

NEW TRENDS IN THE SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY REGARDING AGRICULTURE AND FOOD: A COMPARISON BETWEEN FRANCE AND INDIA

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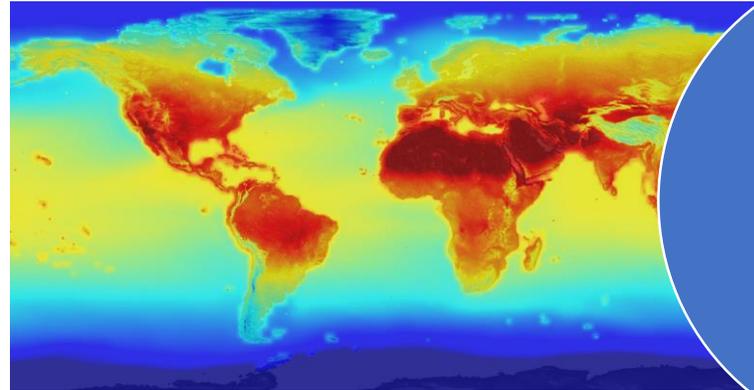
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Food: A three levelled crisis (at least)

Hunger and access to food still a severe issue



Ecological crisis



Agriculturists facing crises everywhere



Question

The question of food access is at the heart of preoccupations from States, NGOs and even business

- UN, national schemes
- Action against hunger, Oxfam, Care
- CSR, Social business

Problem: answers that are too general (Esther Duflo), problem in access (Amartya Sen), too western (Gilbert Rist)

But another form of answers is appearing: small localised social initiatives started by citizens

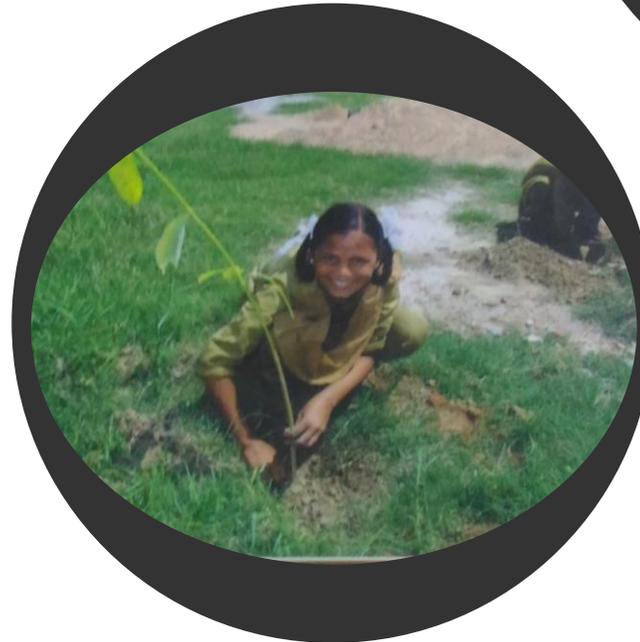
Huge diversity of initiatives

Different juridic forms: cooperatives, associations, foundations, informal collectives...

In many places: from Europe to Asia, from the US to Colombia

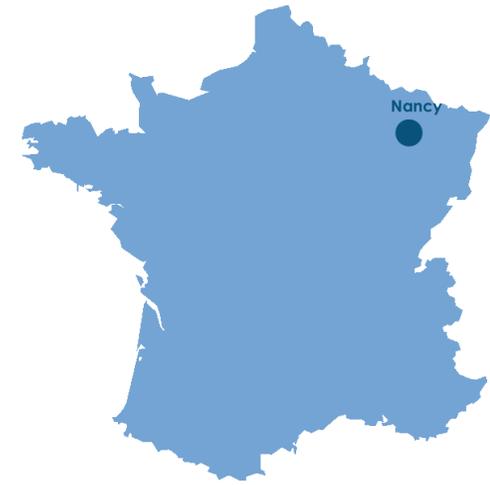
With various activities: shared gardens, self-help groups, CSA,

Could trends be established among them?



My research

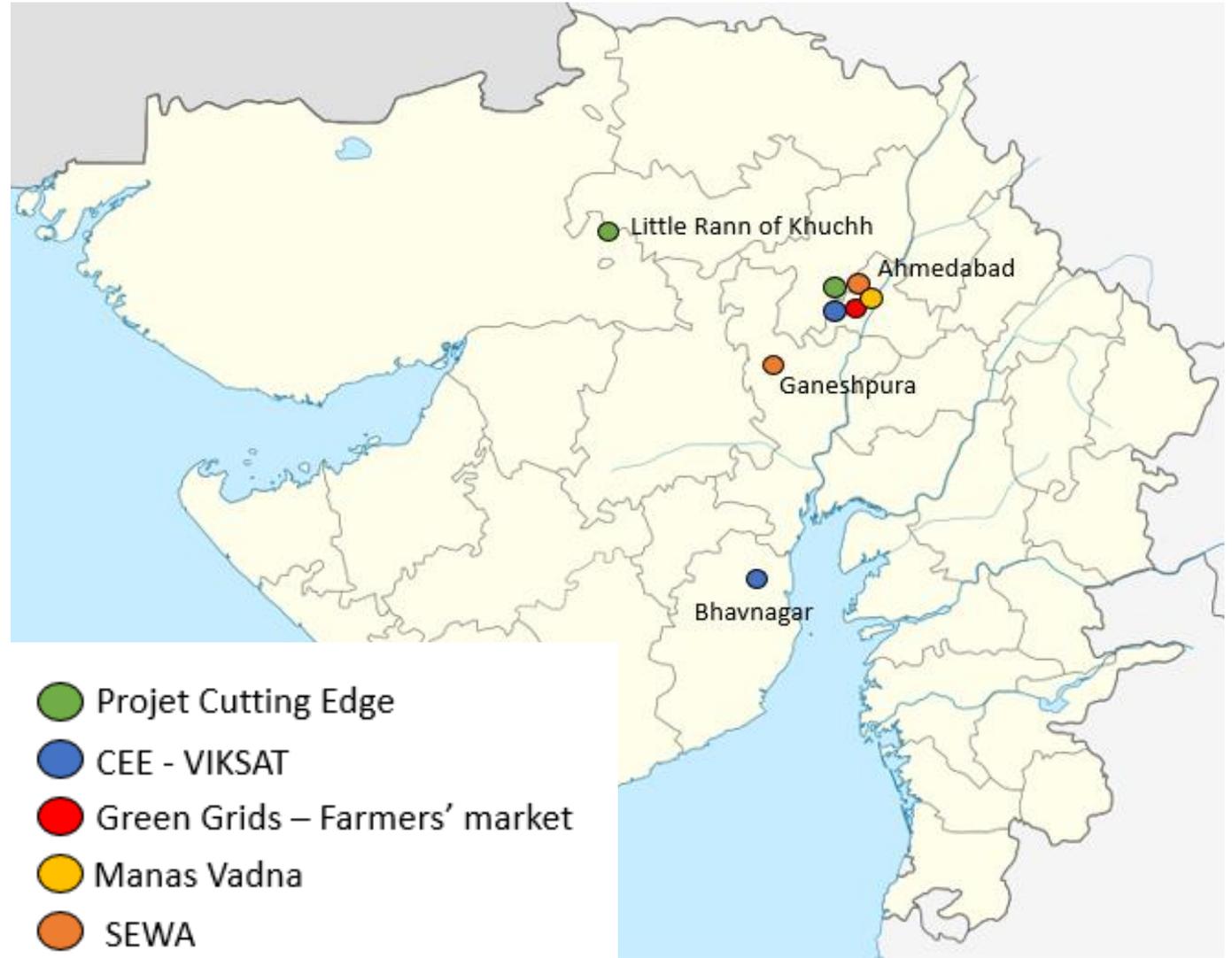
- I study such initiatives in two cities:
 - Nancy, France
 - Ahmedabad, India
- 16 initiatives in Nancy/5 in Ahmedabad
- Observations on site and on documentation throughout 4 years
- Interviews of 43 project founders/prominent members



Initiatives in Nancy



Initiatives in Ahmedabad and Gujarat



Findings

- Many differences: form of action, conception of ecology/solidarity/political, socio-economic status of the audience/members
- But 3 answers/justifications (Boltanski) are present in every one of the 43 interviews (except for two interviewees, more on that later)
 - Desire for eating locally grown food
 - No need and even rejection of terms relating to innovation/newness
 - Aim is to generalise the action



« What we eat we don't grow, what we grow we don't eat »

Desire for short food circuits

Wish to cut the middleman, seen as evil everywhere

Justification in terms of health/ecology/social



« We do nothing new »

- Reluctance for terms like « innovation »
- Referral to a tradition/a better past
- Rejection of the agriculture revolution



« We want to make everybody change »

- Small initiatives with big impact as an ambition: climate change, social inclusion, subverting capitalism
- Desire for attraction/education/change
- Politics at an another level

Limitations

- 2 interviewees refer to the notion of innovation
- Interviews only with directors/founders of initiatives: what would be the opinion of average members/consumers/producers?
- Both countries are infused with ideologies pertaining with localised social production (Gandhi/Proudhon): would the answers be the same in anglo-saxon/African/other Asian countries?
- Aren't those goals too vague and general to allow practices/evaluations/regulation?

Thank you for
your
attention

