

Impact Stories

Empowering farmers
Strengthening communities
Securing futures

Impact Stories from the Farmers' Organizations for Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (FO4ACP) programme in Africa

FO4ACP 2019–2025



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Producers are the central actors in every food system

The farmers and their stories in this publication remind us that producers are the central actors in every food system. They grow food and businesses, creating employment and securing food and nutrition for the people of their communities and beyond. We are proud to present some of the producers and organizations who implemented the *Farmers' Organizations for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific* (FO4ACP) programme in Africa.

FO4ACP was co-implemented from 2019 to 2025 with the Pan-African Farmers' Organization (PAFO) and its regional members across the continent with the financial support of the European Union (EU) and Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), and globally administered by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Despite encountering significant challenges such as climate change, the Covid-19 pandemic, and political instability and insecurity; the programme is a testament to the power of collaboration between farmers' organizations at continental, national and local level, international financiers, and technical development partners like AgriCord and its agri-agencies (AA).

FO4ACP improved the livelihoods of smallholder farmers across Sub-Saharan Africa, made their organizations and cooperatives fit for business and helped farmers build resilience in the face of climate impacts, while increasing income, and enhancing food and nutrition security.

The AgriCord alliance sincerest gratitude goes to the EU, OACPS and IFAD for their continuous trust in our work. We applaud the farmers and their organizations in this publication who represent the countless producers, technicians and staff members who implemented this programme. Their stories exemplify the hard work, commitment and resilience of farming communities. But they are equally stories of drive, joy and empowering achievements.

We wish you an inspiring read,

Pieter VERHELST

Boerenbond & President AgriCord



FO4ACP Africa

FO-support programme from 2019-2025 to



Develop the service delivery by FOs to their members



Strengthen FOs institutionally



Create conducive regulatory and business environments



€ 10,7 million

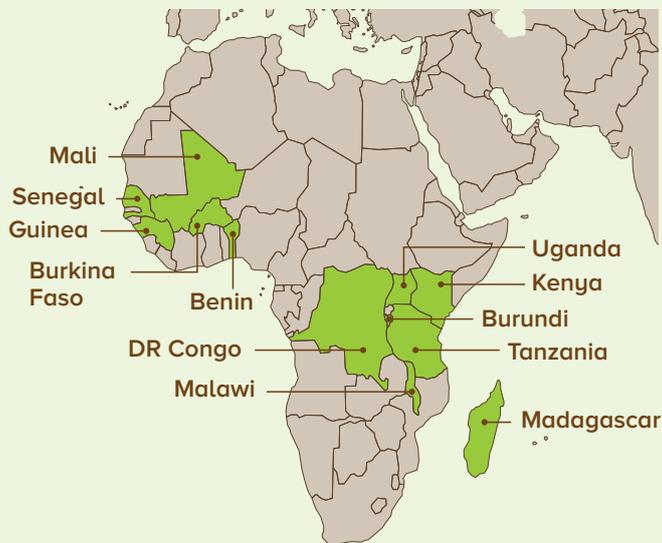
Grant volume AgriCord alliance



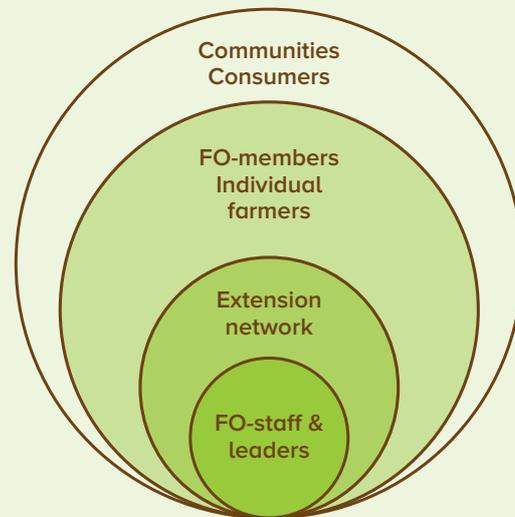
50.000–100.000

Number of individual producers directly participating in program activities per year

28 projects in 12 countries



Scaling of beneficiaries





Impacts of the programme

- 1 **Strengthened FO service delivery**
 - > inputs, processing, marketing, financing
 - > financial inclusion & investment-readiness
 - > wide-ranging farmer-to-farmer extension systems
- 2 **Better access to markets through certification & traceability**
- 3 **More inclusive governance & businesses**
- 4 **Improved climate resilience & agroecology practices**
- 5 **Enhanced participation in policy dialogues at national and international levels**



Insights & best practices



Localized and participatory approach

Projects coordinated and implemented with farmers' organizations at different levels are effective and cost efficient. Farmers who engage in projects led by their own organizations are more trusting, benefit from improved services in the long term and can engage in many ways, for example as peer-to-peer trainers, leaders, and innovators.



Pre-condition for credit-readiness

Experiences by our agri-agencies and FO-partners show repeatedly, that holistic institutional strengthening of FOs is a pre-condition to become and stay fit for credit. FOs must have capable staff and sound business plans, employ sound financial management practices and have a leadership following principles of good governance. Only when a farmers' organization is holistically professionalized, it can truly embrace its role of providing sustainable and durable services to its members.

A steady transformation: How farmers' organizations in Central Benin empower women and building climate resilience

IMPACT STORY 1



Benin

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 1485

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2021): 27%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022-2024): 14%

Value of Agriculture: 25% of GDP

PROJECT INFO

Farmers' Organization(s): UCP Djidja, RC-OPMM Adja-Ouèrè & UGAM Savalou

Agri-Agency: UPA DI

Project Location: Djidja (Zou Department) & Savalou (Collines Department)

Direct Project participants: 5398 farmers

Main Sector: Agroecology, Processing, Women & Youth Empowerment

Women and farmers' organizations driving rural transformation in Central Benin

In the rural heartlands of Djidja and Savalou in central Benin, **and in Adja-Ouèrè in the southeast**, a quiet transformation is underway. Challenged by declining soil fertility, erratic rainfall, and limited income opportunities, smallholder farmers, especially women, are **shaping the future of their communities**. At the center of this shift are **dynamic farmers' organizations**: such as UGAM Savalou, UCP Djidja and RC-OPMM Adja-Ouèrè. With the support of the FO4ACP programme and technical accompaniment from UPA DI, these organizations are **reclaiming degraded lands, building agro-processing enterprises, and amplifying women's leadership**.

Many women used to be excluded from decision-making and lacked access to training and markets. **Today, women not only lead cooperatives but are also key drivers of innovation and resilience**. The story of Félicienne Sinon, a 47-year-old farmer-entrepreneur from Djessi, embodies this change. A mother of four, she cultivates maize, cassava, soybean, and groundnuts on four hectares. Through trainings, she has adopted **climate-smart practices, boosted yields, and expanded** her cassava processing activity. The value of her production increased **five-fold** since she joined the programme.



"I'm a businesswoman now," Félicienne says proudly. "I've learned to buy when the price is low and to sell at the right time. I also process more cassava into gari and tapioca. With my husband, **we now make decisions together at home**, and I'm no longer afraid to speak in public."

Her goals are modest but powerful: save enough to buy a motorbike for her family and build a house with a secure courtyard.

Across Djidja and Savalou, this kind of progress stands exemplary. The project has trained 20 women and youth in agroecology and cooperative leadership, helped establish 42 agro-processing units in different cooperatives, and provided **vital transformation** equipment for cassava, rice, and soy. Through village savings and loan groups, women like Félicienne are gaining **financial literacy and autonomy**. Demonstration days and open events have brought **new knowledge and pride** to entire communities.

By the end of 2024, the projects supported by UPA DI in Benin had reached **5398 producers** through economic services. Today, **40% of leadership roles** in participating cooperatives are held by **women**. The result is not only improved incomes but **stronger voices, greener farms**, and more **inclusive governance**.

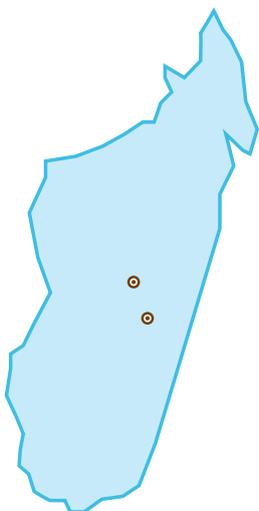
"I'm a businesswoman now. I've learned to buy when the price is low and to sell at the right time."

Félicienne Sinon, farmer-entrepreneur



Building local seed systems for potato farming in Madagascar

IMPACT STORY 2



Madagascar

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 545

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2012): 88%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022-2024): 40%

Value of Agriculture: 22% in GDP

Potato production: 250 000 tons in 2023 (9th place of commodities produced)

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): CEFFEL, Fifata & 8 Regional Networks

Agri-Agency: Fert

Project Location: Multiple regions including Vakinankaratra, Amoron'i Mania

Direct Beneficiaries: Over 12,300 direct beneficiaries

Main Sector: Potato Seed Multiplication, Agroecology, Food Security

Sustainable potato farming in Madagascar: Local innovation and entrepreneurship transforming smallholder futures

In Madagascar's central highlands, potatoes have the potential to play a **bigger role in the country's food system** in the future. But for years, **smallholder farmers** have struggled to find quality seed, relying on expensive and unreliable sources that undermined their productivity and income. That is beginning to change.

CEFFEL, a Malagasy agricultural training centre and part of the Fifata group, and its partners have pioneered a **homegrown solution**: local seed production powered by **agroecological innovation** and farmer leadership. By training over 150 seed multipliers and launching an **in-vitro laboratory in 2024** to produce 325 tons of seedlings per year soon. CEFFEL is helping more than **3,500 farmers** across Madagascar to access **certified potato seeds** right in their communities.

These efforts are **grounded in sustainability**. Farmers are embracing environmentally friendly practices like composting, biochar, and essential oil pest control. They're also learning to navigate markets through **entrepreneurial coaching** and using digital tools like e-Roso and SIEL, ensuring they fetch **fair prices**.



More than **12,000 people** are now reaping the benefits of this approach – **25% of them women and 30% youth**. The project is not just improving yields and lowering input costs; it's nurturing a **new generation of rural entrepreneurs**.

Take **Harimandranto Randrianirina** who works as technical advisor for CEFFEL. As specialist in seed production and agroecology, he has been instrumental in setting up the **region's first local laboratory** and training dozens of cooperatives in sustainable farming. "**The potato sector is an opportunity for young people and women in rural areas**," he says. "Producers are becoming more autonomous and resilient. **It's a driver of change for the entire region.**"

Harimandranto says the FO4ACP project helped CEFFEL to reduce production costs, stimulate the adoption of good agricultural practices, work on the access to planting materials, solidify a network of seed multipliers and establish the in-vitro laboratory.

Thanks to these actions and solutions, **Fifata's potato farmers** in Madagascar are enabled to **grow their production volume**, improve the quality of produce and **advance the entire value chain**.

"The potato sector empowers rural youth and women, fostering autonomy, resilience, and regional transformation."

Harimandranto Randrianirina, technical advisor for CEFFEL



Developing the dairy value chain in Malawi

IMPACT STORY 3



Malawi

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 508

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2019): 75%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022-2024): 21 %

Value of Agriculture (2024): 22 % of GDP

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): CREMPA

Agri-Agency: We Effect

Project Location: Central Region of Malawi

Direct Beneficiaries: over 13.000 Smallholder dairy farmers, especially women and youth

Main Sector: Dairy Farming, Livelihood Resilience, Women Empowerment

Resilience through innovation: Revitalizing Malawi's dairy sector amid climate and economic crises

In the rolling hills of the **central region of Malawi**, **dairy farmers** are facing a complex set of challenges. Droughts intensified by **climate change**, coupled with an **economic crisis** that shuttered key milk buyers, threatened both their **incomes** and **food security**. But through **innovation** and **solidarity**, these farmers are withstanding the current **double crisis** in Malawi of slowing **economic growth** and reduced **agricultural production**.

Supported by the **FO4ACP programme** and **We Effect**, the **Mpasa Cooperative** and the **Central Region Milk Producers Association (CREMPA)** are revitalizing the dairy value chain, **empowering farmers** to take control of their livelihoods. From making their own **livestock feed** and **small scale processing** to leading savings groups, local producers are actively addressing pressing needs.

Practical training has been central to this transformation. **Youth and women** have stepped up as **artificial insemination technicians**, study circle leaders, and cooperative board members. Farmers are **growing crops for feed**, ensuring even **non-dairy households** can benefit from the sector. Upgraded **milk cooling** and **storage facilities** help secure **better prices** and **product quality**.

The **dairy initiative** has been transformative for many, including **Dainess Henele, a dairy farmer at Mpasa Cooperative**. Dainess and her family have been engaged in dairy farming for several years. One of the most significant obstacles was their cow's inability to conceive for three years. This period resulted in **substantial financial losses**, as the cow could not produce milk, and the family's dairy farming aspirations seemed bleak.

The **turning point** for Dainess came with the introduction of **Artificial Insemination services** to members by the FO. Dainess and her family eagerly accessed the AI services, allowing them to grow their herd without keeping a bull, which can be both costly and challenging. Dainess' cow **successfully conceived** and gave birth to a healthy calf. Dainess has now a steady amount of milk daily that she can market, earning **120,000 Malawi Kwacha** (about € 60) per month.

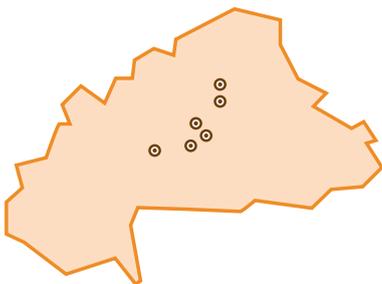
Dainess' story is an example how much of an **impact** specialized **service provisions** by an **FO** can have on the life of its members. By providing access to **Artificial Insemination services** and training **technicians**, the project has enabled farmers to overcome critical **challenges**, enhance livestock genetics, and support **income generation at farm-level**.

From years of cow's infertility to steady income: Dainess Henele's family revived their dairy farm through artificial insemination services, now earning 120,000 MWK monthly.



Future-proofing FOs: How farmers in Burkina Faso become more resilient through their organizations

IMPACT STORY 4



Burkina Faso

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 987

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2021): 42%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022-2024): 13%

Value of Agriculture (2024): 16% in GDP

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organizations: UNAPOB, UMPLB, CPF (including 25 mini-dairies)

Agri-Agency: Afdi

Project Locations: Oubritenga & Sanmatenga (onions) / Ouagadougou, Ziniaré, Koudougou, Kaya (milk)

Direct Beneficiaries (2024): around 500 farmers and dairy processors

Main Sectors: Onion production, Dairy transformation, Agroecology, Climate resilience

Resilience from the soil to the plate: Farmers in Burkina Faso leading change

In the face of water shortages, market uncertainty, and growing insecurity, farmers across Burkina Faso are forging a new path that blends tradition with innovation to feed their communities and protect their environment.

With the support of Afdi and the FO4ACP programme, two farmers' unions—**UNAPOB** and **UMPLB**—are leading the way. Their shared vision: **build resilience from the soil to the plate by empowering producers with climate-smart techniques, market access, and inclusive leadership.**

In the central plateau, where droughts threaten onion farming, UNAPOB has embraced **agroecology**. Through training in composting, water-saving techniques, and the use of natural pesticides, producers are growing more sustainably. A digital monitoring tool developed with KoboToolbox now tracks agroecological performance in real-time—giving 120 producers (over half women and youth) the tools to measure their progress and make smarter decisions.

Meanwhile, in conflict-affected zones, UMLPB is revitalizing the **dairy sector**. From introducing Maralfalfa as a **climate-resilient** fodder crop to retraining staff across 25 mini-dairies with a processing capacity of 39,600 litres of milk per year, they're cutting costs and improving quality. Their "Dairy Quality Charter" has elevated **local production**, while advocacy with the government and World Food Programme has opened doors to **public markets** like school canteens.

Leadership is changing, too. **Women** now manage **76%** of UMLPB's mini-dairies, and **youth** are stepping into board roles and digital service delivery.

René Soalla, President of UNAPOB, sees the future clearly: "With this new **monitoring system**, we can see the tangible **benefits** of agroecology and make **informed decisions**. Our farmers now have a **voice backed by evidence** to engage with government and partners." His goal? Expand this model across other regions and crops, creating **a lasting impact for generations** to come.

The story continues



"With this new monitoring system, we can see the tangible benefits of agroecology and make informed decisions. Our farmers now have a voice backed by evidence to engage with government and partners."

René Soalla, President of UNAPOB





Leila Gariko, 32, is another **powerful voice** in this transformation. As Deputy Secretary of UMPLB and manager of a mini-dairy in Yagma, she processes 100 liters of milk a day and champions the value of local dairy. “Thanks to the training and support from UMPLB and Afdi, we have **improved the quality of our milk products and reached new markets,**” she explains. “My dream is to see **more women** like me succeed, build their **own businesses,** and ensure our **communities thrive** on local milk.”

Leila’s work reflects the project’s core values: **improved quality, inclusive leadership, and stronger market connections.** She’s not only growing her enterprise but also helping shape national policy to ensure small-scale producers are heard—and supported.

Burkina Faso’s farmers are proving that when the land is respected and the people empowered, resilience grows—and so does hope.



“My dream is to see more women like me succeed, build their own businesses, and ensure our communities thrive on local milk.”

Leila Gariko, Deputy Secretary of UMPLB and manager of a mini-dairy in Yagma

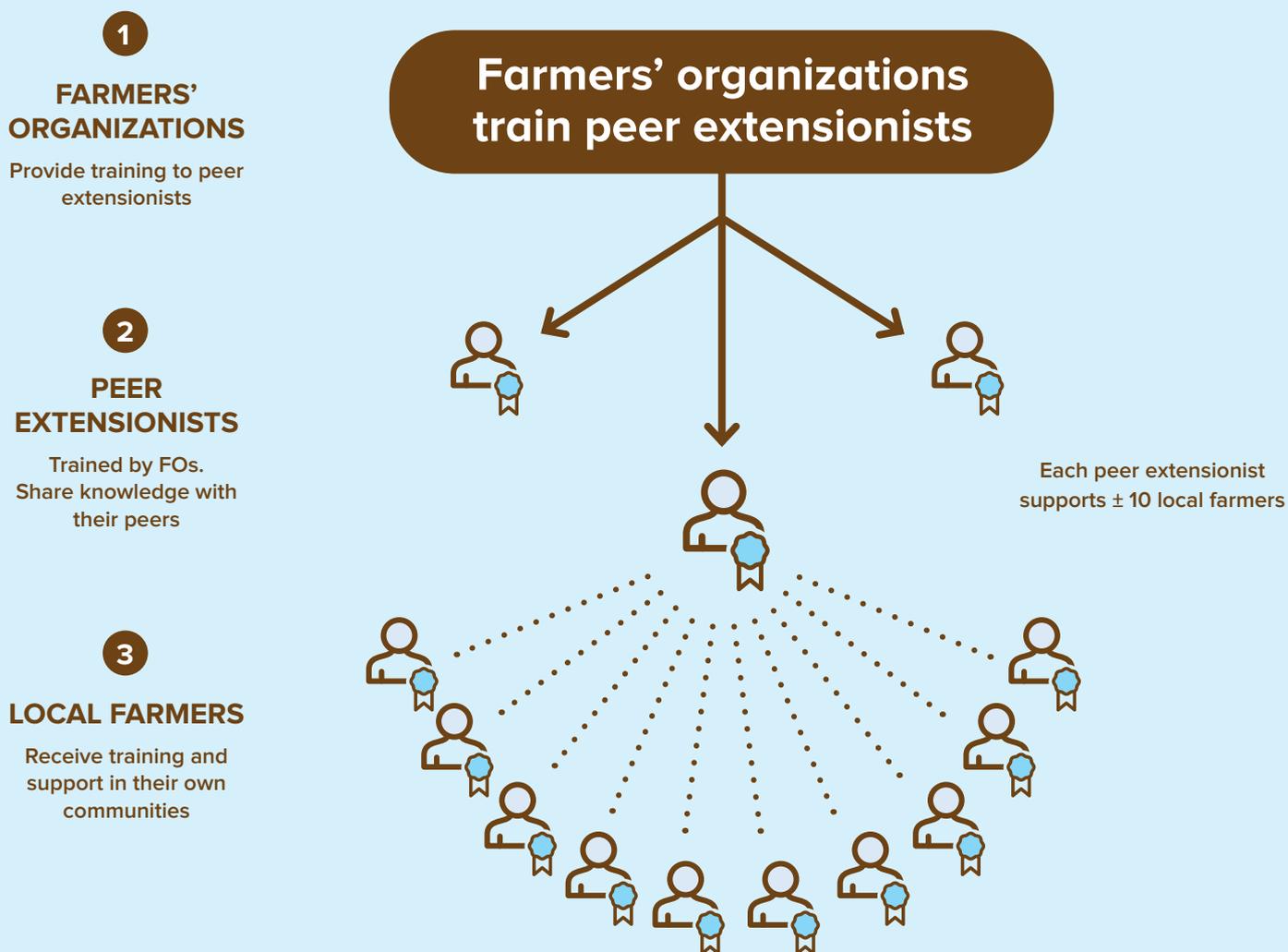




Insights & Best Practices

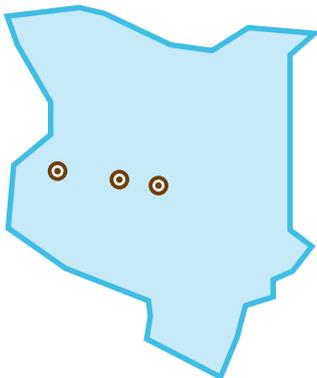
Extension Systems

Strengthening farmer-led extension systems has proven to be one of the most cost-effective ways to scale the technical service provision of FOs. Peer extensionists are critical in disseminating knowledge, monitoring adoption, and facilitating farmer engagement. FOs with well-established extension systems are more capable of mobilising their membership for diverse purposes, including training, innovation dissemination, and advocacy. We estimate that each trained peer extensionist reaches and supports at least ten (10) additional farmers in their own communities. This is particularly vital in regions where public extension services are lacking.



Kenyan farmers cultivate hope amid climate crisis

IMPACT STORY 5



Kenya

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): estimated USD 2,305

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022-2024): 37 %

Value of Agriculture (2024): 21% in GDP

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): Cereal Growers Association (CGA) with 49 grass-roots farmer groups

Agri-Agency: Fert

Project Location: Laikipia, Meru & Uasin Gishu Counties

Direct Beneficiaries (2024): 11,490 (5,614 women, 2,064 youth)

Main Sector: Agroecology, food security, climate resilience

From drought to diversity: How Kenyan farmers are adapting together

In Kenya's cereal-growing regions, smallholder farmers continue to face compounding pressures – from prolonged droughts and unseasonal floods to erratic input prices and limited market stability. For many, these challenges threaten not only harvests, but household food security and the future of farming itself.

Through the support of the Cereal Growers Association (CGA), Fert, and the FO4ACP programme, farmer groups in Laikipia, Meru, and Uasin Gishu are working collectively to adapt. Their approach centres on practical solutions: agroecological farming, locally managed savings groups, peer-to-peer training, and use of digital tools for performance tracking.

In 2024, irregular rains and prolonged dry seasons continued to challenge farming in Kibuline, Meru County. Declining soil fertility and low maize yields had discouraged many smallholders, especially women. Through the **Antuankar'i Community-Based Organization** and with support from **CGA**, new practices began to take root.

Training on soil conservation, organic input production, and climate-resilient crops helped farmers improve yields and reduce costs. An

Agroecology Learning Site was established, now hosted on the farm of **Tabitha Kathao Kamencu**, a 50-year-old single mother of two.

Tabitha manages one acre of her own and rents four more, where she grows maize, beans, vegetables, and keeps poultry. As **chairlady of her farmer group**, she coordinates training activities and oversees the **Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA)**, which offers members affordable loans for inputs and small investments.

The group collectively produces and uses **organic fertilizers**, lowering production costs and increasing income. Tabitha earns around **1,000 Kenyan shillings per week** from organic vegetable sales. Training on animal health and vaccination has also reduced poultry losses, with a **local Farmer Advisor** now supporting all members.

Looking ahead, Tabitha and her group plan to establish a **greenhouse** to produce vegetable seeds for members and the wider community. Their efforts reflect how women farmers in Meru are turning climate challenges into opportunities through shared knowledge, sustainable practices, and local leadership.

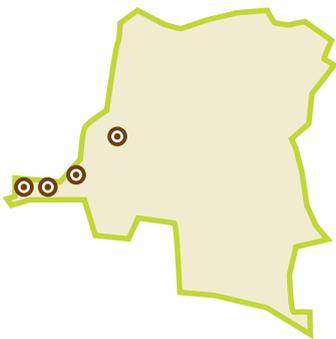


“Before, farming was guesswork. Now, I plan, I keep records, and I see the results. The land is giving back again.”

Tabitha Kathao Kamencu, Chairlady of Antuankar'i Farmer Group

How DRC cooperatives are creating value and equity in the cocoa economy

IMPACT STORY 6



Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 647

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2020): 85%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022-2024): 39%

Value of Agriculture (2024): 16% of GDP

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): COCAMA, COINDELO, CONAPAC

Agri-Agency: Trias

Project Location: Nganda Tsundi, Lubuzi, Mai-Ndombe, Kongo Central

Direct Beneficiaries: 796 (610 men, 175 women, 206 youth) in 2024

Main Sector: Cocoa production and processing, climate resilience, women's entrepreneurship

Building value and equity: Cocoa farmers in DRC rising to global standards

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, **cocoa farming** remains one of the few viable rural livelihoods—but for years, farmers received stagnant prices and struggled with poor post-harvest infrastructure. In conflict-affected zones like Mai-Ndombe and Kongo Central, these challenges are compounded by insecurity, weak logistics, and environmental degradation.

Yet **farmer-led cooperatives** are adapting. With support from Trias and FO4ACP, organizations such as **COCAMA** and **COINDELO** are shifting the dynamics of the cocoa sector—improving processing quality, ensuring **traceability**, and developing new **economic opportunities, especially for women and youth**.

In 2024, both cooperatives achieved major milestones. COCAMA negotiated the sale of **25 tons** of cocoa at \$4.90/kg, while COINDELO secured a record **\$5.50/kg**—prices linked directly to international benchmarks and previously unattainable. These sales were made possible through rigorous geolocation of **998 cocoa plots** to comply with **EU deforestation-free requirements**. Where inconsistencies arose, cooperatives worked proactively to resolve them, reinforcing their credibility.

Women are leading much of this transformation. In Lubuzi, the Nzola AVEC—a village savings and loan group—combines financial autonomy with value addition. After being trained in cocoa processing, members now produce bonbons, cocoa butter, and chocolate using **solar-powered equipment**. “We used to sell raw cocoa and wait for income,” one member explains. “Now we produce and sell finished goods. We are learning to manage, save, and build together.”

Beyond local markets, cooperatives are gaining visibility. COCAMA presented its model at the **World Cocoa Conference** in Brussels and is now in talks with a European buyer interested in **fair trade** partnerships.

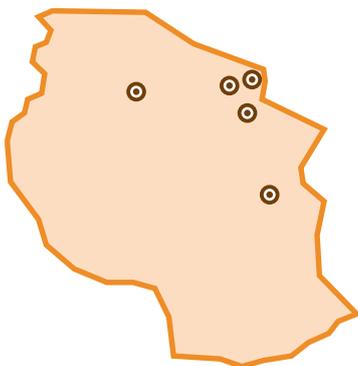
This is not a story of overnight change, it is a tangible example of how farmer organizations, even under pressure, can build value, promote equity, and meet **global standards**—while remaining rooted in their communities.

“We used to sell raw cocoa and wait for income. Now we produce and sell finished goods.”



Leveraging water and sun in Tanzania: Young entrepreneurs lead the shift toward future-oriented agriculture

IMPACT STORY 7



Tanzania

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 1185

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2018): 51%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022-2024): 20%

Value of Agriculture (2024): 26% of GDP

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): NADO, TAHA, TTGAU

Agri-Agency: FFD (Food and Forest Development Finland)

Project Location: Morogoro, Manyara, Shinyanga, Kilimanjaro, and Arusha regions

Main Sector: Agroecology, horticulture, tree crops, forest-based livelihoods

Growing futures: How young farmers in Tanzania are transforming agriculture

Across Tanzania, many smallholder farmers, particularly **youth** and **women**, continue to face barriers to sustainable livelihoods. **Land degradation, water scarcity**, and limited access to financial and technical support have historically constrained growth. But a new generation of farmers, supported by the **FO4ACP programme** and **FFD**, is beginning to change that.

Working across regions such as Morogoro, Arusha, Kilimanjaro, and Shinyanga, FFD has helped NADO, TAHA and TTGAU to invest in **agroecology, forestry-based enterprises**, and **inclusive business models**. Their support has led to the creation of more than **487 tree-based micro-enterprises** at NADO in tree seedlings, poultry, vegetables, and beekeeping where youth and women playing central roles.

A key innovation has been the **MajiChap system**: a **solar-powered, pay-as-you-go irrigation** solution piloted in Morogoro. It provides farmers with reliable **water access** while cutting energy costs addressing a major constraint for many rural producers.

Zacharia, a 26-year-old tomato farmer from Uchira, was among the first to access the new system and trainings on agroecology. Before joining the initiative, his production was limited to a single acre due to

the high cost of electricity and inefficient furrow irrigation. Through the **Value for Water** project with TAHA and FFD, he gained access to **solar-powered drip irrigation**, alongside training in business planning and market access. The result: he now cultivates **two acres** and has significantly increased his yields and income.

“I have never been able to irrigate two acres before due to high electricity costs,” Zacharia explains. “This solar irrigation has really changed how I farm. Now I am earning more and planning for the next season.”

Zacharia’s progress has made him a **point of reference** in his community. He now aims to expand into **export crops** that can be commercialized through TAHA and AVL.

Zacharia’s story illustrates how timely, well-targeted support, particularly when channelled through **organized farmers**, can shift the trajectory of **rural livelihoods**. It is not simply access to technology, but the combination of **infrastructure, training**, and **business planning**, delivered through trusted local organizations, that creates lasting change. For young farmers like Zacharia, this has opened a pathway not just to increased production, but to viable, forward-looking enterprises that can adapt and grow.



“This solar irrigation has really changed how I farm. Now I am earning more and planning for the next season.”

Zacharia, tomato farmer



Smart farming, stronger cooperatives: digital & agroecological transformation in Burundi

IMPACT STORY 8



Burundi

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): 154 USD

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2020): 74%

Prevalence of severe food insecurity (2022-2024): 21%

Value of Agriculture (2024): 27% of GDP

Individuals using the internet: 11%

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): CAPAD (including 21 cooperatives)

Agri-Agency: CSA

Project Location: Several rural provinces

Direct Beneficiaries (2024): 8,600 people (4,050 women, 910 youth)

Main Sector: Agroecology, Cooperative Strengthening, Digital Tools

Resilience under pressure: How Burundi's cooperatives drive rural recovery

Burundi's rural economy faced acute challenges in 2024: persistent **inflation, fuel shortages, and currency instability** strained both production and trade. On top of this, climate impacts—particularly heavy rains and **flooding** from Lake Tanganyika—disrupted more than **40,000 hectares** of farmland. Yet in this difficult context, **21 agricultural cooperatives** affiliated with **CAPAD** moved forward with conviction.

With the support of **CSA** and the **FO4ACP programme**, these cooperatives invested in tools that mattered: **digital platforms, agroecological training, financial literacy, and inclusive leadership**. At the heart of this effort was the expanded use of **PUMA**, a digital member management system that now supports real-time data collection and cooperative planning. Over **15,000 members** were surveyed using **Kobo Collect**, and **42 cooperative leaders** were trained in smartphone use, WhatsApp, and online sales tools—opening up new channels of commerce and communication.

Agroecological methods were also scaled across the network: **composting, biofertilizers, water-saving irrigation, and agroforestry techniques** have improved soil fertility and reduced dependency on external inputs. At the same time, CAPAD worked with partners to strengthen **financial systems, digital inventory, and contract management**—laying a solid foundation for long-term sustainability.

These strategic investments paid off. In 2023–2024, four CAPAD cooperatives won a national **WFP tender** to supply **school canteens**—a first for many of them. With training on **production cost calculation, product certification, and price negotiation**, they entered a competitive public procurement space and delivered successfully. CAPAD's advocacy also led to the removal of VAT on these contracts, increasing their profitability.

This outcome is not accidental. It reflects the capacity of **organized farmers**, when equipped with the right tools and timely support, to operate as professional and accountable economic actors—even amid systemic uncertainty. **Women and youth** were key drivers of this transformation: nearly half of direct beneficiaries were women, and youth took the lead in digital integration and data collection.

What Burundi's cooperatives have shown is clear: even under pressure, strategic, inclusive investment in **local organizations** can create real pathways to **resilience, recognition, and rural economic recovery**.



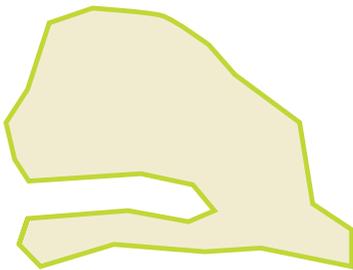
“The actions have made it possible to significantly professionalize the cooperatives, thanks to training and equipment, which strengthens them and their members in the long term”

SEZIBERA Annick, Secrétaire Exécutive



Amplifying farmers' voices in Senegal: advocacy, sovereignty & green finance

IMPACT STORY 9



Senegal

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 1744

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2021): 18%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022): 5%

Value of Agriculture (2024): 17% of GDP

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): CNCR (Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux)

Number of Local Member Organizations: 32 national federations (crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry)

Agri-Agency: ASPRODEB

Project Location: Nationwide (14 regions)

Direct Beneficiaries: 2,723 people during advocacy campaigns (48% women)

Main Sector: Policy advocacy, food sovereignty, access to green finance

From fields to policy: Senegal’s farmers take their seat at the table

In Senegal, agriculture sustains the majority of rural households but farmers are at times underrepresented in the spaces where agricultural and land policies are shaped.

Through the coordinated efforts of **ASPRODEB** and **CNCR** under the **FO4ACP programme**, **32 federations** across **14 regions** of the country with different production systems came together to engage directly in national dialogue on **food systems, land governance, and climate finance**. The work went beyond training or consultation, it positioned farmers as actors in **policy design**.

The FOs mobilized thousands of farmers, nearly half of them **women**, for regional dialogues and national consultations on the revision of Senegal’s **Loi d’Orientation Agro-Sylvo-Pastorale (LOASP)**. Farmers spoke not only about technical needs but about **land rights, youth succession**, and the conditions required for real **food sovereignty**. These mobilisations captured national attention, reaching **policymakers, media, and development partners**.

“We do not want charity — we want policies that work with us,” said Diariatou, a rice producer from Saint-Louis. “Let us protect our land, access credit, and feed our people with our own production.”

Alongside policy engagement, the programme helped prepare federations for **green investment**. A national workshop launched the design of **IGREENFIN 1**, a **climate finance** initiative co-led by CNCR and La Banque Agricole in Senegal. Farmer leaders were trained in **climate project development** and oversight which laid the foundation for long-term **financial inclusion** in **climate adaptation** and **mitigation**.

The result is a visible shift in how farmers’ organizations are perceived and how they operate: **not only as producers but as political and financial stakeholders**. Stronger **internal governance, clearer collective messages**, and more **inclusive leadership** structures—particularly for women and youth—have positioned these FOs to engage with government and donors on equal terms.

Senegal’s farmers are at the table as constructive and confident actors to shape the decisions that will define the **future of agriculture and rural development**.



“We do not want charity — we want policies that work with us. Let us protect our land, access credit, and feed our people with our own production.”

Diariatou, rice producer



Transforming gender roles in agriculture: a replicable model couple approach for inclusive and sustainable farming

IMPACT STORY 10



Women in agriculture: essential work, limited voice

Across many agricultural communities, women play a crucial—yet often invisible—role in production. They sow, weed, harvest, and market crops, yet are frequently excluded from decision-making in both households and cooperatives. Addressing this imbalance requires more than training or access to resources; it requires a transformation in social norms and gender dynamics.

We Effect and other agri-agencies, together with committed national and local FOs, have been actively promoting gender equality and inclusion as a core component of sustainable rural development. One standout example is the *Model Couple* approach implemented for example in Tanzania under the FO-RI programme, in partnership with MVIWAARUSHA, and with BAMSCOS and CREMPA under the FO4ACP programme in Kenya and Malawi.



The Model Couple strategy identifies and supports married or cohabiting couples willing to challenge traditional gender roles. Through targeted gender and agroecology training, the couples are empowered to:

- › Share responsibilities in farming and domestic life,
- › Participate equally in decision-making,
- › Act as local ambassadors for change by influencing peers in their communities.

Facilitated by FO-RI project staff and rooted in the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA), these couples become powerful agents of change. They take part in workshops, media outreach, and peer-to-peer exchanges, inspiring other families to adopt more equitable practices.

“I no longer feel like I am just a housewife. I am a businesswoman, a farmer, and an active member of my community. My husband and I make decisions together, and this has brought us closer and made our family stronger”

Juliana, Gender Champion from Karatu District, Tanzania

Juliana and her husband Deonist from Karatu District are one such couple. Before the programme, financial decisions were made independently and unequally. With GTA training and support from their local FO, they began farming together, sharing both labor and decisions. Juliana’s active involvement not only increased their yields, but also led her to open a tailoring business. Her story has since been featured in radio and TV, inspiring broader societal change.

The Model Couple approach aligns with a broader set of gender-transformative strategies implemented by We Effect and its partner FOs. One key practice is the promotion of dual membership in cooperatives which is a deliberate move to shift from a model where only one (typically male) household member is a co-op member, to one where both partners are included.

This dual membership model:

- › Recognizes women as equal contributors in agricultural work,
- › Gives women access to services, information, and decision-making platforms,
- › Encourages joint planning and financial decision-making at home.

The story continues





In Kenya and Malawi, partner organizations such as BAMSCOS, Meru Union, and CREMPA have embraced this approach, leading to increased participation of women in leadership, greater household collaboration, and a redefinition of gender roles, away from women as unpaid caretakers to full economic partners.

These approaches go beyond technical training. They reshape mindsets, challenge power imbalances, and make cooperatives and households more inclusive. The ripple effect can be seen in higher productivity, more resilient livelihoods, and stronger democratic organizations.

Key Takeaways for Replication:

- › Select change-ready couples: Willingness to transform norms is essential.
- › Embed in FO structures: Link training and support to cooperative systems.
- › Amplify voices: Use community media to spread stories and lessons.
- › Integrate with agroecology: Gender equality and sustainable practices go hand in hand.

The promotion of dual membership is a deliberate shift from a model where only one household member (typically the man) is a cooperative member.





Insights & best practices

Adoption of agroecology & agroforestry practices

Despite growing recognition of agroecology's potential to enhance sustainable agricultural transition, systemic challenges continue to hinder widespread adoption. Fert and the Cereal Grower Association in Kenya confirmed in a local study that low adoption rates were caused by inadequate awareness, lack of practical training, and limited understanding of long-term benefits. Practices that offer immediate and tangible returns, such as pest control, intercropping, and on-farm input production, showed higher levels of adoption. Of the farmers that were trained to be agroecological champions, 80% reported later on that they started producing biopesticides, biofertilizer, compost, and bokashi, demonstrating a clear link between perceived short-term benefits, training support, and adoption rates.



Kickstarting businesses: MWIVAARUSHA's 2023 business plan competition

IMPACT STORY 11



Tanzania

COUNTRY INFO

GDP per capita (2024): USD 1186

Poverty ratio @ USD 3/day (2018): 51%

Prevalence of undernourishment (2022): 20%

Value of Agriculture (2024): 26% of GDP

PROJECT INFO

Supported Organization(s): MVIWAARUSHA

Agri-Agency: AHA

Project Location: Arusha

Main Sector: Youth entrepreneurship

From struggles to sweet success: Joseph's journey in sustainable beekeeping

Joseph, a young entrepreneur from the Engutoto Village in Arusha, faced **financial difficulties** as traditional farming alone was insufficient to sustain his family. He tried to **diversify his income** by purchasing **honey** from the Tabora Region and selling it in Arusha, but his growth was hampered by **limited capital** and **market access**. He ran a modest operation with annual sales ranging from 5 to 40 liters packaging honey in used water bottles.

In 2023, Joseph joined **MVIWAARUSHA** and received entrepreneurship training and business coaching under the **FO4ACP programme, which also supports MVIWAMA**. With expert guidance, he developed a solid business plan and improved his **packaging and labeling techniques**. The turning point in Joseph's journey was winning the **2023 Youth Business Plan Competition**, which provided the capital necessary to expand his operations. This success enabled him to scale his honey orders to **400 liters annually**, significantly improving margins and establishing a reputation as a **progressive entrepreneur**.

Joseph's participation in the Youth Business Plan Competition had a profound impact on his **business growth**. With the prize money, he expanded his beekeeping operation by increasing his hives from 12 to 27. In 2023, he purchased 120 liters of honey for TZS 720,000 and sold it for TZS 1,560,000, achieving a revenue uptick of 116.7%. He also doubled his stingless bee honey sales, purchasing 10 liters for TZS 170,000 and selling it for TZS 220,000, a 29.4% increase. By 2024, his honey purchases rose to 360 liters for TZS 2,160,000, and sales reached TZS 4,680,000, maintaining the trend. Additionally, he bought 25 liters of stingless bee honey for TZS 425,000, selling them for TZS 520,000, realizing a 22.4% increase. The competition facilitated the opening of an **herb shop** managed by his **mother**, adding to the family's **income streams** by selling **natural medicines** mixed with honey.

Joseph's beekeeping practices not only enhanced his business's sustainability but also contributed to **environmental conservation** by **reducing pesticide use**, promoting **tree** and **plant preservation**, and utilizing **minimal land**. His herb shop serves as an **educational platform** on the benefits of natural products and **conservation methods**, actively advocating for **ecological wellbeing**.

Looking ahead, Joseph aims to further **expand honey production** to meet demand using the momentum gained from his competition success. He plans to refine his branding, packaging, and marketing strategies to reach a broader audience. Joseph also intends to **diversify his product offerings** by creating honey-based value-added products like cosmetics and health supplements. Despite challenges with equipment access and modern practice knowledge gaps, he remains committed to **optimizing his operations** and advancing his role in **sustainable entrepreneurship**.

Joseph's story highlights the transformative impact of the **Youth Business Plan Competition**, showcasing how **targeted support** and **training** can empower individuals to drive **economic growth** and **environmental sustainability**, with far-reaching benefits for both their immediate families and broader communities.

Targeted support and training empowers entrepreneurs to grow their income and foster sustainability in their communities.

List of project partners & use of funds

COUNTRY	NATIONAL FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS	AGRI-AGENCY
Benin	UGAM	UPA DI
Benin	PNOPPA	UPA DI
Benin	Fupro, FNPS, CCPSM, CCPS-Save	Afdi
Senegal	CNCR	UPA DI
Senegal	CCPA, FNCAAS, RNCPS, FONGS, UNCAS, FPA, FEPROBA	Asprodeb
Burkina Faso	CPF, UMPLB	Afdi
Burkina Faso	FUPRORIZ, UPPRS, UWERL;UNERIZ	Trias
Guinea	FPFD	Asprodeb
Guinea	CNDH	Asprodeb
Mali	CNOP and its cooperatives	Afdi
Mali	AOPP	Asprodeb
Kenya	CGA	Fert
Kenya	MDCU, BAMSCOS	We Effect
Kenya	FF-SPAK	FFD
Kenya	KENAFF	AHA
Tanzania	TAHA	FFD
Tanzania	MVIVATA, MVIWAMA	AHA
Tanzania	NADO	FFD
Madagascar	Ceffel (Fifata)	Fert
Madagascar	Reseau SOA	Afdi
Burundi	CAPAD	CSA
Malawi	CREMPA	We Effect
Uganda	TUNADO, HODFA	Trias
DR Congo	CONAPAC, COOINDELO, COOPEBAS, COCAMA	Trias

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME COMPONENTS (EUR)

Component 1: Delivery of Economic Services along Priority Value Chains	6.727.149
Component 2: Enabling the Business Environment	1.183.978
Component 3: Institutional Development of FOs	2.367.957
Component 4: Communication & Visibility	484.355
Total	10.763.439

Sources of external data:

Macroeconomic data: Worldbank

Food / Agricultural data: FAOStat

Acronyms and organizations

<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Full Name</i>
AA	Agri-Agencies
AgriCord	Global Alliance of Agri-Agencies supporting Farmers' Organizations
AI	Artificial Insemination
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FO-RI	Farmer-led Research and Innovation
FO4ACP	Farmers' Organizations for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific
GTA	Gender Transformative Approach
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGREENFIN	Initiative for Green Financing in Agriculture
OACPS	Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
PAFO	Pan-African Farmers' Organization
VSLA / AVEC	Village Savings and Loan Association / Association Villageoise d'Épargne et de Crédit
WFP	World Food Programme



Farmers' Organizations by Country

BENIN		
Acronym	Full Name	Website
UGAM	Union des Groupements coopératifs des Agriculteurs Mowossokpo	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063650079924&locale=fr_FR
UCP Djidja	Union Communale des Producteurs de Djidja	/
RC-OPMM	Réseau Coopératif des Organisations Professionnelles de Manioc & Maïs	/
PNOPPA	Plateforme Nationale des Organisations Paysannes et de Producteurs Agricoles du Bénin	https://www.facebook.com/pnoppa.2006
FUPRO	Fédération des Unions de Producteurs du Bénin	https://www.fuprobenin.org
FNPS	Fédération Nationale des Producteurs de Semences	/
CCPSM / CCPS-Save	Coopérative Communale des Producteurs de Semences de Maïs / Coopérative communale de producteurs de soja de Savè	/

BURKINA FASO		
Acronym	Full Name	Website
CPF	Confédération Paysanne du Faso	cpf-bf.org
UNAPOB	Union Nationale des Producteurs d'Oignon du Burkina	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100092428179809&locale=fr_FR
UMPL-B	Union nationale des Mini-laiteries et des Producteurs de Lait au Burkina	https://www.facebook.com/umplb/?locale=fr_FR
FUPRORIZ	Fédération des Unions de Producteurs de Riz	/
UPPRS	Union Provinciale des Producteurs de Riz du Sanmatenga	/
UNERIZ	Union Nationale des Éleveuses de Riz du Burkina Faso	https://www.facebook.com/unerizbf

SENEGAL		
Acronym	Full Name	Website
CNCR	Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux	cncr.org
CCPA	Cadre de concertation des producteurs d'arachide	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063938773863&locale=fr_FR
FNCAAS	Fédération Nationale des Centrales d'Achats du Sénégal	/
RNCPS	Réseau National des Coopératives de Producteurs de Semences	/
FONGS	Fédération des ONG du Sénégal	http://www.fongs.sn
UNCAS	Union Nationale des Coopératives Agricoles du Sénégal	/
FPA	Fédération des Producteurs Autogérés	/
FEPROBA	Fédération des Producteurs de Banane	/

GUINEA		
Acronym	Full Name	Website
FPFD	Fédération des Paysans du Fouta Djallon	/
CNDH	Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme	https://cndh.gw

MALI		
Acronym	Full Name	Website
CNOP	Coordination Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Mali	https://www.cnopmali.org
AOPP	Association des Organisations Professionnelles Paysannes du Mali	https://www.facebook.com/aoppsemences-marketmali

KENYA

CGA	Cereal Growers Association	https://cga.co.ke
MDCU	Meru Dairy Cooperative Union	/
BAMSCOS	Baringo Agricultural Marketing Services Cooperative Society Ltd	/
FF-SPAK	Farm Forestry Smallholder Producers Association of Kenya	https://www.facebook.com/ffspak.org
KENAFF	Kenya National Farmers' Federation	kenaff.org

TANZANIA

TAHA	Tanzania Horticultural Association	https://taha.or.tz
TTGAU	Tanzania Tree Growers Association Union	https://www.ttgau.or.tz
NADO	Njombe Agricultural Development Organization	https://www.nado.or.tz
MVIVATA	Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania	https://www.mviwata.or.tz
MVIWAMA	Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima na Wafugaji wa Mkoa wa Manyara	https://mviwama.or.tz
MVIWAARUSHA	Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Mkoa wa Arusha	https://www.mviwaarusha.or.tz

MADAGASCAR

CEFFEL	Conseil Expérimentation Formation en Fruits & Légumes	/
FIFATA	Fikambanana fampivoarana ny tantsaha / Association pour le progrès des paysans	https://fifata.net
Réseau SOA	Syndicat des Organisations Agricole	https://reseauoa.mg

MALAWI

CREMPA	Central Region Milk Producers Association	https://mwmilkproducers.org/regions/crempa
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BURUNDI

CAPAD	Confédération des Associations des Producteurs Agricoles pour le Développement	https://www.facebook.com/p/Ca-pad-100063128414320
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UGANDA

TUNADO	The Uganda National Apiculture Development Organisation	https://tunadobees.org
HODFA	Hoima District Farmers Association	/

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

CONAPAC	Confédération Nationale des Producteurs Agricoles du Congo	https://www.facebook.com/conapacrdc/?locale=fr_FR
COOINDELO	Coopérative Indenge Lonkoke	/
COCAMA	Coopérative Cacao de Mayumbe	/
COOPEBAS	Coopérative des Basengele	https://www.facebook.com/p/Coopérative-agricole-COOPADlrdc-61557850364668/



AgriCord is a global alliance of 13 agri-agencies, each mandated by farmers' organizations and cooperatives across Africa, Asia, Latin America, Canada, and Europe. Since its establishment in 2003, AgriCord has been dedicated to strengthening farmers' organizations (FOs) worldwide, recognizing them as pivotal actors in achieving climate-resilient agriculture, rural development, and food security.



AgriCord supports farmers' organizations worldwide as key drivers of climate-resilient agriculture, rural development, and food security.

AgriCord's mission is to build resilient, inclusive, and professional FOs that can effectively represent their members, provide essential services, and engage in policy dialogues. Each agri-agency within the alliance offers specialized support tailored to the unique contexts, capacities, goals, and needs of partner FOs. This support encompasses:

- › Organizational Development: Enhancing governance structures, leadership, and management capacities.
- › Economic Services: Facilitating access to markets, finance, and value chain development.
- › Technical Assistance: Promoting sustainable practices, including agroecology and agroforestry.
- › Advocacy and Policy Engagement: Empowering FOs to influence policies affecting the agricultural sector.
- › Resource Mobilization: Support FOs to unlock financing opportunities such as grants and commercial loans.

AgriCord's unique value proposition in FO support programmes lies in its:

- › Farmer-to-Farmer Approach: Leveraging peer-to-peer exchanges to foster mutual learning and solidarity among FOs.
- › Long-Term Commitment: Building enduring partnerships that evolve with the changing needs of FOs.
- › Global Reach with Local Insight: Combining international experience with deep understanding of local contexts.
- › Integrated Services: Offering a holistic suite of services that address the multifaceted needs of FOs.

AgriCord alliance



acodea (Agencia de Cooperación al Desarrollo de la Agricultura)
Country: Spain
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: UPA, FADEMUR, Cooperativas Agro-Alimentarias de España
Website: www.acodea.es



Afdi (Agriculteurs français et développement international)
Country: France
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: FNSEA, APCA, Jeunes Agriculteurs, CNMCCA
Website: www.afdi-opa.org



Agriterra
Country: Netherlands
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: LTO, NCR, NAJK, Vrouwen van nu
Website: www.agriterra.org



AHA (Andreas Hermes Akademie)
Country: Germany
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: DBV
Website: www.andreas-hermes-akademie.de



AsiaDHRRA (Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia)
Region: Asia (Philippines)
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: AFA
Website: www.asiadhrra.org



Asprodeb (Association Sénégalaise pour la promotion du développement à la base)
Country: Senegal
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: CNCR
Website: asprodeb.sn



Cresol AA
Country: Brazil
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: Cresol Confederação
Website: www.cresolagriagencia.org



CSA (Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires)
Country: Belgium
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: FWA
Website: www.csa-be.org



Fert
Country: France
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: Unigrains, AGPB, AGPM, Arvalis
Website: www.fert.fr



FFD (Finnish Agri-Agency for Food and Forest Development)
Country: Finland
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: MTK, Pellervo, ProAgria, SLC
Website: www.ffd.fi



Trias
Country: Belgium
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: Boerenbond, Landelijke Gilden, KLJ, Groene Kring, Ferm
Website: www.trias.ngo



UPA DI (Union des producteurs agricoles – Développement international)
Country: Canada
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: UPA
Website: www.upadi.ca



We Effect
Country: Sweden
Mandating Farmer's Organizations: LRF
Website: www.weeffect.org

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Impact Stories

FO4ACP shows the impact of collaboration in empowering farmers' organizations to build resilience, improve livelihoods, and secure food for their communities.



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