, and (ii) to identify and draw up an inventory of suitable GI products, thus paving the way for greater state involvement.

In the meantime, about half the member states have set up a GI Committee, thereby triggering debate about who should chair it—the Ministers of Agriculture or those in charge of intellectual property (generally the Ministers of Industry), who act as the OAPI's interlocutors in each country and sit on the OAPI executive board. Despite OAPI's reliance on "GI focal points" in ministries of agriculture, there was no allocation of funds from OAPI to ministerial departments not in charge of IP. As no national committee received a budget, either from the project or from the government, their effectiveness can be questioned.

Furthermore, the regulations governing the OAPI, and in particular Annex VI of the Bangui Agreement (OAPI, 1999), are very vague and open-ended about the processes leading up to registration. In article 6, Title III, the definition of the allowed applicant is so broad that any individual producer, manufacturer, or trader dealing in such products can apply for a GI. Moreover, and unlike most *sui generis* GI protection systems, the Bangui Agreement does not call for a code of practices as part of the application, to be respected by producers, and to be controlled. A code of practices is a strategic tool that can be adapted to each situation and includes provisions in favor of groups that might otherwise be disadvantaged. When the legal system calls for a representative group to apply for a GI, in fact, it is a way to make sure the voice and interests of small less-favored stakeholders are heard.

The combination of these features of the OAPI status could result in a system that is not favorable to local communities, producer groups, and less favored stakeholders. The AFD/OAPI project funding agreement requires the PAMPIG project to follow a far more precise, restrictive method than that required by Annex VI of the Bangui Agreement. This methodology was intended to reduce the risk of failure and exclusion.

(b) *Outside the state: producers and collective action*

As a common good, shared among the producers of the same area, GIs are managed collectively following a variety of logics and coordination processes (Torre & Chia, 2001). According to Barjolle and Sylvander (2002), "the primary factor in success is the capacity of a set of firms in a supply chain based in a particular area to effectively coordinate the management of the supply chain" (p. 1457). The level of collective action can thus be seen as an indicator of the success of the GI building process. The development of collective local action can be enhanced by state policies, including providing training and legal support, but it can be also be impeded by a top-down approach, authoritarianism, or contamination by political debates and interests.

Despite using the same methodology, the PAMPIG project outcomes differed in each case; state involvement did not significantly differ and was generally low. In the first three case studies, as François, Prak, and Brun (2009) pointed out in Cambodia, producers were not organized before the GI project, in contrast with the situation that usually prevails in Europe. The primary objective of the project was thus to set up an association, and this had varying results. In Table 3, we list the features of the context that explain these differences.

The international reputation of Penja pepper emerged thanks to its specific qualities and to the use of the geographical

name by a French company, who registered it as a trade mark. However, producers had no control over the use of the name, and no way of checking the true origin of the product. They feared traders would cheat on the origin, at worst, or would receive a too high proportion of the premium price. In this context, producers felt that GI registering and protection could give them a better bargaining power in discussions with the French importer. This is a case that Kerr (2006) does not consider: when a product from a developing country already receives a premium on the market, GI registering is a way for local stakeholders to obtain a fairer share of the premium, which otherwise can be monopolized by merchants who are not locals.

In each case study, for geographical, cultural, or socio-economic reasons, the heterogeneity of stakeholders was high. In the case of Oku honey, GI protection of the name was not perceived as a possible solution to problems faced by producers, whereas the GI appeared to federate Penja pepper producers (who faced problems of usurpation on the national market and undue private appropriation on the European market) and the stakeholders of Ziama-Macenta coffee (where protection of a name was a prerequisite to an origin-linked valorization strategy).

The producers' social capital (Jena & Grote, 2010) also varied significantly: it was very low in the case of Oku honey, but higher for Ziama-Macenta coffee—especially since IRAG, a national public research institution, fostered it (but was not significantly involved in collective action)—and still higher for Penja pepper. In the last two cases, leaders succeeded in federating the stakeholders and organizing collective action. However, only the Penja pepper stakeholders managed to gather additional external support to overcome the difficulties (that were not directly linked with protecting the name) faced by producers, and hence did not fall within the scope of the PAMPIG project (e.g., drilling boreholes for pure water, providing micro-credits for the purchase of fertilizer, constructing a packaging facility).

Finally, the nature of the markets for each product also explains the varying degrees of success of collective organization. Due to short supply and growing reputation, the price of Oku honey is increasing significantly, while usurpation is not perceived as a real danger, so there is no real incentive for collective action. Penja pepper has both a national and international market, which helps mitigate competition among producers. It is not easy for small producers to access the international market, but high demand on the national market means they can sell their entire production anyway.

The construction of quality and reputation are also collective processes that could be supported by institutions. Ziama-Macenta coffee does not yet have a reputation for high quality on the market. As Galtier, Belletti, and Maresscotti (2008, 2013) pointed out in the case of Jarabacoa coffee (Dominican Republic), GI is a process of reputation building pursued by reaching a quality standard fixed locally but based on market requirements. It is a qualification and a collective learning process based on the empowerment of local coffee farmers. In such a case, actions should be undertaken to increase the participation of local actors in building the GI (e.g., education and information) and to increase the effectiveness of the GI (e.g., information, credit, technical assistance, access to markets). The Ziama-Macenta coffee GI indeed faces these difficulties, and needs to mobilize support other than that provided by the PAMPIG project to overcome them.

Table 3. *Context elements which can explain differences in the level of collective action*

	Oku white honey	Penja pepper	Ziama-Macenta coffee
Heterogeneity of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different cultural backgrounds and languages (pidgin English is the most common) • Physical communication difficult • Distance from economic and political centers (Bamenda, Yaoundé, and Douala) • Trading companies managed by Cameroonians from other regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various ethnic groups, but French is the common language • Producers widely differ in size and status. PHP is the largest producer, a French company subsidiary and the largest private employer in Cameroon, its top management being dominated by foreigners. Some medium-sized producers are nationals employing hundreds of workers. The vast majority of producers are very small, some living in precarious conditions with (e.g., no access to drinking water) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different ethnic groups, without a common language: many meetings needed translation from French into two local languages • Producers are approximately the same size • Traders are often of Senegalese or Lebanese origin, and there is a tradition of distrust between producers and traders. Traders should not be involved in the GI initiative, as they mix Ziama-Macenta coffee with lower-grade coffee
Feeling of problems and stakes	<p>Divergent perceptions of local stakeholders and experts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts mention hive desertion, smoky taste of honey, unequal generic quality, use of inadequate containers, lack of protection suits, dangers of usurpation • Local producers were concerned by transportation problems and lack of collection centers, that were outside the scope of the project 	<p>Problems were felt with varying intensity by the stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usurpation of national market • Monopoly of one importer on European market • Producers' lack of expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main issue: the low price of coffee • Main solution: quality improvement (since RC2 project) • Marketing the origin was addressed by the Woko co-operative and GI process
Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producers live in a remote area • Only some of them speak English, none speak French • They are not used to traveling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium-sized producers are educated • Some of them often travel abroad • Some producers have connections with national and international institutions: one served as representative in the national parliament, another is representing African producers on the board of a Euro-ACP institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Woko co-operative president served as vice-chairman of national Guinean farmers' association • IRAG has a research station in the area and previously conducted research on agronomy, post-harvest processing, and sensory analysis of coffee • IRAG acted as a sponsor
Nature of market	<p>Short supply and growing demand explain growth of price and do not encourage further efforts</p>	<p>Penja pepper has a dual market: national and international</p>	<p>The final product is not consumed or known in the country</p>

The duration of the GI establishment process also has a crucial effect on collective organization. Compared with the European context, where seven to 10 years usually pass from initiation to recognition of a GI (in France), the PAMPIG project time frame was short. PAMPIG was active for 4 years (2010–14) and field operations only lasted up to 2 years, a very short time in relation to the pace of establishing and developing a collective action in any rural society. A sound state intervention in the GI field requires a long-term committed strategy aiming at supporting GI governing bodies and collective action, far beyond the short-term economic benefits provided by international projects.

(c) *Beyond the state: international development organizations as drivers and trainers*

In the last 10 years, between the beginning of the OAPI's interest in GIs and the end of the PAMPIG project, there has been a dramatic increase in interest in GIs among development institutions. This is reflected by the appearance of many "GI guides," published by FAO (Vandecandelaere *et al.*, 2009), AFD-FFEM (Amsallem *et al.*, 2010), the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) (Ngo Bagal & Vittori, 2011), the International Trading Center (ITC) (Giovannucci *et al.*, 2009), and the EU (European Commission, 2013). FAO is implementing a program to support the development of procedures focusing on origin-linked specific quality that will contribute to rural development. It has produced publications, been involved in seminars and training sessions, and has developed a method for identifying products. Since the high-level meeting held on June 8, 2010, the EU (DG for Development) considers GIs a new field for cooperation with the African Union. A European Union-Africa Union workshop on GIs was held in Kampala in October 2011, which put forward a number of recommendations (strengthening networking, providing potential GI applicants with clear guidance, exploring available financial assistance, enhancing the awareness of policy makers). A study was commissioned on the potential of GI for African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries (Barjolle *et al.*, 2013). The EU now registers GIs for third countries; the first to be granted was for Colombian coffee in 2007. The EU currently offers GI protection to 10 Chinese products.

Non-local stakeholders, such as national and international institutions, play a key role in determining the outcomes of a GI certification process. Mancini (2013) showed that, if national institutions are ill-informed and not aware of the legal value of GIs, GI registration can actually widen the gap between players and practically exclude the poorest. In such a weak institutional context, she argues that support activities and knowledge transfer should be planned by "institutions interested (...) like NGOs, the EU and WTO" (p. 304). And in fact, PAMPIG was organized in just this way, mobilizing local NGOs, international experts, research centers, and organizations as consultants and collective action drivers. The PAMPIG project assumed that governments were not sufficiently skilled to be in charge of the support program and as a result, governments themselves benefitted from the training services provided in the framework of the PAMPIG project. Besides training 100 officials (30 in a two-week session, 70 in a three-day session), the national GI committees in Cameroon and Guinea received a one-day training when they were requested to examine the GI application(s). However, this was probably not enough to raise the necessary awareness

and to transfer the interest of the governments from international aid to the potential offered by GIs.

The risk of such an approach is grafting "the set of rules developed over several centuries in developed countries," on different societies, as noted by Bowen (2009, p. 15), and as a result, of being ineffective. Moreover, insofar as certification processes in Africa are borrowed from European models, protecting products designated by their origin could be interpreted as a new form of technical transfer from Europe to historically dependent countries. In this regard, critical analysis of the legal and institutional mechanisms of product certification are important for scholars who are concerned with avoiding the pitfalls of technological transfers and relations of dependency that continue to dominate interactions between African countries and Europe.

(d) *Not without the state: monitoring the market*

One of the main goals of GIs is to protect producers and consumers from fraud concerning the origin of products with a specific positive reputation. As mentioned above, usurpations occur on the international market (e.g., Antigua coffee, tequila, basmati rice), yet even more frequently and importantly, usurpations take place on the local market, as shown by the case of Penja pepper. In this connection, the role of the state as guarantor of both consumer and producer rights is central and irreplaceable. The OAPI funding treaty declares that sanctions against infringements to IP rights are the responsibility of the jurisdiction of each member state.

One objection frequently made against origin-based certification processes in developing countries is the comparative incapacity of states to ensure that the rules are respected. Hughes (2009) observed that the problem of guaranteeing origin is one that confronts all economies and all legal and regulatory environments. According to analyses carried out by the WTO, four times more Darjeeling tea is sold around the world than is actually produced, and this despite the fact that the Darjeeling GI is registered in India, which is an interventionist state in agriculture. Wine is probably the most closely monitored sector, because of its cultural importance, the taxes it generates, and its prominent economic role in producer countries. Nevertheless, many cases of fraud are discovered, including in wine-producing countries such as France (Pfanter, 2012). In other words, the problem of enforcing origin-based rules is a real problem for GIs, and this is something that holds true not only in states with weak regulatory capacity but, to varying degrees, in all legal and regulatory environments.

Longstanding GIs have therefore developed strategies to make it easier to guarantee origin. The trade bodies of the Cognac and Champagne industries are both actively involved in closely monitoring the market, and they both employ several legal experts and draw on the full battery of legal means they have at their disposal. GI specifications can also contain technical clauses that make it easier to guarantee origin and traceability. For instance, pre-packaged Parma ham must be packed and sliced in the Parma PDO area itself to be marketed under its name of origin (Chabrol & Muchnik, 2011). The new African GIs have taken this problem into account and seek to address it. That is why the specifications for Penja pepper (the name having hitherto been extensively misused) state that it must be packaged in the zone of origin. The group representing the GI has also sought to build up an association of distributors who accept the GI rules.

In short, the question of guaranteeing origin is one that applies everywhere, and nowhere in the world can producers simply count on the law, the courts, and the police to enforce it. They will always have to devise and implement strategies to make it easier to guarantee origin, based on varying combinations of market surveillance, communication with retailers and consumers, technical measures laid down in specifications, and the way the industry is organized. A powerful collective representative body is particularly well-suited to implement such strategies.

6. CONCLUSION

Our observations show that attempting to establish GIs in developing countries is not (at least not always) “an illusive dream” (Kerr, 2006). Here we sum up the conditions and factors that make GIs a good investment.

We show that GIs have been successfully registered in Western and Central Africa despite the lack of significant involvement of the state or of national institutions, in a short time-frame. This was made possible by the particular status of the African Intellectual Property Organization (French acronym OAPI), which is the shared Intellectual Property office of its 17 member states, and by the mandate it received to implement pilot projects in the framework of the PAMPIG project. The fact that national states were not actively involved in the PAMPIG project does not mean it was a non-governmental project. OAPI and FAO are intergovernmental organizations, AFD is a governmental agency, and Cirad is a government-supported research organization.

The PAMPIG funding agreement required a dedicated methodology, which was based on the conclusions of SINER-GI (a research project and network on Geographical Indications supported by the European Community) described in *Linking People, Places and Products, A guide for promoting quality linked to geographical origin and sustainable geographical indications* (Vandecastelaere *et al.*, 2009).

The dedicated methodology enabled the project to go beyond the vague and open-ended provisions of Annex VI of the Bangui Agreement (OAPI, 1999). However, in the future, the establishment of GIs in West and Central Africa may not be obliged to apply this method, but only to respect the provisions laid down by the Bangui agreement, which, like the TRIPS agreement, does not promote the creation of associations nor stipulate collective organization as a prerequisite for GI schemes. In agreement with Mancini (2012), we underline the need for “effective enforcement of GI principles in national legislative contexts” (p. 196). A strong and appropriate GI legislation, with emphasis on producer representation, is an essential tool for developing the organizational capacities of producers in often unfavorable social and political contexts (Bowen, 2009).

The use of the methodology described in this paper led to the selection of three local products, whose stakeholders received support in their application for a GI, and which were actually registered as GIs: Oku white honey, Penja pepper, and Ziama-Macenta coffee. As their registration is very recent, only initial effects have been observed to date. Although economic outcomes are not to be ignored, the most distinctive and promising outcomes involve the effectiveness of collective organization. In our opinion, irrespective of the product's link to its origin, and irrespective of the diversity of the stakeholders, what counts most is (i) a shared perception of the principle

of a GI (protecting the name) as a possible solution to different stakeholder issues; (ii) the stakeholders' social capital and the federative capacity of a leader; and (iii) favorable market characteristics. As Belletti and Marescotti (2011) put it: “products are not a ‘starter’: the triggering factors are always the local actors.”

The results of our study also highlight the interest of regional integration of IP legal frameworks. Regional integration makes GI registration more appealing, as it ensures simultaneous protection in many countries. It also pools responsibilities in a common institution where specialized skills can accrue. This last aspect is of particular interest for GIs, a new and very specific IP right that national institutions have yet to master.

We believe that the time frame of a dedicated GI project is not long enough to allow collective action to develop and consolidate, and such projects often fail to rally sufficient resources to support the supply chain. GI is a legal tool for the valorization of local products. As such, it can be incorporated in agricultural, territorial, or environmental policies, and should be mainstreamed in national and international policies, strategies, and projects. However, one limiting factor is the—as yet—limited availability of the skills required for the inventory, promotion, and protection of local products as GIs. Project monitoring and further field research are needed to identify the conditions required for effective development of GIs in developing countries and to improve methodologies in light of concrete experience. International organizations should consider making available multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary training, taking advantages of lessons drawn from projects, thereby reducing the risk of “institutional mono-cropping” and of the “band aid approach” denounced by Bowen (2009).

Until now, Central and West African states have been spectators or facilitators of the establishment of GIs in their countries. We however do not suggest that governments should be bypassed. Far from it, creating a producer organization aimed at the controlled use of a geographical name is simply impossible if the national government does not (at least) agree. In our case, local and national authorities were kept informed of each step of the project. One overall objective of the project was to enhance the capacities required for the implementation of this dedicated approach. As Seidman (2007) argues on the subject of fair trade, we firmly believe that national governments cannot and should not be replaced. Whether GI certification ultimately and sustainably benefits all producers, including the smallest, is largely determined by national policies, as demonstrated by Besky (2014) in the case of Darjeeling tea.

Central and West African states are now much more aware than they were 10 years ago of the interest of GIs and of the availability of funding. They are likely to be more active in the future. At the end of the certification process, both Cameroon and Guinea expressed interest, and publicly endorsed official recognition of the new GIs, sometimes catalyzing local stakeholders' collective action. As yet, however, only the government of Côte d'Ivoire has allocated a budget for a multi-annual GI program and launched feasibility studies on several products.

Controlling misuse was shown to be arduous for all the GIs under study. States are barely addressing the issue. Producers' organizations are supposed to set up a “local guarantee system” and are in a position to exert internal control, which could subsequently be certified by an external Certification

Authority. However, despite the knowledge and training provided by PAMPIG, outcomes are still uneven at best.

The state remains the only authority in the matter of market clampdowns and its involvement is increasingly necessary as origin food gains in reputation. When consumers agree to pay a higher price for an origin-based food, fraud

and usurpation become more tempting and the need for a clampdown emerges. Although control has been identified as a critical point for the success of GIs worldwide, in countries where the government has only recently established legal recognition and protection of GIs, control is still at risk.

NOTES

1. OAPI includes 17 member states, mainly French-speaking: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Chad, Togo, Comoros (<http://www.oapi.int/index.php/en/aipo/etats-membres>).
2. CIRAD: Centre for International Cooperation on Agricultural Research for Development.
3. CIRAD was in charge of the feasibility study commissioned by PCDA (Projet de compétitivité et développement agricole) project funded by the World Bank (2008–09).

4. 1 Euro = 656 XAF (CFA Franc of Central Africa).
5. There is insufficient space in this article to go into the current situation in Korhogo (in early 2015), 4 years after civil peace returned in 2011.
6. The *West African Catalogue of Plant Species and Varieties* is drawn up by the FAO and the Sahel Institute (INSAH) on the basis of information provided by the 17 member countries of the ECOWAS, the UEMOA, and the CILSS.

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