



Access to Seeds
Index

The Rise of the Seed-producing Cooperative in Western and Central Africa

Mapping the Strengths
and Weaknesses of Seed-
producing Cooperatives

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFSTA	Africa Seed Trade Association	NSS	National Seed Service
ASPRODEB	Association Sénégalaise pour la Promotion du Développement à la Base (Senegalese Association for the Promotion of Development)	OHADA	Organisation pour l'Harmonisation en Afrique du Droit des Affaires en Afrique (Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa)
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	ONDR	Office National de Développement de la Riziculture (National Office of Rice Development)
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research	OPV	Open Pollinated Varieties
CILSS	Comité inter état de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel (intergovernmental Committee for Drought Control in Sahelian Countries)	RESOPP	Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et Pastorales du Sénégal (Network of Peasant and Pastoral Organizations of Senegal)
CORAF/ WECARD	Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la recherche agricole et le Développement (West and Central Council for Agricultural Research and Development)	ROPPA	Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Network of Peasant Organizations and Agricultural Producers in West Africa)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West Africa States	SEEDPAG	Seed Producers Association of Ghana
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	SLARI	Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Department for International Development)	SLeSCA	Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency
IAR4D	Integrated Agricultural Research for Development	UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africain (West Africa Economic and Monetary Union)
ICRA	International Centre for development oriented Research in Agriculture.	UNIS	Union Interprofessionnelle des Semences du Sénégal (Senegalese National Seed trade Association)
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics	UNPSB	Union Nationales des producteurs de Semences du Burkina Faso (Senegalese National Seed trade Association)
ICT	Information and communication technology	UPOV	Union pour la Protection des Obtention Végétales (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants)
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IITA	The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture	WAAPP	West Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme
INADES	Institut Africain pour le Développement Economique et social (African Institute for Economic and Social Development)	WASIX	West Africa Seed Information Exchange Platform
ISSD	Integrated Seed Sector Development programme	WASP	West Africa Seed Programme
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute	WFP	World Food Programme
NASC	National Agricultural Seed Council		
NASTAG	National Seed Trade Association of Ghana		
NGO	Non-governmental organization		
NSC	National Seed Committee		

Introduction

In a region where the adoption rate of quality seeds remains remarkably low, it is evident that no local or regional actor involved in the seed industry and capable of delivering quality seeds into the hands of smallholder farmers should be overlooked. Although the Access to Seeds Index was created to encourage seed companies to step up their efforts in this area, regional experts in Western and Central Africa advised us to also look at the role of seed-producing, farmer-led cooperatives.

What we found was both surprising and promising. It is often stated that only 20% of the seed used in sub-Saharan Africa is certified seed from the formal seed sector. The so-called informal seed sector, which covers community-based initiatives and farm-saved seed practices, accounts for the other 80%. Cooperatives are often regarded as part of the informal sector.

Although this may still be correct for a lot of cooperatives – a 2016 survey by the Nigerian government revealed that no fewer than 560 informal farmer groups across the country were engaged in seed production – the statement ignores the fact that in most of Western and Central Africa, seed-producing cooperatives are increasingly being formally recognized as producers of certified seed. They often partner with national and international research institutes to select and test improved varieties and with seed companies to distribute their seeds nationally and regionally through the seed companies' channels.

This study profiles 54 seed-producing cooperatives that were identified through landscaping studies in 20 countries. Strong examples of seed-producing cooperatives were found in four countries – Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal. The situation in eight other countries – Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo – can be characterized as promising. In four countries – Gabon, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and Republic of Congo – no seed-producing cooperatives were identified that are formally recognized or may be in the near future.

General insights and conclusions on the role of seed-producing cooperatives in Western and Central Africa are based on the leading cooperatives in each country. As such, this study gives an indication of the potential of the cooperative sector, rather than providing a representative picture of the sector as a whole.

At the same time, experts have raised concerns about the financial stability of the sector. This is addressed on page 14. The strong examples identified here can serve as an inspiration to others. Yet although the sector seems to be on the rise, more than inspiration will likely be needed to deliver on its potential.

We would like to express our gratitude to the national focal points and members of the Expert Review Committee that have contributed to this study. Also, our thanks go to the funders of the Access to Seeds Index, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and to Agence Française de Développement (AFD) for providing through AgriCord additional funding that made it possible to do this study.

1. Methodology

Motivated by the desire to create a better understanding of the performance of seed-producing cooperatives in Western and Central Africa, 54 leading seed-producing cooperatives were identified and profiled. The focus on leading cooperatives gives an indication of the sector's potential, rather than providing a representative picture of the sector as a whole.

This study provides an overview of the landscaping studies in 20 countries in Western and Central Africa that were conducted to identify and clarify the role of leading seed-producing cooperatives. The country studies were conducted by national focal points. Three leading cooperatives in each country were selected for further evaluation from a longlist of community-based seed organizations and cooperatives registered as seed producers.

To compile the longlists, the national focal points consulted various data sources and agencies such as the National Seed Council, the Ministry of Agriculture, seed certification agencies, farmer-based associations and seed trade unions. To profile the shortlisted cooperatives, the national focal points conducted interviews and surveys and consulted relevant experts. The work was undertaken under the supervision of Mr. Yacouba Diallo, a regional consultant based in Bamako, Mali.

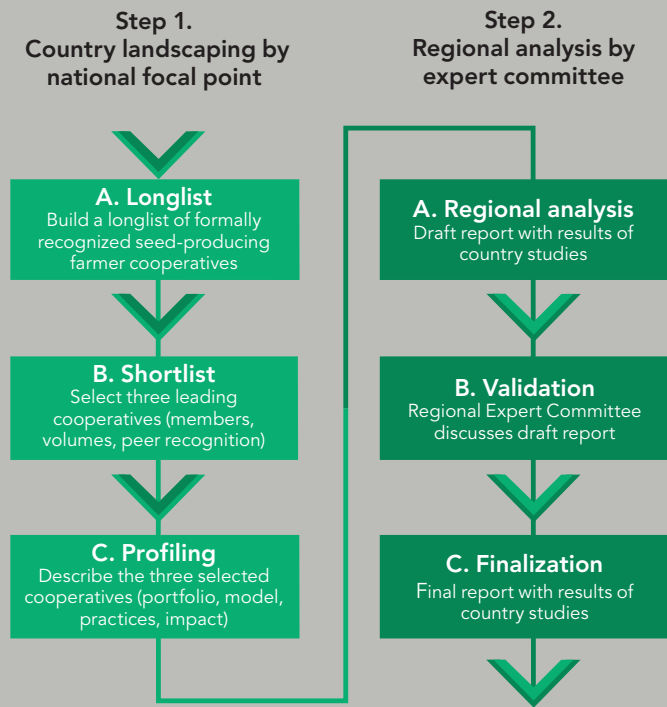
The three leading cooperatives were selected using a set of predefined criteria: (1) number of members; (2) seed volumes; (3) geographic coverage; and (4) peer recognition. The framework and selection criteria for the study were defined by the Regional Expert Review Committee (ERC) at its meeting in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on October 10, 2017. The ERC convened again in Accra, Ghana on April 17, 2018 to discuss and validate the research findings and draw general conclusions.

Although various experts were involved in the verification and validation process, the quick-scan nature of the study means that not every detail could be checked and verified. The selection of good agricultural practices was guided by ERC advice but was also influenced by the quality of the data available on an individual cooperative level.

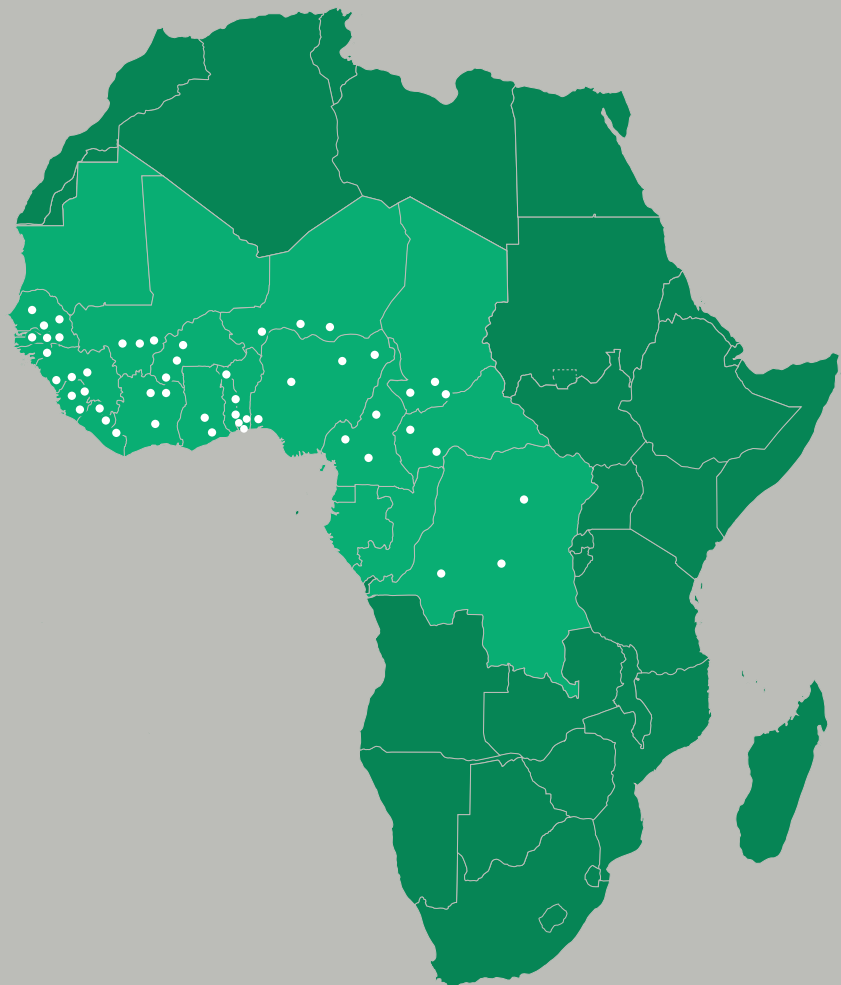
List of country focal points, responsible for country profiles

Country	Focal point
Benin	Isabelle Ahouandjinou Megbleto, President, Benin National Seed Trade Association (ANASEB)
Burkina Faso	Semde R. Abdoulaye, Seed Service Expert, Ministry of Agriculture
Cameroon	Ernert Ngoumbé, National Seed Service, Ministry of Agriculture
Central African Republic	Hervé Mbedane Moyoukpena, Agricultural Engineer
Chad	Moundibaye Allarangaye, Breeder, National Research Center
Côte d'Ivoire	Esse Koudia, National Seed Service, Ministry of Agriculture
Democratic Republic of Congo	Antoine Frangoie, Agronomist and Seed Expert
Gabon	Calixte Mbeng, Agronomist, Ministry of Agriculture
Ghana	Solomon Ansah Gyan, National Seed Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture
Guinea	Moussa Kane, President, Niger National Seed Trade Association (APIDIA)
Guinea-Bissau	Kaoussou Diombera, Focal Point, AGIR
Liberia	Julius M. Bass, National Coordinator of the Farmers Union Network of Liberia
Mali	Mamadou Kayentao, President, National Seed Trade Association (ASSEMA)
Niger	Baina Danjimo, National Seed Specialist, WASP
Nigeria	Okelola Sunday Folarin, Seed Production Specialist, National Agricultural Seed Council
Republic of Congo	Zangtinda Marcel Ouedraogo, Agronomist and Consultant
Senegal	Adama Keita, National Seed Specialist, WASP/WAAP
Sierra Leone	Turay Momoh Yusif, Acting Head, Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA)
The Gambia	Fayinkeh Mahamadou, President, NACOFAG and ROPPA Board Member
Togo	August Essiomle, Agronomist, Ministry of Agriculture

The cooperative study took a two-step approach:



The analysis is based on the profiles of 54 leading seed-producing cooperatives across the region:



2. The Rise of the Seed-producing Cooperative

It is only in the past two decades that many of the seed-producing cooperatives included in this study have been formally recognized as certified seed producers. This development was spurred by the privatization of national seed sectors in the 1980s and '90s.



3. Five Key Insights into the Potential of Seed-producing Cooperatives In Western and Central Africa

A significant part of the seed used by smallholders in Western and Central Africa is currently produced by farmer cooperatives. They are often grouped into the informal sector. But that ignores the fact that in recent years many of these cooperatives have become formally recognized by the authorities and are partners in the value chains of research agencies, seed companies and NGO's. Five insights on current performance of leading cooperatives shine a different light on the status and potential of seed cooperatives.

1 Cooperatives are part of the formal seed sector

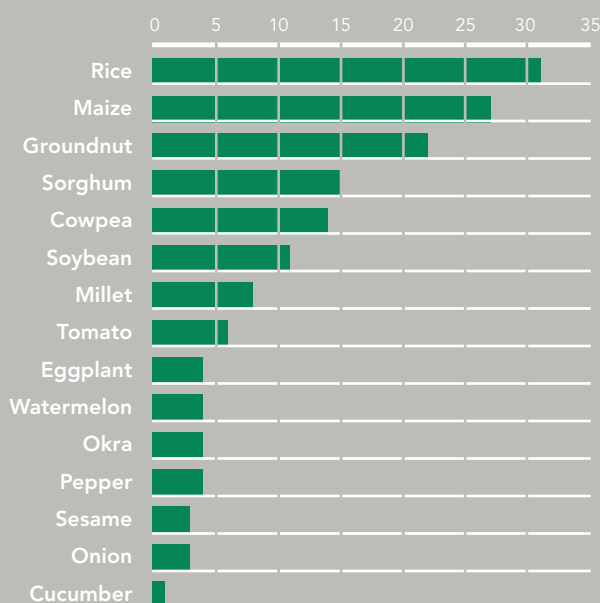
Many seed-producing cooperatives are formally recognized and as such should be regarded as part of the formal seed sector. Their role is described in regional and national regulations, they have governance structures in place and are partners in the value chains of research agencies, seed companies and NGOs. In many counties, they constitute the basis of the private seed sector.

In 15 of the countries studied, cooperatives were identified that have been formally recognized as seed producers by the authorities. In Burkina Faso, no fewer than 54 formally recognized seed-producing cooperatives were identified. In Senegal, 32 such cooperatives were identified. The degree of formalization differs between countries. In Togo, ten of the 18 seed-producing cooperatives have already been formally recognized and the other eight are currently going through the registration process. In Nigeria, a 2016 survey of the informal seed sector identified 560 farmer groups engaged in seed production across the country. Only two have been formally recognized and two others have commenced the formalities.

2 Cooperatives introduce improved varieties

Seed-producing cooperatives do not have their own breeding programs but source their seeds from national and international research institutes. In some cases, partnerships with research institutes include variety testing and participatory variety selection. As such, seed-producing cooperatives play an important role in introducing and making improved varieties available.

Many seed-producing cooperatives follow the model where foundation seeds are produced by the national research institute and cooperatives in turn produce certified seeds from them. Depending on the cooperative's level of maturity and whether national legislation allows it, seed production may go a step further. For instance, Union Madda Ben de Falwel in Niger works with ICRISAT on variety testing and participatory variety selection. It even produces foundation seed for ICRISAT's Seed Unit. As a result of this partnership, four new millet varieties have been introduced. The model can be found in other countries as well. Coopérative Agricole de Niassan and Coopérative Agricole de Bama in Burkina Faso produce foundation seed for the national research institute. CORIDEK in Democratic Republic of Congo is involved in participatory variety selection projects with the national research agency and IITA. Cooperatives in Mali are involved in variety testing with the national research agency and ICRISAT. In Côte d'Ivoire, Société Coopérative Womiengon de Korhogo reports having introduced three newly released rice varieties. In Liberia, two cooperatives have introduced new rice varieties developed by AfricaRice.



Seed cooperatives work on a diverse portfolio, including cereals, legumes and vegetables. Rice, maize and groundnut most often found on cooperative portfolios.

3 Cooperatives produce certified seed

What sets the formal seed sector apart from the informal seed sector is the production of certified seed of a high quality and purity. The vast majority of the seed-producing cooperatives in this study have been formally registered as certified seed producers. Depending on national legislation, being certified includes quality controls during production and before distribution.

In Sierra Leone, 20 cooperatives are registered and supervised by the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA). Cooperatives produce certified seed as mandated by the National Seed Act. SLeSCA inspects the seed fields and tests the seeds before distribution. SLeSCA even advises cooperatives not to have a large number of members with no clustered farmlands as this complicates quality control. In response to this strong focus on quality, Feika Women Farmers' Association in Sierra Leone established a committee specifically responsible for overseeing seed quality. Whereas a cooperative like Savana Semence in Togo relies on the support of the national Institute of Advice and Technical Support (ICAT), others like SOCOOPRACE in Cameroon have their own production coordinator and two technicians in charge of monitoring seed production. Seed-producing cooperatives in Senegal make use of technical support staff provided by their umbrella organizations.

4 Cooperatives work on complementary crops

The portfolios of seed-producing cooperatives feature crops generally not found in the portfolios of seed companies. These include legumes as well as propagation material for manioc and plantain. A number of cooperatives also produce seeds for (African) vegetables. In general, cooperatives produce OPV seeds. This is complementary to seed companies, which tend to focus on hybrids, although some cooperatives also have the capacity to produce hybrids.

In Liberia, seed-producing cooperatives can be found with a broad portfolio, including vegetables. According to the country study, this can be attributed to the work of the Cooperative Development Agency, established by the government to regulate and support cooperatives in diversifying their portfolio. As an example, the country's largest seed-producing cooperative, Guma Mendi Farmers' Cooperative, produces seeds for local vegetables such as eggplant and okra as well as maize, rice, soybean and cowpea. Tekelaneh Farmers' Association in Sierra Leone produces seed for pigeon pea and planting material for cassava, while COOPAD in Senegal produces fonio. A few cooperatives also work on local varieties, such as COPRORIZ COOP CA in Côte d'Ivoire, which not only produces rice seed for improved varieties from research institutes such as AfricaRice, but also for traditional rice varieties. Some cooperatives, such as COOPROSEM in Mali and CAPLABAM in Cameroon, produce hybrid seeds for sorghum and maize respectively.

5 Cooperatives distribute on a national scale through partnerships

Distribution by seed-producing cooperatives themselves remains fairly local, which is not necessarily a problem, particularly in regions where no other formal seed actors distribute certified seeds. However, through partnerships with seed companies, government agencies and NGOs, the seed produced by cooperatives is distributed nationally and in some cases to neighboring countries.

Seed-producing cooperatives in Liberia report that their seed is distributed in a 8-12km radius, which is typical for cooperatives that distribute seed themselves. Some build their own distribution networks to extend their reach. Jirkur Seed Cooperative Society in Nigeria operates a network of agro-dealers at village level in Borno State, providing a much-needed service to farmers in a region plagued by Boko Haram. Kamuyu Agribusiness Centre, which established a national research center in the northwest of the country, is actively expanding into neighboring districts via a network of distribution agents and outgrower schemes. Others operate in partnership to reach farmers beyond their own region. Coopérative Agricole de Bama in Burkina Faso sells its seed at the local level directly to farmers and works at the national level with seed company NAFASO, which also exports to other countries in the region. COOPROSEM follows the same model though its partnership with seed company Faso Kaba. In the Central African Republic, Bouar sells its seed to WFP for further distribution. Yada Iri de Chadakori in Niger has outgrower contracts with FAO and seed farm FESA, both of which distribute on a national scale.



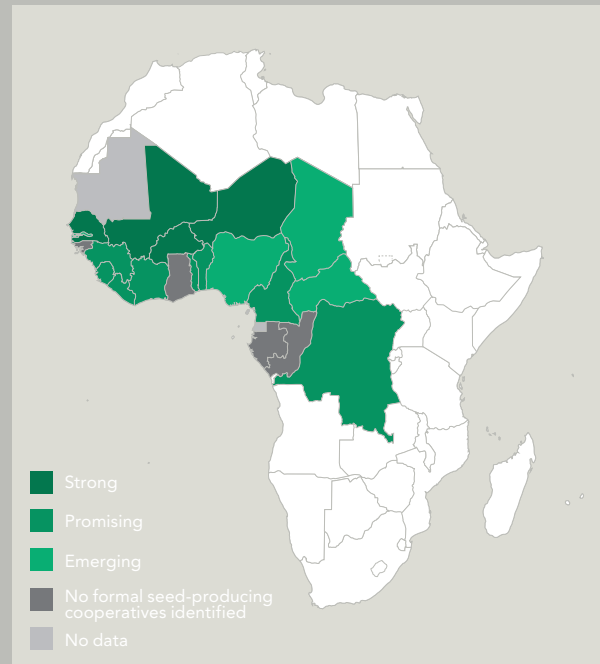
In nearly half of the countries, partnerships between cooperatives and research institutes involve variety selection and testing

4. Assessment of Current Business Models

The analysis of current business models was specifically guided by the question: can seed-producing cooperatives play a role in delivering improved seed varieties into the hands of smallholder farmers? With no breeding of their own and generally limited marketing and sales capacity beyond their own region, this requires partnerships. Despite the constraints, several strong examples of effective business models were identified.

In the most basic model, a seed cooperative sources foundation seed from national authorities or programs organized by FAO or WFP which is used for multiplication by its members. Seeds are distributed among members and sold to neighboring farmers. More advanced seed-producing cooperatives partner with national or international research institutes to test and select varieties and work with seed companies, NGOs or government agencies to distribute the seed. Whether these examples can be identified in countries not only depends on the maturity of cooperatives but also on the presence of research and distribution partners, which can be influenced by the quality of the regulatory environment.

Based on an assessment of business models, which looked at the maturity of cooperatives in each part of the business model and the existence of partnerships, strong examples of seed-producing cooperatives were found in four countries - Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal. The situation in seven other countries - Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo - can be characterized as promising.



Strong examples of seed-producing cooperatives were identified in four countries, the situation in eight countries has been characterized as promising.

Business model used for the assessment

Research & development	Breeding	No. cooperatives with own breeding programs identified	
	Selection and testing	7	Only sourcing from research institute
		11	Sourcing and support from research institute
		22	Partnerships with research institute
Seed production	Seed multiplication	49	Certified seed
		4	Hybrids
		4	Early generation seed
	Seed processing	25	Manual
8		Third party machinery	
	4	Own equipment	
Seed marketing & sales	Distribution	39	Local
		16	Extended network
		24	Through partnerships
	Adoption	8	Demonstration
		7	Promotion
		24	Capacity building

Variety testing and selection

Although seed-producing cooperatives do not have their own breeding programs, they do know the preferences of their members and clients and are familiar with the local growing conditions. Therefore, more advanced cooperatives partner with national and international research institutes to select and test varieties that are suitable for local conditions.

Union Madda Ben de Falwel in Niger is probably one of the few cooperatives that can claim it has an ICRISAT seed variety named after it. This reflects the far-reaching cooperation with ICRISAT's millet breeding program. Members of Madda Ben work with ICRISAT on participatory variety selection and variety testing. So far, four new millet varieties have been introduced as a result of this cooperation.

Seed production

Seed-producing cooperatives provide training and support to their members to ensure that the seed is produced according to quality standards set by national authorities. Some have their own technical staff in-house or use the technical support services of their umbrella organizations. Others rely on technical support provided by government agencies. The latter can be cost effective, although it can make cooperatives reliant on outside services for their core business.

Coopérative Agricole de Bama in Burkina Faso has 200 seed producers operating in irrigated land, which means it can produce seeds in the rainy season and the dry season. It produces commercial seed as well as early generation seed for the national research institute INERA and seed company NAFASO. In cooperation with its partners, it trains 10-15 new seed producers annually and provides capacity-building services to existing growers.

Seed processing

The vast majority of cooperatives report that seed processing (threshing, cleaning and sorting) is done manually. Some make use of the facilities of public agencies, as is the case in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, or have contracts with private seed companies that have seed-processing plants, as in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.

Coopérative Sikolokoloton in Mali produces OPV seed for millet, sorghum, maize and cowpea that it distributes in its own region. It is one of the few cooperatives that reported having its own seed treatment and conditioning unit. The unit has a capacity of over 10 tons per day.

Seed distribution

Distribution activities vary across the region. For many cooperatives, seed distribution remains fairly local, although some have set up their own distribution networks. In some cases, federations or national umbrella organizations of seed-producing cooperatives are responsible for nationwide distribution, such as FUPRO in Benin, RNCPS in Senegal and UNPSB in Burkina Faso. Others benefit from contracts with seed companies. Although some cooperatives distribute seed in various package sizes, in general the seed is distributed without labeling or branding, which would be helpful to build customer recognition and loyalty.

Jirkur Seed Cooperative Society in Nigeria was set up by a group of community seed producers in Borno State to continue the sustainable supply of quality seed in the region after an IITA-supported project ended. In 2010, it was one of the first cooperatives to be officially registered by the National Agricultural Seed Council. Initially consisting of ten members, it has now grown to 200 members. Its production has also increased, from 50 tons to nearly 1,000 metric tons annually. Through a network of agro-dealers at village level, it has progressively increased its market share and is currently the main certified seed distributor in northeastern Nigeria.

Adoption strategies and capacity building

Although providing agricultural training to its members is a regular activity for cooperatives, few seem to offer these services to customers. Demonstration plots, field days and the use of local radio and posters are among the most common promotional strategies. In some cases, cooperatives participate in donor-funded capacity-building programs for women farmers, such as Coopérative de Paoskoto in Senegal and Société Coopérative Chongagnigui in Côte d'Ivoire.

Groupe d'Initiative Commune Nguégoué Thomas in Cameroon specializes in the production of seed potato. It currently produces six varieties that are mainly sold locally. As part of the cooperative's after-sales strategy, buyers can register for a (paid) training program. As part of a train-the-trainer program, cooperative members trained 15 government officials on roots and tubers.

5. Performance on ICT, Youth and Women

At the request of the Expert Review Committee (ERC), the study paid special attention to the performance of seed-producing cooperatives on topics that are currently high on the development agenda: integrating ICT solutions in business models, engaging youth in agriculture and the position of women farmers. There is room for improvement on all three.



Use of ICT

Smallholder farmers can greatly benefit from ICT to facilitate the transmission of farming-related information and business transactions. Even remote farmers can have instantaneous access to a wide range of data and services, provided there is some form of connectivity. This is why it is salient to know how seed-producing cooperatives use ICT in their daily business. Unfortunately, Western and Central African countries differ greatly in terms of the reliability and affordability of access to mobile networks and internet, with a significant proportion of rural areas still without any form of ICT.

Generally, most cooperatives rely on mobile communications to share information on growing parameters, agronomic advice, weather forecasts and seed planting instructions. Several cooperatives in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia also depend on mobile payment solutions. More specifically, CAMSEED in Cameroon, although not shortlisted for this study, reported the use of mobile communications and payments to ship seed directly to customers in remote areas.

Several cooperatives clearly lead the way in terms of ICT use. In Mali, UPLC and COOPROSEM use the web, together with local radio, to reach farmers. Savana Semence in Togo uses WhatsApp and wasix.net (West Africa Seed Information Exchange). This website was created by CORAF for the West Africa Seed Program to gather information and analysis related to seed sector development, facilitate the exchange of ideas, experience and best practices among stakeholders, disseminate information on seed demand across markets and aggregate seed supply data.

Other countries do not have sufficient infrastructure or it remains too sparse or expensive for seed-producing cooperatives to use. This is the case in the Central African Republic, where costs are high and internet use is still extremely low. In Niger, Maddan Ben and Yada Iri still use local radio as it remains a much more effective tool.



Making agriculture appealing for a new generation of farmers

Training a new generation of farmers that has access to land and credit is key for ensuring sustainable food production. With a few exceptions, however, cooperatives have limited programs and no detailed information targeting young farmers.

Among the youngest cooperatives, AGAN in Nigeria has about 500 young farmers. Similarly, in Burkina Faso, 80% of Douana's members and 40% of Bama's are young, although it is not clear what age range this covers. Some cooperatives have training activities for young farmers, including BELACD and APDI in Chad, Pakao-Jogou in The Gambia and ULPC in Mali. In Sierra Leone, young farmers can receive training. Savana Semence in Togo provides access to credit for its young members.

It is not clear why seed-producing cooperatives in Western and Central Africa do not address the issue of young farmers better. In Cameroon, the lack of young farmers is acknowledged, as the members of the Nguegoue Thomas cooperative are, on average, 45 years old. It is unclear whether the cooperative structure is less appealing to younger farmers, whether cooperatives have other priorities or whether the lack of young members is simply a reflection of a phenomenon occurring across the agricultural sector.



Special programs for women farmers

Access to land, seeds, inputs and training is particularly problematic for a large proportion of women farmers. Seed companies therefore have a role to play in ensuring that women farmers have access to quality seeds, since they may not farm under the same conditions as their male counterparts. In Western and Central Africa, seed-producing cooperatives vary significantly in their approaches to women farmers. Although women-only seed-producing cooperatives do exist in several countries, notably Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, most seed-producing cooperatives do not address women.

In Sierra Leone, all the shortlisted seed-producing cooperatives are majority female. They provided evidence of targeting women in their training, extension and demonstration activities. In neighboring Liberia, at least four women's cooperatives produce seeds. The three shortlisted seed-producing cooperatives, which are male dominated, have special programs targeting women farmers through Village Savings Loan Associations (VSLAs). These allow women to save their income and gain access to credit.

In other countries, the situation varies significantly. In The Gambia, cooperatives report helping women secure land for seed production. In Mali, two of the main cooperatives address women specifically, either through groundnut seed multiplication or training on inputs and equipment handling. Savana Semence in Togo also helps women gain access to credit. In other countries, seed-producing cooperatives do not have any specific programs targeting women. Madda Ben in Niger offers some positions for women in processing and packaging, but this reflects a traditional division of labor in the seed industry and does not address women farmers specifically.

Some cooperatives have women in senior governance positions, such as Banni Certified Seed Growers, which has three women in its management committee. Jirkur Seed Cooperative Society in Nigeria is one of the few cooperatives known to have a woman as the CEO.

Three leading seed-producing cooperatives in Sierra Leone

Cooperative name	Kamuyu Agribusiness Centre	Feika Women Farmers Association	Tekelaneh Farmers' Association
Location(s)	Feradugu, Karene District, Northwestern Region	Munu-Thala, Kambia District, Northwestern Region	Rokupr, Kambia District, Northwestern Region
Number of members	150 Female: 90	148 Female: 100	140 Female: 95
Number of farmers reached	1,500	1,150	1,122

6. Concluding Remarks and Expert Review

While seed-producing cooperatives have the potential to improve the availability of quality seeds of improved varieties, national focal points and experts have also raised concerns. Cooperatives in Western and Central Africa have gone through cycles of success and failure. The collapse of seed-producing cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire in 2011 is an example of the latter. To sustain the rise of seed-producing cooperatives identified in this report, further professionalization is needed.

The business model assessment indicates that seed multiplication is the core business of seed-producing cooperatives. In some instances, cooperatives have the capacity to produce hybrid and early generation seed. Partnerships with research institutes enable cooperatives to select and test new varieties, and in many cases this has resulted in the introduction of new varieties. Although partnerships with companies, NGOs and public institutes can enable wider distribution, seed marketing still appears weak. Experts question whether excelling in multiplication alone is a viable business model in the long term.

The focal point responsible for the study on cooperatives in Togo raised concerns about the marketing skills of the cooperatives in his country. There is a lack of marketing plans, and seeds are sold in generic packaging without labeling. This means not only that cooperatives are failing to provide farmers with information on the product bought; it also means that cooperatives cannot build a base of returning customers. The results from the other countries indicate this is an issue across the region.

Governance can also be a weak point. The focal point responsible for the study in Liberia pointed out that a lack of support and protection from the government has made some cooperatives vulnerable to individuals who have taken over and used leadership positions to advance their own interests. The Senegalese expert underlined the need for a well-implemented governance model with clear checks and balances between the governance bodies. Audits by governments should not only look at the books but also at how a cooperative works in practice.

In its meeting in Accra, Ghana on April 17, 2018, the Expert Review Committee (ERC) overseeing this study added that the long-term viability of seed-producing cooperatives can be problematic. The ERC regretted the general lack of long-term business plans and well-defined business models. Although outgrower partnerships with seed companies, donors and public institutes can ensure that the seed produced is distributed at a large scale, some also fear that this makes cooperatives vulnerable when such a partnership is not built on a long-term business plan.

A performance dashboard for seed-producing cooperatives

Helping cooperatives across the region to learn from each other could be a good approach for professionalizing the sector. The business model assessment demonstrated clear differences in the maturity of cooperatives. Insights in this area could help cooperatives determine their development process compared to their peers.

One of the scenarios discussed at the start of the study was including seed-producing cooperatives in the Regional Access to Seeds Index for Western & Central Africa. The performance of the cooperatives would then be evaluated against the performance of seed companies. The ERC agreed that the study indicates that different business models are incomparable, which would lead to an unfair assessment of cooperatives.

A separate index focused on cooperatives was discussed, although experts agreed that cooperatives might be better served by an individual dashboard showing where they are in their development. This should be accompanied by dashboards for national governments, giving an insight into the quality of the enabling environment needed for cooperatives to thrive.

Such a dashboard should also include a business model assessment. In addition, the ERC underlined that such a dashboard should not overlook the basics. A dashboard measuring the performance of cooperatives should include: (1) strength of the governance model; (2) strength of professional book-keeping operations; (3) revenue model; (4) business strategy; and (5) marketing plan.

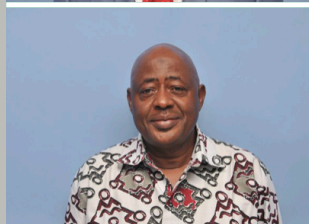
Regional Expert Review Committee for Western and Central Africa



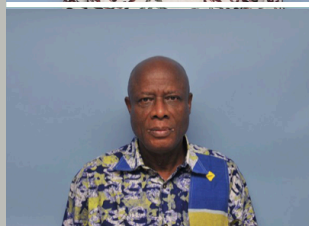
1. **Kodjo Agbegnido**
Agribusiness and Marketing Specialist, CORAF



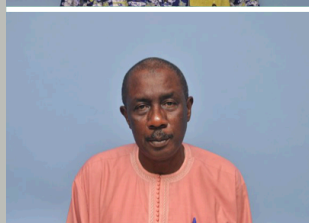
2. **Amadou Moustapha Beye**
Seed System Specialist, AfricaRice



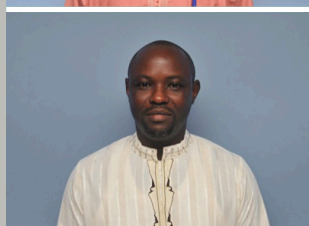
3. **Issoufou Kapran**
Program Officer Seed Production & Dissemination, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)



4. **Kouamé Miezan**
Executive Director, AfricaSeeds



5. **Ousmane Ndiaye**
Director, Association Sénégalaise pour la Promotion du Développement par la Base (ASPRODEB), representing ROPPA



6. **Folarin Sunday Okelola**
Senior Technical Advisor to the Director General, National Agricultural Seeds Council in Nigeria



7. **Yacouba Diallo**
Research Consultant Regional Access to Seeds Index for Western & Central Africa

8. **Richard Olafare**
President, Seed Entrepreneurs Association of Nigeria (SEEDAN)

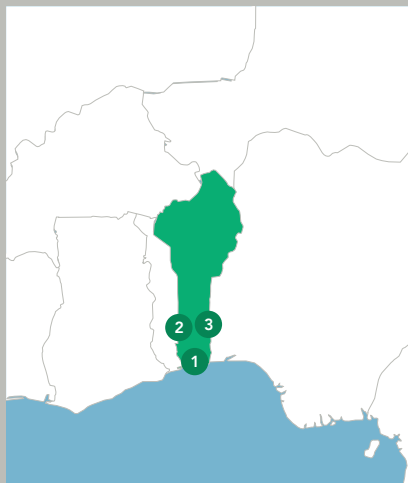
Richard Olafare was represented by Adigun Stephen Oludapo at the first ERC meeting in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on October 10, 2017.

7. Country Profiles

Country-specific profiles were developed by national focal points. After compiling a longlist of community-based seed organizations and cooperatives registered in the country as seed producers, three leading cooperatives were selected for further profiling. For the longlists, national focal points consulted various data sources and agencies such as the National Seed Council, the Ministry of Agriculture, seed-certification agencies, farmer-based associations and seed trade unions. To profile the shortlisted cooperatives, the national focal points conducted interviews and surveys and consulted relevant experts. The profiles of the seed-producing cooperatives are based on the information provided by cooperatives and submitted by the national focal points. The quick-scan nature of the study means that not every detail, such as volumes of seed produced, could be checked and verified.



7.1 Benin



Seed-producing cooperatives in Benin

During the 1990s, Benin experienced several political and socioeconomic changes. The 1991 agricultural policy reforms, in particular, transformed the farming sector. To improve the organization of the sector, the government became less directly involved and transferred responsibilities to local farming organizations with autonomous decision-making powers. This implied a larger role for cooperatives. However, as the government limited its role, private companies, including cooperatives, struggled to embrace their new and expanded responsibilities. Nowadays, the government’s rural economic development policy is aligned with the cooperative model. In addition, OHADA, the treaty to unify regional business law, established a clear and favorable legal framework for cooperatives, contributing to their good governance and competitiveness. Large federal and national umbrella organizations have a dominant role in structuring seed-producing cooperatives. This role has its roots in the dismantling of SONAPRA, the state-run company that coordinated 90% of the commercial seed sector until 2008.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
ANASEB	n/a	60 groups	Rice Maize Soybean	●	●	●	National	n/a
FNPS	n/a	n/a	Rice Maize Soybean		●	●	National	1,100
ANAF	n/a	n/a	Maize		●	●	National	n/a

1 Association Nationale des Semenciers du Bénin (ANASEB)

Created in 2006 following the liberalization of the seed sector, ANASEB is Benin’s major seed organization and coordinates around 60 seed producers around the country. Its main goal is to strengthen the foundations of an effective and sustainable national seed industry. It supports the organizational capacities of its members, contributes to the improvement of production, processing, and storage infrastructure, and seeks to strengthen the technical and economic capacity of its members. It produced about 80,000 tons of seed in 2016/17. Also ten seed companies are members of the association who are responsible for commercializing and distributing the seeds produced, which reach about a third of farmers in Benin. It collaborates with INRAB, the national agricultural research agency, on variety trials for rice, soybeans and some vegetables. To ensure production meets quality standards, ANASEB’s members are monitored by state agencies. With assistance from the World Vegetable Center and INRAB, certain ANASEB members have been trained on seed-production norms for local varieties of tomatoes, hot pepper and African herb species.

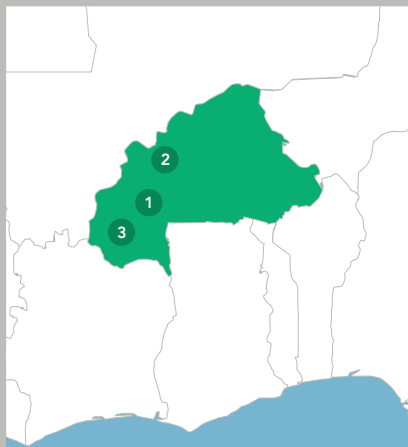
2 Fédération nationale des producteurs de semences (FNPS)

This organization was created in 2016 as part of the CORAF West Africa Seed Program (WASP). Producing about 2,500 tons of maize, rice and soybean seeds and reaching around 1,000 farmers a year, FNPS is present throughout Benin. It adheres to national and OHADA norms on quality controls, record-keeping and certification. Similar to ANASEB, its seeds are commercialized through seed companies.

3 Association Nationale des Femmes Agricultrices du Bénin (ANAF)

Established in 2007, ANAF is a women-run organization that seeks to improve the living and working conditions of women farmers and promotes their strategic interests. Around 2,800 local organizations are members of ANAF, and some of these produce seeds. Very few seeds are distributed to external parties, as most seeds are internally commercialized. ANAF produces about 2,500 tons of seed a year of all varieties. It also collaborates with various international organizations, including USAID, UN Women and GIZ, on various non-seed related projects focused on supporting entrepreneurship of women farmers and promoting good agricultural practices.

7.2 Burkina Faso



Seed-producing cooperatives in Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso's economy is dependent on the farming sector, employing over 80% of the population. Agriculture therefore represents the main source of economic growth as well as being key to food security and nutrition. Successive governments have introduced various reforms to develop agriculture in the long run, notably two regulations that seek to promote the widespread adoption of improved varieties: the 2006 law on seeds and the harmonized seed regulation from ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS. Further measures have been put in place to structure the rural sector around umbrella organizations. This has led to the creation of Groupements de Production Semencière (GPS) and other farming cooperatives in regions including Sourou, Kou and Bagré. These cooperatives are part of the national seed trade association l'Union Nationale des Producteurs Semenciers du Burkina Faso (UNPSB).

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Coopérative Agricole de Bama	1,000	200	Rice Cowpea	●	●	●	National	1,500
Coopérative Agricole de Niassan	210	60	Rice Maize		●	●	National	2,500
Coopérative Inekouvi	147	50	Rice Maize Cowpea		●	●	National	3,500

1 Coopérative Agricole de Bama

Of the 1,000 members that make up this cooperative, 200 are dedicated to the production of rice and maize seeds. Working in close partnership with the national agricultural research agency INERA, Bama produces about four tons of breeder seeds yearly. The cooperative is also contracted to produce foundation seed for NAFASO, a private seed company with a regional presence. This means that Bama's seeds indirectly reach international markets. It also produces around 750 tons of certified seeds per year for the local market. Its production is treated with insecticides. Bama has a democratic governance structure, with a managing board comprising nine members and a control committee with three members, each elected for three years. Together with INERA, Bama trains about a dozen new seed producers annually and formally registers them, in an effort to strengthen the current production capacity. With NAFASO, Bama has introduced two new rice varieties and aims to have them registered in the national catalog.

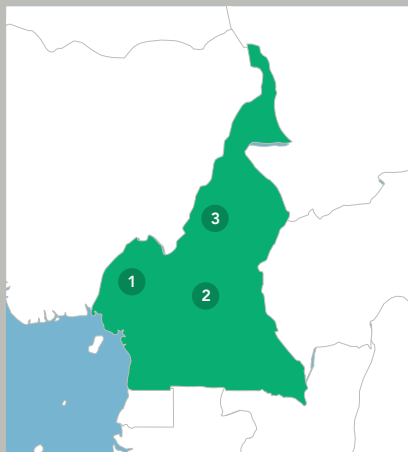
2 Coopérative Agricole de Niassan (CANI)

This cooperative has 210 members, 60 of which produce seeds. Its governance structure is identical to Bama. It produces rice foundation seed with INERA as well as certified rice and cowpea seed. It also produces about 50 tons of rice foundation seed that are distributed regionally and nationally through its partnership with seed company Bikaba kani, which buys the under a government subsidy program. Locally, CANI sells its seeds directly to neighboring farmers.

3 Coopérative Inekouvi de Douna

Around 80% of Douna's 147 members are young farmers, and around 50 members produce about 160 tons of rice, maize and cowpea seeds annually. The production is sold locally and nationally through a government subsidy program for seeds. From 2009 to 2011 the cooperative benefited from technical and financial support from FAO, that made fertilizer and foundation seed available and bought the produced certified seed back. The cooperative was founded by producers of neighboring villages. It is part of a departmental federation of cooperatives and its board members are democratically elected.

7.3 Cameroon



Seed-producing cooperatives in Cameroon

Since 2010, the Cameroon government has implemented a growth and employment strategy in which the agricultural and rural sectors have a major role to play. To boost agricultural production and competitiveness, a national farming investment plan aims to support the research and development of improved varieties with high yields. Three government actors are responsible for seed sector development: the agricultural research institute (IRAD), the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Council for Seeds and Breeders' Rights (CONSOV). The most dynamic cooperatives can be found in the western and northwestern regions. These cooperatives have good economic performance and follow democratic governance structures. In general, though, cooperatives do not follow a robust business model. Sales are highly seasonal and local, rarely going beyond the village market. Bean, soybean and potato seeds are an exception: they are traded nationally and sometimes even internationally.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
GIC Nguegoue Thomas	26	26	Potato		●	●	National	n/a
SOCOOPRACE	65	65	Maize	●	●	●	Regional	1,500
CAPLABAM	127	127	Maize	●	●	●	National	5,000

1 Groupe d'Initiative Commune Nguegoue Thomas

Exclusively focusing on potatoes, this 26-member cooperative produces about 3,500 tons and six varieties, meeting 40% of local demand. The seed potatoes are certified by the Ministry of Agriculture, and about 70% of the production is sold through government subsidy programs. Although GIC Nguegoue Thomas only sells nationally, there is a high demand in Gabon for seed potato. The cooperative receives support from IRAD, and its production is controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture. The cooperative employs two full-time technicians who monitor production and select appropriate seeds. As a form of customer service, GIC Nguegoue Thomas organizes paid training seminars for the customers to which it sells seed.

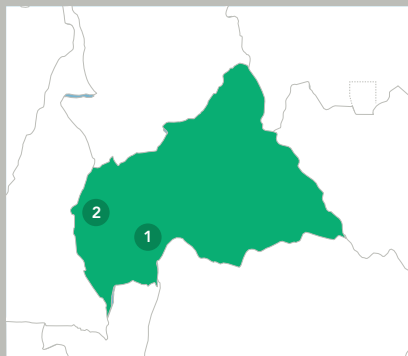
2 SOCOOPRACE COOP-CA

The second-largest seed producer after IRAD, SOCOOPRACE has 65 members. Its maize seeds reach about 1,500 smallholder farmers, and three large customers each buy about 1 ton of hybrid maize. It also sells some cassava seeds locally. SOCOOPRACE works with IRAD and IITA to strengthen the capacities of the members multiplying seeds. Formally recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture, SOCOOPRACE abides by the OHADA regulations on cooperatives. It is administered by a board of seven members and has a supervisory board with an accountant to verify its annual reports. There are also three employees: a production coordinator and two technicians in charge of monitoring seed production. Issues arise when the cooperative fails to produce enough seeds, causing prices to spike and farmers to source their seeds elsewhere. SOCOOPRACE has local agents to ensure customers have the right training and to oversee the growing performance. Currently, the cooperative is experimenting with off-season seed production.

3 Coopérative des Planteurs de Bamboutos (CAPLABAM)

With 127 members and 100 ton annually produced, CAPLABAM is located in the Western province. Its seeds are sold across Cameroon but are also shipped to the borders with Congo, Equatorial Guinea and the Central African Republic. However, export rules are difficult and the cooperative sells seeds to retailers straddling the borders. It reaches about 5,000 smallholder farmers. CAPLABAM sells only one kind of hybrid maize seeds, although it also produces coffee seedlings. It collaborates with IRAD, IITA and its seeds are sold through various distribution channels including local farming shops and national seed companies such as Phytograine or SEMAGRI. Similar to other cooperatives, it follows a democratic governance aligned with OHADA regulations.

7.4 Central African Republic



Seed-producing cooperatives in Central African Republic

More than 20 years ago, the Central African Agricultural Research Institute (ICRA) organized a network of seed producers around ICRA's research stations, experimenting on variety trials, multiplication and seed production. Due to political instability, those centers were destroyed. Currently, new strategies are being implemented and a national seed agency (ONASEM) is being launched. Cooperatives in the country consist of smallholder farmer organizations, legally existing either as an NGO or a rural and farming smallholder organization (OPAR). They defend the interests of smallholder farmers at various meetings and organize farming fairs to showcase and sell their production.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Association des groupements des producteurs de Riz de Sakaye	245	245	Rice		●	●	Local	1,225
Réseau Sous-Préfectoral de producteurs des semences de Bouar	8,700	556	Peanut Maize Red bean		●	●	Local	8,639

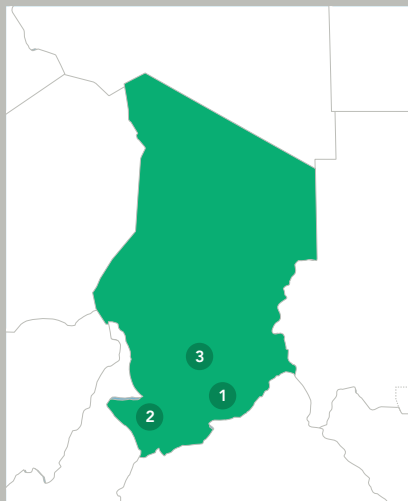
1 Association des groupements des producteurs de Riz de Sakaye

Located in a region specialized in rice farming, this association was set up over 40 years ago to provide NGOs and other organizations with seeds. Its rice-farming area covers around 28 hectares and produces around 40 tons annually. It generates some revenue as a service provider (seed processing, tractor rental etc.). Each subgroup of the association manages its own profit autonomously, with only a fraction being withheld for equipment maintenance. Technical supervision is provided by ICRA to the 245 members.

2 Réseau Sous-Préfectoral de producteurs des semences de Bouar

This network of farmers is located in the Western Region. Its members – around 4,200 men and 4,500 women – cultivate about 1,300 hectares to produce 944 tons of seed in 2017. New varieties are provided by FAO and WFP. Seeds are then distributed by the farmers themselves during weekly local markets or bought back by WFP under the Purchase for Progress project. The Central Africa Development Agency provides technical support along with a number of NGOs.

7.5 Chad



Seed-producing cooperatives in Chad

Historically, Chad's cooperatives were established by the government and run as public organizations. A lack of willingness by members and meddling by the government explain the failure of cooperatives to grow sustainably. However, the recent reorganization of the national seed sector has fostered the establishment of seed-producing cooperatives. Many of these cooperatives began after development projects were implemented and trainings were offered. On top of regular food production, cooperatives produce seeds that are first sold locally and then to NGOs or development programs. In spite of being productive, many cooperatives lack proper commercial channels.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
BELACD	n/a	75	Maize Sorghum Groundnut		●	●	National	5,000
Coopérative Zlaptou	2,160	n/a	Rice		●	●	National	10,000
APDI	n/a	22	Maize Sorghum Cowpea Sesame		●	●	Local	5,000

1 Bureau d'Etudes, de Liaison et d'Action Caritative et de Développement (BELACD)

The evolution of BELACD reflects the sometimes dynamic nature of cooperatives because it may soon become an NGO. Officially recognized by the government, BELACD has a team of technicians, a board of directors, holds meetings at pilot farms and collaborates with national research institutes. The cooperative provides tools and inputs to its members. Its portfolio is complemented by the production of mango, lemon and other fruit tree seedlings. Seeds are usually sold directly to local farmers who come to the farm. The cooperative's seed production can have national reach when NGOs purchase seeds for redistribution but the cooperative reports that these requests are unregular. It is estimated that about 5,000 farmers are impacted through the seeds produced.

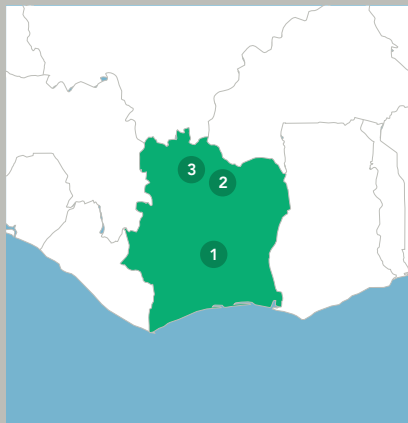
2 Coopérative Zlaptou

This cooperative has 2,160 farmers as members. With no technical staff, farmers must take care of their 42 hectares of rice fields themselves. The 72 tons of seeds have national reach. Next to its seed-producing activities, the cooperative produces food crops. The cooperative has purchased some essential farming equipment, contributing to its professionalization and enabling it to complement its revenues by renting out the equipment to other producers.

3 Association pour la Promotion de Développement Intégré (APDI)

This cooperative's mission is to fight food insecurity in the Moyen Chari Region. Twenty-two of its members are dedicated to producing seed, which reach an estimated 5,000 farmers. Formally recognized by the authorities, APDI has a team of technical and trained staff. It collaborates with the Chadian institute of agronomic research ITRAD, to introduce new varieties that fit the climatic requirements of the area. It plans to produce vegetable seeds in the future. It currently operates locally but intends to expand regionally.

7.6 Côte d'Ivoire



Seed-producing cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire

Thanks to favorable natural conditions, the Ivorian agriculture sector produces a range of export crops, food products and vegetables. The use of improved seed is more developed for cash crops targeting export markets. Improved plant material is used for all pineapple, banana, papaya, coconut and palm oil production. For coffee and cocoa, it is around 40%. For staple crops, the use of improved varieties is between 20%-30%. The legal basis for cooperatives was established in the 1970s. Further formalization came with the 1997 OHADA Act on Cooperatives that introduced governance conditions and an audit system. In 2017, there were 3,867 formally recognized agricultural cooperatives, of which 77% produce coffee and cocoa. Only 6% produce staple crops such as rice, maize and cassava. Further development of the cooperative sector falls under the National Agency for Rural Development (l'Agence National d'Appui au Développement Rural, ANADER).

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
COPRORIZ COOP CA	298	93	Rice	●	●	●	National	n/a
Société Coopérative Chongagnigui	4,236	160	Rice Maize Vegetables	●	●	●	Regional	n/a
Société Coopérative Womiengon de Korhogo	2,000	120	Rice	●	●	●	Regional	n/a

1 Société Coopérative des Producteurs de Riz de Yamoussoukro (COPRORIZ COOP CA)

Officially recognized in 2016, this is the largest rice-seed producing cooperative in Côte d'Ivoire. Its head office is in the village of Nana in the central Yamoussoukro Department. A third of the 298 members are involved in rice seed production. They produce 650 metric tons per cycle, which is distributed on a national scale. For the selection and introduction of new varieties, the cooperative works with the National Center for Agricultural Research (CNRA) and AfricaRice. For seed processing, it uses the facilities of the Office National de Développement de la Riziculture (ONDR). It also reports working on local crops such as yam and traditional rice varieties.

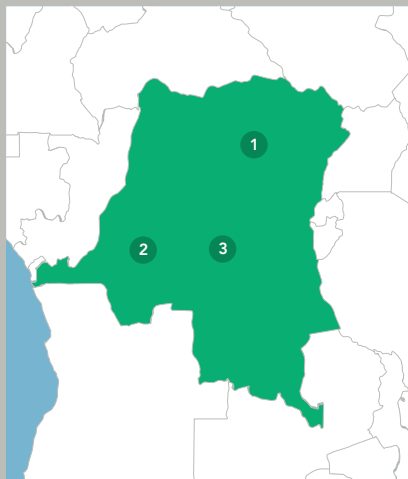
2 Société Coopérative Chongagnigui

This cooperative, based in the northern town of Karakoro, is notable for its almost exclusively (98%) female membership. Only 160 of its 4,236 members are involved in seed production, producing 83 metric tons per growing cycle. The seed is predominantly distributed to members but also reaches other farmers in three surrounding departments. The cooperative not only produces seed for rice and maize but also for vegetables (onion and squash). In cooperation with international donors such as GIZ and Hellen Keller International, it has programs specifically focused on the capacity development of women farmers. It provides technical support and training to its members. However, as it does not have its own technical staff, it relies for this on agencies such as Inades.

3 Société Coopérative Womiengon de Korhogo

Also based in the north of the country, in Natio-Kobadara, the Womiengon cooperative was officially recognized in 2010. It is 2,000 members strong (60% women) and has 32 members who focus on seed production for irrigated rice. Per cycle, they produce 60 metric tons of seed that is predominantly distributed among its members. In partnership with ONDR, the cooperative introduced three new rice varieties. Although it no longer has permanent staff and technicians, it provides technical support in cooperation with agencies such as Fonds Interprofessionnel pour la Recherche et le Conseil Agricoles (FIRCA).

7.7 Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)



Seed-producing cooperatives in DRC

In the 1950s, the first cooperatives in DRC focused on coffee production. Since then, various kinds of cooperatives have come and gone. The government was particularly involved in the 1970s, but the cooperatives did not survive funding cuts. Some producers tried to create autonomous organizations too. In 2007 and 2010, several smallholder organizations from more than seven provinces met to discuss the state of farming in DRC. This led to the creation of the Confédération Nationale des Producteurs Agricoles du Congo (CONAPAC), which brought together local federations and sectoral associations. In addition, the Belgian-supported Project d'Appui au Secteur Semencier project saw the establishment of several seed organizations. Now that the project has ended, it is uncertain whether these organizations will persist. In any case, seed-producing cooperatives are likely to keep evolving in DRC in the near future.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
GAVANAT	483	197	Rice Maize		●	●	National	1,211
CORIDEK	520	428	Cassava Maize	●	●	●	Local	2,457
APSKO	131	15	Maize		●	●	Local	4,248

1 Groupe d'Action pour la Valorisation de la Nature (GAVANAT)

This cooperative has a particularly rich portfolio, encompassing cassava, groundnut, cowpea, rice and maize as well as market garden seeds (eggplant, amaranth, pineapple, spring onion) and banana. About 200 of its 483 members are involved in seed production. GAVANAT has partnered with several organizations, such as FAO and IITA to provide training to members. GAVANAT is officially certified by SENASEM, the Congolese seed agency, and has about 30 agronomists. It produces about 300 tons of seed per year. In 2016, 141 members received training through different partners.

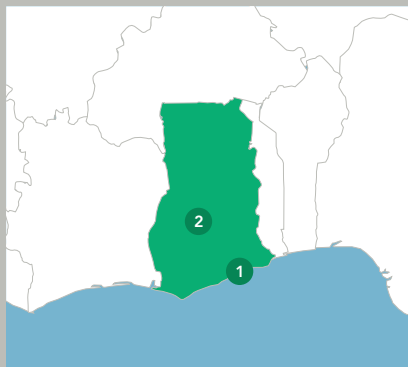
2 Collectif des organisations pour le développement intégré de la rive droite du Kwilu (CORIDEK)

This collective of 24 smallholder organizations has been certified as a seed multiplier by the national seed service SENASEM since 2003. It has 520 members, of which 478 are women, and produces cassava, maize, cowpea, soybean, rice and groundnut. It collaborates on various participatory varietal selection projects with the national agricultural research agency and IITA, and manages its own marketing and sales activities. The reach is almost entirely local, with about 2,500 farmers purchasing CORIDEK seeds. It produces about 117 tons of seed per year.

3 Associations des Producteurs des Semences du Kasai Oriental (APSKO)

APSKO is a grouping of six seed-producing associations. Created in 2002, APSKO supports seed growers from production through to sales and defends their interests more generally. It has about 430 members, who produce about 73 tons of seed, including strong-performing local varieties. The seed is sold locally to around 4,200 farmers, although it sometimes reaches neighboring provinces too. Certified by SENASEM and employing about 13 agronomists, APSKO collaborates with IITA and the national research agency. The cooperative has about 13 agronomists.

7.8 Ghana



Seed-producing cooperatives in Ghana

Prior to 1990, the public sector dominated the seed sector in Ghana. The 2010 Plants and Fertilizer Act promoted the private sector's role in the seed industry. In contrast to surrounding countries, Ghana has limited, if any, seed farmer cooperatives, according to the National Seed Trade Association of Ghana (NASTAG). This is likely because of limited attention for the cooperative model in the 2010 Act. Many seed-producing farmers operate individually in outgrower schemes, producing seed for local enterprises. These farmers can join the Seed Producer Association of Ghana (SEEDPAG) as well as the Peasant Farmer Association in Ghana (PFAG). These organizations have the potential to support further development of the cooperative model in Ghana.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
SEEDPAG	197		Maize Rice Soybean Cowpea Sorghum Groundnut		●	●	National	200,000
PFAG	38,740				●	●	National	38,740

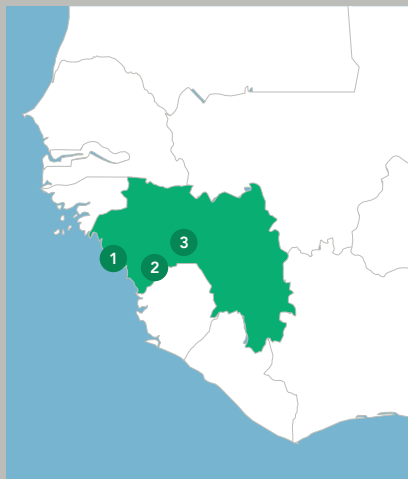
1 Seed Producers Association of Ghana (SEEDPAG)

SEEDPAG was incorporated in 2009 and provides a forum for interaction and information exchange among registered seed producers in Ghana. It organizes training programs and other capacity-building activities for its members. In 2016, only 14 of the 197 members were women farmers. After a period of working as an outgrower, some of the members set up their own small businesses and join NASTAG as individual companies (32 in 2017). SEEDPAG members produce certified seed or propagation material for crops such as maize, rice, soybean, cowpea, sorghum, groundnut, cassava, millet and common bean. The bulk of the foundation seed is provided by the Grains and Legumes Development Board of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

2 Peasant Farmers' Association of Ghana (PFAG)

PFAG was established in 2005 with support from Oxfam. The organization seeks to represent the interests of peasant farmers and provides services to build their capacity, including programs specifically targeting women farmers. PFAG has a total membership of 1,511 farmer-based member organizations and 37,740 individual members. The majority of the members are located in the Brong Ahafo Region. About 98% of members rely on their own saved seeds. A small group of members, in Ashaiman, Hohoe, Tono and Garu Tempaani, produce seeds. A few also produce seeds and distribute these outside their region, such as the PFAG representative in the Volta Region.

7.9 Guinea



Seed-producing cooperatives in Guinea

Similar to other countries in the region, Guinea's utilization rate of quality seeds is low at around 10% of total seeds, the rest originating from the informal sector. Guinea has various legal measures and instruments in place to promote quality seeds, but some have yet to be fully implemented. For instance, a national seed committee has yet to materialize. However, the government is involved in seed distribution through IRAD, the agricultural research institute. Together with FAO and CILSS, Guinea is preparing a national variety catalog and an overarching seed policy. Breeder and foundation seeds are produced by the national research institute IRAG. Seed-producing cooperatives receive them and in turn produce certified seeds. This means that public entities are currently responsible for foundation seed, and the private sector, including cooperatives, can only produce certified seeds under the supervision and approval of authorities. Most Guinean farmers belong to a cooperative or farmer organization. These are often supported by government projects and programs and are supervised by public authorities. Despite this, production remains low.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Coopérative semencière de Koba	29	29	Rice		●	●	Local	458
Union des producteurs semenciers de Kindia	150	74	Rice		●	●	Local	1,350
Entreprise Guinée Semences	25	25	Maize		●	●	Local	n/a

1 Coopérative semencière de Koba

This cooperative has 29 farmer members, seven of which are women, who produce around 50 tons of rice seed annually from 21 hectares of plantations. With support from the Chinese government and IFAD, the cooperative has received training on rice production and now has the use of a storage unit with a capacity of 800 tons, a drying area and a well. Its seeds are sold to various government projects and the private sector, making it difficult to determine the exact number of farmers reached. The cooperative serves as a regional example of the benefits of improved techniques and the adoption of improved seed varieties. It is supervised by relevant public authorities and is certified by the Ministry of Agriculture.

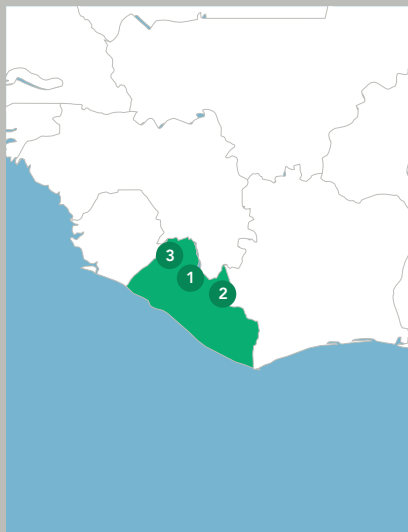
2 Union des producteurs semenciers de Kindia

The Kindia Region has experienced a revival of smallholder farmer organizations in recent years. This has incentivized farmers to formalize their organizations and create a union in order to defend their interests and better face challenges. The Kindia union is made up of 150 members who produce 90 tons of rice seed annually on 70 hectares. The seeds are supplied to about 1,350 remote farmers. The World Bank and CORAF previously supported the union through the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program, supplying quality seeds and training. The union offers its services to different projects but also private actors.

3 Entreprise Guinée Semences

Bringing together 25 farming technicians, this cooperative is the first in Guinea to specialize in maize seed production. It has perfected a variety of hybrid maize that is registered at the national level. Around 45 tons are produced each year, reaching about 1,000 farmers.

7.10 Liberia



Seed-producing cooperatives in Liberia

Cooperatives in Liberia flourished in the 1960s, '70s and '80s with the rise of the Liberia Produce Marketing Cooperation (LPMC). Following this period, the government established the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA) to regulate and support the development of cooperatives linked to several crops. As a result, Liberian cooperatives are among the few in the region with a broad portfolio that includes vegetable seeds. Cooperatives have long been among the chief sources of farmers' empowerment. They have played critical roles in providing farmers with access to finance, seeds, tools, marketing, transport and storage. In addition, they represent farmers' interests at the national level. Currently, there are 75 to 80 seed-producing cooperatives in Liberia. Some of these are directly linked to seed companies and public agencies. Although the state has promoted the development of cooperatives, it has done little to provide financial or technical support or audit performance. This has made several cooperatives vulnerable to individuals who have taken over and used leadership positions for their own interests. Many cooperatives report working with a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) that run special saving and credit programs for women.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Guma Mendi Farmers' Cooperative	3,500	n/a	Vegetables Maize Rice Soybean Cowpea	●	●	●	Regional	7,000
Dokodan Cooperative	460	n/a	Vegetables Maize Rice Soybean Cowpea	●	●	●	National	1,300
Gbandi Brothers Cooperative	750	n/a	Vegetables Maize Rice Soybean Cowpea	●	●	●	Local	1,060

1 Guma Mendi Farmers' Cooperative

With 3,500 members, this is the largest cooperative in Liberia. It is located in the northern Lofa County. Members produce seeds for vegetables (cabbage, eggplant, okra, cucumber), cereals (maize, rice) and legumes (soybean, cowpea). Members periodically visit the Central Agricultural Research Institute of Liberia to learn about new varieties. Training on good agricultural practices is provided by extension officers. The cooperative also works with cocoa and coffee companies and has been involved in the introduction of Mercedes, a new cocoa variety. The cooperative only distributes seeds in its own region and reports reaching over 7,000 farmers.

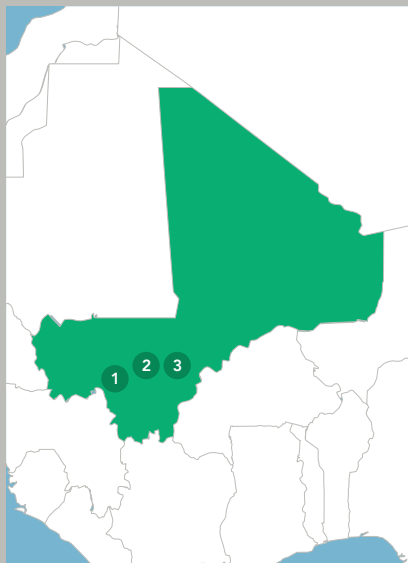
2 Dokodan Cooperative

The 460 members of the Dokodan Cooperative operate in the northeastern Nimba County, producing seeds for vegetables (okra), cereals (maize, rice) and legumes (soybean, cowpea). The cooperative has been involved in introducing a new variety of rice developed by AfricaRice. Like the other cooperatives in Liberia, Dokodan also works with the Central Agricultural Research Institute and provides training to its members. The cooperative reports that it only distributes seeds in a 10km radius. However, through partnerships with local seed companies, such as Arfay Farm Seed Company and Green Star Seed Company, it also reaches farmers further afield.

3 Gbandi Brothers Cooperative

Also located in Lofa County, the 750-member Gbandi Brothers Cooperative is one of the few seed-producing cooperatives that report distributing seed beyond the national border. Through distribution points along the border with Sierra Leone, farmers from that country also have access to the cooperative's seed. It is also one of the few cooperatives that work together with an international seed enterprise, namely BRAC from Bangladesh. It has been involved in releasing two AfricaSeeds rice varieties into the market, NERICA L19 and Suakoko 8.

7.11 Mali



Seed-producing cooperatives in Mali

Although Mali is still predominantly reliant on the informal seed sector, recurrent droughts and the modernization of agriculture have increasingly led farmers to rely on quality seeds. Since 2002, a number of NGOs and smallholder seed suppliers have emerged. These organizations are often part of a larger umbrella association such as the Professional Smallholder Organization Association (AOPP), which coordinates them and defends their interests at the national level. As Mali's seed sector transitions from a traditional, government-ruled system to a more liberal structure in which private seed companies play an expanded role, various types of seed-producing cooperatives are also occupying a significant role in the seed supply chain. Seed-producing cooperatives produce certified seeds while the organizations oversee commercialization. AOPP, together with Oxfam, reach out to farmers to understand their needs for improved varieties. They identify the local climatic zones and select the appropriate varieties from research institutes, and cooperatives work as multipliers of those quality seeds to supply the local markets. AOPP bears the financial costs of certification and distribution of certified seeds. This is how smallholder farmer organizations play an essential role in Mali's seed supply chain.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
COOPROSEM	87	45	Sorghum Maize Groundnut Cowpea	●	●	●	National	650
ULPC	1,074	55	Sorghum Maize Groundnut Cowpea Sesame Soybean	●	●	●	National	905
Coopérative Sikolokoloton	40	40	Millet Sorghum Maize Cowpea		●	●	National	2,000

1 Coopérative pour la Promotion de la filière Semencière du Mandé (COOPROSEM)

With roughly half of its 90 members involved in seed production, COOPROSEM produces OPV and hybrid sorghum, maize, groundnut and cowpea seeds. COOPROSEM produced about 32 tons of seeds in 2017. The cooperative collaborates with ICRISAT on varietal testing and partners with seed company Faso Kaba on seed sourcing and sales, extending its reach from the local to the national level. It also regularly organizes training sessions on topics such as good agricultural practices, production and certification of seeds, storage and seed conservation. COOPROSEM also specifically targets women for groundnut seed production. It uses a variety of communication channels (videos, posters, website, radio) to raise awareness among seed producers about new varieties.

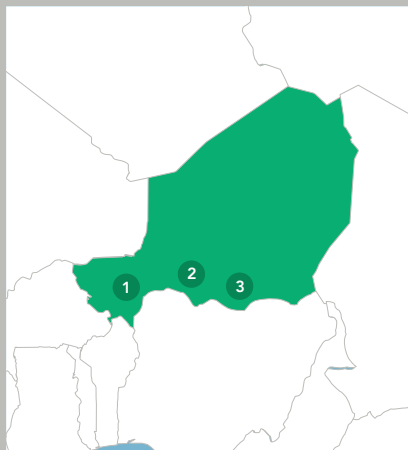
2 Union Locale des Producteurs de Céréales (ULPC) de Dioïla

ULPC is an umbrella organization created in 2001. It is made up of 43 cooperatives with 1,074 producers, half of whom are women. Officially registered, it is founded on solidarity among members and adheres to cooperative principles (democratic governance, equity in benefit sharing, training and cooperation, etc.). About 905 farmers benefit from the cooperative's services. ULPC produces seeds and large-scale commercial crops. It also works on varietal improvement, the introduction of farming innovations, input supply and a warranty scheme. ULPC has seven input stores locally, although its seeds are distributed nationally too. Out of the 32 tons it produces, 25 tons are commercialized. ULPC also collaborates with seed companies and research institutes.

3 Coopérative Sikolokoloton

Sikolokoloton is made up of 40 producers whose seeds reach 2,000 farmers. It sources foundation seed for its members, supports certification, advises them on production, storage and marketing, and facilitates microfinancing. It collaborates with the Cinzana Agronomic Station. It has a local reach. It also collaborates with seed companies and NGOs. It is one of the few seed-producing cooperatives that has its own seed-processing unit.

7.12 Niger



Seed-producing cooperatives in Niger

In recent years, Niger's seed industry has been characterized by an upswing in private actors involved in the production and supply of quality seeds to farmers. This has been made possible by an increasingly favorable institutional and regulatory environment. The National Seed Policy, adopted in 2013, clarifies the role of each actor in the seed value chain and grants seed-producing cooperatives the same rights and obligations as seed companies. Seed-producing cooperatives constitute the basis of the private seed sector. The Association of Private Seed Producers of Niger (Association des Producteurs Privés de Semences du Niger, APPSN) was created in 1999 and was exclusively composed of organizations of an associative and cooperative nature. With the improvement of the regulatory environment, the first private seed companies were created and mostly emerged from the member organizations of the APPSN. In 2017, there were about 65 cooperative seed producers and multipliers active in Niger.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Union Madda Ben de Falwel	3,167	170	Millet Cowpea Groundnut	●	●	●	National	7,000
OP Yada Iri de Chadakori	n/a	60	Millet Sesame Groundnut Sorghum	●	●	●	Regional	400
CPS IRI de Magaria	133	133	Millet Cowpea Groundnut Sorghum	●	●	●	Regional	2,800

1 Union Madda Ben de Falwel

Madda Ben was founded in 2000 and is a union of producer organizations (POs) comprising 69 groups of 46 villages in the town of Falwel. It has its own distribution points in the region. It is probably one of the few cooperatives that can claim it has an ICRISAT seed variety named after it. This reflects the far-reaching cooperation with ICRISAT's millet breeding program. Madda Ben members not only work together with ICRISAT in participatory variety selection, variety testing and demonstration in field schools, but they also produce foundation seed for ICRISAT's Seed Unit. So far, four new millet varieties have been introduced as a result of this cooperation. Madda Ben is a member of Moriben, a federation of farmers' unions. Through its partnership with ICRISAT, Moriben and outgrower contracts with three seed companies, Madda Ben's certified seed reaches farmers throughout the country.

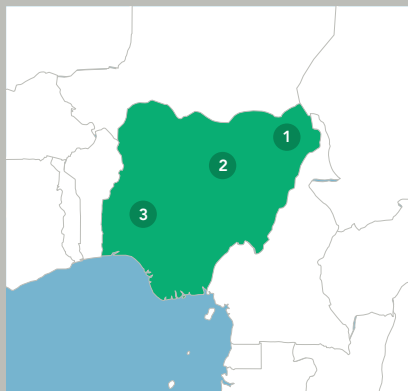
2 Organisation des Producteurs Yada Iri de Chadakori

Based in the Maradi Region, Yada Iri was officially recognized as a seed producer in 2006. Its 60 seed-producing members produce on average 90 metric tons of seed a year, which are distributed nationally through partnerships with FAO and Ferme Semencière Amaté (FESA). Annual contracts with FESA not only guarantee that a large part of the production is sold, it also provides members with access to inputs and capacity-building activities. With FESA and the national research institute (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique du Niger, INRAN), Yada Iri is involved in multi-local variety testing. Although the cooperative predominantly focuses on the production of improved varieties for cowpea and millet for the national market, it also grows local varieties of millet and groundnut for use in its own region.

3 Coopérative de Production de Semences (CPS) IRI de Magaria

CPS IRI is located in Angoul Gamdji in the Zinder Region, where the Regional Center for Seed Multiplication (CRMS) is also based. Through this proximity, it benefits from CRMS's facilities for screening, packaging and storing seeds as well as technical staff for supervising the seed production. It was officially recognized as a seed producer in 2010. From 70 members at the time, it has grown to 133 members producing seeds. For selecting and testing seed varieties, it cooperates with various research institutes such as INRAN, ICRISAT and IITA. It specializes in producing improved varieties of millet, cowpea, sorghum and groundnut. It sells its seed in the surrounding villages but also has multiplication contracts with FAO and WFP. On average, the cooperative produces 200 metric tons of seed per year.

7.13 Nigeria



Seed-producing cooperatives in Nigeria

A 2016 survey by the National Agricultural Seed Council (NASC) found that only 24% of seed in Nigeria is supplied by the formal sector. This suggests that up to 76% of farmers' seed requirements is met by the informal seed sector. This study identified a total of 560 farmers' groups that are engaged in seed-production activities but are not registered with the NASC as a seed-producing entity. To date, only a handful of cooperatives have been formally recognized as seed producers.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Jirkur Seed Cooperative Society	200	200	Maize Sorghum Rice		●	●	Regional	n/a
Badala Azare Farmers' Cooperative Society	n/a	250	Maize Sorghum Millet Rice		●	●	Regional	n/a
AGAN	n/a	50	Maize Sorghum Rice		●	●	Regional	5,000

1 Jirkur Seed Cooperative Society

Jirkur Seed Cooperative Society in Nigeria was set up by a group of community seed producers in Borno State to continue the sustainable supply of quality seed in the region after an IITA-supported project ended. It was officially registered with the Borno State Ministry of Cooperatives in 2008, with NASC in 2010 and with the Corporate Affairs Commission in 2014. Initially consisting of ten members, it has now grown to 200 members. Its production has also increased, from 50 tons to nearly 1,000 metric tons annually of maize, rice, soybean, cowpea and groundnut seed. NASC certifies and approves the quality of seeds produced for dissemination to farmers and also assists in capacity building.

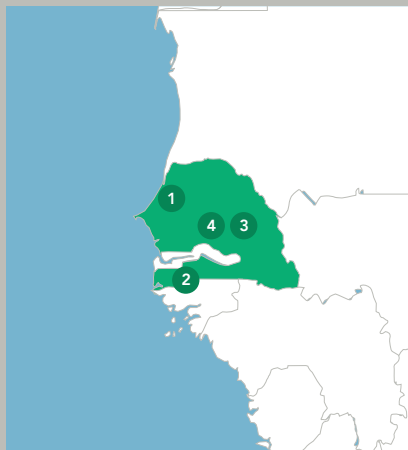
2 Badala Azare Farmers' Cooperative Society

According to the 2016 survey, this is the largest seed-producing cooperative in Nigeria, with a total of 250 members. Along with the Jirkur Seed Cooperative Society, it is the only cooperative that is formally recognized as a seed producer. It operates in the northwest, north central and northeast of Nigeria. Seed-production activities focus on four field crops: rice, maize, sorghum and millet. The cooperative reports a total estimated seed production of 400 metric tons a year.

3 Agriculture Graduates Association of Nigeria (AGAN)

AGAN has begun the accreditation process for the formal seed system. It was established with the aim of mobilizing young graduates to take a lead in sustainable agricultural development in Nigeria. Although AGAN is a national association, most of its activities (extension services, community-based seed production, community-based equipment hiring and commercial farming programs) are developed and promoted in Niger State. AGAN has engaged over 500 young farmers and 50 professional members in community seed production. AGAN interacts with both national and international research institutes to source its foundation planting materials. The crops covered include rice, sorghum, maize (PVA), cassava and oil palm.

7.14 Senegal



Seed-producing cooperatives in Senegal

In Senegal, farmer cooperatives are grouped under two major umbrella organizations: Association Sénégalaise pour la Promotion du Développement à la Base (ASPRODEB) and Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et Pastorales du Sénégal (RESOPP). ASPRODEB is the largest network and has set up 34 cooperatives producing certified seeds across the country. These cooperatives were regrouped in December 2009, to create the National Network of Seed Producers' Cooperatives (RNCPS). The network's head office is located in Kaffrine, in the center of the country. RESOPP, which is headquartered in Thiès, has also set up a dozen seed-producing cooperatives across the country. Both umbrella organizations are overseen by a general assembly, composed of representatives of its member cooperatives. However, they differ in one respect: ASPRODEB cooperatives hire technical teams from the umbrella organization and pay for their services themselves, whereas RESOPP's technical support teams are paid by the umbrella organization.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
COOPAKEL	5,127	450-500	Cowpea Millet Sorghum Groundnut	●	●	●	Local	2,650
COOPAD	5,212	45-75	Maize Rice Groundnut Fonio Sorghum	●	●	●	Local	1,985
Coopérative de Kahi	800	800	Groundnut Sorghum Millet Maize	●	●	●	Regional	n/a
Coopérative de Paoskoto	794	794	Groundnut Maize	●	●	●	Regional	n/a

1 Coopérative agricole de Kelle Guèye (COOPAKEL)

With over 5,000 members, COOPAKEL is among the largest farmer cooperatives in Senegal. Between 450 and 500 members are involved in seed production. The production includes cowpea, millet, sorghum and groundnut. Members are provided with services such as access to microfinance and training. The cooperative was founded in 2002 and officially recognized in 2004. Like other RNCPS cooperatives, COOPAKEL was involved in a partnership with the national research agency ISRA to adopt groundnut varieties and promote maize hybrids.

2 Coopérative agricole de Diendé (COOPAD)

COOPAD's seed-production activities focus on maize, rice, groundnut, fonio and sorghum. The cooperative also has over 5,000 members, but only between 45 and 75 members are involved in seed production. Member services include access to microfinance and training. The cooperative was founded in 2007 and officially recognized in 2008. Since 2008, RNCPS cooperatives have had a business relationship with Caisse Nationale de Crédit Agricole du Senegal (CNCAS), which provides credit for seed producers.

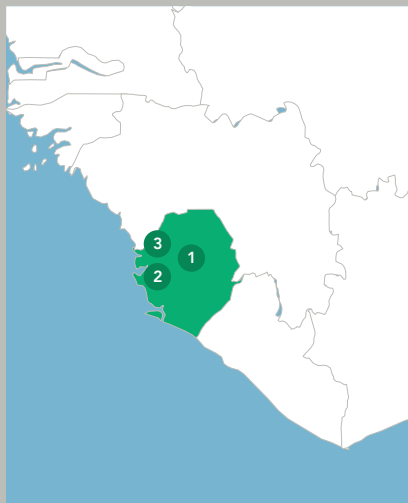
3 Coopérative de Kahi

The Kahi cooperative reportedly has nearly 800 members involved in seed production. The majority focuses on groundnut, a quarter on rice and maize. In cooperation with Office Chérifien des Phosphates du Maroc (OCP), the cooperative is developing a soil fertility map to formulate tailored fertilizer doses for groundnut seed-production plots. The cooperative was founded in 2007 and officially recognized in 2009.

4 Coopérative de Paoskoto

Founded in 2007 and officially recognized in 2009, Paoskoto has 800 members involved in seed production for groundnut and maize. In collaboration with the Compagnie Nationale d'Assurances Agricoles du Sénégal (CNAAD), both the Paoskoto and Kahi cooperatives provide insurance products for their members. Paoskoto also provides entrepreneurship training for women in cooperation with UPADI Canada.

7.15 Sierra Leone



Seed-producing cooperatives in Sierra Leone

Seed-producing cooperatives are officially acknowledged as a vital sub-sector of the formal seed sector in Sierra Leone. In 2018, 20 cooperatives are registered and supervised by SLeSCA (Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency). A high concentration of 12 (60%) registered seed-producing cooperatives is found in the Northwestern Region, close to the Rokupr Agricultural Research Centre and Seed Multiplication Programme. With support from organizations such as the Cooperative Promotion Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, research institutions and NGOs, the number of seed-producing cooperatives is increasing. However, the number of members is relatively small, as SLeSCA advises seed-producing cooperatives not to have large memberships with no clustered farmlands because quality control can become more difficult. The cooperatives produce certified seed as mandated by the Seed Act. The breeder and foundation seed are produced by the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) and Seed Multiplication Programme respectively. The Seed Certification Agency inspects seed fields and tests the cooperatives' seed lots before planting, distribution and/or marketing.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Kamuyu Agribusiness Centre	150	150	Rice Cassava Sorghum Groundnut Vegetables		●	●	Regional	1,500
Feika Women Farmers' Association	148	148	Rice Sorghum Cassava Groundnut Vegetables	●	●	●	Regional	1,150
Tekelaneh Farmers' Association	132	132	Rice Groundnut Cassava Sorghum Pigeon pea Vegetables	●	●	●	Regional	1,122

1 Kamuyu Agribusiness Centre

This community-based seed cooperative produces and markets rice, cassava, vegetable, sorghum and groundnut seed. Established in the Karene District, Kamuyu Agribusiness Centre is actively expanding into neighboring Bombali, where it operates a network of distribution agents, and Port Loko District through outgrower schemes. The cooperative has a program that focuses specifically on educating and training women and young farmers on topics ranging from nutrition, hygiene and food safety to farming practices and seed customer capacity building.

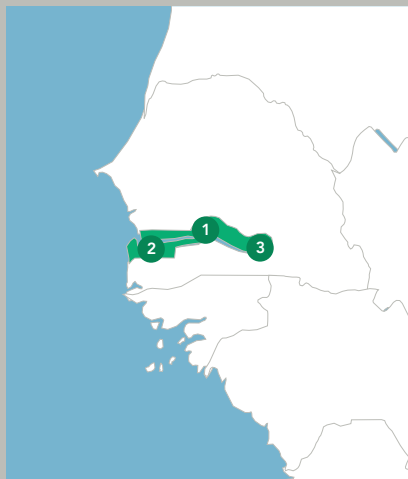
2 Feika Women Farmers' Association

Feika Women Farmers' Association is also a community-based cooperative that produces and markets seed for cereal crops (rice, sorghum), roots and tubers (cassava), groundnut, oil palm and vegetables. The cooperative is located in the Kambia District in the Northwestern Region but also operates in the nearby Karene and Port Loko districts. The cooperative is contracted to produce seed for local and international NGOs as well as serving farming communities and other farmers in its areas of operation. It is notable for having a four-member committee that is dedicated to seed-quality issues, which was initiated by extension agents working at the Rokupr Agricultural Research Centre.

3 Tekelaneh Farmers' Association

Tekelaneh Farmers' Association is a seed cooperative in Rokupr, Kambia District, Northwestern Region. It undertakes the production, processing, marketing and distribution of quality seed for rice, groundnut, cassava, sorghum, pigeon pea, oil palm and vegetables. The cooperative has 37 hectares of upland and 34 hectares of lowland involved in own production of seed. It is also involved in a contract outgrower scheme, where the bulk of the seed is produced. Tekelaneh Farmers' Association interacts with the breeding unit of SLARI in participatory selection of new varieties and quality seed testing for germination and moisture content.

7.16 The Gambia



Seed-producing cooperatives in The Gambia

The agriculture sector in The Gambia has suffered major setbacks over the past decades. The commercial export of groundnuts, the main cash crop, declined from 150,000 metric tons at its peak to less than 30,000 tons in 2016. Imports of rice, the main staple food, increased significantly, with less than 40% of the national demand being produced locally. Earlier attempts to revitalize the cooperative model, following the liquidation of The Gambia Cooperative Union in 1998, failed because of a lack of government support. Since 2013, the cooperative model has been officially recognized under the Cooperative Societies Act. With support from CORAF through WAAPP, a new institutional framework was developed. This resulted in the establishment of the National Seed Council and the National Seed Secretariat, which work closely with newly founded cooperatives to scale up the country's seed system. Inspections of seed-production activities are conducted by the National Research Institute (NARI), and every year the Agric-Business Agency under the Ministry of Agriculture conducts financial and performance audits.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Banni CSGCS	30	30	Groundnut		●	●	Local	125
CSGCS of Pakao-Jogou	30	30	Groundnut		●	●	Local	150
CSGCS of Taibatou Wulli Niakoy	35	35	Maize		●	●	Local	500

1 Banni Certified Seed Growers Cooperative Society (CSGCS)

Banni consists of 31 members from ten villages in the Central River Region North. It was officially recognized in 2014 and was accredited as a certified producer of groundnut seed by the National Seed Secretariat in 2016. Members work together to purchase foundation seed from growers supported by ASPRODEB in Senegal. The cooperative also provides services to its members such as training on best agronomic practices. It is governed by an annual general assembly and a management committee of ten members, of which three are women.

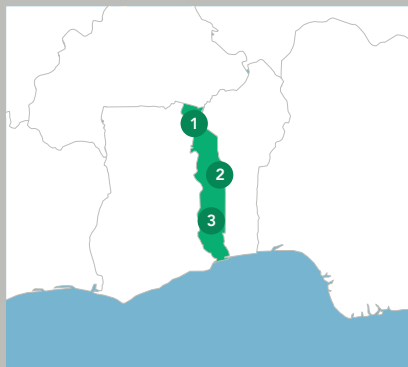
2 Certified Seed Growers Cooperative Society of Pakao-Jogou (CSGCS)

Thirty members, of which 20 are men and ten are women, all produce seed on 1 hectare plots. Through contracts with the government and private seed dealers, the seed is redistributed to farmers across the country. This model has encouraged members to grow their production capacity to 19 metric tons. The cooperative is located in the Upper Niumi District near the capital Banjul. The management committee consists of seven members, of which three are women. To ensure that its members work according to good agricultural practices, the cooperative has engaged the services of NARI and NSS.

3 Certified Seed Growers Cooperative Society of Taibatou Wulli Niakoy (CSGCS)

Certified maize seed growers from seven villages in the Upper River Region established the Taibatou Wulli Niakoy cooperative in 2013. Currently, the cooperative has 35 members, of which nine are women. The management committee consists of 11 members. Four of these are women, including the vice president and treasurer. The maize seed produced is distributed to farmers at the local level. Through government institutions and private seed traders such as The Gambia Horticulture Enterprise, the seed also reaches farmers in other parts of the country.

7.17 Togo



Seed-producing cooperatives in Togo

In Togo, seed-producing cooperatives consist of small individual seed producers who are shareholders in the cooperatives. The establishment of cooperatives was stimulated by the introduction of the 2010 OHADA Act on Cooperatives. Currently, there are about 20 seed-producing cooperatives or related community-based associations producing seeds in the country, of which ten are registered and officially recognized. They produce certified seed through their members who bring their produce to a central collection point for bulk sale. The business models used are largely embryonic. Seeds are sourced from the national research institute, but there is no capacity for participatory testing and selection. Many cooperatives struggle to sell their entire production and lack marketing plans to improve this situation.

Name	No. members	No. seed producers	Crops	Business model			Reach	Farmers reached
				Testing, selection varieties	Production	Distribution		
Société cooperative Savana Semence	118	118	Maize Rice Soybean Sorghum Groundnut		●	●	National	300
Société cooperative DAVEZI	38	38	Soybean		●		National	1,500
Société cooperative OTISSAN	22	22	Maize Rice Soybean Cowpea		●	●	National	1,300

1 Société cooperative Savana Semence

Savana Semence was created in 2010 and registered in 2012. It is based in the city of Dapaong in the northern Savanes Region. A third of its 118 members are women. They produce four seed varieties for maize, two varieties for rice and one for soybean, sorghum and groundnut. The seed is sourced from the Institute for Agricultural Research (ITRA), although it does not have a partnership for testing and selection. Neither does it own technical staff and so relies on the seed inspectors from the National Institute of Advice and Technical Support (ICAT). The cooperative uses WhatsApp and the website wasix.net (West Africa Seeds Information Exchange) to promote adoption. Part of its seed is supplied to the ESOP program run by the French development organization CIDR.

2 Société cooperative DAVEZI

With about 40 members, DAVEZI produces certified soybean seed under contract for a private soy-processing company called Soja Nyo. Soja Nyo distributes the certified seeds to its 1,500 contracted growers. The contract guarantees the cooperative that its production will be sold to Soja Nyo. Access to inputs and credit is also guaranteed. DAVEZI was officially registered as a seed producer in 2013 and is located in the village of Koussountou, in the Central Region.

3 Société cooperative OTISSAN

OTISSAN is a 22-member cooperative located in the city of Atakpamé in the Plateaux Region. Its seeds reach about 1,300 farmers in and outside the region. It has reportedly set up local sales kiosks for the sale of seeds in villages through trained distributors, although it also notes that it struggles to sell its entire production. The cooperative produces one variety of maize, rice and soybean and two varieties of cowpea. Like the other two cooperatives in the country, it sources its foundation seed from ITRA and relies for technical support on ICAT.

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