



CROSSROADS

Newsletter



Editorial

Farmers and their organisations are at the forefront of locally led adaptation and mitigation. Their choices and actions are also important building blocks of resilience – from individual farms to entire agri-food systems.

This edition of Crossroads shines a light on results and impacts from our Farmers' Organisation-led Research and Innovation (FO-RI).

You'll discover **inspiring examples of farmer-driven innovation and farmers' organisation-to-farmers' organisation learning**, such as the poultry farming exchanges between Cameroon and Benin, where simple but powerful solutions are taking root. In Madagascar, **youth farmers are being prepared** not just to farm,

but to lead – shaping the future of agriculture with confidence and vision. AgriCord and its agri-agencies are also **supporting farmers' organisations to strengthen their climate strategies** using our Building Resilience Toolkit.

These stories remind us that **when farmers lead, sustainable solutions flourish, and transformation become possible**. I invite you to explore these stories, dive into the Building Resilience Toolkit, and reflect on how extension systems can become more inclusive and effective.

Wishing you an inspiring read,

Katja Vuori,
CEO, AgriCord

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Local poultry farming: Cameroon draws inspiration from Beninese innovations (1/2)

By Atangana Hortense, CNOPCAM

Beninese farmers have been innovating and testing feed mixtures to improve productivity of local poultry. They have been integrating 45% dried cassava peel flour into poultry rations. This feed has been successfully tested for more than two years and is ready to be scaled.

This is exciting news for the six Cameroonian experts from the PRAEPOUL project who were on a technical study mission in Benin to learn about best practices in agroecological local chicken farming. The delegation was composed of representatives from Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes au Cameroun (CNOPCAM), the AGREN and FRIENDSHIP Common Interest Groups, the Agricultural Research Institute for Development (IRAD), and Afdi.

“This innovation in the use of cassava by-products represents a major opportunity for Cameroon, a major cassava producer (...). We have an abundant resource that we can use to reduce the cost of feeding our poultry while respecting agroecological principles.”

Hortense Marie Lucienne Atangana Alene, Coordinator
PRAEPOUL Project



PRAEPOUL team in Benin, June 2025

The farmers and experts from Cameroon were also excited to discover local egg incubation innovations that reduce dependence on imported chicks. These innovations include solar-powered incubators capable of handling up to 6,000 eggs.

Local incubation solutions are a strategic focus for the Cameroonian farmers' organizations to improve the sustainability and profitability of agroecological poultry farming in the country. The incubation units visited demonstrated mastery of local incubation techniques to produce chicken and quail chicks. This reproductive autonomy allows for a drastic reduction in supply costs and dependence on imports.

“I was impressed by the autonomy of Beninese farmers. They produce their own chicks, make their own feed from local resources, and even turn their waste into a source of income. This is exactly what we need to strive for in Cameroon.”

Raphaël Etoundi Abega,
representative of GIC AGREN

Manure as an additional source of income

The National Association of Poultry Farmers of Benin (ANAB) has built additional circular economy business around poultry manure. They transform their poultry waste into marketable quality compost, creating an additional source of income while respecting the environment.

“The entire process was demonstrated to us, including all the necessary components,” says **Clémence Njehoya of IRAD**. “This waste recovery fits perfectly with our agroecological approach and offers prospects for income diversification for our farmers.”



Demonstration of cassava flour production for local chicken feed

Local poultry farming: Cameroon draws inspiration from Beninese innovations (2/2)

By Atangana Hortense, CNOPCAM



Local chicken farming - Bénin

Challenges identified, solutions adapted

This peer-to-peer exchange confirmed common challenges facing traditional poultry farming in the region - low standardization of farming methods, unstructured marketing channels, and an imbalance between supply and growing demand.

However, the innovations observed in Benin offer possible solutions that can be adapted to the Cameroonian context.



Manual cassava processing

Use of local agricultural by-products, the development of artisanal incubation, and the structuring of marketing channels are all identified levers for improvement.

Back in Cameroon, the PRAEPOUL team is already preparing to adapt these innovations. Pilot tests with cassava feed are planned, as well as training for leading livestock farmers in incubation techniques.



Product of a mini processing unit

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“This South-South exchange mission perfectly illustrates the effectiveness of learning between African countries,” emphasizes **Evy Crismabe** of **AFDI**. *“Locally developed solutions are often the most relevant and sustainable.”*

This project is part of the FORI program, financed by the EU and the OACPS.

[Find more about it here](#)

Savoir-Faire & Links

- The SEPOP programme funded by AFD consists of 17 projects in Africa and Latin America. SEPOP is contributing to the sustainable development of the agricultural sector and to improve the lobby and advocacy, technical and commercial services of FOs for the benefit of their family farmer members. [Read here the SEPOP 2024 Overview: Achievements and Highlights.](#)
- 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. [Read it here](#)

Quality coffee, empowering generations

By Florian Reyskens, AgriCord

In Colombia, the Támara coffee producers' cooperative is undergoing a remarkable transformation. With more than 700 members, it has, since 2023, launched a profound modernization process with the support of Acodea through the SEPOP program.

Initially lacking a technical assistance service and detailed member information, the cooperative created a new technical team. This team trains producers in agroecological practices, enhancing biodiversity and climate resilience, while building a comprehensive database that includes social, economic, and technical data.

These advances strengthen the relationship between the cooperative and its members in an increasingly competitive market. Technicians, now the cooperative's face in the field, provide proximity and trust.

Staff has grown from 19 to 25, doubling women's participation and increasing youth involvement. At the same time, administrative modernization has professionalized management with updated payroll and accounting systems, improving transparency and efficiency.



The cooperative has also adopted a 2023–2028 strategic plan built around three priorities:

- improving coffee quality,
- diversifying markets,
- and ensuring generational renewal.

Youth committees and targeted training address rural migration, land access, and leadership succession.

Cooperative Competitiveness Strength

On the commercial side, Támara renewed its origin certifications, expanded sales of roasted and ground coffee, and generated more than 16 million COP in regional trade. By combining technical support, inclusive governance, and a clear vision for the future, the cooperative is strengthening both its competitiveness and its social impact.

The Támara cooperative shows how quality, governance, and inclusion can come together to secure the long-term sustainability of Colombian coffee.



This project was supported by SEPOP, a programme financed by AFD, the French Development Agency. [Find more about it here](#)

Supporting Women Farmers in Extension Services - Insights from a recent systematic review

Summarized by Lukas Hadasch, AgriCord

Agricultural extension services are meant to bring new knowledge and practical skills to all farmers. Yet for women smallholders, access and impact often remain uneven. A systematic review by Nyberg et al. (2025) examined thousands of studies to identify what enables – and what obstructs – women's participation and impact.

“Policy alone is insufficient. Practical change alone is insufficient. Action needs to be taken across multiple levels and complement each other.”

(Nyberg et al., 2025)

Human capital

Training must pair technical skills with confidence-building, leadership, and gender awareness. Time constraints, childcare availability, and basic skills like literacy and accounting strongly influence participation.

Natural capital

Secure land rights are foundational – without them, women struggle to access other resources. Female-headed households face compounded barriers, making policy reforms on land rights crucial.

Financial capital

Control over household income is as critical as credit access. Incentives like food, transport, or childcare make training feasible, while financial literacy and couple-based approaches support lasting change.

Extension services themselves

Tailored approaches, more female providers, and gender-disaggregated monitoring are key. Extension agents need communication skills to engage women effectively and measure long-term impact.

Societal norms and policy environment

Norm change requires role models, statistics, and legal reform, plus buy-in from traditional and religious leaders. Gender-specific budgets and monitoring mechanisms strengthen accountability.



Implications for AgriCord

The findings echo what AgriCord projects often reveal: skills-only interventions are not enough. Lasting change must cut across households, communities, and policies, and run for years.

Three key takeaways

- Holistic approaches are essential. Training should address time, mobility, and power dynamics.
- Farmers organizations are leverage points.
- Measure long-term change. Evidence builds the case for legal and institutional reform.

Checklist: Designing Women-Sensitive Extension

- Start with women's groups, then expand
- Incentivize participation (transport, food, childcare)
- Build confidence alongside skills
- Engage men, couples and leaders
- Track gender-specific outcomes over time

[Find the original article here](#)

Nyberg, Y., Mackay, H., Wilson, M., Samkunde, M., & Wetterlind, J. (2025). **Supporting access and implementation of agricultural extension services for female smallholder farmers – a systematic review.** *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 23(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14735903.2025.2505387>

Youth Take the Lead in Madagascar's Farming Future

By Chamsyatou Mama Gao, AgriCord

In Madagascar, young farmers are stepping forward to shape the future of agriculture. In the context of the FOFS program and through the support of Afdi & Fert, the youth from Réseau SOA and Fifata, are gaining the skills to become successful and professional farmers and also emerging as leaders within their farmer organizations.

Over the past year, youth installation committees have been established to guide and mentor aspiring young farmers. These committees bring together mentors, technicians, and model farmers to provide hands-on support, from drafting professional projects to solving practical challenges such as access to water, veterinary services, and farm management. Already, dozens of young people have launched their own agricultural enterprises in poultry, pig farming, market gardening, and rice cultivation.



Group work during the training of young relay workers at FIFATAM Junior

At the same time, leadership training in communication, facilitation and cooperative management is preparing youth to take on decision-making roles.

Heritinia, a young farmer in Amoron'i Mania, central region of Madagascar shared : *"I have piglets to fatten, local chickens, and I grow cassava and rice (two cycles per year). I'm the chair person of a youth farmer organization and I manage my farm well. We receive good support from the regional FO (Fifatam, a member of Fifata). I have a tomato growing project because there's demand but no producers!"*

"The support of the project has strengthened my credibility and integration with other players in the agricultural sector. For example, the agricultural input supplier in my community trusts me and facilitates my purchases," says Sehen, a young farmer from the Fisoï farmers' organization, members of Réseau SOA.

These efforts are paying off. Across Madagascar, more than 6,500 young people have been supported in their agricultural journeys during the first 18 months of the program. By combining technical training with leadership development, the FOFS program is contributing to much needed generational transition by preparing a new generation of farmers who are confident, innovative, and ready to take responsibility in their communities.

This project is part of the FOFS program, financed by GIZ. [Find more about it here](#)

Reflections from the Use of the Building Resilience Toolkit (BR-I)

Since 2020, this practical tool has supported farmer organisations and agri-agencies in planning climate adaptation, engaging thousands of farmers across 14 countries.

The publication highlights lessons learned, field experiences, and concrete examples of farmer-led solutions.

[The publication is available here](#)



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AgriCord financial partners included the EU, OACPS, FAO, AECID, AFD, DGD, and GiZ. The views expressed herein do not reflect the official opinion of the EU, OACPS, FAO, AECID, AFD, DGD, and GiZ.

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