

MAY 2025



GLOBAL ANNUAL REPORT 2024

**ONE
ALLIANCE
13 AGRI-
AGENCIES**



Image: PFO (2024), Pacific Breadfruit Project (FORI)



Executive Summary

- **This document** is AgriCord's Annual Report 2024, presenting the joint activities of the global alliance of agri-agencies strengthening farmers' organisations (FOs) in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific through peer-to-peer support, capacity building, and sustainable agriculture initiatives.
- **AgriCord's programme portfolio** continues to evolve, with six active multi-country programmes in 2024, new partnerships launched (e.g., with AECID in the Maghreb), and successful donor evaluations confirming increased impact, efficiency, and alignment with FO priorities.
- **Knowledge management** advanced significantly, expanding peer learning, capitalisation of thematic insights (e.g. resilience, agroecology, access to finance), and multi-language outreach through webinars, newsletters, and communities of practice.
- **AgriCord marked the year with strong global engagement**, including a new strategic partnership with the World Farmers' Organisation, a well-attended General Assembly in Brazil, and active contributions to high-level events such as COP29, the Africa Food Systems Forum, and the International Agrobiodiversity Conference.
- **The report features diverse stories** from our joint programmes that stand exemplary for the wider work of the alliance in the joint programme and beyond.
- **We warmly thank our financial and technical partners**, whose ongoing support enables us to transform challenges into opportunities and deliver lasting impact for farmers and producers around the world.

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FOREWORD

In 2024, the AgriCord alliance continued its mission to create added value in addressing global challenges, particularly those impacting the agricultural sector. The intensification of climate change effects—manifested through changing weather patterns, extreme events, and prolonged droughts—has adversely affected agricultural productivity. Our programmes remained steadfast in supporting farmers and their organisations to adapt to and mitigate these impacts. Promoting sustainable agricultural practices, such as agroecology, is central to our efforts to prevent agrobiodiversity loss and improve soil health.

Farmers and their organisations (FOs) are pivotal in driving the necessary transformation of our food systems. Yet, access to finance for agricultural production and investment remains a significant hurdle. In 2024, facilitating access to finance was again a core focus of our programmes. We also worked closely with our partners to strengthen the capacities of farmers' organisations in advocacy and lobbying, ensuring that farmers have a voice in securing investments in rural infrastructure and in farmer-led research for affordable, adaptable innovation.

Our alliance operates through a network of 13 agri-agencies, collaborating with over 400 farmers' organisations across countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Agriterra joined the alliance in January 2024 as most recent member agri-agency. Together, we implement a suite of programmes designed to strengthen farmers' organisations and promote sustainable agricultural practices:

- Farmers' Organisations for Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (FO4ACP): aiming to increase incomes and improve livelihoods, food and nutrition security, and safety of organised family farmers by strengthening regional, national, and local FOs.
- Farmers' Organisations for Asia (FO4A): focusing on improving technical and economic services along value chains, particularly for youth and women, and strengthening the capacities of FOs to influence business environments.

- Services et Plaidoyer des Organisations Paysannes (SEPOP): contributing to the sustainable development of the agricultural sector by improving the technical, financial, and commercial capacities of family farms by strengthening of FOs.
- Farmer-led Research and Innovation on agroecology (FO-RI): supporting the transition towards resilient, productive, and sustainable agroecological agri-food systems through farmer-led innovation and research.
- Farmers' Organisations for Food Systems (FO4FS): focusing on food system transformation in Africa.
- Forest and Farm Facility: A partnership between FAO, IIED, IUCN and AgriCord, hosted by FAO/Rome. The Forest and Farm Facility provides direct financial support and technical assistance to strengthen forest and farm producer organizations representing smallholders, rural women's groups, local communities and indigenous peoples' institutions.
- CEA-First -Consortium Europe-Africa for Research and Innovation on Food Systems Transformation: is a bicontinental effort put together to operationalise the International Research Consortium (IRC) as a long-term platform on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) in line with the FNSSA Roadmap of the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD).

In 2024, AgriCord-managed programmes reached over three million members by supporting their farmers' organisations, while benefiting over 300,000 farmers directly through our programme activities.

Our heartfelt thanks also to all our financial and technical partners who are too many to be named here but without whom our work would not be possible. While challenges persist, we believe that together, we can transform them into opportunities—opportunities to learn, to grow, and to reshape agriculture for a more sustainable future.

Wishing you an inspiring read,

Katja Vuori
CEO, AgriCord



WHO WE ARE

AgriCord was founded in 2002 as a global alliance of agri-agencies. Today, we have 13 agri-agency members, mandated by farmers' organisations from countries in Africa, Asia, Canada, Europe, and Latin America.

The mission of AgriCord is to promote and strengthen farmers' organisations and cooperatives of family farmers through peer-to-peer approach, within a long-term partnership.

AgriCord mobilizes and manages financial support from governments, donors, and development organizations, and channels it to farmers' organizations in the Global South. AgriCord acts as a broker between financial and implementing partners with a role to manage complex programmes, coordinate knowledge co-creation, support FOs' advocacy efforts.

The agri-agencies are currently active in 53 countries with 65 country offices. Currently, AgriCord manages 6 programmes in the Caribbean, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia and the Pacific Islands. All these programs are co-implemented by farmers' organisations at sub-national, national, regional and continental level and the agri-agencies and where pertinent, supported by research institutes, private sector actors and other technical partners.

The programmes are financed by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), European Commission (EC),

and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Forest and Farm Facility (FFF/FAO).

Agri-agencies provide advisory services and technical support for FOs to:

- Develop organisational and managerial capacities
- Strengthen and scale up technical and economical services to farmer members
- Promote sustainable production systems – including ie. agroecology, agroforestry, regenerative agriculture
- Increase farmers' and FOs' climate adaptation and mitigation awareness and capacities
- Enhance staff, leaders' and members' competencies on lobby and advocacy
- Formulate and implement strategies on gender and youth inclusion
- Develop farmers' organisations competencies in leading research and innovation in collaboration with research and private sector

Overall, AgriCord's work contributes to food systems transformation, climate resilience, youth and gender inclusion, and the broader SDGs (especially SDG 1, 2, 5, 8, 13, and 17).

OUR MEMBERS



Acodea
Agencia de Cooperación al
Desarrollo de la Agricultura
Spain



AgriTerra
Netherlands



Afdi
Agriculteurs Français et
Développement International
France



AHA
Andreas Hermes Akademie
Germany



AsiaDHRRRA
Asian Partnership for the Development
of Human Resources in Rural Areas
Asia (Manila, Philippines)



Asprodeb
Association Sénégalaise pour la
promotion du développement à la base
Senegal



CSA
Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires
Belgium



Cresol AA
Brazil



Fert
France



FFD
Food and Forest Development
Finland



Trias
Belgium



UPADI
Union des producteurs agricoles -
Développement Internationale
Canada



We Effect
Sweden

KEY FIGURES & EVOLUTION 2024

OUR FINANCIAL PARTNERS

9 Staff (3 new members in 2024)

📍 Brussels, Belgium

1 Long-term consultant

📍 Benin

6 Multi-country programmes in 2024

EU, OACPS, AFD, GIZ

1 Active partnership under FFF/FAO

New letter of agreement signed for 2025 implementation

NEW Spanish funding (AECID) for Maghreb region unlocked

Implementation started in 2025

NEW Start of FO4IMPACT design process

Co-design with EU-IFAD, PAFO & RFOs for a multi-annual programme in Africa and Asia

**EUR
8.67
MIO**

In funds disbursed

to the agri-agencies and partners across programmes in 2024

4 Positive EU-IFAD assessments for FO4- sub-programmes

The final report summarized:

AgriCord maintained a worldwide presence through the affiliated agri-agencies (AAs), operating across all continents. The mission observed significant enhancement of AgriCord's activities over the past years, with strong performances at AAs level, maturation of activities, and overall improved and efficient coordination at AgriCord secretariat level, including ongoing improvement in M&E systems. This led to an efficient and impactful use of the funds allocated to AAs (27% of the overall FO4 Programmes budgets). AgriCord provided effective technical assistance to many FOs from local to regional levels across all continents, which could be instrumental in upcoming phases.

IFAD (2024, p.22) FO4Programmes' Evaluation: Summary Global Report.



The European Union (EU)



The Organisation for African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)



The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)



The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)



The French Development Agency (AFD)



The German Development Cooperation (GIZ)



The Belgian Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGD)



the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)

PROGRAMMES (1/2)

A DIVERSE PORTFOLIO

In 2024, AgriCord managed a diverse portfolio of programmes and participated in several key initiatives, including the Forest and Farm Facility and CEA-First. The F04 programmes entered their final year of implementation. The GIZ-financed FOFS programme launched its activities in Africa, and the EU-funded FORI programme was in full swing, marked by a first stocktaking exercise at the end of the year.

Over the past years, our programme portfolio has evolved. We expanded our network of financial partners and ventured into new thematic areas—such as action research under FORI—while continuing to prioritize institutional strengthening and service development. Despite growing competition for donor funding, we are confident that with our strong partnerships and innovative programming, we can convince donors.



PROGRAMMES (2/2)

CONTINUING PARTNERSHIP

Over the past years, AgriCord implemented four multi-annual programmes from the “FO4-” family in South-East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and South America, all administered by IFAD.

Two successor programmes are in the making with first consultation meetings taking place in late 2024.

CLOSING

IFAD-MANAGED 4 PROGRAMMES



**FO-Services
Business Environment
Institutional Strengthening**



**Africa - Caribbean -
Asia - Latin America**



EUR 18 million



**Projects finished,
grants close in 2025**



DESIGN

IFAD-MANAGED 2 PROGRAMMES



**FO-Services (incl. AE)
Advocacy
Institutional Strengthening**



Africa - Asia



EUR ?? million



Start 2026



AECID

1 PROGRAMME



**FO-Services
VC development
Youth & Women**



Maghreb



EUR 500 K



Started in 2025



NEW PARTNERSHIPS

In 2024, AgriCord signed a contract for the first time with the Spanish development agency AECID. The new programme “Masar Ahora” started implementation in 2025. For the Alliance, it is the first programme in the Maghreb region and hopefully only the start of a long-term partnership between AgriCord and AECID.

“Today we farm with pride”

THE STORY OF RIMNAGDO COMPAORE AND HER GROWING COOPERATIVE

In Zitenga, located in the Plateau-Central region of Burkina Faso, Rimnagdo COMPAORE, 53 years old, is more than a farmer — she is a community leader and a visionary woman. For the past four years, she has been a member — and is now the president — of the Nèb là boubbou cooperative in Nambèguian. Her cooperative has benefitted from the support of FO4ACP Africa project of the national farmers' organisation CPF and accompanied by the French agri-agency Afdi. Her commitment has transformed not only her own life but also the lives of dozens of other women and young people in her village.

On her farm, she grows onions on 300 m² during the dry season, followed by sorrel. In the rainy season, she cultivates millet, sorghum, beans, and okra across over one hectare. Despite limited means, she manages to produce up to 12 sacks of 100 kg of onions, 20 carts of sorghum, and several sacks of cereals and vegetables.

But the environmental context is tough: rain is scarce, the soil is not very fertile, and agricultural inputs are often expensive. "We do what we can with what we have," she says, fully aware that these constraints limit productivity.

That's where the cooperative comes in.

“The farmers’ organization opens many doors for us,” she explains.

“Thanks to it, we receive training, seeds, fertilizers — sometimes even organic manure — and above all, technical support on agroecological practices.”



One recent breakthrough was the introduction of sales by the kilogram, which increases the income of onion producers.

As president of her local group, Rimnagdo has witnessed real change. “Before, it was hard to convince women to work together. Now, many have joined us. Young people are also getting involved, and the cultivated land has doubled in just a few years.” As a result, the cooperative's governance has become more dynamic, inclusive, and effective. But she doesn't plan to stop there. Together with her cooperative members, she dreams of building a shop to sell agroecological onions and setting up a training center in her village to share their knowledge with other farmers.

“If each of us had enough organic fertilizer, I believe we could produce much more and flood the market with quality onions,” she says with determination. Through her leadership and perseverance, Rimnagdo is a living example of how rural women, with a bit of support and a lot of courage, can be key players in agroecological transition and local development.



PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

REGULAR RESPONSIBILITIES

The coordination and oversight of our multi-annual programme entail a significant volume of reporting and operational responsibilities. In 2024 alone, our team managed and **processed over 400 individual reports, submitted on a biannual basis**. These include comprehensive technical and financial reports, indicator updates, detailed reference lists, and impact stories that capture qualitative change on the ground.

Each implementing organisation is required to undergo **external audits**, and we play an active role in facilitating and supporting the audit process across all projects. This ensures transparency, accountability, and compliance with donor requirements.

Beyond reporting and auditing, we provide **continuous technical backstopping** to our partners to help maintain the quality and consistency of implementation. We also organise regular information sessions and **targeted risk management** support to help identify challenges early and proactively respond to potential risks.

EVALUATIONS 2024

In addition to routine programme oversight, 2024 saw the implementation of several major external evaluations. From January to June, the FO4ACP, FO4LA, and FO4A programmes underwent a **comprehensive evaluation process** led by IFAD and the EU. This required extensive coordination, including timely provision of documentation and data, active participation in virtual and in-person missions, and engagement in multiple workshops and consultation sessions.

Simultaneously, a **stocktaking exercise** was conducted for the FORI programme, contributing to internal learning and strategic planning.

These evaluations not only ensured compliance with donor requirements but also provided valuable feedback for programme improvement and future design. **The evaluations were overall positive and confirmed a strong trajectory of development and relevance across the programmes.**

IMPROVING

Our team is committed and constantly working to improve and to adopt good practices. In 2024, AgriCord finance team updated their competences by focusing on best anti-fraud practices in the NGO sector. An anti-fraud policy including a whistleblower mechanism was approved by the AgriCord Board.

Despite the high workload, our team remains committed to ensuring effective coordination and strong programme delivery, maintaining both rigorous standards and a collaborative spirit with our partners throughout the year.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (1/2)

Knowledge management (KM) at AgriCord is not just about data or documents—it's about fostering learning, amplifying voices, and supporting farmer organisations to thrive. Over the past three years, our approach to KM has significantly evolved—from laying the groundwork for communication and data infrastructure in 2023, to scaling thematic knowledge outputs and partnerships in 2024, and setting ambitious collaborative goals for 2025.

2023 - FOUNDATIONS

We started in 2023 by solidifying key information channels and systems. We prioritised:

- Website and SharePoint maintenance for consistent knowledge sharing and internal coordination.
- Biannual internal newsletters to keep our agri-agency members informed and engaged.
- Crossroads external newsletters to share updates with a wider community of stakeholders.
- Farmer testimonies integrated into reporting, offering direct insight from the field.

These efforts provided a necessary base for the more ambitious content generation and engagement activities that followed.

2024 - SCALING CAPITALISATION AND OUTREACH

The year 2024 marked a leap in both the volume and depth of our KM activities:

1. CAPITALISATION AND THEMATIC LEARNING

We launched and deepened several capitalisation processes, notably:

SEPOP Capitalisation: With thematic leadership from Fert, Afdi, FFD, we produced multiple webinars, guides, and synthesis documents focused on resilience, FO leadership, and access to finance.

FORI Capitalisation: Captured lessons from 13 action research projects via multi-language webinar sessions and synthesis outputs. These informed both internal learnings and external presentations, including the DeSIRA Connect Days.

FFF Access to Finance Webinars: Collaborated with FAO, IIED, TUNADO, KENAFF, and Acodea to share successful finance mechanisms, engaging audiences across language regions.

2. STRENGTHENING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

We supported structured peer learning:

Gender Working Group: Developed a comprehensive gender tool database and launched a peer-learning cycle across agri-agencies.

Building Resilience (BR) Community of Practice: Regional events brought together partners to reflect and adapt toolkit implementation based on field experiences.

3. COMMUNICATIONS AND VISIBILITY

The KM team amplified outreach through:

Over **100 social media** posts, primarily on LinkedIn, sharing thematic insights and project milestones.

Crossroads newsletters in English, French, and Spanish—highlighting programme successes, lessons, and innovations.

Public forums and KM seminars, like the FO4 Caribbean event, showcasing impact stories, fostering policy dialogue, and catalysing new partnerships.

Cresol's Knowledge Route

STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES IN SUPPORT OF COOPERATIVES



As part of its *Knowledge Route* training programme, Cresol has launched an ambitious initiative aimed at strengthening the skills of cooperative employees and members in Ecuador. This structured program is delivered through a digital learning platform offering 15 tailored modules designed to develop a broad range of technical, organisational, and interpersonal skills essential to effective cooperative management.

Among the key topics covered are business management, financial planning, emotional intelligence, negotiation strategies, communication, people management, cooperative principles, and sustainable and rural finance. This training pathway enables participants to develop targeted skills aligned with the actual needs of cooperatives and the specific roles within them.

What sets this program apart is its innovative educational approach. By organising learning around clearly defined “competency tracks” tailored to different positions, the program provides participants with a clear vision of their learning journey, fostering greater ownership of the content. Certification upon completion validates participants’

achievements, boosting motivation and professional recognition.

Key Results of the Program (2024):

- 1,450 total participants
- 1,152 graduates (a completion rate of nearly 80%)
- 588 male graduates
- 564 female graduates
- 365 youth graduates (aged 15–35)

These results demonstrate not only the programme’s effectiveness, but also its inclusive nature, with impressive gender parity and strong youth participation (key for ensuring generational continuity in cooperatives).

Beyond individual skills development, the *Knowledge Route* has contributed to a deeper transformation of cooperative organisational culture. By integrating social and environmental themes, the program promotes a more resilient and sustainable cooperative model, aligned with today’s challenges. The collective learning dynamic has also enhanced leadership, teamwork, and communication capacities within organisations.



KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (2/2)

2025 - DEEPENING COLLABORATIONS

Looking ahead, 2025 is poised to deepen our collaborative work:

- **PAFO-AgriCord Webinar Series:** A five-part series on farmer seed systems in Africa, building on the success of the 2024 pilot, with input from research partners such as FARA.
- **FFF Finance Dialogues:** Planned follow-ups to the 2024 webinars, aligned with global platforms such as the COP.
- **Launch of SharePoint for Programme Commission and Working Groups:** Creating a space for real-time collaboration, knowledge exchange, and institutional memory across the alliance.
- **Expanded internal and external newsletters:** Quarterly editions will enhance member alignment and stakeholder outreach.

LESSONS AND REFLECTIONS

The past year reaffirmed several critical insights:

- **Strategic partnerships elevate knowledge work:** Collaborations with PAFO, FARA, FAO, IIED and others brought depth, credibility, and new perspectives.
- **Webinars are more than events**—they're part of learning trajectories: With thoughtful design, curation and good moderation, these sessions are driving meaningful knowledge exchange. We observed they are an easy way for audiences to approach other organizations and that the resulting and disseminated materials engage audiences after for a longer period.
- **Data and stories go hand in hand:** From farmer testimonies to impact fact sheets, blending qualitative and quantitative insights is key to communicating results effectively.

RESOURCES

Summaries, videos, studies and more!

Find resources on our website:
www.agricord.org/en/resources



GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024

In June 2024, AgriCord held its General Assembly in Francisco Beltrão, Paraná, Brazil, generously hosted by **our member Cresol AA** and their mandating organisation. The event brought together agri-agencies, international partners, and local stakeholders for a dynamic week of exchange, learning, and governance. A highlight of the week was the thematic seminar titled *“Building Innovation in Agriculture and Finance for a Sustainable*

Tomorrow”, which focused on access to finance as a key lever for FO resilience and rural development. The General Assembly also marked a leadership transition, with **Pieter Verhelst from Boerenbond elected as the new AgriCord president, succeeding Marcel Groleau of UPA**. A heartfelt thanks to Marcel for his calm stewardship of the alliance during transitional times!



Images: Le Bulletin, Boerenbond



Image: Cresol (2024)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & EVENT PARTICIPATION 2024

In 2024, AgriCord deepened its global engagement through the development of new strategic partnerships and active participation in major international events. These efforts have not only elevated the visibility of the alliance but also helped shape key discussions on sustainable agriculture, farmer-led innovation, and inclusive rural development.



WORLD FARMERS' ORGANISATION

One of the year's highlights was the announcement of a strategic partnership between AgriCord and the World Farmers' Organisation (WFO). This collaboration underscores a shared commitment to empowering farmers' organisations (FOs) globally.



Image: Cresol (2024)

"For AgriCord, as a specialized alliance providing technical expertise to farmers' organizations and their businesses in a peer-to-peer approach, counting the World Farmers' Organisation among our strategic partners is an important milestone..."

– Marianne Streel

Vice-President of the AgriCord Alliance, President of Fédération Wallonne de l'Agriculture at the time

"Our new partnership with AgriCord marks the beginning of a joint action to strengthen the agency of farmers' organisations worldwide..."

– Arnold Puech d'Alissac

President, World Farmers' Organisation

AGRICORD ON THE GLOBAL STAGE



Image: Clim-Eat (2024)

Side Event co-hosted by AgriCord, Clim-Eat, SACAU, Wageningen University & Research, Government of the Netherlands, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil

- World Farmers' Organisation General Assembly (Rome)
- IFAD Farmers' Forum (Rome)
- Annual Meeting of the World Rural Forum (Basque Country)
- Africa Food Systems Forum (Kigali)
- World Food Forum (FAO, Rome)
- SPAC 2024 and DeSIRA Connect Days (Kigali), where FORI projects from Tanzania (TTGAU, We Effect) presented results
- Side Event at AU-EU Ministerial Meeting (Rome) with PAFO
- International Conference on Agrobiodiversity (Nepal), co-organised with FAO, IIED, and IUCN under FFF. AgriCord coordinated key sessions, including FORI case study from Mali on seed system innovations.
- Climate COP 29 (Baku) – Two side events
- Biodiversity COP 16 (Cali) – Two side events
- AgriCord is part of GFAiR's collective action on agroecology, and serves on its steering committee
- We are member of the Africa-Europe Foundation Agri-food Strategy Group

REGIONAL AND PROGRAMME EVENTS

- F04ACP Caribbean Capitalisation Event (December, Dominican Republic)
- Regional Consultations with FOs (December) to prepare the next F04 programme cycle
- AsiaDHRRA Anniversary Week (November, Hanoi), where AgriCord co-organised the Farmers' Forum
- FIFATA's 35th Anniversary (September, Madagascar) – A significant milestone for our partners in Madagascar
- Agri-Enterprise Assessment Tool Development with AFA (April, Bangkok)
- IFAD Workshop on Theory of Change and Logical Frameworks (June, Manila)



Image: Trias (2024), Raldi Bonilla

A member of the FO Asoanor in the Dominican Republic. The joint project between Trias, Acodea and CLAC supported FOs to empower women and youth, develop entrepreneurial capacities, and to produce bankable business plans.

The project was part of F04ACP, funded by the EU, OACPS and administered by IFAD.

THE ALLIANCE'S IMPACT

In 2024, our alliance made measurable strides across all programme areas, as evidenced by the quantifiable results captured in our logical frameworks. These figures reflect solid progress—improved yields, strengthened farmer organizations, expanded market access—but the true impact of our work comes to life through the stories behind the numbers. Whether it's a young cooperative leader transforming her community, a climate-smart innovation reshaping farming practices, or a new alliance opening doors to long-term sustainability, these stories reveal the real change our programmes catalyze. They speak to the resilience, leadership, and creativity of the farmers and organizations we support—proof that our collective effort is not only effective but deeply meaningful.

KEY PROGRAMME FIGURES 2024



317,417 Direct farmer beneficiaries

3,557,339 Members in supported FOs

4,297 Women and youth in leadership positions

Euro
23,259,019 and **256,862**
tons of
marketed goods



434 FOs with increased capacities

418 Peer-to-peer events

Fit for the Future

HOW SEED PRODUCER FRÉDÉRIC XAVIER RAKOTONIRINA AND HIS FARMERS' ORGANIZATION IN MADAGASCAR ARE GETTING READY FOR THE FUTURE



In Tanjombita, in the Haute Matsiatra region of Madagascar, Frédéric Xavier RAKOTONIRINA, 56 years old, cultivates more than just crops — he nurtures a vision. For nearly 20 years, he has been a member of the SOAMANDIMBY farmers' group, affiliated with the regional farmers' organization CRAM, which is dedicated to the production of quality seeds.

“Since I’ve been working with CRAM, the way I produce has completely changed. Thanks to the advice, training, and access to foundation seeds, I now produce certified seeds that are far more valuable than rice grown for consumption.”

On his family farm, Frédéric grows:

- 50 ares (0.5 hectares) of irrigated rice for certified seeds, yielding 1.6 tons per year,
- 100 kg of vegetable seeds (carrot, zucchini, Chinese cabbage, and peas),
- 10 ares of year-round irrigated market gardening (tomatoes, green beans, zucchini, etc.) with a weekly yield of 500 kg,
- He also fatten 3 pigs every 4 months and works with 5 zebus for animal traction.

Married, father of 5 and grandfather of 9, Frédéric says that while his income is tight and doesn't allow for savings, he fights every day to improve his family's livelihood, in a climate that is increasingly unpredictable.

“Climate change, drought, cyclones... all of it has reduced our yields. Some rice fields couldn't even be planted. But I decided not to give up.”

Frédéric has served as president of his local group for 4 years and has been treasurer of CRAM for 12 years. He is happy that women and youth are now actively involved at all levels of governance. “Today, two out of five members of our board are women.

And each local group elects a young person and a woman to represent them at the General Assembly. That's our way of preparing for the future.”

Frédéric has a clear vision for future proofing his family farming business.

“In the face of risks, I want to diversify my farm: raise laying hens for the local market, expand my vegetable production, and continue fattening pigs. But I'll never give up seed production — without quality seeds, there's no good harvest.”

The CRAM plays a central role in improving its members seed growing businesses. It provides technical training on seed legislation, support for certification, including coverage of inspection and testing costs, advance payments to secure seed production, farm management support as well as strategic guidance, partnership building, and market access.

“Thanks to the FO4ACP project, and the partnership with the French agri-agency Afdi, CRAM has grown stronger and gained visibility. We now attend fairs, respond to tenders, and we have started to think seriously about our sustainability with a real business plan.”



Empowering Women and Youth

MOCAF INNOVATION IN INDONESIA



In the heart of Central Java, Indonesia, the women-led cooperative KOKAMA is reshaping its future in the face of climate adversity and social challenges. With support from the “UPSCALE” Project — implemented in collaboration with HTNM, UPA DI, and Trias—the cooperative has turned vulnerability into resilience, especially for women and youth in cassava-producing communities.

Cassava, the core ingredient for MOCAF (Modified Cassava Flour), has long been central to KOKAMA’s economy. However, prolonged El Niño conditions from 2023 to early 2024 severely affected harvests in Jatiporo sub-district, reducing cassava supply by 70%. This threatened not only food production but the livelihoods of many women who rely on cassava processing for income.

Yet, amid these setbacks, KOKAMA emerged stronger. One of the most transformative outcomes was the rapid expansion of MOCAF production. What began with just a few women in five villages evolved into a network of 140 women across 15 villages actively engaged in value-added MOCAF production. Through training, these women learned to develop new food products—growing their product line from five to over 60 items. This innovation was supported by the UPSCALE project and culminated in the launch of KOKAMA’s MOCAF marketing service, boosting both economic participation and member engagement.

Beyond production, the project ignited leadership and confidence among KOKAMA’s women and youth. Female leaders now facilitate meetings with ease and engage confidently in public forums. Youth membership tripled—from 8 to 24—thanks to tailored scheduling that accommodated school and work obligations. Training in organizational

development, gender awareness, and facilitation created a fertile ground for inclusive leadership, and services like childcare during sessions made participation more accessible for mothers. KOKAMA’s internal governance also saw a leap forward. A new financial system ensures transparent operations, and leadership teams now use their improved skills to guide the organization with clarity. The cooperative has gained recognition locally and regionally—invited to policy discussions and acknowledged as a MOCAF Development Centre for Central Java.

Partnerships and peer exchanges were pivotal. A knowledge-sharing agreement with KSPS Bulukumba emerged from a peer-to-peer learning trip in Sulawesi, reinforcing MOCAF know-how and collective marketing strategies. Joint planning with HTNM strengthened project execution, and the co-development of a business plan positioned KOKAMA for sustainable growth.

Looking ahead, KOKAMA sees the need to involve men more deeply in gender equality efforts, enhance its financial services, and better align production with market opportunities. But its progress is undeniable.

As Mrs. Sartini Aisah, a cooperative member, reflects, “We are more confident now. We understand our value and can stand alongside others—not behind them.”

KOKAMA’s development is a testament to what happens when women and youth are not just included, but empowered.

BUILDING RESILIENCE TOOLKIT

AgriCord
Building Resilience
Toolkit



AgriCord's Building Resilience (BR) Toolkit, developed with FO4ACP co-financing, supports farmers' organizations (FOs) and their farmer members in adapting to the impacts of climate change and developing bankable adaptation plans. The toolkit has been in use since 2020 and consists of two parts:

BR-I

Focuses on climate **risk analysis** at farm level, accompanying farmers identify vulnerabilities and prioritize adaptation measures through a participatory approach.

BR-II

Focuses on **adaptation** to identified risks at FO level. BR II is currently being tested in Tanzania, Madagascar, Burkina Faso, Central Africa, and the Philippines.

The toolkit is rolled out globally in collaboration with Forest and Farm Facility/FAO of which AgriCord is one of the partners together with IIED, IUCN and FAO. To this date over 300 BR-I facilitators within FO staff are trained, and 2700 farmers in 14 countries have participated in BR-I climate adaptation priority consultations. These farmers come from FOs representing 600.000 members.

According to the latest available figures, the participants for Training-of-Trainers on the methodology came from 38 different countries.



+300 Facilitators were trained, and

2700 Farmers in

14 countries participated in BR-I.

Participating FOs count

600.000 members.

“I farm smarter now”

HOW MARTHA WAYIKU IS TURNING CLIMATE STRUGGLES INTO SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

In the heart of Laikipia West, Kenya, 47-year-old Martha Wayiku surveys her 4.5-acre farm with a renewed sense of confidence. Farming used to be straightforward, she recalls. “The rains came when we needed them. Even with little fertilizer or pesticide, the land gave us good yields,” she says. But over time, the rhythm changed. Rain became scarce, pests more stubborn, and what once flourished began to wither.

When prolonged droughts hit her region, Martha tried to adapt—adding fertilizers and pesticides to her routine. But the results were disappointing. “Farming became a struggle, and many times, the droughts led to great losses,” she reflects.

Everything began to shift when Martha joined the Mahiga Dincom group and got involved with the Cereal Growers Association (CGA) FO4ACP project, accompanied by the French agri-agency Fert, after the government’s KCSAP project phased out.

“CGA came in just when we needed someone to walk with us. They helped us not just with farming techniques, but with understanding our farms as businesses,” she says.

With the technical extension services provided by the CGA staff, Martha started embracing conservation agriculture. “I learned about minimum tillage, mulching, making my own biopesticides and biofertilizers. I even visited trial sites. The training on soil health really opened my eyes,” she shares. “Now I can look at my soil and understand what it needs—I know how to rotate crops and when to use biofertilizers.”



Although last season was tough and a dry spell killed the 200 vegetable seedlings from the group nursery, Martha is not discouraged. This year, she’s learning vertical gardening, a technique she hopes will better withstand future droughts. She has also planted 30 avocado trees—an investment for diversification - both for food security and future income.

Perhaps the biggest transformation has been in how Martha approaches decision-making. “I now keep my farm records and calculate gross margins. That has changed how I farm,” she says. “Maize was no longer making sense financially, so I switched to sorghum. It survives the drought, I sell most of it, and then I can buy maize if I need it.”

Thanks to CGA’s advice and member services, Martha and her group have even been linked to a reliable sorghum miller, guaranteeing a fair market price. “I farm smarter now,” she says with a smile. “Even when it is dry, I know there’s a way forward.”



FIRST INSIGHTS FROM FORI

A survey among producers, researchers, agri-agencies and FO-staff in the context of the FORI stocktaking exercise in late 2024 provided us with first insights about the qualitative impact of the FORI programme.

TOWARDS MORE EQUAL PARTNERSHIPS

The FORI programme (Farmers' Organizations for Research and Innovation), implemented under the DeSIRA initiative, has provided valuable lessons on how farmer-led research can accelerate the adoption and contextualisation of agroecological and agroforestry practices. A key insight is that meaningful facilitation enables more equal partnerships between farmers' organisations and research institutions. When well-facilitated, these partnerships foster co-creation of knowledge, moving beyond traditional top-down models of knowledge transfer. Rather than one side solely transmitting information, both farmers and researchers engage in iterative processes—sharing perspectives, conducting experiments jointly, and integrating scientific methods with traditional practices and varieties.

FACILITATING ROLE OF AGRI-AGENCIES

It became clear, however, that co-creation does not imply equal contributions in the same way from all parties, nor the absence of leadership. Rather, it requires mutual openness to the priorities and constraints of each side. In this process, it is important not to overlook the inherent tensions between the roles and interests of researchers and producers. While researchers seek data and scientific rigour, farmers are primarily driven by practical outcomes and the need to improve their production systems. These contrasts become particularly visible when both sides engage on equal footing. In this field of tension, FOs and agri-agencies play a critical role as facilitators—helping to mediate expectations, align objectives, and sustain collaborative momentum. AgriCord's role as provider of methodological support and facilitator of cross-regional experience-sharing was assessed to be very useful.

FROM AGRONOMIC-TO SOCIAL INNOVATION

Farmers' dominant interest in FORI was focused on agronomic challenges related to productivity—such as varietal adaptation, soil fertility, and pest management—which are immediately relevant and tangible. The collaboration with researchers deepened the scientific understanding of FO technicians and shifting mindset, positively impacting their ability to provide quality capacity-building services to their members.

Agroecology also proved to be a lever for social innovation beyond the agronomic domain. FORI demonstrated how agroecological initiatives can intersect with gender and youth engagement, as seen in the sunflower value chain project in Tanzania, opening up new avenues for inclusive participation and leadership.

OWNERSHIP, CONFIDENCE AND ADAPTATION

Finally, the programme reinforced a sense of ownership among participating FOs. Some reported increased confidence in continuing research and experimentation independently. Those with prior experience in trials were able to improve the methodological robustness of their approaches and extend their farmer-to-farmer extension systems. By generating their own data and evidence, FOs not only inform internal strategies but also enhance their credibility and voice in policy advocacy.

Agroecological Practices for Pest Control & Soil Fertility

FARMER-LED EXPERIMENTS IN BURUNDI

For more on our action-research programme FORI, visit:

www.agricord.org/en/fori

Through collaborative efforts between local farmers and researchers, 115 farmers across various regions in Burundi tested innovative, sustainable practices aimed at controlling the fall armyworm in maize and improving soil fertility. These trials, conducted during the 2023–2024 season, have yielded promising results and unveiled practical, environmentally friendly solutions that can potentially reshape local farming systems.

One of the standout methods trialed was a simple yet effective solution: a 50/50 mixture of sand and ash. Applied weekly, this mixture served as a natural deterrent against fall armyworms. Farmers were impressed by its feasibility and efficiency. While the ash did darken maize leaves temporarily, this cosmetic effect did not compromise plant health. The main challenge identified was the labor-intensive application process, which could hinder its scalability. Nonetheless, its low cost and accessibility make it a valuable tool in the integrated pest management toolkit.

Farmers also explored the use of Tithonia purin, a liquid fertilizer derived from fermented Tithonia leaves. This innovation showed great potential as a dual-purpose solution—effectively deterring fall armyworms and other pests, while simultaneously enriching the soil as a biofertilizer. The standard application involved diluting one liter of purin in nine liters of water and applying it weekly. Farmers praised its versatility and natural effectiveness. However, limited access to equipment such as sprayers and storage barrels posed a barrier to widespread use. With improved access to tools, this solution holds promise for broader adoption.

Soil degradation has long been a challenge for Burundian farmers. As part of the trials, farmers incorporated Tithonia plant biomass directly into their fields, using 24 kg per plot as the optimal dosage. This practice not only restored soil fertility but also contributed to pest control. Its effectiveness was widely acknowledged, though its expansion was hampered by the limited availability of Tithonia in large enough quantities. Efforts to scale up Tithonia cultivation could significantly enhance the sustainability of this method.

While the outcomes of these farmer-led trials are promising, researchers caution that the results emerged from an unusually wet season. The techniques now need testing under drier conditions to determine their robustness across diverse climatic scenarios.

From a scientific standpoint, the current results are still preliminary and not yet ready for publication in technical journals. Two key limitations were identified:

- High variability in control treatments, making statistical comparisons difficult.
- Insufficient repetition of treatment trials to ensure statistical significance.

Despite these limitations, the real success lies in the enthusiastic engagement of farmers, the practicality of the solutions, and the potential for long-term impact. These grassroots innovations mark a crucial step toward resilient, ecologically sound agriculture in Burundi—and signal the start of a new era for smallholder farmers eager to embrace agroecological approaches.



PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE

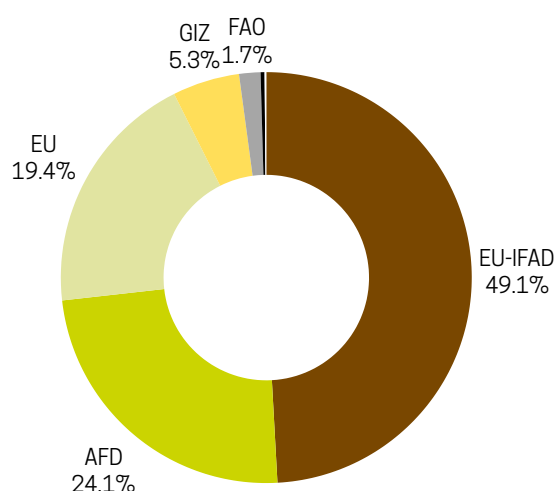
HOW WE SPEND



The vast majority of our financial resources flows directly to our programmes implemented by our member agri-agencies and partnering Farmers' Organizations.

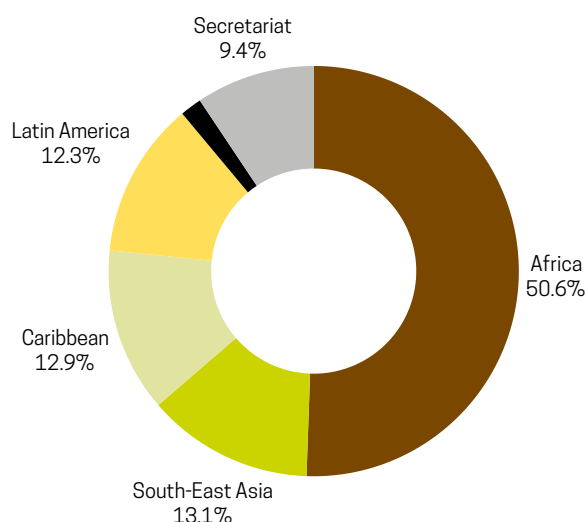
The remaining 9-12% of our income is utilized at the secretariat-level for: administration, management and quality assurance to maximize programme effectiveness, as well as partnership and fundraising in support of FOs globally.

SOURCES



Donor	EUR
EU - IFAD	4 945 107
AFD	2 424 670
EU	1 949 612
GIZ	531 502
FAO	169 238
DGD - Trias	31 212
Other	13 396
Total	10 064 738

WHERE DO WE SPEND IT?



Region	EUR
Africa	5 013 349
South-East Asia	1 301 182
Caribbean	1 282 316
Latin America	1 221 753
Pacific	168 830
Secretariat	928 734
Total	9 916 164

From Drought to Diversification

HOW DAIRY FARMERS IN MALAWI FOUND STRENGTH IN UNITY

At just 28 years old, FO-staff member Andrew Chimalizeni stands at the forefront of change in Malawi's Central Region Milk Producers Association (CREMPA). As the dry winds of El Niño swept across the country, bringing crop failures and feeding crises in their wake, Andrew and his team found themselves facing one of the toughest seasons dairy farmers had experienced.

Milk processors, already struggling in an unpredictable economy, began to delay payments to farmer cooperatives. One major buyer, Kombeza Foods Limited, shut down entirely, sending ripples through the milk value chain. With delayed or no payments coming in, some farmers, desperate to support their families, began selling milk informally to unlicensed vendors—an act that threatened to undermine the collective gains of the association. But even as drought parched the fields and soy and groundnut harvests fell far below average, something remarkable began to take root.

With support of the FO4ACP Africa programme, accompanied by the Swedish agri-agency WeEffect and designed to build local resilience, farmers started seeing opportunity in adversity. The project was helping members who didn't own dairy cows to step into the value chain by growing raw materials for livestock feed—creating new income streams in a time of scarcity. For those who did own cows, the project encouraged diversification, transforming mono-income farms into farming businesses with different income streams.

At the heart of this transformation were the producers and support for them to acquire new skills and competencies. Local community members were trained as artificial insemination technicians, Study Circle organisers, and feed-making machine operators.



These newly skilled individuals became pillars of support within their communities, ensuring that essential services continued far beyond the scope of the project.

One of the most powerful shifts came from an unexpected place: study circles. These farmer-led groups became real hubs of learning and innovation, spreading new agricultural techniques and even branching out into setting up group savings and loan schemes.

“Study circles have grown not just in number, but in impact,” Andrew shared. “They’ve become the backbone of our resilience strategy.”

Today, the Central Region Milk Producers Association is not just recovering—it's redefining what rural resilience looks like. With grassroots leadership, community-led service provision, and a spirit of innovation, CREMPA's farmers are proving that even in the face of environmental and economic hardship, collective strength can turn crisis into opportunity.



ONE ALLIANCE 13 AGRI- AGENCIES



Acodea

Agencia de Cooperación al
Desarrollo de la Agricultura
Spain



AgriTerra

Netherlands



Afdi

Agriculteurs Français et
Développement International
France



AHA

Andreas Hermes Akademie
Germany



AsiaDHRRA

Asian Partnership for the Development
of Human Resources in Rural Areas
Asia (Manila, Philippines)



Asprodeb

Association Sénégalaise pour la
promotion du développement à la base
Senegal



CSA

Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires
Belgium



Cresol AA

Brazil



Fert

France



FFD

Food and Forest Development
Finland



Trias

Belgium



UPADI

Union des producteurs agricoles -
Développement Internationale
Canada



We Effect

Sweden



Image: Trias (2024), Raldi Bonilla

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