

Sustainable and Profitable Seed Systems by Farmers' Organisations in Africa

Webinar Summary

- On April 29, 2025, the Pan-African Farmers' Organisation (PAFO) and AgriCord co-hosted a webinar within the context of the **Farmers Organisations Led Research & Innovation in Agroecology (FORI)** programme.
- The objective of FORI is to foster a transition towards resilient, productive and sustainable agroecological agri-food systems through farmer-led research and innovation.
- The AgriCord alliance in collaboration with the PAFO and Regional Farmers' Organisations (RFOs) is implementing this action with the financial support of the European Commission (EC) and Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).



Showcasing Farmer-Led Seed System Models

- Three successful models from different regions of the African continent were presented:
 - **Les Jardins Pour Tous - Benin**
 - **MVIWAARUSHA - Tanzania**
 - **Réseau SOA - Madagascar**
- A panel discussion featuring researchers from CIRAD, World Vegetable Center, and Alliance of Biodiversity International & CIAT



Les Jardins Pour Tous - Benin

Presented by Hyacinthe EKE, Founder & Manager



- A **private seed company** established in 2015 in Benin, operating as an accredited entity in the **production and distribution of vegetable seeds and seedlings**.
- The company also **operates as an aggregator**, enhancing its production capacity through **partnerships** with individual seed producers, two cooperatives, and three private enterprises.
- **These partners produce certified seeds based on agreed-upon crop varieties**, which are then collected, processed, stored, and marketed by the company.
- **Producers purchase certified seeds directly from the company's distribution centre**. Seeds are also distributed through affiliated cooperatives.
- **The company expanded its portfolio** from 03 varieties in 2015 to 33 varieties in 2025.



MVIWAARUSHA - Tanzania

Presented by Damian James SULUMO, Programme Director



- **MVIWAARUSHA is a farmers' organisation** in the Arusha region with 15,459 members and operates a decentralised, farmer-led seed system supported by 14 community seed banks.
- **Focused on agrobiodiversity and resilience**, their model integrates agroecology, microfinance, and **strong advocacy for legal recognition of Farmer-Managed Seed Systems (FMSS)**.
- **Farmers are organized into village groups for seed production**, harvesting, and storage. These groups receive training in seed selection, agroecological methods, and quality assurance.
- **Selected farmers multiply resilient, traditional seed varieties**, supported by MVIWAARUSHA's technical and organizational resources.
- **Due to restrictions on direct sales of farmer-managed seeds** in Tanzania, distribution methods include:
 - Sale as “grain”
 - Group to group exchange
 - Community seed fairs
 - Marketing through local agroecological markets.



Réseau SOA - Madagascar

Presented by Gérard Andriamandimby, Director



- Réseau SOA is a **union of farmers' organisations** in Madagascar with 34 member organisations.
- It engages on **issues related to seeds**, climate change, and land management.
- The union employs a **mixed system blending formal certification with decentralized, grassroots-led production**. Supporting seed production of key staple crops such as rice and maize.
- Réseau SOA provides the following **key services for its seed producer members**:
 - Technical training in entrepreneurship
 - Access to market
 - Facilitation to access to finance
 - Access to relevant management tools.



Insights from the panel

- **Biodiversity and Agroecological Transition**

“If you store all the genetic material in deep freezers, you stop its evolution. But when farmers select seeds year after year, they adapt to climate change. This evolution is key.”

Dr Rémi Kahane, CIRAD

- **Supporting All Seed System**

“We must stop marginalizing local seed systems and ensure regulatory frameworks recognize their essential role in providing seed to farmers.” **Lys Aglinglo** - World Vegetable Center

- **Enabling Environment and Farmers' Rights**

“The majority of seeds used in Africa, up to 80 or even 100% in some cases, are from farmer-managed systems. We need policies that recognize and support this reality.”

Dr Gloria Otieno, Alliance of Bioversity International & CIAT



What's Next? A Call To Action

- Scale up and replicate successful models
- Invest in hybrid seed systems blending formal and community-based systems
- Strengthen the capacities of farmer organizations to provide technical and economic services to their farmer members
- Foster policy environments that empower smallholders
- Place farmer organisations at the heart of Africa's seed and food systems.



Join us



Thank you to all speakers, partners & participants.

📖 **Full summary on www.agricord.org**

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