ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Collection of best practices : Innovations and experiences to transform the livestock and meat sector in West Africa and beyond

Experience capitalised on within the framework of PACBAO

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

This catalogue of best practices was produced as part of Phase 1 of the Livestock Marketing Support Programme in West Africa, implemented from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2023 with technical and financial support from

To cite this document :

ECOWAS Commission – Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF), Capitalisation Note, 2025 : Compilation of good practices: Innovations and experiences to transform the livestock and meat sector in West Africa and beyond. Experiences capitalised on within the framework of PACBAO.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Producing locally to feed better: the initiative of rural groups for sustainable access to livestock feed

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Enhanced local access**: The establishment of rural micro-processing enterprises gives livestock farmers access to high-quality feed that is adapted to local resources and offered at affordable prices, even during periods of fodder shortages.
- **Demonstrated impact**: Well-trained, structured and equipped groups can efficiently produce compound feed, generate significant income and meet growing market demand, while competing with imported products.
- **Conditions for success**: Success depends on a combination of factors: regular technical support, basic infrastructure (grinders, sheds, weighing and storage equipment), and good governance of the groups.
- **Reproducibility**: To disseminate the practice, it is essential to integrate the groups into public livestock support schemes, strengthen their territorial roots and facilitate their access to finance and markets.

Country: Niger

Project leader/organisation: Interprofession bétail, viande, cuirs et peaux (IPBVCP

Challenge

Before this good practice was implemented, livestock farmers in the project areas, particularly in the Tillabéry and Dosso regions, faced a chronic fodder deficit, exacerbated by the effects of climate change and the degradation of natural pastures. The 2021–2022 grazing season was marked by a significant shortage of food resources for livestock: in Tillabéry, the deficit was estimated at more than 4 million tonnes of dry matter, corresponding to approximately 3,000 tonnes of livestock feed, representing a need of around 900 million CFA francs.

To cope with this shortage, livestock farmers were heavily dependent on imports of livestock feed from neighbouring countries (Benin, Togo, Burkina Faso), or on occasional distributions by the State through tenders awarded to large factories such as NUSEB Niger and AVINiger. These solutions, although necessary, were limited in time, costly, inaccessible to small producers, and focused on a standardised supply that was difficult to adapt to local realities.

At the same time, rural groups, particularly those formed as part of the project, had abundant local resources (cereal stalks, leaves, bran) and human potential that could be mobilised. The opportunity therefore lay in supporting these groups in transforming these resources into accessible, suitable and competitive compound feeds, while stimulating local economic growth. The establishment of manufacturing units based on grinders, combined with minimal structuring of the actors, thus represented a credible alternative for guaranteeing permanent access to quality inputs, while reducing dependence on imports.

Description of the good practice

Before this good practice was implemented, livestock farmers in the project areas, particularly in the Tillabéry and Dosso regions, faced a chronic fodder deficit, exacerbated by the effects of climate change and the degradation of natural pastures. The 2021–2022 grazing season was marked by a significant shortage of food resources for livestock: in Tillabéry, the deficit was estimated at more than 4 million tonnes of dry matter, corresponding to approximately 3,000 tonnes of livestock feed, representing a need of around 900 million CFA francs.

To cope with this shortage, livestock farmers were heavily dependent on imports of livestock feed from neighbouring countries (Benin, Togo, Burkina Faso), or on occasional distributions by the State through tenders awarded to large factories such as NUSEB Niger and AVINiger. These solutions, although necessary, were limited in time, costly, inaccessible to small producers, and focused on a standardised supply that was difficult to adapt to local realities.

At the same time, rural groups, particularly those formed as part of the project, had abundant local resources (cereal stalks, leaves, bran) and human potential that could be mobilised. The opportunity therefore lay in supporting these groups in transforming these resources into accessible, suitable and competitive compound feeds, while stimulating local economic growth. The establishment of manufacturing units based on grinders, combined with minimal structuring of the actors, thus represented a credible alternative for guaranteeing permanent access to quality inputs, while reducing dependence on imports.

Results achieved and changes observed

Since the installation of the grinders and the start-up of local livestock feed manufacturing units, the beneficiary groups have achieved concrete results, both in terms of quantity and quality.

In quantitative terms, the volumes produced vary from one group to another, ranging from 2 to 210 bags of livestock feed manufactured according to capacity and raw material availability. Sales have followed a positive trend, with quantities sold reaching up to 150 bags in some cases. The diversification of packaging formats (25 kg, 50 kg, retail in tia and half-tia) has made it possible to reach a varied clientele, ranging from small producers to organised feedlots. The revenue generated also varies between groups, ranging from 7,500 CFA francs for start-up units to more than 500,000 CFA francs for the best-organised structures.

In terms of quality, the manufacture of livestock feed from local ingredients was perceived as a relevant solution, better suited and more economical than imported products. A 50 kg bag produced locally sells for 6,000 CFA francs, compared to 9,000 to 11,000 CFA francs for its imported equivalent, with nutritional quality recognised by the beneficiaries themselves. Some groups have reported visible effects on fattened animals or milk production, thereby reinforcing the credibility of their products among local livestock farmers.

The change in behaviour is also notable. Initially mobilised solely for custom grinding, several groups quickly moved on to the complete manufacture of compound feed. The involvement of women in formulation and packaging, as well as that of young men in operating the grinders, has helped to create a collective dynamic. Initiatives such as the organisation of fairs and the promotion of products at local markets reflect a change in attitude and a gradual increase in confidence among members.

Finally, at the local level, these units have helped to relocalise livestock feed production by encouraging the use of agricultural residues and strengthening links between producers, processors and livestock farmers. Ultimately, this dynamic could help to structure a micro-livestock feed sector at the territorial level.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

The success of this good practice is based on several favourable conditions. Firstly, the existence of significant agricultural potential in the intervention areas ensured a regular supply of raw materials: stalks, leaves, pods, husks, bran, etc. Secondly, the growing demand for quality livestock feed, fuelled by a large livestock population and recurring fodder shortages, provided a natural outlet for the manufactured products. Furthermore, the availability of proven technologies, such as various types of grinders, facilitated technical implementation. The commitment of the beneficiaries – particularly young women for packaging and young men for grinding – was also decisive.

Strategic partnerships reinforced this dynamic: support from the ARAA, involvement of the Ministry of Livestock, and ad hoc support from NGOs such as ENABEL and PRAPS. Minimal structuring around organised groups and the creation of an exchange network via WhatsApp also facilitated the sharing of experiences and the collective resolution of difficulties.

However, several constraints have limited the full development of this practice. Competition with imported feed or feed distributed free of charge by the State has sometimes undermined the marketing of local products. The lack of basic infrastructure – storage facilities, sheds, tarpaulins, weighbridges – has hampered production and storage capacities. The absence of in-depth technical training (formulation of rich feeds, occupational safety, equipment maintenance) has hindered the professionalisation of the units. Finally, the variability of raw material prices, particularly for imported inputs used as supplements, has made it difficult to stabilise production costs.

Important lessons can be learned from this experience. It is clear that livestock feed manufacturing has significant economic and social potential when properly supervised. However, success depends on comprehensive support, combining equipment, skills development, collective structuring and market access. This practice is transferable, but requires certain minimum conditions to be met: available local resources, demand for animal feed, technical support and the willingness of stakeholders.

Finally, the practice must be part of a broader ecosystem, where groups can be recognised, supported and integrated into public procurement or livestock support schemes. Only then can the efforts undertaken be consolidated and scaled up.

Success factors

- Local availability of raw materials
- Sustained demand for livestock feed
- Proven technologies (crushers)
- Active involvement of beneficiaries
- Institutional support and partnerships

Constraints

- Competition from imported or subsidised products
- Lack of basic infrastructure
- Weak technical training
- Variability of input costs

Lessons learned

- Promising activity if fully supported
- Success linked to equipment, training, structuring and market access
- Transferability dependent on a favourable local ecosystem

Recommendations

To maximise the impact of this initiative and enable its consolidation, several recommendations can be made to those involved in similar projects, public decision-makers, donors and technical support structures.

- **For those involved in similar projects**: Groups must be supported in strengthening their technical skills, particularly in the formulation of rich compound feed, species-appropriate rationing and micro-enterprise management. Practical management training, such as the «Gérer Mieux Mon Entreprise (GERME)» module, would help to strengthen the economic viability of the units.

  It is also recommended to encourage networking among units through exchange platforms with clear operating rules, in order to facilitate the pooling of resources, the sharing of experiences and collective representation.

  Finally, to better promote their products, groups would benefit from training in communication and marketing techniques, including labelling, participation in local fairs and practical demonstrations.

- **For public decision-makers**: It is crucial to integrate local micro-units into public livestock support mechanisms, in particular by reserving a share of livestock feed procurement contracts for groups that meet quality criteria.

This institutional recognition would strengthen the legitimacy of the groups and help stimulate rural economies, while consolidating the local supply of animal feed.

- **For lenders**: Unit performance can be significantly improved through targeted investments in basic infrastructure: grinding sheds, storage facilities, tarpaulins, weighbridges and packaging equipment. This logistical support is essential for improving livestock feed production and storage capacities.

  Donors can also play a catalytic role in promoting the economic inclusion of young people and women, particularly through tailored support mechanisms.

- **For technical support structures**: The introduction of continuing education modules on workplace safety, mill maintenance, and formulation techniques is an essential prerequisite for ensuring the sustainability of equipment and product quality.

  Support for the strategy to raise awareness among livestock farmers is also essential to increase demand for local compound feed, highlighting its nutritional and economic advantages.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Strengthening local consultation through participatory mapping of livestock and meat sector stakeholders

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Local empowerment**: Organising participatory mapping workshops empowers actors in the livestock and meat sector. By involving them in the analysis of their environment and collective planning, the practice creates a sense of ownership and improves the coherence of interventions.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The participatory approach promotes better collaboration between links in the chain, transforms beneficiaries into development actors, and facilitates the sustainability of achievements. Testimonials show strong support and a willingness to replicate the results.
- **Reproducibility**: Extending this practice requires trained facilitators, strong commitment from local organisations from the outset, and a safe and inclusive environment that allows all types of participants – including the most vulnerable – to express themselves and contribute.

Countries: Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso

Project leaders/organisations: Sikasso Regional Chamber of Agriculture (CRA), Sikasso Regional Livestock and Meat Industry Union (URFBV); Sikasso Regional Agricultural Research Centre (CRRA); Poro Region Livestock Farmers' Cooperative (SCOOPERPO; Korhogo); SONG-TAABA Men's Group of Livestock Traders, Bobo-Dioulasso; Association of Fresh Grass Sellers for Livestock in Bobo-Dioulasso (AVHF/B); International Centre for Research and Development on Livestock in Sub-humid Areas (CIRDES)

Challenge

Before the implementation of participatory mapping workshops, agricultural extension activities in the livestock and meat sector still largely followed a vertical model, inherited from colonial practices, in which local actors had little or no involvement in identifying their own needs. Programmes were often designed and implemented without any real consultation with beneficiaries, which limited the ownership, relevance and sustainability of the actions undertaken. Livestock farmers, traders, processors and other stakeholders remained passive beneficiaries rather than active contributors to the definition and implementation of interventions that affected them.

This lack of upstream participation created a gap between the priorities expressed in the field and the solutions proposed by the projects. It also reduced opportunities for co tribution between the different links in the livestock-meat value chain, hindering the emergence of productive alliances and the optimisation of available resources.

It was in this context that the opportunity arose to adopt a participatory approach based on stakeholder mapping workshops. The aim was to gain a better understanding of the local ecosystem, identify the roles, interactions and needs of the various stakeholders, and build a collective dynamic in which everyone could play an active role in transforming the sector. This approach responded to the need to anchor projects in local realities while empowering stakeholders to take responsibility for the development of their own sector.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced consists of organising participatory workshops to map stakeholders in the livestock and meat sector in the areas covered by the project Local Forages and Feed for the Intensification of Fattening and Quality Meat Production in West Africa (FAPROVIAQ). This practice is based on a participatory approach that places beneficiaries – particularly producers and other local stakeholders – at the centre of the action. It aims to empower them by enabling them to jointly assess their environment and propose their own solutions to the constraints they face.

One of the distinctive features of this approach is that it reverses traditional roles: development agents no longer act as prescribers, but as facilitators and coaches. The innovation lies in the fact that local populations analyse their own challenges, identify the different actors present in their territory, understand their respective roles, and actively participate in planning joint actions. This approach promotes the emergence of a sense of shared responsibility and greater consistency between interventions.

Implementation took place in several stages. First, the consortium partners mobilised national focal points in each country (Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire) to plan and organise the sessions. Next, awareness-raising and training sessions were held to explain the benefits of participatory mapping to local actors. The workshops themselves enabled participants to identify the different categories of actors in the sector (producers, processors, traders, transporters, financial institutions, veterinary services, etc.), to graphically represent their interactions and to discuss the complementarities or gaps in their relationships.

The resources mobilised were human, technical and financial. In terms of human resources, the workshop facilitators came from the consortium's member organisations, with support from local technical services and researchers from the Regional Chamber of Agriculture (CRA-Mali) and the International Centre for Research and Development on Livestock in Sub-humid Areas (CIRDES-Burkina Faso). The beneficiaries themselves actively contributed to the discussions and analysis. Financial resources were allocated to cover the logistics of the sessions, partial costs for participants, and the production of visual aids. This multisectoral mobilisation helped to establish a local dynamic of consultation, while laying the foundations for better coordination within the sector.

Results achieved and changes observed

The implementation of participatory mapping workshops as part of the FAPROVIAQ project raised awareness among approximately 1,250 stakeholders in the livestock and meat sector, out of an initial target of 3,000 people, representing an achievement rate of 42%. These workshops provided a space for dialogue and co-construction that profoundly transformed the role of local stakeholders in the intervention dynamics. From being mere passive beneficiaries, participants became responsible actors, capable of identifying their own needs, proposing solutions and collaborating with other links in the sector.

The exchanges facilitated by the workshops led to a better understanding of each person's role and complementarity within the value chain. This increased clarity on the interactions between actors encouraged local initiatives and a desire to strengthen business ties. The ownership of project activities also resulted in greater mobilisation of beneficiaries in other technical areas, such as the establishment of fodder banks and the manufacture of concentrated feed.

In terms of quality, there has been a noticeable change in the attitudes of stakeholders: they are more involved in monitoring actions, express their needs more clearly and demand a more active role in decision-making bodies. This reversal in attitude is confirmed by the testimonies collected.

> *TRAORE Ayouba, from the Association for the Promotion of Local Species (APEL), states: «The approach used in conducting the activities has enabled good ownership of the activities. This will enable us to sustain the project's achievements and work further towards replicating the results recorded.»*

The practice has therefore contributed to a structural change in the way we interact with beneficiaries, while consolidating the basis for more inclusive and collaborative governance of the sector.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this good practice. First, the territorial anchoring of the project through focal points in each country enabled close support for beneficiaries and better local coordination. Second, the active involvement of research structures such as CRRA and CIRDES strengthened the technical credibility of the process and facilitated the integration of results into other components of the project. The choice of a participatory approach, respectful of community dynamics, also helped to establish a climate of trust conducive to the expression of stakeholders.

The method used – facilitation, awareness-raising, training – was instrumental in getting participants to take ownership of the mapping tools and to reflect collectively on the strengths and weaknesses of their sector. In addition, regular monitoring meetings made it possible to quickly identify constraints and respond to them before they became insurmountable.

However, the implementation also encountered several difficulties. The delay in the disbursement of the second tranche of funding limited the coverage of the areas initially planned and reduced the logistical resources available for mobilising participants. The duration of the intervention, which was considered too short, did not allow for the consolidation of all the dynamic in s that had been initiated. The low level of participation by women in certain activities was also highlighted as a limitation that needs to be addressed. Finally, insecurity in certain localities restricted access to certain territories

and prevented workshops from being held in certain target areas.

These constraints highlight the importance of realistic timeframes, smooth financing and greater attention to social inclusion in implementation. The practice can be replicated in other contexts, provided that these elements are taken into account and the facilitation tools are adapted to local realities. It is particularly relevant in projects seeking to strengthen local governance of value chains and structure interactions between actors. The main lesson learned from this experience is that genuine involvement of beneficiaries from the early stages of a project increases their commitment, improves the relevance of actions, and lays the foundations for sustainable transformation.

Success factors	Constraints	Lessons learned
. Territorial anchoring with focal points. . Involvement of research structures (CRRA, CIRDES). . Participatory approach and adapted methods (facilitation, training, regular monitoring).	. Funding delays limiting coverage and logistics. . Duration too short to consolidate achievements. . Low inclusion of women. . Insecurity hindering access to certain areas.	. Importance of a realistic timetable and smooth funding. . Need to fully integrate social inclusion. . Adapt tools to local contexts. . Involve beneficiaries from the outset to strengthen commitment and sustainability.

Recommendations

The experience of participatory mapping workshops as part of the FAPROVIAQ project highlights several useful lessons for those involved in similar projects, public decision-makers, and technical and financial partners.

- **For project leaders**, it is essential to incorporate a structured participatory approach from the design phase onwards, enabling local actors to express their needs, roles and expectations. Mapping stakeholders should not be a mere formality, but a collective diagnostic process that informs the project's strategic choices. It is recommended that facilitation teams be equipped with simple and accessible participatory methods, and that specific resources be allocated to organise interactive sessions in each intervention area.

- **For public decision-makers**, this approach represents an opportunity to improve local governance of the sectors. It would be appropriate to consider integrating participatory mapping into sectoral planning processes, particularly in regional or local consultation

frameworks. Strengthening the participation of livestock farmers' organisations, traders and processors in decision-making bodies will help to consolidate a shared vision of the challenges facing the sector. It is also crucial to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups – women, young people, displaced persons – in these dynamics, guaranteeing them equitable access to spaces for dialogue and action.

- **For technical and financial partners**, this practice demonstrates that a relatively modest investment in local consultation can have lasting effects in terms of ownership and accountability. It is recommended that this practice be scaled up through multisectoral programmes, combining training, territorial facilitation and process documentation. Digital tools can also be used to promote the results of mapping exercises and encourage collaborative monitoring of the resulting action plans.

- **In the longer term**, the reproducibility and sustainability of this practice depend on its ability to be institutionalised. This requires providing ongoing training to technical service and local authority staff in participatory facilitation, creating synergies between projects and public policies, and promoting the continuous capitalisation of field experiences. Only under these conditions can participatory mapping fully play its role as a lever for concerted and inclusive transformation of the agricultural and pastoral sectors.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Structuring stakeholders to boost the livestock and meat sector in Guinea Forestière

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Structuring of actors**: Networking among livestock farmer groups strengthens their internal organisation, improves their coordination with other links in the livestock-meat sector, and contributes to product quality and the overall performance of the system.
- **Demonstrated impact**: Targeted organisational support, combined with the installation of shared infrastructure (dairies, cold rooms, parks), has created a dynamic of collaboration based on complementarity and trust between actors who were often isolated before.
- **Reproducibility**: The success of this practice in other contexts depends on differentiated support according to the level of structuring of the groups, active mobilisation of local technical services, and the establishment of collective mechanisms for the management of shared equipment.

Country: Guinea

Project leader/organisation: Network of Facilitators for Integrated Development in Guinea (RADIG) and its partners

Challenge

In the Guinea Forestière region, actors in the livestock and meat sector – small-scale farmers, pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and feedlot operators – operate in a poorly structured environment with limited technical, organisational and financial capacities. Although numerous, their groups suffered from a low level of internal organisation: few up-to-date legal documents, fragile governance, and little interaction with support structures or professional federations.

This lack of structure limited their ability to access technical services, raise funds, defend their interests or cooperate with other links in the value chain. In addition, women and young people, although active in the sector, were particularly marginalised, both in terms of access to resources and representation within organisations.

The lack of collaboration between stakeholders – farmers, butchers, veterinarians, fodder producers, consumers – hindered the development of a coherent and productive value chain. Meat, for example, was rarely inspected by veterinarians before consumption, posing health risks. Links between production, processing and marketing were weak or non-existent.

It was in this context that an opportunity arose to strengthen collective dynamics and complementarities between actors through structured support aimed at improving the internal capacities of groups, encouraging inter-professional collaboration and consolidating the institutional anchoring of livestock farmer organisations.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced consisted of structuring interactions between the various actors in the livestock-meat chain in Guinea Forestière, by strengthening both their internal organisational capacities and their external collaboration dynamics. The approach was based on two levers: a detailed organisational analysis of livestock farmer groups on the one hand, and targeted training and advisory support on the other, to initiate synergistic action at all levels of the sector.

The intervention began with a field survey conducted by a consultant recruited by the consortium, in collaboration with the technical services. This baseline survey provided a better understanding of existing livestock farming systems, identified the main organisational weaknesses, and gathered the information needed to develop an appropriate strengthening plan. A specific tool, the rapid organisational assessment form (ROAF), was used to assess fifty groups on criteria such as the existence of legal documents, the quality of their governance (technical, administrative, financial), and their level of interaction with technical services and the regional federation of livestock farmers.

On this basis, capacity-building modules were developed and delivered, covering the principles of internal governance, administrative and financial management, and inter-professional collaboration. Advisory support was organised to accompany the implementation of the acquired knowledge, with close monitoring.

One of the distinctive features of this practice is the emphasis placed on developing functional relationships between the different links in the chain. The project has facilitated closer ties between livestock farmers and veterinarians, butchers and hygiene services, and fodder producers and agro-pastoralists. This approach has encouraged the establishment of concrete channels of collaboration, with visible results in terms of meat quality, product preservation and the smooth flow of trade.

The provision of appropriate infrastructure, such as cold storage and dairies, reinforced this dynamic. It made it possible to limit losses, ensure product quality and create physical anchor points for cooperation between stakeholders.

In terms of human resources, all members of the consortium, livestock service technicians, representatives of the regional federation and group leaders were mobilised. Funding was provided under the Programme to Support Livestock Marketing in West Africa (PACBAO), covering consultants' fees, training logistics costs and the implementation of support infrastructure.

By focusing on structuring and cooperation, this good practice has laid the foundations for a more coherent and inclusive value chain that is better prepared to face the economic and health challenges of the livestock sector.

Results achieved and changes observed

The implementation of this good practice has created a new dynamic among stakeholders in the livestock and meat sector in Guinea Forestière. By strengthening the structure of groups and promoting inter-professional interactions, the project has helped to build bridges where isolation and mistrust previously prevailed.

A major result has been the establishment of regular collaboration between livestock farmers and technical services. Cases of disease are now reported quickly, enabling early and effective treatment of herds. This new relationship of trust not only improves animal health, but also reduces economic losses associated with unreported epidemics.

The sanitary quality of meat products has also improved. Before the project, meat was not systematically inspected by veterinarians. Thanks to the networking between butchers and veterinary services, the meat sold today is inspected and meets safety requirements for human consumption.

In addition, relations between the different links in the value chain – fodder producers, livestock farmers, feedlot operators, butchers and consumers – have been strengthened. This increased complementarity between stakeholders has helped to improve the fluidity of exchanges and the coordination of actions, and to develop a collective vision for the sector.

Finally, on an organisational level, the internal capacities of the groups have been consolidated. Some have updated their statutes and internal regulations, initiated regular meetings, or improved their administrative and financial management. This internal strengthening creates a more solid foundation for accessing services, forging partnerships, and defending their interests with institutions.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this practice. First, the use of the Rapid Organisational Assessment (ROA) tool made it possible to make an accurate and targeted diagnosis of the groups' real needs. By adapting the actions to this diagnosis, the project gained in effectiveness and relevance.

The recruitment of a specialist consultant to conduct a benchmark survey of technical services and livestock farmers was also a strategic step. This survey documented the actual functioning of the livestock farming system, institutional bottlenecks and opportunities for synergy. It facilitated the formulation of a realistic and context-appropriate intervention plan.

The mobilisation of stakeholders, in particular the regional livestock farmers' federation and technical services, played a decisive role. Their involvement facilitated the local anchoring of actions, reinforced the legitimacy of the messages conveyed, and created bridges for sustainable collaboration.

The installation of key infrastructure, such as cold storage and dairies, served as a concrete lever to bring stakeholders together and demonstrate the benefits of collaboration. This equipment made it possible to reduce post-slaughter losses, better preserve products, and professionalise distribution channels.

However, implementing this synergy of action was not without difficulties. Initial resistance to change was a major obstacle. Habits of operating in isolation, rivalries between stakeholders and a lack of mutual understanding of each other's activities sometimes hampered collective dynamics. It took time, education and repeated support and advice to change mindsets.

Another constraint was the varying levels of structuring among the groups, which were not all at the same stage of institutional maturity. This made support more complex, requiring adjustments and differentiated monitoring.

One of the key lessons learned from this experience is that organisational strengthening cannot be separated from the development of concrete inter-professional relationships. The most visible effects were not only the result of training or statutory updates, but also the way in which the actors began to talk to each other, collaborate and build a chain of trust.

The replicability of this practice will depend on several factors: local political will, the existence of credible support structures, the ability to mobilise funding for key infrastructure, and above all, the time needed for stakeholders to embrace a new culture of collaboration.

Success factors	Constraints	Lessons learned
. Targeted diagnosis using the ERO tool and a benchmark survey . Involvement of local stakeholders . Concrete infrastructure facilitating networking	. Resistance to change and silo mentality . Highly variable levels of structuring between groups . Rivalries and lack of trust between certain actors	. Dialogue and collaboration are key to structuring stakeholders in a sustainable manner . Support must be tailored to the actual capacities of beneficiaries . Networking takes time but creates a promising and reproducible dynamic

Recommendations

To strengthen and sustain this momentum for structuring and collaboration among stakeholders in the livestock and meat chain, several recommendations can be made to decision-makers, donors, support structures and project leaders.

- **For decision-makers**, official recognition of livestock farmers' federations and their integration into national livestock policies are key conditions for the sustainable structuring of the sector. Their mediating role is all the more effective when they benefit from stable institutional support and sufficient resources to carry out their mission.

- **For donors**, extending the duration of projects is essential to promote profound changes in the behaviour and organisational methods of stakeholders. Increased financial support, including appropriate grants and mixed financing mechanisms, helps to consolidate achievements and ensure their long-term viability.

- **For support structures**, support mechanisms must be differentiated according to the level of structuring of the groups, with progressive capacity-building pathways. Local technical support, targeted training and coaching sessions facilitate the anchoring of new practices.

- **For project leaders**, collective infrastructure (cold rooms, dairies, points of sale) are concrete levers for networking, provided that they are accompanied by participatory management mechanisms. Their proper use depends on clear governance, regular monitoring and ownership by the beneficiaries.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Strengthening the capacities of livestock farmers to improve meat quality and incomes in Chad

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Professionalisation**: Technical capacity building, the provision of appropriate equipment and the structuring of producers have improved the running of fattening workshops, with visible effects on the quality of animals sold and the income of livestock farmers.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The active involvement of local actors and local support facilitated the rapid adoption of good practices and generated a ripple effect in areas not directly targeted by the project.
- **Reproducibility**: To extend the practice, it is essential to adapt the content and pace of training to the profiles of the beneficiaries, to provide regular post-training support, and to facilitate access to appropriate financing to support the growth of feedlot operators.

Country: Chad

Project leader/organisation: Association des Eleveurs Nomades (AEN)

Challenge

Before the intervention of the Support for the Development of Cattle and Sheep Farms in Chad (PADEFEM-TD) project, the running of fattening workshops in Chad suffered from multiple shortcomings that limited the profitability of the activity, despite its economic potential. Fattening cycles were often too long, technical performance was poor, and feed losses were high due to poor equipment layout or a lack of know-how. The majority of producers involved in fattening operated on an empirical basis, without structured training or appropriate technical reference . At the same time, access to the necessary inputs (feed, equipment, veterinary care) remained limited, both in terms of availability and cost. This situation discouraged many producers and made it impossible to meet the growing demand for quality meat on local markets.

These difficulties were compounded by the lack of structure among fattening operators, which hampered their visibility, their negotiating power and their access to services and markets. Their isolation slowed the spread of good practices and prevented the emergence of partnerships with other links in the value chain, such as input suppliers and traders.

In this context, PADEFEM-TD identified an opportunity for concrete action: supporting feedlot operators in improving their technical practices and economic positioning. The aim was to transform these individual or community initiatives into structured, technically reliable and economically viable activities capable of sustainably supplying local markets with quality slaughter animals.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced by the PADEFEM-TD project is based on integrated support for the management of fattening units. It combines technical capacity building, provision of basic equipment, organisational support and networking among producers. The objective was to professionalise

fattening practices by promoting mastery of technical processes, reducing losses, improving health monitoring and enhancing the value of products on the markets.

One of the distinctive features of this approach is the mobilisation of local actors with strong roots in the territories. Provincial umbrella organisations of livestock farmers and the decentralised services of the ministry in charge of livestock farming were at the heart of the implementation. This choice made it possible to leverage local skills, adapt messages to the realities on the ground, and strengthen the beneficiaries' ownership of the actions. In addition, the publication and distribution of a technical manual on fattening contributed to the sustainability of the educational gains.

Implementation took place in several stages. It began with a diagnostic study of local fattening dynamics in the target areas, providing a better understanding of existing practices and enabling beneficiaries to be targeted. Information and awareness campaigns were then organised to mobilise producers. Training sessions on improved techniques for running fattening workshops were then conducted, focusing on key topics such as pen layout, feeding, veterinary care and fattening cycle management. At the end of these training sessions, 90 equipment kits were distributed to the trained producers. The project also facilitated the structuring of three fattening unions and encouraged the creation of commercial partnerships with butchers and traders.

In terms of resources mobilised, the project benefited from the support of specialists from the livestock service for the diagnostic study, the DPEPA for training, and umbrella POs for community mobilisation and organisational support. On the technical side, fattening equipment was provided (feeders, waterers, various tools), and a technical manual was developed to support knowledge transfer. The entire approach was funded as part of PADEFEM-TD activities, in synergy with other local initiatives.

Results achieved and changes observed

The implementation of this practice has yielded concrete results, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Twenty-five awareness-raising sessions were organised, reaching approximately 3,600 producers, including 705 women. This mobilisation has helped to anchor local interest in fattening techniques and prepare beneficiaries to adopt new skills.

A total of 90 fatteners were trained in improved techniques for running fattening workshops. At the end of these training courses, each participant received a kit of equipment tailored to their identified needs (feeders, drinkers, restraint tools, etc.). In addition, a technical manual was published to consolidate the knowledge acquired and facilitate the replication of good practices beyond the direct beneficiaries. On an organisational level, three fattening unions were created, giving them greater capacity for representation and collective action. These unions also made it possible to negotiate and conclude three partnership agreements with traders and butchers.

The changes observed are significant. On a technical level, producers have begun to implement recommendations related to animal feed, housing and health monitoring. The use of the equipment provided has reduced feed losses, as highlighted by the president of the Mongo Feedlot Owners' Union. Improved fattening conditions have led to an increase in the quality of slaughter animals and, consequently, their market value. For example, cattle purchased for between 75,000 and 100,000 CFA francs were resold for up to 200,000 CFA francs after only 40 days of fattening, generating significant margins for producers.

Beyond the direct beneficiaries, the initiative has had a visible ripple effect. Several neighbouring producers have been inspired by the results and have begun to adopt the promoted practices, contributing to a dynamic of local transformation. The more frequent use of veterinary services for preventive and curative treatments also reflects a change in attitudes towards animal health. Finally, other projects and partners working in the area have shown growing interest in supporting or replicating this type of initiative.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this good practice. One of the key elements was the active involvement of local actors, particularly umbrella organisations of livestock farmers and decentralised technical services. This approach made it possible to adapt messages to local realities, build producers' confidence and leverage existing skills in the field. The initial assessment also played a structuring role, directing actions towards motivated beneficiaries who were in line with the project's objectives. Finally, the combination of technical training, equipment support and organisational assistance constituted a comprehensive and well-articulated approach.

However, certain constraints limited the scope of the results. The duration of the training courses, which participants considered too short and too intense, did not always allow for complete assimilation of the modules covered, especially for an audience that was largely illiterate. In addition, the lack of post-training follow-up deprived producers of personalised advice and support when they encountered practical difficulties in implementing what they had learned. Finally, no financial support was provided to assist producers wishing to expand their fattening units, which limited the transition to scale.

Several lessons can be learned from these limitations. It appears essential to adapt the pace of training to the capacities of participants, even if this means spreading the modules over several sessions. A post-training follow-up mechanism, even a light one, can greatly enhance the effectiveness of learning and promote its sustainability. Furthermore, while basic equipment is useful for introducing producers to the practice, capital support, even partial, may be necessary to consolidate the activity and make it fully profitable. Finally, while the practice is technically transferable to other similar Sahelian contexts,

its reproducibility will depend heavily on the existence of competent local actors, accessible market outlets, and a minimum of structured support.

Success factors

- Involvement of local actors
- Relevant initial diagnosis
- Integrated support: training, equipment, structuring
- Approach rooted in local realities

Constraints

- Training courses too short and intensive
- Lack of post-training follow-up
- Lack of financial support to expand activities

Lessons learned

- Adapt the pace of training to the profiles of beneficiaries
- Provide on-the-ground support after training
- Combine financial support to promote growth
- Reproducibility dependent on local supervision and the existence of markets

Recommendations

For those undertaking similar projects, it is essential to adopt an integrated approach that combines technical training, equipment provision and organisational support. Training must be planned over a sufficient period of time, with simplified modules adapted to the abilities of learners, particularly those with low literacy levels. It is also recommended to provide for a post-training follow-up mechanism, even if only a light one, in order to reinforce learning and respond to the practical difficulties encountered during implementation. Finally, the involvement of local actors – professional organisations, local technical services – is an important lever for ensuring the relevance of interventions and their ownership by beneficiaries.

For decision-makers, donors and support structures, this practice demonstrates that targeted investment in the capacities of small producers can produce tangible results, both in terms of quality and income. It is therefore recommended that fattening be integrated as a strategic focus in livestock development policies, by facilitating access to continuing training, appropriate equipment and inclusive financing mechanisms. The establishment of working capital or appropriate credit facilities could help producers to reach a new level in terms of volume and professionalisation. At the same time, support for the structuring of producers is essential to improve their position in the value chain and promote the establishment of sustainable commercial partnerships.

- **In the short term**, it is advisable to consolidate the achievements of current beneficiaries through support and advisory missions and to strengthen the dissemination of good practices via fattening unions and trained community relays. In the medium and long term, replicating this good practice in other regions will require mapping existing stakeholders, targeting areas with high potential and ensuring the existence of dynamic local mark . Rigorous monitoring and ongoing documentation will also make it possible to adjust approaches and increase long-term impact.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Designing motorcycles equipped for hygienic meat transport in Nigeria

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Hygiene and modernisation**: The introduction of motorcycles equipped for meat transport improves hygiene throughout the supply chain, reduces the risk of contamination, and supports the emergence of new services such as online sales of fresh meat. These vehicles are becoming key assets for young entrepreneurs and cooperatives.
- **Demonstrated impact**: Supported by a strong commitment from local authorities, this locally designed technical innovation is transforming meat transport and sales practices, strengthening food safety, and boosting consumer confidence.
- **Replicability**: To spread this practice, it is essential to provide local artisans with clear standards, ensure the support of local governments, and facilitate access to financing for operators who wish to equip themselves or develop delivery services.

Country: Nigeria

Carriers/organisations: KSA-AgroLog Consortium

Challenge

Before the intervention of the «Feedlots, Crossbreeding, Upgrading Meat Value Chain» project, meat was transported in Nigeria under extremely precarious conditions, compromising the safety of meat products. Carcasses were frequently transported using unsuitable means such as dirty cars, ordinary motorcycles, open tricycles, wheelbarrows or even carried on the head in basins. These practices exposed the meat to dust, fumes, insects and other contaminants throughout the journey from the slaughterhouses to the points of sale or consumption. No measures were in place to ensure minimum hygiene conditions, and almost all transporters had received no training or awareness-raising on health standards.

This situation posed a serious risk to public health by promoting microbial contamination of meat. Informal practices and the lack of control or regulation exacerbated the problem. However, growing demand for quality meat and new consumption habits, particularly through online sales, opened up interesting opportunities to improve supply and modernise the value chain.

In response to this opportunity, the project identified meat transport as a critical link that needed to be transformed in order to guarantee product safety, protect consumers and support the emergence of new commercial services, while creating jobs for young people, particularly in e-commerce for meat products.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced by the project is based on the design and testing of motorised vehicles suitable for transporting fresh meat, particularly hot meat, in hygienic conditions. The main innovation consists of the manufacture of stainless steel or aluminium cabins, mounted on motorcycles and

designed to transport up to 100 kg of meat, while protecting the products from external contamination.

This device has been designed to meet several requirements: it must not itself be a source of contamination, it must be easy to wash and inspect, it must provide protection against external elements (dust, smoke, odours, microbes), and it must be easy for operators to maintain. Two main variants were designed: cabins integrated onto motorcycles for small volumes and modular structures on tricycles or vans for larger volumes. For budgetary reasons, the project focused on the manufacture of pilot models of equipped motorcycles, which were given to transporters and online sellers.

The implementation process took place in several stages. First, a technical analysis was conducted by the project team to identify the necessary specifications. These specifications were then entrusted to local craftsmen specialising in mechanics and welding to produce the cabins according to the required standards. Close supervision was provided by the KSA-AgroLog consortium to ensure manufacturing quality. At the same time, training courses, seminars and demonstrations in local languages were organised to raise awareness among stakeholders of the health risks associated with traditional meat transport and the benefits of new practices.

The resources mobilised for this innovation were human, technical and institutional. The project team, with its multidisciplinary expertise, was responsible for design, coordination and technical monitoring. Local craftsmen contributed their know-how to the manufacturing process. The governments of Edo and Gombe states supported the initiative, in particular by facilitating its integration into local regulations. Funding was provided by the project budget, although constraints limited the large-scale extension of the practice.

Results achieved and changes observed

The implementation of this innovation in meat transport has yielded several concrete and measurable results. Four motorcycles equipped with stainless steel cabins were built locally and handed over to value chain operators, including transporters and online meat sellers. These vehicles were immediately operational in the project's intervention areas, where they contributed to significantly improving the conditions for transporting hot meat between slaughterhouses and points of sale or delivery.

At the institutional level, the impact has been equally remarkable. The Edo State Government has adopted the model proposed by the project as a mandatory standard for all meat transport in the state from 1 January 2023. This decision marks a complete appropriation of the innovation by local authorities. In Gombe State, a similar process is underway, with discussions on establishing a legislative framework to incorporate this model into regulations.

The effects on the system have been manifold. Local artisans, particularly welders involved in the manufacture of cabins, have strengthened their technical skills and are now able to reproduce this equipment in accordance with standards. This paves the way for a local manufacturing sector that generates income and jobs.

A change in behaviour is also noticeable among operators. Awareness of the health issues associated with transport has prompted several stakeholders to gradually abandon traditional methods in favour of safer practices. The use of these motorbikes also facilitates delivery in the context of online sales, an emerging segment of the value chain that the project has helped to strengthen.

Finally, the recognition of the model by other actors outside Nigeria testifies to its attractiveness. The NGO Vétérinaires Sans Frontières International, for example, has replicated the approach in Togo, confirming its potential for regional dissemination.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this innovation. First, the awareness-raising approach was decisive. Workshops, seminars and demonstrations organised in local languages helped to disseminate good practices and explain the dangers of unhygienic meat transport. The use of audiovisual equipment made these messages accessible and convincing to a wide audience, particularly small operators.

Institutional support also played a key role. The commitment of the beneficiary state governments, particularly that of Edo, not only legitimised the approach but also anchored it firmly in public policy. The technical capacity of the project coordination team, combined with rigorous supervision of the manufacturing process, ensured the quality of the prototypes produced.

However, several constraints have limited the expansion of the practice. The high cost of the materials required, particularly aluminium or stainless steel sheets, has been an obstacle to large-scale replication. In addition, potential beneficiaries face difficulties in accessing credit from financial institutions, which limits their ability to invest in this type of equipment.

These difficulties highlight the need for additional support. The project has begun to establish links with banks such as the Bank of Industry, the Bank of Agriculture and NIRSAL, but stronger support is needed to secure specific lines of financing.

An important lesson is that even relatively simple technical innovations can have a significant impact if they are well adapted to the local context, accompanied by sustained awareness-raising efforts, and integrated into an institutional strategy. However, the replicability of the practice will depend heavily on the ability to remove economic barriers and structure a local manufacturing and maintenance offering.

Success factors

- Effective awareness-raising in local languages using audiovisual tools
- Active support from governments, particularly Edo
- Technical expertise and rigorous supervision

Constraints

- High cost of materials
- Limited access to credit for small operators
- Local production still limited

Lessons learned

- A simple innovation can have a significant impact if it is well contextualised
- Removing financial barriers is key to replication
- Institutional anchoring reinforces sustainability

Recommendations

To reinforce the impact of this good practice and facilitate its wider dissemination, several recommendations can be made to project leaders, public decision-makers, donors and support structures.

For project leaders, similar initiatives would benefit from incorporating a technical component from the outset, aimed at the local design of appropriate equipment. The use of local craftsmen has proven effective in producing cabins that comply with hygiene standards, while developing sustainable skills within communities. To guarantee quality, it is essential to provide artisans with precise specifications, rigorous technical supervision and targeted support throughout the manufacturing process.

Furthermore, innovation should not be considered in isolation: its integration into an overall strategy for modernising the meat sector – from slaughter to distribution – is essential to maximise its effects.

For public decision-makers, local and national governments must be made aware of the health and economic issues involved in meat transport. The example of Edo State shows that strong political support, in the form of a decision to make the use of the promoted equipment mandatory, can accelerate adoption and ensure the sustainability of innovation. The establishment of clear regulatory frameworks, the recognition of certified artisans, and the organisation of exchange visits between states can play a structuring role in the regional dissemination of the practice.

For donors, financial support for this innovation is crucial to ensuring its growth. Although the equipment is less expensive than international standards, its acquisition remains out of reach for many small operators. It is therefore recommended that specific support mechanisms be developed: targeted subsidies, preferential interest rate loans, leasing options, or mixed financing schemes. Support for the regional standardisation of technical

models can also be a strategic investment with a high leverage effect.

- **For support structures**, it is necessary to continue and expand capacity-building efforts among actors in the chain. This includes cascade training on equipment maintenance, good hygiene practices, and the use of specialised vehicles. In the longer term, the creation of a network of certified artisans, the dissemination of technical guides, and the establishment of regionally recognised standards (ECOWAS) could promote the professionalisation of the sector. The free sharing of technical plans, as proposed by KSA-AgroLog, is a concrete opportunity to be seized in order to structure this dynamic.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Formalising to improve trade: introducing live weight sales and contractual documents in the livestock trade

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Structuring trade**: The introduction of live weight sales and standardised commercial documents enhances transparency, traceability and fairness in transactions, contributing to the gradual formalisation of the livestock trade.
- **Transformation of practices**: The combination of simple technical tools (such as scales) and accessible legal support is bringing about a lasting transformation in commercial practices, provided that it is supported by regular dialogue and the active involvement of the stakeholders concerned.
- **Reproducibility**: Extending the practice to other contexts requires strong commitment from local professional organisations, the involvement of technical authorities, and local support combining awareness-raising, training and ongoing support for traders.

Countries: Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso

Lead partner/organisation: National Federation of Livestock and Meat Cooperatives of Côte d'Ivoire (FENACOFBVI-CI)

Issues

Before the formalisation of commercial transactions on the Ouagadougou–Abidjan corridor, livestock trading practices were largely informal, based on verbal negotiations and visual estimates. All transactions – orders, deliveries, sales and purchases – were carried out without any written record, exposing the parties involved to frequent disputes and considerable financial insecurity. Prices were often determined arbitrarily, depending on the customer's negotiating skills or their relationship with the seller, which penalised livestock farmers, traders and middlemen alike.

This informality had several adverse consequences. When orders were placed, traders had no proof in the event of cancellation by a customer. This made it difficult, if not impossible, to obtain financing from financial institutions, as formal purchase orders did not exist. During deliveries, the lack of documentation allowed customers to dispute the debt or receipt of goods, weakening the supplier's position. As for sales and purchases, the lack of objectivity in price setting exacerbated trade imbalances, fuelled the indebtedness of middlemen and contributed to unjustified price increases for end consumers.

At the same time, monetary exchanges related to these transactions were often carried out in cash, as there were no money transfer counters near the markets. This exposed traders to the risk of robbery, particularly when travelling with large sums of money.

Faced with these multiple dysfunctions, the formalisation of commercial exchanges appeared to be a strategic opportunity to structure relations between actors, secure transactions, increase transparency in price setting and lend credibility to financing initiatives with financial institutions. It responded to a need clearly expressed by actors in the field, who were keen to escape precariousness and improve their negotiating capacity in a more structured and secure environment.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced consists of formalising commercial transactions in the livestock trade through two complementary innovations: the adoption of purchase and sale by live weight, and the systematic use of commercial documents such as purchase orders, delivery notes and invoices. This dual reform aimed to professionalise trade, improve traceability, increase transparency in price setting and facilitate access to finance.

The distinctive feature of the practice lies in the combination of standardised legal tools and a concrete technical innovation – the weighing of livestock using scales installed in the markets of Pouytenga and Port-Bouët. Animals are weighed individually before sale, and a printed document states their exact weight. The price is then calculated on the basis of a unit price per kilogramme, agreed in advance. This approach guarantees an objective and fair price, while reducing the scope for speculation.

The implementation of the practice followed several structured steps. A baseline study was first conducted to establish an overview of existing practices. Next, awareness campaigns were conducted among traders and local authorities to present the planned innovations and gain their support. A lawyer was recruited to draft commercial documents tailored to the realities of the sector. At the same time, the markets were equipped with two weighing scales, the installation of which required consultation with local stakeholders and specific adjustments.

At the institutional level, the good practice mobilised a variety of stakeholders. The project team coordinated and monitored activities. The heads of professional organisations contributed to mobilising beneficiaries. The director of the Port-Bouët slaughterhouse played a decisive role as mediator between the stakeholders. Finally, technical service providers ensured the acquisition and commissioning of weighing equipment.

In financial terms, the main costs related to legal services for the preparation of documents, the ordering and installation of scales, and communication and stakeholder mobilisation activities. These investments laid the foundations for a more structured, equitable and secure trading system, breaking with previous practices.

Results achieved and changes observed

The formalisation of commercial transactions in the livestock trade has led to concrete improvements at several levels of the value chain. The results achieved are visible both in terms of infrastructure and stakeholder behaviour.

At the operational level, two weighing scales have been installed: one at the primary market in Pouytenga, Burkina Faso, and the other at the terminal market in Port-Bouët, Côte d'Ivoire. This equipment has enabled the launch of a live weight purchasing and sales system, which did not previously exist in this corridor. At the same time, an office for centralising and facilitating operations was built in Pouytenga to support the structuring of trade flows and reduce administrative delays.

In terms of legal tools, several commercial documents have been developed: purchase orders, delivery notes, invoices and letters of acknowledgement of debt. These documents are now available in printed format, ready for use, and have been presented to stakeholders during validation workshops. Around 100 traders have been informed about their usefulness and how to use them, initiating a process of gradual adoption.

The changes observed in the field are encouraging. In Pouytenga, traders are actively awaiting the operational launch of the weighing and formalisation system. In Port-Bouët, initial resistance has been overcome through awareness-raising sessions and negotiations, and several traders are now in favour of installing the weighbridge. The use of commercial documents is beginning to be seen as a protection against disputes and a lever for accessing bank financing.

In terms of quality, these innovations have helped to strengthen trust between stakeholders. Weighing makes prices more transparent and objective, reducing disputes. Commercial documents provide traceability, which secures commercial relationships and lends credibility to transactions. The testimonials collected confirm these advances: for some traders, this practice marks a gradual move away from the informal sector and opens up new opportunities for structuring their activities.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

The success of this good practice is based on several key factors. First and foremost, the quality of communication and awareness-raising played a fundamental role. Information campaigns targeting traders helped to explain the concrete benefits of the innovations and overcome some of the initial resistance. Consultation fostered greater buy-in from stakeholders, particularly in Port-Bouët, where negotiations were lengthy but fruitful.

The role of local leaders was also essential. In Pouytenga, the president of the traders' cooperative was heavily involved in mobilising its members and supporting the adoption of the practice. In Abidjan, the director of the Port-Bouët slaughterhouse acted as a mediator between the different parties, enabling dialogue to resume in what was initially a tense atmosphere. These intermediaries helped to convey the project's messages in a language that was understandable and credible to the beneficiaries.

In terms of methodology, the combination of technical innovations (weighing scales) and legal tools (commercial documents) made it possible to address formalisation in a comprehensive manner. The drafting of the documents by a specialist lawyer reinforced their legitimacy, while the weighing equipment made transactions more objective.

However, several constraints hampered the full deployment of the practice. The complexity of setting up a one-stop shop, as initially planned, required an adjustment towards a facilitation office, which was simpler to implement. The harmonisation of procedures between the two countries, which was also envisaged, encountered institutional obstacles and was replaced by a strategy to streamline road traffic flows. In addition, internal resistance, linked to leadership conflicts between professional organisations, delayed the buy-in of certain actors, particularly in Port-Bouët.

One of the main lessons learned is that technical innovation, however relevant, is not enough without parallel investment in dialogue and local governance. The involvement of professional leaders, active mediation and the creation of a space for dialogue were the real levers of change.

Another important lesson concerns the transferability of the practice. While the results obtained are promising, replicating them in other contexts requires prior work to adapt them to the institutional framework, local dynamics and the capacity of stakeholders to take ownership. This is not a fixed model, but an adaptable framework, whose success depends heavily on the quality of the implementation process.

Success factors

- Effective communication and local consultation
- Commitment of local leaders
- Technical (balance) and legal (documents) alliance
- Participatory development of tools

Constraints

- Difficulty in creating a one-stop shop
- Leadership conflicts in certain localities
- Barriers to harmonisation between countries
- Slow uptake by some traders

Lessons learned

- Dialogue and local governance are key to ownership
- Credible intermediaries facilitate stakeholder buy-in
- The model is transferable if adapted to local realities
- A co-constructed process reinforces the legitimacy and sustainability of solutions

Recommendations

To ensure the sustainability and dissemination of the practice of formalising commercial transactions in the livestock trade, several courses of action can be considered at different levels.

- **For those involved in similar projects**, it is essential to combine technical innovations with simple commercial management tools. Weighing livestock and drawing up contractual documents should be seen as complementary levers. It is advisable to start with a pilot phase in a well-structured market, mobilising local professional leaders and providing local support. Training traders in the use of documents, particularly in contexts of low literacy, is also a key factor to be integrated from the outset.

- **For public decision-makers and support structures**, it is crucial to recognise that formalisation cannot succeed without clear institutional support. The active involvement of technical ministries (trade, livestock, finance) helps to create an environment conducive to the adoption of these practices. The formalisation of commercial documents, their legal recognition, and the installation of weighing facilities in large markets must be supported through coherent public policies. The role of ECOWAS and its technical institutions could also be strengthened to promote regional harmonisation and the sharing of experiences between countries.

- **For donors and technical partners**, priority should be given to the gradual extension of the practice to other strategic corridors. This requires adequate funding for the installation of infrastructure (weighbridges, facilitation offices), but also support for local governance and mediation between actors. Interventions should include a monitoring and evaluation component to enable adjustments to be made to the mechanisms as they are adopted by beneficiaries. It would also be useful to produce simplified tools (guides, practical information sheets, videos) to support replication in other contexts.

- **In the short term**, it is recommended that the ARAA engage in formal dialogue with the technical ministries of the countries concerned in order to present the results and impacts observed. An official letter accompanied by a capitalisation dossier could serve as a basis for obtaining their support for an extension within the framework of phase 2 of the Programme to Support Livestock Marketing in West Africa (PACBAO). Such an approach will strengthen the institutional legitimacy of the practice and facilitate its integration into national policies supporting the livestock and meat sectors.

- **In the longer term**, the formalisation of the livestock trade could constitute a strategic axis for regional economic integration. By professionalising trade, reducing disputes and improving traceability, this practice contributes to the structural transformation of the sectors and to strengthening food security in the ECOWAS region. As such, it deserves sustained support, at the crossroads of the economic, social and political priorities of the Member States.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Growing fodder to secure livestock feed during the dry season

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Food resilience**: By cultivating *Panicum maximum*, livestock farmers have been able to stabilise their herds' feed during the dry season, improve the animals' body condition and reduce conflicts with farmers through sedentarisation.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The introduction of fodder crops, accompanied by targeted training and local support, has enabled livestock farmers to transform their feeding practices in a sustainable way and improve the productivity of their livestock, even in an extensive context.
- **Reproducibility**: To disseminate this practice, it is necessary to guarantee secure access to land, support livestock farmers in mastering cultivation and conservation techniques, and ensure continuous technical monitoring, at least during the first few seasons.

Country: Guinea

Lead organisation: Network of Facilitators for Integrated Development in Guinea (RADIG) and its partners

Challenge

Before the introduction of fodder crops, livestock feed in Guinea Forestière relied almost exclusively on natural pastures. However, these plant resources were gradually dwindling due to land pressure, land degradation and a succession of prolonged dry seasons. This situation led to animals regularly wandering in search of greenery, causing recurring conflicts between livestock farmers and itinerant farmers. It also exposed herds to increased risks of disease, malnutrition, predation and weight loss, particularly during periods of food shortage.

The dominant extensive system did not allow for the anticipation of critical periods or the stabilisation of herds in secure areas. In addition, post-harvest residues were rarely used, and supplementary feeding practices remained marginal, with the exception of palm kernel meal and corn bran used for small ruminants.

In this context, the introduction of structured fodder cultivation represented a strategic opportunity to improve the livestock feeding system, encourage the sedentarisation of herds and reduce tensions between users of rural space. The project therefore seized this opportunity to work with livestock farmers to test practices that are resilient to climate change and likely to increase productivity while reducing risks related to the environment and social interactions.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced consisted of working with livestock farmers to develop the cultivation of *Panicum maximum*, a forage grass that is resistant to drought and bush fires and highly palatable to local species (cattle, sheep and goats). This plant was chosen following preparatory fieldwork carried

out by the RADIG consortium and its partners, in consultation with technical services, local resource persons and livestock farmer representatives.

The specificity of this practice lies in the planned introduction of a perennial fodder crop, adapted to the climatic conditions of the region, combined with a participatory approach to capacity building for livestock farmers. Through the herbarium created, the plant species preferred by the three main animal species were identified, and *Panicum maximum* emerged as a viable option. This initiative also aimed to rehabilitate the rational use of post-harvest residues, which had been underutilised until then.

The main stages of implementation began with a field reconnaissance mission, followed by the selection of beneficiaries and the establishment of plots. Forage groups were formed and then trained in various techniques: the importance of forage cultivation, possible forms of cultivation, farming methods, seed production and adaptation constraints. The training was provided by the NGO AVES, a member of the consortium, with the support of UREBV and technical services.

In terms of resources, mobilisation was multidimensional. Human resources included field facilitators, relay trainers, technicians from the Ministry of Livestock, and community leaders involved in setting up the sites. Technical resources included seeds, soil preparation tools, and agronomic assistance. Financial resources were allocated by the Programme d'Appui à la Commercialisation du Bétail en Afrique de l'Ouest (PACBAO) through the consortium, covering the installation of plots, training and monitoring costs.

This combination of technical approach, local support and community mobilisation formed the basis of a simple but strategic innovation capable of profoundly transforming herd feeding practices in a fragile context.

Results achieved and changes observed

The cultivation of *Panicum maximum* on an area of four hectares produced around eight tonnes of

fodder, which was used to feed livestock during the lean season. This availability of food enabled the herds to remain sedentary, thus limiting their wandering during the dry season. The animals remained close to their homes and were fed in a controlled manner, which significantly improved their physical condition.

The qualitative effects were manifold. On the one hand, sedentarisation reduced tensions between livestock farmers and crop farmers by eliminating conflicts related to the wandering of herds into cultivated fields. On the other hand, it enabled livestock farmers to better control their animals, facilitating health monitoring, disease prevention and a reduction in predator attacks . Livestock farmers also saw an increase in milk and meat production, attributed to better quality feed.

These changes have resulted in a tangible improvement in the beneficiaries' income. The testimony of Mamady Bamba, a livestock farmer in Guéasso, highlights the positive impact of introducing breeding stock fed with cultivated fodder: animals from these crossbreeds perform better than local breeds. Another beneficiary, Baba, says that before the project, he had to travel long distances to harvest wild grasses and that during the dry season he lost animals. Since the establishment of fodder fields, losses have decreased and the workload has been reduced.

Finally, in terms of behaviour, beneficiaries have adopted a more proactive approach to livestock feed management. The systematic cutting and storage of fodder for critical periods marks a break with previous practices, which relied exclusively on natural resources. This development reflects a structural change in livestock management.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

The success of this good practice relies primarily on technical training for farmers, provided by the NGO AVES in collaboration with UREBV and technical services. The training modules covered the entire fodder crop cycle, from soil preparation to seed production. This comprehensive and progressive approach enabled beneficiaries to master the key stages of the practice and strengthen their technical autonomy.

The choice of *Panicum maximum* as a forage species adapted to the local climate was also a determining factor. Its resistance to fire and drought, as well as its palatability to the main livestock species, made it an effective solution in a context of increasing climate variability.

The partnership dynamic was another lever for success. The complementarity between consortium members, technical services, local resource persons and community leaders ensured local support and good information flow. This collaboration facilitated the participation of livestock farmers and the establishment of plots within a reasonable time frame.

However, several constraints were encountered during implementation. The first was the difficulty of accessing land for the establishment of fodder fields, with some beneficiaries finding it difficult to secure sites. The second was related to climatic conditions, with a prolonged drought at the time of sowing affecting plant growth. Finally, isolated attacks by predators were reported, but these did not call into question the overall effectiveness of the practice.

These constraints highlight the need to better anticipate implementation conditions, in particular by

securing land before activities begin and adapting the agricultural calendar to weather forecasts. It is also essential to raise awareness among communities about plot protection and collective resource management.

One of the key lessons learned is the simplicity and adaptability of the practice. Without resorting to complex technologies or costly inputs, this initiative has introduced a high-impact innovation that can be replicated in other rural areas facing the same challenges. However, replicability will depend on the availability of seeds, the capacity of stakeholders to ensure rigorous monitoring, and the maintenance of technical support during the first few seasons.

In short, this good practice has demonstrated that it is possible to initiate a sustainable transformation of the livestock food system through simple, participatory solutions that are well rooted in the realities on the ground.

Success factors

- High-quality practical training
- Choice of a suitable species (*Panicum maximum*)
- Good synergy between local stakeholders

Constraints

- Difficult access to land
- Drought during sowing
- Predator attacks

Lessons learned

- Simple solutions can bring about lasting change in practices
- Reproducibility requires available seeds and sustained support
- Anticipate land issues and raise awareness of collective plot management

Recommendations

To consolidate the achievements of this good practice and enable its replication in other rural areas, several recommendations can be made to project leaders, public decision-makers, donors and support structures.

- **For project leaders**, fodder producers benefit more when they are organised into groups or cooperatives with clear management rules. The effectiveness of interventions also depends on training and advisory support mechanisms that are adapted to local realities and led by competent community leaders. Simple and accessible educational materials are needed to promote ownership, particularly in areas with low literacy rates. Medium- to long-term support remains essential to consolidate technical and organisational gains.

- **For public decision-makers**, recognising fodder crops as a local priority requires their inclusion in municipal development plans and national livestock policies. The commitment of local and traditional authorities is crucial to securing access to land, particularly in transhumance areas. The launch of pilot projects in vulnerable areas can serve as a springboard for the gradual integration of the practice on a larger scale.

- **For donors**, extension initiatives would have a greater impact with an increase in the amounts allocated and an extension of the duration of subsidies, allowing for more gradual and inclusive implementation. Targeted financing of collective infrastructure (forage fields, storage facilities, distribution systems) is a lever for strengthening sustainability. Sustained support for continuing training and technical guidance also remains essential.

- **For support structures**, technical support for producers plays a key role in the adoption and success of fodder cultivation, particularly during the first few seasons. The skills of local intermediaries (technicians, veterinary agents, facilitators) must be developed over the long term. Access to appropriate financing, such as microcredit or local subsidies, is a favourable condition for maintaining and expanding already established plots.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Training for transformation: livestock training workshops for a more efficient livestock and meat sector in Togo

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Skills development**: Feeding workshops provide young people and women with practical, structured and accessible training that is directly rooted in their local realities. This technical training improves their performance and strengthens their integration into the livestock and meat sector.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The practice-based approach, backed by well-established community infrastructure, accelerates the adoption of innovations and promotes sustainable change. Trained livestock farmers have improved their fattening capacities, productivity and incomes.
- **Replicability**: To replicate this initiative elsewhere, it is essential to secure land tenure, build on strong partnerships with local authorities, provide appropriate technical support, and integrate additional services such as irrigation or on-site accommodation for learners.

Pays : Togo

Porteur/organisation : Fédération Nationale des Professionnels de la Filière Bétail et Viande du Togo (FENAPFIBVTO), Entreprise Territoire et Développement (ETD) et École Supérieure d'Agriculture (ESA)

Challenge

Before the implementation of the fattening school workshops, most stakeholders in the livestock and meat sector in Togo, particularly young people, women, livestock farmers and traders, carried out their activities according to traditional practices, passed down informally within families or communities. Although these practices were suited to a traditional livestock farming system, they did not optimise productivity or significantly improve the quality of the animals brought to market. Very few stakeholders had received structured training in fattening, livestock infrastructure management, slaughter techniques or meat product marketing. The lack of technical and financial support reinforced this precariousness, limiting prospects for professional development in the sector.

On an organisational level, even though the actors were grouped into cooperatives or associations, their functioning remained fragile, marked by a need to strengthen cooperative principles, associative management and governance. Furthermore, there was no permanent space for sharing experiences, experimenting or disseminating improved livestock farming techniques. Training opportunities continued to be provided on an ad hoc basis, with no territorial anchoring.

In this context, the project to support quality livestock production through cattle and sheep fattening and marketing (PERCO) identified a strategic opportunity: to introduce a new approach inspired by field schools, capable of sustainably anchoring practical training, the dissemination of innovations and dialogue between peers. The feedlot training workshops were thus designed as living training centres, integrated into the territories, making it possible to structure capacity-building around adapted and accessible infrastructure, with strong involvement from local authorities.

Description of the good practice

The practice introduced by the PERCO project is based on the establishment of livestock training workshops, designed as centres for practical training, demonstration and experience sharing for stakeholders in the livestock and meat sector. Inspired by the field school model, these workshops aim to promote learning through practice in a collaborative environment. They are primarily aimed at young people, women, traditional feeders and cooperatives, combining the technical expertise of professional trainers, the knowledge of experienced farmers and the support of local institutions.

The workshops are unique in that they serve a dual purpose: they are both places for technical capacity building (cattle and sheep fattening, animal feed, health and herd management) and spaces for disseminating innovations (valorisation of agricultural by-products, use of salt licks, manufacture of salt licks). The educational approach is based on role-playing, direct demonstration, and the capitalisation of empirical knowledge through sharing sessions and events such as «pastoral hackathons.»

Implementation took place in several stages. First, consultation with local authorities identified and secured workshop sites in three regions (Savanes, Centrale, Kara). This stage was followed by the development of technical plans, the launch of calls for tenders, the selection of local service providers, and the construction of infrastructure including stables, feed stores, grinders and various equipment. Once the infrastructure was delivered, management committees were set up to oversee its operation. Training courses were then planned and delivered to 100 young people, including 30 women, in cattle and sheep fattening. Due to delays in completing the work, some training sessions were temporarily organised outside the initial sites.

In terms of resources, the practice mobilised various actors: the National Federation of Livestock and Meat Professionals of Togo (FENAPFIBVTO) as the strategic leader, local authorities for the provision of land, local companies for construction, specialised trainers for technical supervision, and beneficiaries from local farmers' organisations and cooperatives. Financial resources were allocated to infrastructure construction (52% of the budget), training (9%), the establishment of feed banks (19%), fodder cultivation (11%), and the acquisition of equipment (9%).

Results achieved and changes observed

The establishment of livestock training workshops in the Savanes, Centrale and Kara regions has yielded concrete results, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Three facilities have been built, each incorporating stables, grinding equipment, livestock feed stores and small equipment. Although training began off-site due to delays in construction, 100 young people, including 30 women, were trained in fattening techniques . These beneficiaries strengthened their skills in animal nutrition, livestock management and the valorisation of agricultural and agro-industrial by-products.

The changes observed among the beneficiaries are notable. Several livestock farmers have increased their production capacity. For example, one livestock farmer increased from 5 to 12 sheep per cycle, with a significant increase in income, selling the animals for between 120,000 and 130,000 CFA francs, compared to 90,000 CFA francs previously. Others have integrated new practices such as the use of salt licks or the manufacture of salt blocks, thereby improving the health and weight of their animals. The adoption of these practices has been stimulated by the educational approach based on experimentation and peer-to-peer exchanges of experience.

The workshops also served as a source of inspiration for other stakeholders. Some farmers replicated the facilities observed at the learning sites, such as feeders and feeding systems, on their own farms. This dynamic demonstrates the multiplier potential of the practice. Finally, the establishment of management committees helped to structure the use of infrastructure and promote its community anchoring.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this good practice. The pre-existing livestock cooperatives and the national structure supported by FENAPFIBVTO served as an organisational foundation for identifying beneficiaries, coordinating actions and ensuring field monitoring. The active involvement of local authorities was decisive, particularly in granting secure plots of land for the installation of infrastructure. In addition, the alignment between the needs of livestock farmers and the content of the training courses strengthened the motivation of participants and encouraged the adoption of practices.

The chosen pedagogical approach – based on learning by doing and peer-to-peer exchanges – proved particularly effective. By integrating local knowledge and valuing the experience of practitioners, the school workshops created an environment conducive to transforming practices.

However, implementation was not without difficulties. Delays in the justification of expenses by technical partners slowed down certain procedures. The COVID-19 pandemic also hampered the execution of activities by imposing unforeseen restrictions. Other constraints related to the acquisition of land, which proved difficult in some cases, and the lack of specialists in livestock feed production, which limited the rapid development of feed banks.

One of the key lessons learned is that the success of such an initiative depends as much on the quality of the infrastructure as on the quality of human and institutional support. It also became apparent that in order to ensure the sustainability of the schemes, complementary services – such as irrigation systems for fodder production or accommodation for learners – must be planned from the outset. Finally, the transferability of the practice depends heavily on the level of local organisation, the

commitment of the authorities, and the ability to mobilise resources over time.

Success factors

- Existence of active cooperatives and involvement of a structuring federation
- Involvement of local authorities in access to land
- Training tailored to the needs of livestock farmers
- Practical learning and peer-to-peer exchanges

Constraints

- Delays related to financial justifications
- Restrictions related to COVID-19
- Difficulties in acquiring plots of land
- Lack of animal feed specialists

Lessons learned

- Human support is as crucial as infrastructure
- Plan for additional services (irrigation, accommodation, etc.) from the outset
- Success depends on the level of local organisation and political commitment
- Good technical and institutional coordination ensures sustainability

Recommendations

- **For those involved in similar projects**, setting up livestock training workshops should be seen as a medium-term structural investment. It is recommended that additional measures essential to their optimal functioning be included from the outset, in particular irrigation systems to secure fodder crop production and accommodation blocks to house learners during training sessions. Realistic budget planning, accompanied by a clear timetable shared with technical and financial partners, is essential to avoid delays in implementation.

- **Support structures and professional federations must continue their efforts to organise beneficiaries around these infrastructures. It is recommended that the supervision of management committees be strengthened**, local governance be promoted and the equitable involvement of women and young people be ensured. The professionalisation of cattle herders, through certified training modules backed by school workshops, would be a major step forward in recognising the profession and the quality of practices. In addition, the manufacture and promotion of livestock feed must be institutionalised around school workshops, in conjunction with local agro-industries.

- **For public decision-makers and donors**, school workshops should be recognised as strategic levers for the transformation of the livestock and meat sectors. Their deployment

on a larger scale requires strong institutional support, particularly in terms of land security, equipment provision and regular technical support. It is recommended that these mechanisms be further integrated into national policies supporting livestock farming and vocational training. Future investments should focus on improving infrastructure, networking training centres and supporting local livestock feed production.

- **In the short term**, existing sites should be fenced off to improve security, work still in progress should be completed more quickly, and beneficiaries should be provided with close support.

- **In the medium and long term**, the sustainability of the model will depend on the ability to mobilise recurring funding, document the observed impacts, and adapt the training offer to changes in livestock farming practices and market requirements.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

From vulnerability to resilience: transport insurance for the livestock trade

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Securing regional trade**: Livestock transport insurance reduces financial losses related to accidents, reassures traders and facilitates cross-border trade by offering coverage adapted to the realities on the ground.
- **Demonstrated impact**: Co-developed with traders and supported by insurers and authorities, the practice strengthens ownership of the scheme and improves the credibility of beneficiaries with financial institutions, thereby facilitating their access to credit.
- **Replicability**: To succeed in other contexts, it is essential to involve traders from the outset, work with a flexible insurer, raise local awareness and embed the initiative in a clear, recognised and supported institutional framework.

Country: Central Corridor Burkina Faso - Côte d'Ivoire - Ghana - Togo - Benin

Implementing partners/organisation: Centre d'Appui à l'Entreprenariat Agricole et Services Afférents (CAEASA), Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la filière Bétail-Viande pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest (COFENABVI-AO) and Coris Assurances Burkina

Challenge

Before the implementation of livestock transport insurance, exporters in the livestock and meat sector were exposed to major financial risks related to accidents on export corridors. Every year, accidents resulted in significant losses of animals and sometimes human lives, with no compensation mechanism for victims. A striking example is the accident that occurred in August 2019 on the Ouagadougou–Côte d'Ivoire route, causing the death of two transporters and the loss of 160 sheep, with no compensation for the traders concerned, as the animals were not covered by the vehicle's insurance.

This vulnerability had the effect of severely eroding the capital accumulated by traders, often after many years of effort, and compromising their business. It was a major obstacle to the sustainability of their businesses and the professionalisation of the regional livestock trade. Furthermore, without adequate cover, traders had little chance of accessing credit from financial institutions, which limited their capacity for investment and growth.

In response to this situation, an opportunity was identified in the development of an insurance product specifically tailored to the realities of the road-based livestock trade. Traders, through their professional organisations, expressed their need for an insurance mechanism covering both animals and transporters, in order to secure transport, guarantee the continuity of their activity in the event of an accident, and improve their access to finance

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced consists of the implementation of a specific insurance product, called Livestock Transport Insurance with Contractual Indemnity (ATBIC), designed to cover losses related

to the transport of animals and transporters on livestock export corridors. This initiative marked a major innovation in the livestock and meat sector in West Africa, introducing a financial solution tailored to the needs of traders and incorporating institutional mechanisms to facilitate its adoption.

One of the distinctive features of this practice is its participatory design. The product was co-developed with the traders themselves, who helped to define the premium levels, validate the types of risks covered, and adjust the contractual terms and conditions to reflect the realities on the ground. This ongoing dialogue between stakeholders ensured the product's relevance and promoted its uptake.

The implementation strategy was structured around four main stages. First, a partnership was formed between three key stakeholders: the Centre d'Appui à l'Entreprenariat Agricole et Services Afférents (CAEASA), which spearheaded the project and was responsible for technical and financial coordination; Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la filière Bétail-Viande pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest (COFENABVI-AO), the umbrella organisation for professional organisations, mobilised to raise awareness among traders; and Coris Assurances Burkina, responsible for the technical design and marketing of the product. The insurance product was then developed on the basis of discussions with export traders, through consultation workshops and data collection on transport flows. A third step consisted of raising awareness among traders in livestock markets, particularly in Ouahigouya, Bobo, Fada, Kaya, Pouytenga, Banfora and Dori. Finally, a distribution system was set up via focal points, trained and equipped to handle subscriptions and follow-up, with a digital payment system via Orange Money to limit cash handling.

At the same time, an institutional framework was established to strengthen the scope of the system. An agreement was signed with the Burkina Faso Ministry of Security, resulting in the issuance of a circular facilitating the passage of insured trucks through the corridors. A toll-free number and a COFENABVI-AO visa have been set up to resolve any blockages at checkpoints. These elements show that good practice is not based solely on a technical product, but on an integrated approach combining financial innovation, collective action and institutional dialogue.

Results achieved and changes observed

The implementation of the livestock transport insurance pilot project has generated tangible results, both quantitatively and qualitatively. In terms of effective coverage, the ATBIC product is now available

in several major livestock markets in Burkina Faso, including Pouytenga, Kaya, Fada, Ouahigouya, Dori, Kossodo/Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso and Banfora. A total of 4,120 animals destined for Côte d'Ivoire were insured during the implementation period, including 3,320 cattle and 800 sheep. This volume reflects the growing adoption of the product by export traders.

In terms of behaviour, approximately 51% of export traders operating in active markets have adopted regular, full or partial insurance coverage for each shipment. This dynamic reflects a notable change in attitude towards insurance, which was previously viewed with suspicion. The testimonials collected reveal a strong d sense of security among exporters, who say they are transporting more animals because they feel reassured by the coverage in the event of an accident. This development has increased their turnover, streamlined their logistics and improved their peace of mind.

The introduction of the product has also led to systemic improvements. On export corridors, the passage of insured lorries has been made considerably easier thanks to the recognition of insurance documents by security forces. Travel times have been reduced, informal fees have fallen – in some cases by more than 80% – and checks have become less frequent and less arbitrary. The COFENABVI-AO visa and the toll-free number have helped to create a climate of responsibility, both among traders and law enforcement agencies.

Finally, the project has had a leverage effect on access to finance. In the northern region, several insured traders have been able to obtain loans from the Caisse Populaire, thanks to the credibility conferred by their insurance subscription. This emerging link between insurance and finance has been supported by business dialogues with local financial institutions, which have begun to consider insurance as an indicator of creditworthiness.

Although there were no accidents during the implementation period, which meant that the compensation process could not be tested, beneficiaries are confident about the insurance company's commitment. Nevertheless, there are still high expectations for the coverage of risks beyond transport accidents alone.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

The success of this good practice is based primarily on the quality of the tripartite partnership established between CAEASA, COFENABVI-AO and Coris Assurances Burkina. The complementary nature of their roles – coordination, beneficiary mobilisation and technical expertise in insurance – has enabled smooth and consistent implementation. The involvement of the Ministry of Security, through a formal agreement and the support of CONACFP, played a decisive role in institutionalising the practice and promoting cooperation among law enforcement agencies in the field.

Another key condition for success is the participatory approach adopted for product development. By involving traders from the outset, the project was able to adapt the insurance terms and conditions to the realities on the ground and strengthen ownership of the scheme. Joint determination of premiums, consultation on cover and collection of pricing data helped to overcome initial reluctance.

At the operational level, the use of focal points in the markets facilitated the distribution of insurance and awareness-raising. The dematerialisation of payments via Orange Money limited cash handling and ensured effective traceability. The multi-channel communication strategy (meetings, markets,

support from local leaders) helped to inform stakeholders and reassure them about the usefulness of the product.

However, several constraints have slowed down the full-scale roll-out of the project. Persistent insecurity in certain areas of Burkina Faso has made several markets inaccessible, thereby reducing geographical coverage and limiting the number of subscriptions. Furthermore, there is still some misunderstanding about the actual objectives of the product: some traders expected an immediate end to red tape or automatic access to credit. This gap between perception and reality highlights the need for even more targeted, continuous and tailored communication.

The uneven dynamism of the focal points is also a limitation. Some do not carry out regular local awareness-raising activities, contenting themselves with relaying messages at market gatherings. This operational weakness reduces the effectiveness of the scheme in certain localities. Added to this is the fact that, despite two years of implementation, some traders remain reluctant or poorly informed.

Finally, the replicability of the practice depends on several conditions: the availability of a strong leader, a flexible and committed insurance company, the active involvement of the security authorities, and a favourable institutional environment. The practice can be transferred to other sub-regional contexts, provided that the terms and conditions are adapted to local realities, in-depth awareness-raising work is carried out, and a clear and shared regulatory framework is guaranteed.

Success factors

- Effective partnership between CAEASA, COFENABVI-AO and Coris Assurances
- Involvement of the Ministry of Security
- Co-design of the product with merchants
- Payments via mobile money and local relays in markets

Constraints

- Insecurity limiting certain markets
- Unrealistic expectations of traders
- Low involvement of certain focal points
- Persistent reluctance despite awareness-raising efforts

Lessons learned

- Ownership through co-construction and strong partnerships
- Targeted, continuous and tailored communication
- Active relays essential for effective deployment
- Transferable model if adapted to the context and institutionalised

Recommendations

- **For those involved in similar projects**, it is essential to adopt an integrated approach from the outset. A preliminary analysis of the capacities of the organisations interested in implementing the project should be carried out to ensure that they have the necessary

technical skills, local roots and institutional credibility. Identifying recognised leaders among exporting traders is also a key factor in ensuring beneficiary buy-in from the outset. It is recommended that the insurance product be developed in a participatory manner, involving traders in defining the coverage, pricing and subscription terms. A partner insurance company must be able to adapt to the specificities of an unconventional product and comply with the regulations in force in the country of operation.

- **For decision-makers**, donors and support structures, it is important to promote the inclusion of livestock transport insurance in national policies for the modernisation of agricultural and commercial sectors. The formal involvement of the ministries responsible for security helps to create an environment conducive to the smooth flow of regional trade and the reduction of road harassment. Support for coordination mechanisms with security forces, such as agreements or official circulars, is essential to ensure the effectiveness of the system. At the same time, monitoring mechanisms must be put in place to support and regulate interactions between insured traders and control agents.

- **In the short term**, it is necessary to strengthen local awareness-raising mechanisms. It is recommended to set up a system to motivate focal points, organise regular monitoring visits to markets, and harmonise the messages disseminated to avoid misunderstandings about the real benefits of the product. The use of various communication channels, in local languages and with appropriate visual aids, can help to increase uptake. It would also be useful to integrate technological tools such as GPS tracking or digital incident reporting systems to further professionalise the scheme.

- **In the medium to long term**, the replicability of the practice will depend on its ability to evolve. It is recommended to gradually expand the risks covered (e.g. losses not related to road accidents, illness, theft), adjust the product based on feedback, and explore synergies with financial institutions to offer combined products (insurance + credit). Technical and institutional support will be needed to adapt the practice to other countries in the sub-region, taking into account local regulatory frameworks and commercial dynamics.

- This practice therefore represents a concrete step towards the professionalisation of the livestock trade, but its sustainability requires collective commitment, continuous consultation with beneficiaries and strategic support from institutional actors.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Establish an integrated landing area to improve the conditioning and sale of cross-border livestock

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Local development and livestock safety**: The development of the integrated area of Nguekokh improves the physical condition of livestock after transport, limits commercial losses and generates economic activity in the area (security, catering, food sales).
- **Demonstrated impact**: The provision of a multifunctional equipped space (watering, fodder, veterinary care) has professionalised sales channels and strengthened cooperation between actors in Sahelian and coastal countries. Structures such as the CNMDE are gaining visibility and legitimacy.
- **Conditional reproducibility**: Extending this practice requires secure land, adequate funding for infrastructure, and strong involvement of umbrella organisations in day-to-day management. Partnerships with veterinarians and integration into regional business plans are essential levers.

Countries: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal

Project leader/organisation: The simplified cooperative society of meat and livestock merchants and exporters of Kadiago «SCOOP/SONGTAABA»

Challenge

Before the establishment of the integrated landing area in Nguekokh, cross-border livestock trade between Sahelian countries (particularly Burkina Faso) and Senegal faced a major challenge: animals arrived at their destination in a state of advanced fatigue, sometimes emaciated, injured or stressed due to long journeys in unsuitable conditions. This situation compromised their market value, increased health risks, and limited the profitability of sales operations. Losses incurred during transport or emergency care required upon arrival increased costs for traders and reduced the economic appeal of regional trade.

Added to these constraints was the lack of specific infrastructure to house, feed, water and care for the animals before they were put back on the market. The lack of secure and suitable resting areas prevented any process of recovery, which is essential for optimal commercial value. This shortcoming also hampered the smooth organisation of resale operations, particularly during periods of high demand such as Tabaski.

In this context, the National Council of the Maison Des Éleveurs du Sénégal (CNMDE) identified a strategic opportunity: the development of a 126-hectare site in Nguekokh, in the Thiès region, to create a multifunctional transit area. This site offered the possibility of developing a logistics hub adapted to the realities of the regional livestock trade, capable of meeting the needs of animal recovery, health support, fodder storage and transaction security. This initiative aimed to simultaneously address economic, health and commercial constraints, while generating new activities in the local sector.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced consists of the creation and operationalisation of an integrated livestock unloading area in Nguekokh, designed as a transit, recovery and marketing space for animals from the hinterland. This area meets a critical need to improve the conditions in which animals are received on arrival, providing them with an environment conducive to physical recovery and improving their commercial presentation.

The distinctive feature of this practice is its multifunctionality. The Nguekokh area includes watering facilities, grazing areas (including 100 tonnes of Malal fafa produced on site), livestock feed storage, rest boxes, veterinary support provided by private partners, and a partial sales area before final transport to target markets such as Daral de Ngoundiane. This comprehensive system transforms a simple transit point into a tool for the economic enhancement of livestock shipments.

Implementation was based on a strategy focused on the logistical and health needs observed during the first livestock import operations. The CNMDE mobilised its own land, structured the reception areas, secured the water supply, established fodder crops, and organised the internal livestock traffic circuits. An agreement was signed with private veterinarians to ensure rigorous health monitoring, while shepherds, guards and night watchmen are responsible for the day-to-day management of the site.

On the human side, members of the CNMDE's purchasing and sales committee played a leading role in organising the site. Jobs were created locally, particularly in surveillance, catering and service activities around the area. On the financial side, the CNMDE's own funds, contributions from beneficiaries and support from the PACBAO project have made it possible to finance the fencing of the site, the installation of hydraulic systems, the purchase of livestock feed and the provision of livestock trucks for internal transport.

This good practice also stands out for its ability to generate multiplier effects within the value chain: improved animal welfare, reduced losses, greater attractiveness for resellers, and the creation of economic opportunities in the immediate ecosystem.

Results achieved and changes observed

The establishment of the integrated area in Nguekokh has produced significant results in both logistical and socio-economic terms. In eight operations, more than 1,000 sheep and 200 cattle from Burkina Faso passed through this area before being distributed to Senegalese markets. This facility enabled the animals to be sheltered, fed, watered and cared for on arrival, significantly improving their physical condition and therefore their market value.

In terms of quality, this good practice has brought about a profound change in the post-transport management of livestock. Thanks to access to running water, locally stored animal feed and veterinary monitoring provided through a partnership with private professionals, the animals now benefit from effective recuperation before being offered for sale. This improvement has contributed to greater buyer satisfaction, reduced commercial losses, and more secure incomes for sellers.

The presence of this infrastructure has also led to behavioural changes. Traders and resellers, traditionally reluctant to invest in the livestock sector due to the high risks involved, have begun to view this activity as profitable and stable. As Adiouma Kâ, a member of the sales commission, testifies, this area has convinced several hesitant players to make a long-term commitment to the livestock trade. The professionalisation of logistics operations has strengthened the confidence of partners and members of the sector.

At the local level, the Nguekokh area has had a positive impact on job creation. Several related activities have developed around the site, including security, herding, catering and the sale of livestock feed. These economic opportunities have mainly benefited young people and women in the area, helping to boost the local socio-economic fabric.

Finally, at the institutional level, this experience has enabled the CNMDE to strengthen its role as a key player in the livestock and meat value chain in Senegal. The initiative has resulted in a replicable operational model, adapted to the realities of regional cross-border trade and recognised as a lever for structuring the sector.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

The success of the Nguekokh landing area is based primarily on the mobilisation and professionalism of the actors involved. The CNMDE was able to make use of existing land, structure the spaces according to identified needs, and bring together technical, financial and logistical partners. The desire to provide a concrete, e response to a major operational constraint – the state of fatigue of the animals on arrival – was a powerful driving force for mobilisation. The partnership established with private veterinarians for health monitoring was also a determining factor in the quality of the services offered.

The diversity of the resources mobilised, both internal (manpower, logistical organisation, own funding) and external (project co-financing, technical support, livestock trucks), ensured the smooth implementation of the scheme. The integrated approach, combining care, feeding, rest and sale, facilitated the smooth running and profitability of operations.

However, certain constraints limited the potential impact of the initiative. Livestock transport remains a weak point, due to mortality during transport and the poor condition of the animals on arrival.

The lack of appropriate logistics (in particular the use of unsuitable lorries) remains a risk factor. Furthermore, concentrating animals in the same space poses health risks, particularly in the event of contagious disease.

The reality of the local market also limits the area's full profitability. The volatility of livestock and feed prices, as well as uncertainty about demand, can undermine economic stability. Added to this is a structural constraint: the lack of funding to expand or consolidate existing infrastructure.

One of the key lessons to be learned is the need to design regional trade operations that incorporate appropriate intermediate infrastructure capable of absorbing the effects of transport and creating value before marketing. The Nguekokh area shows that such initiatives can improve the economic performance of the sector while generating positive social externalities. However, their success depends heavily on the quality of coordination between stakeholders, the availability of a suitable site, and the long-term commitment of the institutions involved.

Finally, although the model is inspiring, its replicability will depend on several conditions: the availability of land, the ability to mobilise resources for basic infrastructure, the structuring of local organisations, and the establishment of sustainable management and maintenance mechanisms.

Success factors

- Mobilisation of land by the CNMDE
- Partnership with private veterinarians
- Various resources (internal and external) mobilised
- Appropriate logistical organisation

Constraints

- Unsuitable lorries causing animal losses
- Health risks linked to the concentration of animals
- Price volatility and uncertainty of demand
- Insufficient funding to consolidate infrastructure

Lessons learned

- Integrating transit areas into regional trade projects
- Local coordination enhances efficiency and sustainability
- An integrated approach improves the profitability and quality of operations
- The model is replicable under certain conditions (location, resources, governance)

Recommendations

For those involved in similar projects, the experience of the Nguekokh integrated area highlights the importance of planning, from the outset of a cross-border livestock trade project, for transit infrastructure that is suitable for resting, recuperating and improving the condition of the animals. These areas should be located close to the main arrival markets

and designed as multifunctional spaces, including areas for watering, feeding, veterinary care and sales. The prior mobilisation of secure land and the direct involvement of beneficiaries in development and management activities are essential conditions for success. It is also recommended that a health monitoring system be put in place, supervised by qualified professionals, by establishing local partnerships with veterinarians or specialised services.

- **For decision-makers**, donors and support structures, it is necessary to integrate the financing of this type of infrastructure into regional trade support mechanisms. Livestock rest areas are a strategic link that is often overlooked in livestock-meat value chains, even though they help to limit economic losses, increase product quality and structure trade in a sustainable manner. Funding must cover both the initial development costs (fences, boreholes, light buildings, pastures) and the training of local managers and basic veterinary equipment. In addition, national public authorities can play a role in facilitating the allocation of land and supporting the official recognition of these areas as logistical entry points for imported livestock.

- **In the short term**, it is recommended to support the consolidation of the Nguekokh area by integrating additional facilities such as vaccination parks, shelters against bad weather, a weighbridge for weighing animals and a permanent veterinary care centre. These improvements would enhance the quality of services offered, increase the profitability of operations and provide security for those involved in the sector.

- **In the longer term**, a regional strategy could be considered to roll out this integrated area model to other livestock trade corridors, adapting the specific features to local contexts. Networking existing sites, exchanging experiences between umbrella organisations, and harmonising livestock reception and care standards across the ECOWAS region would all be levers for promoting the replication of this good practice. Finally, the systematic inclusion of young people and women in services associated with these areas (transport, logistics, catering, care, trade in inputs) should be promoted as a condition for economic and social sustainability.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Certifying street vendors to improve meat hygiene: an educational and inclusive approach in Togo

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Professionalisation**: The certification of micro-food distributors (MFDs) improves hygiene, boosts consumer confidence and increases the income of street meat vendors. Certified MFDs have seen their turnover increase by 25 to 50 per cent thanks to greater customer confidence.
- **Demonstrated impact**: Training, support and access to credit are transforming MDA practices in a sustainable way, even in precarious contexts. The inclusion of women, who make up the majority of street food vendors, is essential to ensuring equity and maximising the economic impact of the practice.
- **Reproducibility**: Success elsewhere requires a flexible institutional framework, an educational approach, interventions adapted to local realities, and easier access to financing. The use of digital tools, such as a geolocation application for certified MDAs, can increase their visibility and facilitate monitoring.

Country: Togo

Lead organisation: Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Suisse (VSF-Suisse), Entreprises Territoires et Développement (ETD), the National Federation of Actors and Professionals in the Livestock and Meat Sector of Togo (FENAPFIBVTO) and the Higher School of Agronomy (ESA)

Challenge

Before the innovation was implemented, hygiene conditions at small ruminant meat outlets in Togo were largely inadequate, particularly in the informal markets of Greater Lomé. Micro-food distributors (MFDs) – street food vendors, butchers and rotisserie chefs – operated in a poorly regulated environment, often without prior training in hygiene or suitable equipment. This situation exposed consumers to high health risks, while limiting the recognition and profitability of these actors' activities.

Several obstacles hindered improvement of the situation. On the one hand, a lack of knowledge or failure to apply good hygiene practices (GHP) compromised the quality of the products on offer. On the other hand, the low financial capacity of MDAs was a major obstacle to the supply of quality meat, forcing them to resort to informal channels, sometimes including clandestine slaughter. Insecurity in certain peri-urban areas also limited access to recognised slaughterhouses. The lack of appropriate support mechanisms and the essentially repressive approach of the inspection services contributed to low adherence by stakeholders to any attempts at formalisation.

However, a real opportunity existed: MDAs are essential links in urban food distribution, with a loyal customer base and a strong presence in the local economy. By capitalising on their central role and supporting them through a training and incentive-based approach, it became possible to improve food safety, MDA working conditions and consumer confidence.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced by the DEFI-Viande project is based on the implementation of an MDA certification mechanism, combining training, technical support, access to credit and visibility tools. This innovation has made it possible to professionalise informal actors in the sector while improving the quality of small ruminant meat offered for consumption.

The scheme is based on several innovative elements. First, it relies on a tailored training approach, with modules delivered directly at MDA sites to minimise disruption to their activities. The training courses used visual aids such as picture boxes in local languages (Ewe, Mina) to facilitate understanding. Secondly, a hygiene certification process was introduced: after a training phase, the MDAs received individualised support and guidance, followed by a series of inspections using a digital assessment grid (via Kobo Collect). Those who achieved a satisfactory level of hygiene were issued with an official certificate, strengthening their credibility with customers.

At the same time, the project facilitated access to credit to support the investments needed to achieve compliance (purchase of equipment, improvement of facilities, storage). A guarantee mechanism was established, enabling MDAs to obtain loans capped at 150,000 CFA francs from partner microfinance institutions, with a sliding interest rate. Post-loan monitoring through monthly visits was put in place to support beneficiaries. MDAs were also geo-referenced and integrated into an operational database.

The project also paid particular attention to the visibility of certified MDAs through the distribution of nameplates and the production of communication materials (good practice guides, image boxes, awareness posters). This recognition has enabled MDAs to attract more customers and position themselves as credible players in the street food sector. A mobile application currently under development will enable consumers to locate certified MDAs.

The implementation involved a wide range of stakeholders. The project consortium, including VSF-Suisse, the Organisation for Food and Local Development (OADEL), Entreprises Territoires et Développements (ETD) and the Health Control and Inspection Division (DCIS) of the Ministry of Health, was responsible for technical design and coordination. Public veterinary services were trained and equipped to carry out health inspections. Food hygiene technicians (THA) adopted a supportive rather than repressive approach, promoting trust. Microfinance institutions were mobilised as local partners for financing. Finally, the MDAs themselves were fully involved in the process, from design to implementation, through WhatsApp groups, follow-up visits and personalised interviews.

Results achieved and changes observed

The implementation of the certification mechanism has generated tangible results at the individual, collective and systemic levels.

In quantitative terms, more than 235 MDAs were identified and trained in the 13 municipalities of Greater Lomé. At the end of the monitoring and inspection process, 34 MDAs obtained an official hygiene certificate, attesting to the improvement in their practices. Approximately 40% of certified MDAs have invested in equipment such as freezers, reducing product losses by 30%. Thanks to easier access to credit, several MDAs have been able to change their supply methods: instead of buying carcasses of dubious origin, they have switched to purchasing whole animals, which are then slaughtered in recognised facilities or « «. This change has helped to limit the risks associated with consuming meat from illegal slaughterhouses.

From a qualitative point of view, marked changes in behaviour have been observed. Personal hygiene, clothing and environmental hygiene practices have improved. MDA operators have adopted new habits such as storing unsold items in the freezer, ensuring that cooked and raw products are kept separate. This gradual professionalisation has led to a significant increase in customer numbers, attributed to the greater confidence generated by certification and the improved visibility of the points of sale. According to the testimonies gathered, turnover has increased by between 25% and 50%.

> *The testimony of Ms Kate Ahoefa, a restaurant owner at CMS Agoè Nyivé, illustrates this dynamic well. Thanks to the training and certification, she has seen an increase in customer traffic, with her turnover rising from 50,000 CFA francs to 75,000 CFA francs..*

At the system level, the momentum generated has led to cross-sector collaboration between veterinary services, health inspectors, training institutions and microfinance partners. The digitalised inspection grid has facilitated monitoring and reporting, contributing to the emergence of a geolocated database of certified MDAs. The project has also led to an initial change in the attitude of administrative officials, particularly those from the DCIS, who have adopted a more educational than repressive approach in supporting MDAs.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this good practice. The visibility offered to certified MDAs played a central role: displaying a plaque certifying their compliance with good practices strengthened their credibility and attracted new customers. Financial support through the granting of loans, made possible by the establishment of a guarantee fund, facilitated the investments needed to improve practices. Regular coordination through monthly meetings between consortium partners ensured consistent implementation. The intervention strategy adopted by the technicians, focused on awareness-raising, support and proximity, helped to overcome resistance and build a relationship of trust with the beneficiaries.

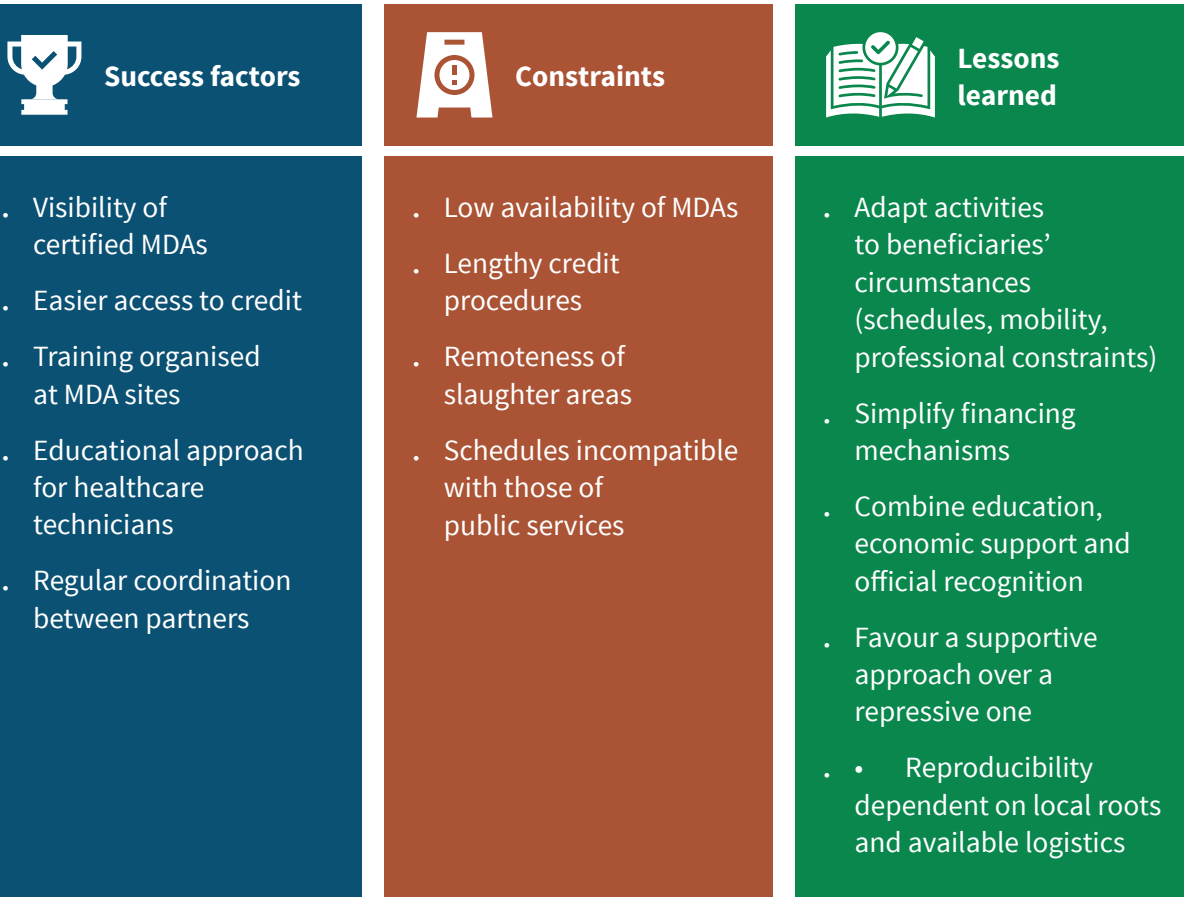
The decision to organise training directly at the MDA sites was also decisive. This made it possible to maintain their activity while training them in their real working environment, making the learning more concrete and immediately applicable.

However, several constraints hampered implementation. The limited availability of MDAs for group

training or meetings with credit institutions complicated the roll-out of certain activities. In addition, although the credit approval process was simplified, it proved to be lengthy and sometimes discouraging for some. The distance from slaughter areas has led some MDAs to continue practising illegal slaughter, despite awareness-raising messages. Finally, the atypical working hours of MDAs, particularly roasters, did not always coincide with the working hours of public health technicians, complicating monitoring.

These constraints reveal key lessons. It is essential to plan interventions taking into account the operational realities of the beneficiaries, including their schedules and mobility. The educational approach adopted by veterinary services and inspectors proved to be much more effective than repressive methods, creating a climate of collaboration rather than mistrust. However, this approach requires sustained institutional support to prevent backsliding.

Finally, while the practice is promising and adaptable to other urban contexts in Togo or West Africa, its reproducibility depends on certain prerequisites: the availability of a network of trained technicians, proximity to recognised slaughterhouses, financial accessibility for MDAs, and coordinated commitment from institutional actors. The establishment of a system combining health education, official recognition and economic support provides a solid foundation, but requires long-term structural support to ensure its sustainability.



Recommendations

- **For those involved in similar projects** seeking to improve food safety in the informal sector, it is essential to adopt an approach focused on education, recognition and support for stakeholders. The implementation of a certification mechanism such as the one tested in the DEFI-Viande project must be based on contextualised training, benevolent inspections and visible support for the promotion of good practices. It is recommended to prioritise on-site training, maintain ongoing dialogue with MDAs via simple digital tools (WhatsApp groups, audio messages), and document each step of the process to encourage ownership.

- **In the short term**, public decision-makers and technical services must be made aware of the importance of replacing repressive approaches with a partnership-based approach with street vendors. Official recognition of certified MDAs, in particular through the issuance of visibility plaques and certificates validated by the health authorities, must be institutionalised. In addition, the establishment of simplified credit access mechanisms, backed by a guarantee fund, must be encouraged to enable MDAs to invest in basic equipment (freezers, work surfaces, hygiene clothing). This financial component is essential to prevent compliance requirements from becoming barriers to entry.

- **In the medium and long term**, it is necessary to support the structuring of the street food sector in Togo. This involves creating a clear institutional framework for MDAs, promoting good practice standards through partnerships with vocational training centres, and aligning interventions with the principles of the «One Health» approach. It is recommended that the ministries responsible for health, livestock, trade and vocational training work together to harmonise health requirements, develop shared tools (digitalised inspection grids, MDA database) and facilitate the replication of the approach in other urban areas.

- Finally, any project of this type should include, from the design phase onwards, a mechanism for continuous capitalisation, enabling the documentation of behavioural changes, persistent obstacles and emerging opportunities. This capitalisation must be accessible to those working in the field in order to promote mutual learning and the adaptation of approaches over time. Regular advocacy with local and national authorities is also recommended to ensure the institutional and political anchoring of these high-impact initiatives.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

A modern complex for producing high-quality kilichi that complies with the PGI

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Structuring the sector**: The Eco-Kilichi complex professionalises kilichi processing by introducing hygiene standards in line with the PGI, while integrating environmentally friendly solutions such as solar energy and water recycling. This modernisation strengthens the product's credibility on national and regional markets.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The establishment of modern infrastructure, supported by a multi-stakeholder platform, improves the quality of kilichi, mobilises local skills and generates interest in export. The project also generates new economic dynamics, particularly for women involved in spice sales and distribution.
- **Reproducibility**: To replicate the model, it is essential to ensure clear institutional anchoring, secure land ownership upstream, and guarantee technical and organisational support throughout the project. The beneficiaries' commitment and the visibility of the complex are key levers for ensuring its sustainability.

Country: Niger

Project leader/organisation: National Solar Energy Agency (ANERSOL), Directorate for the Promotion of Animal Sectors and Quality (DPFAQ), Directorate-General for Animal Production and Industries of Niger, Niamey Cold Storage Slaughterhouse (AFRIN), Central Livestock Laboratory (LABOCEL)

Challenge

Before the good practice was implemented, kilichi production in Niger was mainly based on traditional techniques, often carried out in makeshift shelters that did not meet modern hygiene standards. Although kilichi processing involves a series of technical steps that producers have mastered – from meat selection to final grilling – the processing and drying conditions did not guarantee the product's safety or consistent quality. Open-air drying, in particular, exposed the meat to dust, insects, rain and other health risks, while also affecting its nutritional qualities.

This situation severely limited the possibilities for certification, commercial promotion and, above all, export of the product, even though Nigerien kilichi enjoys strong recognition at the national and sub-regional levels. The lack of suitable infrastructure, health control mechanisms and specific equipment prevented the development of a competitive sector. However, the context was favourable: the recent recognition of the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI – Kilichi du Niger) opened up a strategic opportunity to reposition the product on the markets, provided that a production framework compliant with the specifications was in place.

It was in response to this issue that the initiative was launched to create an autonomous complex for the ecological processing of kilichi, designed as a reference centre for the implementation of the PGI's technical specifications and the dissemination of good practices within the sector.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced consists of setting up an autonomous complex for the ecological production of kilichi, supported by the Kilichi Innovation Platform (PIK) with the backing of several Nigerien public institutions. This complex has been designed to serve as a modern processing unit, a technological showcase and a training and experimentation centre, in accordance with the standards defined by the specifications of the Niger Kilichi PGI.

The innovation is based on several distinctive elements. In terms of infrastructure, the complex includes a meat processing unit consisting of a storage warehouse, an equipped cutting and trimming room, a packaging room and a storage area for the finished product. At the same time, an open-air solar drying field has been designed to optimise exposure to solar energy while allowing for controlled drainage of wastewater, which is recovered, treated and then reused to water the site's green spaces. The facility also includes a solar power plant that ensures the complex's energy independence, further enhancing its environmental sustainability.

The implementation of the good practice took place in several key stages: mobilisation of the necessary resources, technical design of the complex, construction of the treatment block and drying field, installation of the solar power plant and wastewater management system, and initial equipping with processing and packaging equipment. At the same time, training and awareness-raising activities were carried out among the platform's members to reinforce hygiene practices and ownership of the system.

The success of this good practice was made possible by the joint mobilisation of technical and institutional actors. The Kilichi Innovation Platform, which brings together the various links in the chain (producers, butchers, food technologists, quality control specialists, distributors, etc.), implemented the project in the field. The National Solar Energy Agency (ANERSOL) led the design of the drying field and solar power plant. The Niamey Refrigerated Slaughterhouse (AFRIN) contributed its expertise in meat quality and safety. The Central Livestock Laboratory (LABOCEL) carried out health analyses and quality monitoring. Finally, the Directorate for the Promotion of Animal Sectors and Quality (DPFAQ) contributed to strategic guidance, technical validation and stakeholder training.

This expanded partnership, combined with the commitment of the beneficiaries, has made it possible to build an infrastructure that combines technological innovation, respect for the environment and the promotion of an iconic traditional product.

Results achieved and changes observed

The establishment of the autonomous Eco-Kilichi complex has achieved several concrete results, although the project has not yet fully started production due to delays related to the Covid-19 pandemic and organisational difficulties that have slowed down the implementation of activities. In terms of infrastructure, construction of the complex is 95% complete, and the solar power plant, which guarantees the unit's energy autonomy, is 100% complete. These achievements are tangible gains that mark a decisive step towards the industrialisation of the kilichi sector in Niger.

The knock-on effects, although still being consolidated, are significant. The project has enabled the implementation of a processing model aligned with the hygiene and quality standards defined by the specifications of the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI – Kilichi du Niger). This technical compliance opens up new export opportunities, while enhancing the commercial value of the product on local and regional markets.

From an environmental perspective, the use of clean energy, solar power, for drying and the site's electrical needs is a major innovation in the Sahelian context. It is part of a low greenhouse gas emission livestock farming approach. At the same time, the system for treating and reusing wastewater for watering green spaces demonstrates a focus on sustainable resource management.

Qualitative changes have also been observed in practices and behaviours. Members of the Kilichi Innovation Platform have incorporated concepts of quality assurance, personal hygiene, use of personal protective equipment and biosafety. More professional attitudes are developing in the processing of kilichi, strengthening the credibility of the sector.

Finally, the project has fostered the emergence of new economic dynamics, particularly for women, through the sale of spices and herbs used in production. It has also encouraged collaboration between stakeholders, strengthening teamwork, complementary roles and collective participation in decision-making.

These results were illustrated by testimonials from platform managers, who highlighted the added value of the complex in improving production practices and opening up export opportunities.

> *According to Zabeirou Karimoun, a member of the PIK, the operationalisation of the complex would improve the performance of its semi-modern unit, in line with PGI requirements.*

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this good practice. First, the commitment of the beneficiaries proved to be decisive, both in the design of the project and in the day-to-day management of activities. Their active involvement promoted greater ownership of the complex and the innovations introduced. The consideration of gender in the implementation, with particular attention to income-generating activities for women, reinforced the socio-economic impact of the project. State support, through the involvement of the Ministries of Livestock, Trade and Industry, also played a structuring role, providing legitimacy and technical support.

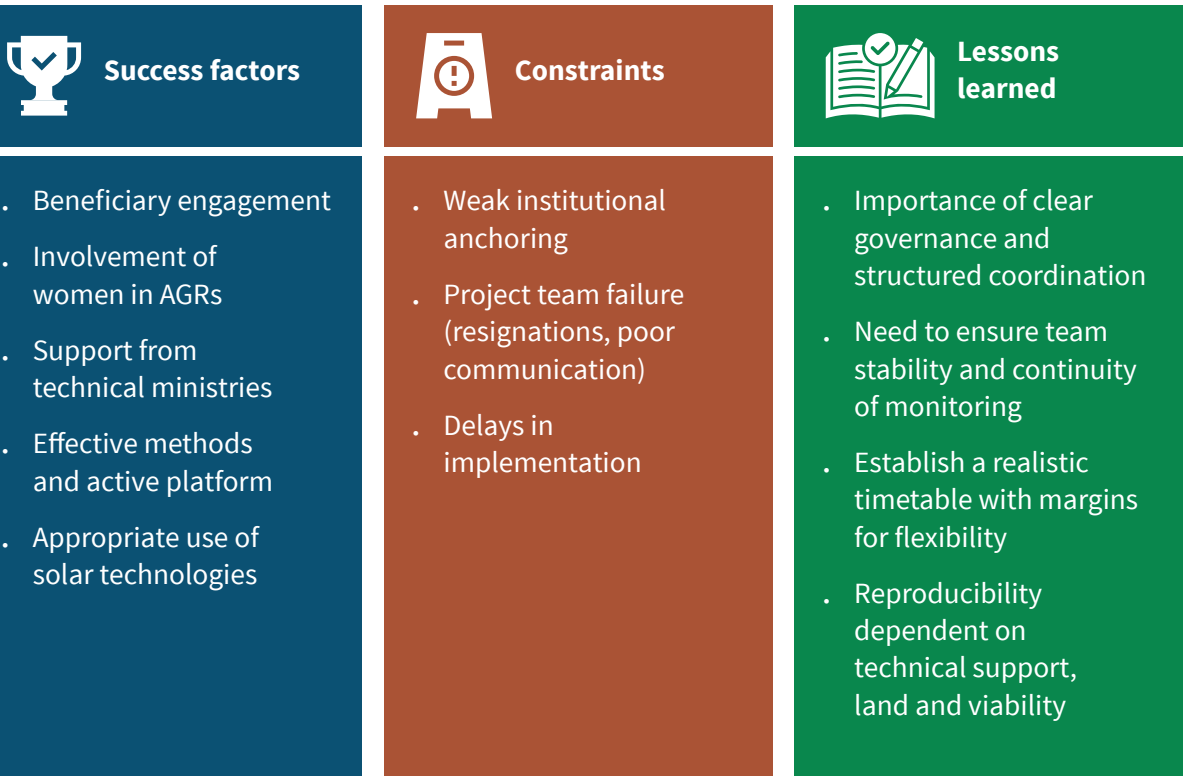
The methods used proved effective: the use of appropriate equipment, the organisation of processing

chains around dedicated spaces, and the structuring of the platform ensured better control of the production process. The introduction of solar technologies was particularly well suited to the local context, while meeting environmental and economic requirements.

However, implementation encountered several obstacles. One of the most significant was the lack of institutional anchoring of the project within ANERSOL, which affected the smooth running of technical coordination. Added to this were internal management difficulties within the project team, marked by insufficient communication, which led to the resignation of the coordinator and the monitoring and evaluation manager. These disruptions caused a significant delay in the execution of activities, with a direct impact on the initial schedule.

The lessons learned highlight the importance of clear governance, well-defined technical management and strong institutional support. Coordination between the various actors must be formalised from the outset and maintained throughout the implementation. It is also crucial to ensure continuity in management, particularly in the event of the departure of key personnel, in order to avoid disruptions in the monitoring of activities.

With regard to transferability, the interest shown by other production basins in replicating the model shows that the good practice has strong potential for replication. However, its reproducibility remains dependent on the availability of land, mastery of the technical aspects of the model, and sustained institutional support. The question of initial financing and the economic viability of the model must also be addressed to ensure that replicated units can achieve financial autonomy within a reasonable time frame.



Recommendations

These recommendations aim to consolidate and replicate the Ecokilichi model to structure the kilichi sector. They are aimed at three key audiences..

- **For those involved in similar projects**, it is essential to anticipate the conditions for implementation from the design phase onwards. This involves securing land in advance, defining a clear and shared governance model, and identifying the key skills needed for the project to succeed. The use of a multi-stakeholder platform, such as the Kilichi Innovation Platform (PIK), is a strategic lever, provided that it is well structured and supported over the long term. Beneficiaries must be fully committed to the operationalisation of the complex, actively participate in trade shows and fairs to ensure its visibility, and make the unit a living and replicable model.

- **For public decision-makers**, technical and financial partners, and support structures, it is recommended that they support the growth of the kilichi sector by including specific actions in the Priority Action Plans (PAPs) of the relevant technical ministries (Livestock, Trade, Industry, Youth). Stronger institutional support is also needed to ensure that these initiatives are firmly established. This includes support for the National Committee for Geographical Indications for the protection, enhancement and promotion of kilichi as a product with high potential within the framework of the AfCFTA. It is also desirable to facilitate the replication of this good practice in other production basins, particularly by building on the requests already expressed by certain partners. This approach will amplify the results obtained and structure a genuine value chain around kilichi in Niger.

- **For the ARAA and regional ECOWAS stakeholders**, capitalising on this experience should serve as a basis for strategic dissemination in member countries. The ARAA is invited to support the consolidation of the Eco-Kilichi model by ensuring its effective operation for at least two years, while providing ad hoc technical assistance as necessary. It could also play a facilitating role in documenting, sharing and disseminating the practice to other platforms or programmes involved in the agri-food sector in West Africa.

- In the longer term, the improvement and sustainability of this practice will depend on resolving the constraints identified, particularly in terms of governance, environmental protection and coordination between partners. Systematically integrating these aspects into future replicas of the model will be crucial to ensuring its lasting impact and consistency with regional and international quality standards.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Using treated wastewater for fodder production via drip irrigation in São Vicente

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Sustainable water management**: Drip irrigation using treated wastewater enables local fodder production in arid areas, while reducing water waste and making use of previously under-exploited effluent.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The experimental plot has enabled the cultivation of six forage species, attracting the interest of livestock farmers and the support of institutions. The practice has demonstrated its technical effectiveness, economic feasibility and potential for community replication.
- **Reproducibility**: Reproducibility depends on the existence of a functional treatment station, local technical support, a clear health framework, and the active involvement of local actors in the management, training and dissemination of the practice.

Country: Cape Verde

Project leader/organisation: Associação dos Amigos da Natureza (AAN) and Associação de Criadores de Curral de Tortolho (ACCT)

Challenge

On the island of São Vicente, fodder production faced a chronic deficit, aggravated by difficult agro-climatic conditions, low rainfall and increasing pressure from urbanisation. Livestock farmers were heavily dependent on imported inputs to feed their cattle, which made their farms vulnerable to global market fluctuations, as evidenced by the rise in feed prices following the war in Ukraine. In addition, local irrigation practices – particularly flood irrigation – led to significant waste of water, an already scarce resource on the island.

In this context, an opportunity emerged to use the treated wastewater produced by the Tchon d'Holanda treatment plant, one of the oldest in the country, for fodder production. This water, which had previously been underused or discharged, represented a valuable alternative resource for crops not intended for human consumption. However, its use remained limited due to a still underdeveloped health framework, a lack of product safety testing, and the absence of reference experiences in the field of animal feed.

The practice introduced thus sought to address a twofold challenge: to compensate for the fodder deficit while demonstrating the technical, economic and environmental feasibility of fodder production irrigated by a drip system fed by treated wastewater.

Description of the good practice

The practice introduced consists of producing fodder using a drip irrigation system fed by treated wastewater from the Tchon d'Holanda plant. It is based on the use of irrigation technology generally reserved for market gardening, but adapted here to fodder cultivation with the aim of reducing costs

and ensuring environmental sustainability.

What sets this practice apart is its innovative nature in an island context with severe water constraints: it combines the use of an unconventional resource (treated water) with water-efficient technology, while meeting the immediate needs of livestock farmers. In addition, it introduces a logic of demonstration and local replication, closely linking technical production, training and community awareness.

The implementation process took place in several stages. First, a joint assessment by the partners confirmed the benefits of using treated wastewater for irrigating fodder crops. Next, the necessary equipment (pipes, pump, drip irrigation system) was purchased with funding from the PACBAO programme. A pilot plot of approximately 2,000 m^2 was set up in Tchon d'Holanda, with six different fodder species, including sorghum, maize, djedjé, vetiver and fodder palm.

The system was installed with technical support from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAA), the Associação dos Amigos da Natureza (ANN) and members of the local community. In addition, training courses were organised for livestock farmers and crop farmers, enabling them to learn how to install and manage a drip irrigation system and to understand the conditions for the safe use of wastewater.

The resources mobilised were institutional, human and financial. The government, through the MAA, provided the agricultural land and ensured technical monitoring. The ANN coordinated operations in the field and facilitated relations with the beneficiaries. The São Vicente City Council, which manages the treatment plant, authorised the use of water for fodder purposes. Finally, PACBAO programme funds covered the initial costs of the installation, thus ensuring controlled risk-taking for this experiment.

Results achieved and changes observed

The implementation of this best practice has produced concrete results in technical, environmental and social terms. On the pilot plot in Tchon d'Holanda, the installation of the drip irrigation system has enabled the successful cultivation of six forage species suitable for animal feed: djedjé (*Panicum maximum*), maize (*Zea mays*), elephant grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*), vetiver (*Vetiveria zizanoides*),

sorghum (Sorghum sp.) and forage palm (Opuntia cochenillefera). This plant diversity, cultivated on approximately 2,000 m^2, provided significant vegetation cover, never before seen in this arid area.

The site quickly became a demonstration plot for local livestock farmers and agriculturalists, attracting the attention of the community and creating a ripple effect. Following this experiment, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment made an additional 3,000 m^2 plot available in the Tchon d'Holanda agricultural perimeter for the benefit of the Tortolho Livestock Farmers' Association, which was interested in installing a similar system.

The qualitative results are also noteworthy. Changes in perception have been observed within the beneficiary communities, particularly with regard to the potential use of wastewater in agricultural production. The practice has reinforced understanding of the issues related to water management, health safety and the sustainability of livestock systems. Several testimonials highlight the role of the plot as a medium for learning, awareness-raising and demonstration, helping to change attitudes towards a resource that was previously considered marginal or even risky.

Finally, the practice has initiated a local dialogue on the use of unconventional water resources. It has paved the way for reflection on the integration of wastewater treatment plants into local livestock support policies and has helped to raise awareness of the potential benefits of the rational use of these resources with a view to achieving local food sovereignty.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this good practice. First, the convergence of interests between public actors, local NGOs and livestock farmers made it possible to create a collaborative and responsive implementation framework. The partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment, the São Vicente City Council (which manages the treatment plant) and the Associação dos Amigos da Natureza facilitated access to water, the provision of land and the technical support needed to install the system.

The availability of PACBAO programme funding made it possible to assume the initial risk associated with innovation by financing irrigation equipment, agricultural developments and training activities. The project was also able to draw on internal technical expertise, particularly in irrigation, agriculture and animal husbandry, to design and manage the plot effectively.

Nevertheless, several constraints were identified during implementation. Securing the equipment installed in an area frequented by many agricultural users was a constant challenge. In addition, the lack of systematic testing of the quality of the fodder produced and the long-term effects of using treated wastewater limited the possibilities for certification and wider dissemination. Persistent health uncertainties, particularly regarding the potential impact on animal and human health, highlight the need for a more rigorous regulatory framework.

The practice has also highlighted the limitations of immediate transferability. Although technically reproducible, it requires certain preconditions: the presence of a functional treatment plant, a transparent water management framework, sufficient social acceptability, and resources to ensure health and technical monitoring.

One of the key lessons learned is the importance of combining technical experimentation with community mobilisation. The fact that beneficiaries were able to participate in the establishment, maintenance and management of the plot facilitated the adoption of the practice. Similarly, positioning the plot as a demonstration space helped to overcome initial reluctance and leverage it to transform local perceptions of wastewater reuse for productive purposes.

Success factors	Constraints	Lessons learned
. Strong partnership between NGOs, the town hall and technical services . PACBAO funding covering initial costs . Local expertise in irrigation and animal husbandry mobilised	. Securing of equipment and lack of thorough health testing . Insufficient regulatory framework . Social acceptability still needs to be consolidated	. Ownership requires the active involvement of beneficiaries . The practice is only reproducible if the technical and social conditions are met . Experimentation coupled with demonstration facilitates acceptance

Recommendations

The experiment conducted in Tchon d'Holanda offers several useful lessons for stakeholders wishing to replicate or extend this good practice in other contexts. It highlights the technical, institutional and social prerequisites that must be met to ensure the success and sustainability of this type of initiative.

- **For those undertaking similar projects**, it is essential to carry out a preliminary assessment of available resources, particularly the quality and regularity of treated wastewater, as well as access to secure land. The success of the project also depends on technical mastery of the drip irrigation system and the ability to adapt fodder crops to the local soil and climate conditions. A pilot phase, combined with a participatory approach involving the direct beneficiaries (livestock farmers, farmers, technicians), helps to promote ownership of the practice and adjust technical choices to the realities on the ground.

- **For local authorities and decision-makers**, the practice highlights the importance of integrating agriculture and livestock farming into local wastewater management policies. This requires the establishment of clear regulatory frameworks to govern the agricultural use of this water, the strengthening of the capacities of municipalities and technical services in terms of health monitoring, and the mobilisation of resources for the maintenance of treatment infrastructure. The creation of health standards, combined with community

information campaigns, would help to overcome reluctance and ensure the safe use of these resources.

- **For donors and technical support structures**, it is recommended to encourage the establishment of demonstration plots in areas with a high fodder deficit in order to test and document replicable models. Support for action research on the health, environmental and economic impacts of this practice is also crucial. Partnerships with research institutions could generate reliable data on forage quality, the health of animals fed with these resources, and the safety of animal products intended for consumption.

- **In the longer term**, the practice could contribute to the structuring of local fodder production chains, in line with agricultural development plans and climate resilience strategies. To achieve this, it is necessary to create incentive mechanisms for municipalities and producers who wish to engage in this type of approach, as well as to support the emergence of local actors capable of sustainably managing these systems at the territorial level.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Reducing costs and improving the profitability of cattle fattening through Brachiaria and metocour blocks

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Increased profitability**: The integration of improved forages (Brachiaria, Mucuna) and metocour blocks reduces feed costs, shortens fattening time and increases farmers' profit margins by up to 59%.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The practice improves the productivity and economic performance of cattle farms, while reducing dependence on cottonseed meal through accessible local alternatives.
- **Reproducibility**: Its dissemination requires local technical support, secure access to land for farmers, and support for the structuring of women in production and the equipping of nutritional block units.

Country: Mali

Lead organisation: Consortium AMEDD, ILRI, DC-Consulting, Huilerie Ba-Mariama and Laham Industrie

Challenge

In the Sikasso region, cattle fattening practices traditionally relied on natural food resources, such as fodder gathered in the bush or crop residues. This dependence on seasonal resources exposed fatteners to considerable uncertainty, both in terms of the quantity and quality of available inputs. During the dry season or the lean period, the scarcity of fodder and the volatility of livestock feed prices, particularly cotton seed meal, significantly increased production costs and limited the profitability of fattening operations.

In addition, stakeholders did not always have the knowledge necessary to accurately assess the nutritional needs of cattle or to optimise rations according to production objectives. This led to inefficient practices, longer fattening times (up to 90 days), and low or unpredictable profitability.

However, the context also presented an opportunity. Strong demand for quality meat, growing interest among young people and women in livestock farming as a source of income, and the existence of dynamic innovation platforms created a favourable environment for the introduction of improved techniques that are more resilient to climate change and better suited to market-oriented livestock farming.

Description of the good practice

The good practice introduced by the project consists of combining the cultivation of improved fodder crops (notably Brachiaria and Mucuna) with the use of the «Metocour» nutritional block produced locally by women's groups to optimise the feeding of fattening cattle. This practice aims to reduce feed costs, shorten the fattening cycle and improve the economic profitability of the activity, while strengthening the resilience of livestock farmers to climate hazards.

What sets this practice apart is the integration of simple solutions that are adapted to local realities. Brachiaria, which is more nutritious and productive than local species, can be grown to produce sufficient fodder even on small areas of land. Metocour blocks, produced from agricultural by-products, effectively supplement the feed ration while remaining affordable. The combination of these two inputs allows feedlot operators to reduce or even eliminate the use of cottonseed meal, which is often expensive and difficult to obtain.

The implementation of this good practice took place in several stages :

- Practical training sessions were organised for livestock farmers on Brachiaria cultivation and the formulation of optimised feed rations.
- Women's groups were trained in the production of Metocour blocks, with support on technical and economic aspects;
- Demonstrations and visits to model stables were organised as part of innovation platform meetings;
- Testimonials from livestock farmers who had adopted this practice were shared to encourage other stakeholders to follow suit.
- Veterinary monitoring was provided to support the optimisation of rations and the fattening cycle.

Many stakeholders were involved in this initiative: the livestock farmers themselves, women's block producer groups, project technical agents, veterinarians, and members of the innovation platforms who served as communication relays. Financially, the project supported training, demonstration and production support activities, but did not invest in equipment or structural investments for block production.

Results achieved and changes observed

The combination of improved fodder crops and Metocour blocks has yielded remarkable results, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

In terms of figures, 496 livestock farmers were trained in fodder crops, compared to an initial forecast of 320. Among them, 333 livestock farmers adopted efficient use of fodder combined with Metocour blocks to feed their animals. The area planted with Brachiaria and other forage species reached 818 hectares, or 204% of the initial target. These efforts have led to a reduction in production costs per head of cattle and a significant improvement in profitability: the average net margin has increased from 88,000 CFA francs to 148,000 CFA francs per head of cattle, representing a 59% increase in net profit.

Beyond the figures, significant changes have been observed in practices. The fattening period has been reduced from 90 to 75 days, thereby reducing feed and health monitoring costs. Feedlot operators have acquired new skills to calculate feed requirements based on weight and fattening duration, and are now able to select cattle for fattening more rigorously in order to optimise their investments.

> *The testimony of Mahamoud Oul Mahadine, a cattle farmer in Zangasso, illustrates these changes. Initially sceptical, he experimented with Brachiaria production on a small area, with encouraging results: 1.8 tonnes of fodder harvested from 1,250 m^2. By combining fodder, Metocour blocks and corn bran, he was able to fatten a cow without resorting to oilcake and sell it at almost double the purchase price. This personal success story is emblematic of the impact of good practice on the profitability and autonomy of livestock farmers.*

More broadly, the project has improved the level of professionalism among cattle farmers and enhanced the role of women in the value chain, particularly through their involvement in the production of nutritional blocks and their active participation in innovation platforms..

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

The success of this good practice is based on several favourable conditions. First, the agro-ecological and socio-economic context of the Sikasso region, characterised by high demand for fodder, growing pressure on land, and interest in fattening among young people and women, provided fertile ground for the adoption of new practices. The support of innovation platforms, which played a catalytic role in organising training, demonstrations and the dissemination of testimonials, was also decisive. Finally, the technical simplicity and visible profitability of the practice encouraged widespread adoption by local actors.

However, several constraints have been identified. Land pressure limits access to land for young people and women, making it difficult to expand fodder cultivation. The production of metocour blocks is also hampered by the lack of suitable storage facilities and appropriate equipment. Women's groups often have to produce to order and sell the next day, as they are unable to dry the blocks under good conditions. These limitations affect product quality and the regularity of supply.

In terms of lessons learned, it is clear that the reproducibility of this good practice depends heavily on secure access to land, the organisation of women around structured production units, and the presence of local technical support. The practice is easily transferable to other agro-pastoral areas facing the same challenges of scarce food resources for livestock, provided that appropriate support mechanisms are put in place to remove land and logistical barriers.

Success factors

- Favourable context (high demand for fodder, interest among young people and women)
- Catalytic role of innovation platforms (training, demonstrations, dissemination)
- Technical simplicity and visible profitability of the practice

Constraints

- Land pressure limiting access to land
- Lack of storage facilities and equipment for blocks
- Drying constraints affecting quality and consistency of supply

Lessons learned

- Secure access to land is essential for reproducibility
- The structuring and equipping of women's units enhances sustainability
- Local technical support is essential for dissemination

Recommendations

The experience in the Sikasso region offers several useful lessons for those involved in similar projects, public decision-makers, and technical and financial partners.

- **For project leaders working in agro-pastoral areas**, it is recommended to incorporate simple and inexpensive innovations such as Brachiaria grass and nutritional blocks, combining them with a local support strategy. Field demonstrations, peer visits and beneficiary testimonials have proven particularly effective in convincing livestock farmers to adopt these practices. It is also important to support the implementation of practical training modules on animal feed, economic analysis of fattening, and techniques for selecting animals for fattening.

- **For local decision-makers and local authorities**, it is crucial to secure access to land for young people and women involved in livestock farming, in particular by facilitating the allocation of plots for fodder production in municipal development plans. In addition, innovation platforms must be recognised as strategic local governance mechanisms for the sector. Strengthening their institutional capacity and providing them with minimum resources (support and advice, collective equipment, functional premises) can greatly increase their impact.

- **Donors and support structures are invited to invest in light but structuring infrastruc-**

ture to support women's groups producing metocour blocks. The construction of small production centres, equipped with drying areas and appropriate equipment, would improve product quality, stabilise supply and strengthen women's economic capacities. At the same time, the creation of specific credit lines for block production and the purchase of inputs could secure supplies and further professionalise this activity.

- Finally, in the medium and long term, it is recommended that this good practice be incorporated into public policies supporting livestock farming, through supervised dissemination mechanisms, recognition of alternative inputs (Metocour blocks) in technical programmes, and institutional support for distribution networks. This would consolidate the project's achievements and trigger a larger-scale dynamic of change in the livestock and meat sector in Mali.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Introduction of artificial insemination in ruminants to enhance genetic improvement at lower cost in Cape Verde

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Accessible genetic improvement**: Artificial insemination makes it possible to disseminate genetic advances without importing live animals, thereby reducing the logistical costs and health risks associated with inter-island transport.
- **Demonstrated impact**: The adaptation of an existing laboratory and the support of specialists have made artificial insemination technically operational in a low-resource island context, while strengthening local skills.
- **Reproducibility**: The practice can be scaled up provided that basic infrastructure is available, qualified technicians are trained, strong technical partnerships are established, and long-term financial and institutional support is guaranteed.

Country: Cape Verde

Project leader/organisation: Associação dos Amigos da Natureza (AAN) and Associação de Criadores de Curral de Tortolho (ACCT)

Challenge

Before the introduction of this good practice, artificial insemination (AI) in ruminants was not practised in São Vicente or the neighbouring islands, mainly due to the lack of suitable equipment, specialised laboratories and qualified personnel. Efforts to renew the gene pool relied mainly on importing live breeding animals, which was a cumbersome, costly and, logically, risky operation in terms of biosecurity. The maritime transport of ruminants between countries – or even between islands – generated high logistical costs and exposed farmers to losses in the event of disease, accidents or the imported animals' inability to adapt to the local environment.

At the same time, the Associação dos Amigos da Natureza's breeding unit already had a mini pig insemination laboratory, which was operational and staffed by competent technical personnel. This infrastructure offered a concrete opportunity to move towards assisted reproduction of ruminants, adapting it at low cost. The project therefore seized this opportunity to experiment with the introduction of bovine and caprine AI as an alternative to importing live animals, with the aim of sustainably improving the genetic quality of the local livestock while reducing costs, health risks and logistical constraints.

Description of the good practice

The good practice consists of introducing artificial insemination as the preferred method of genetic improvement for ruminants, based on the adaptation of an existing laboratory – initially dedicated to pigs – to meet the specific needs of cattle and goats. The aim is to more widely disseminate the genetic advances achieved by the Associação dos Amigos da Natureza (ANN), particularly from high-potential breeding stock acquired under the PACBAO programme.

The innovative nature of this practice is based on two key elements: firstly, the optimisation of existing infrastructure, which has reduced equipment costs; and secondly, the mobilisation of specialised technical support, combining local expertise and international cooperation. Unlike traditional methods based on the physical introduction of animals, AI allows for the rapid and secure dissemination of improved genetics, with enhanced control of health risks and increased adaptability.

The process began with an analysis of existing capacities within the ANN, in particular the presence of a functional mini-laboratory and a technical coordinator trained in porcine AI. Building on this foundation, the project established a partnership with a team of specialised technicians, including an expert from Portugal, to train local teams and adapt the equipment to the specific needs of ruminants.

Implementation took place in several stages: technical evaluation of the facilities, identification of necessary adaptations, acquisition of additional equipment, knowledge transfer by guest trainers, and initial in situ experiments. These steps not only tested the technical feasibility of insemination in cattle and goats, but also strengthened local skills in this area in the long term.

At the institutional level, the practice mobilised the ANN as a host and coordinating structure, the network of technical partners within the CPLP, as well as ad hoc support from the ARAA and the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment. Financial resources were partly covered by PACBAO programme funds, particularly for equipment, training logistics and technical support. All these efforts laid the foundations for a new dynamic of sustainable genetic improvement that can be replicated in other island or isolated territories

Results achieved and changes observed

The introduction of artificial insemination (AI) in ruminants marked a significant technical advance in animal reproduction management in São Vicente. The first concrete achievement of the project was the successful adaptation of the Associação dos Amigos da Natureza (ANN) mini pig laboratory into an operational insemination centre for cattle and goats. This transformation enabled the implementa-

tion of the first AI procedures in the field, with technical support provided by zootechnical specialists, including an expert from Portugal.

The installation and operationalisation of this facility has strengthened local capacity to disseminate the genetic advances achieved by the reproduction centre. In particular, the ANN was able to initiate a transfer of genetic material from high-potential breeding stock, under controlled conditions and at lower cost than importing live animals. This helped to raise awareness among farmers of the benefits of AI, particularly in terms of improving meat productivity, carcass quality and the economic value of their livestock.

The effects of this practice have also been observed in training and learning dynamics: local technicians have benefited from targeted skills transfer, and a new demand has emerged among farmers for access to these innovative services. The laboratory has thus become a local reference centre for assisted reproduction , reinforcing the credibility of the ANN and its role as a technical platform serving family livestock farming.

Finally, this good practice has changed stakeholders' perspectives on reproduction management. AI is no longer perceived as a distant technique reserved for large farms, but as a realistic, economically accessible solution that is compatible with the realities of island livestock farming, provided that adequate support is available.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

Several factors contributed to the success of this good practice. The first was the existence of a basic infrastructure – the mini pig laboratory – which could be repurposed at low cost, significantly reducing the investment required to start the activity. The availability of a competent technical coordinator, already trained in swine AI, was also crucial in driving the project internally and ensuring operational follow-up.

Technical cooperation with international experts, particularly through CPLP networks, helped to fill initial gaps in training and quality assurance. In addition, support from the PACBAO programme, through targeted funding and institutional recognition of the initiative, provided a favourable framework for experimentation, while ensuring a certain legitimacy in the eyes of public partners.

However, several constraints have been identified. One of the main difficulties concerns the need to structure more sustainable technical partnerships, particularly with specialised laboratories or universities, in order to further studies on genetic results, the quality of meat from AI, and the resilience of crossbred breeds. The lack of clear benchmarks on these aspects is currently limiting the widespread adoption of the practice.

In addition, delays in the disbursement of funds have slowed down the implementation of certain technical and logistical steps. At the regional level, the lack of a structured framework for cooperation with neighbouring countries or ECOWAS technical networks is hindering the growth of the practice on an inter-island or cross-border scale.

One of the key lessons learned is the value of an incremental and contextualised approach: by building on existing capacity and support structures, the project was able to introduce a high-potential

innovation with limited risk. This shows that, even in resource-constrained contexts, genetic improvement is possible when initiatives are led by strong local actors, supported by targeted technical partnerships and an environment conducive to experimentation.

Success factors

- Reallocation of an existing laboratory
- Local expertise and international technical support
- PACBAO funding and support

Constraints

- Lack of technical standards
- Delays in disbursement
- Technical and regional partnerships still limited

Lessons learned

- Building on existing infrastructure reduces risks and costs
- A gradual, contextualised approach promotes ownership
- The combination of local expertise and external partners strengthens the impact of innovation

Recommendations

The introduction of artificial insemination in ruminants within the Associação dos Amigos da Natureza is a promising step forward in the modernisation of livestock farming in Cape Verde, and may inspire other territories facing similar constraints in terms of transport, access to improved genetics, or high costs associated with importing live animals.

- **For those involved in similar projects**, it is recommended to identify and make use of existing infrastructure that could be adapted for artificial insemination, as has been done with the ANN's pig laboratory. Starting from a functional base makes it possible to limit initial investment and quickly test the technical feasibility of the approach. It is also essential to have trained or trainee technical staff who are capable of conducting the initial experiments while ensuring the transfer of skills to local technicians.

- **For decision-makers and public institutions**, this practice highlights the need to strengthen national and regional frameworks for supporting animal reproduction. It would be useful to encourage structured partnerships with veterinary laboratories, universities or research centres in order to further study the performance of animals produced through AI, their adaptation to local conditions, and gains in terms of meat quality. Official recognition of locally established AI units, accompanied by appropriate technical and health standards, would help to secure and lend credibility to the practice.

- **For the ARAA and donors**, it is recommended to support the scaling up of this innovation by funding regional training, creating networks of technicians qualified in ruminant AI, and supporting exchanges between countries or islands facing the same logistical constraints. Funding for lightweight technical kits (nitrogen containers, straw, field equipment) could enable other territories to initiate this type of low-cost innovation.

- Finally, it would be wise to raise awareness among farmers about the advantages of AI and gradually involve them in the demand for services through information campaigns, demonstration visits, and ongoing dialogue about the economic, health, and genetic benefits of the practice. A viable economic model for AI units, based on gradual and controlled access to services by farmers, will also need to be considered in the medium term to ensure the sustainability of this innovation.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Good practices

Structuring platforms for contractual access to high-quality oilseed meal

With technical and financial support from :

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

September 2025

Key messages

- **Securing inputs**: Direct contracts with an oil mill guarantee feedlot operators a regular supply of high-quality oilseed meal at controlled prices.
- **Demonstrated impact**: Structured partnerships between innovation platforms and the agri-food industry stabilise costs, secure supplies and make fattening more attractive, particularly for young people and women.
- **Reproducibility**: The dissemination of this practice requires a transparent contractual framework, stronger platform structures and support for commercial negotiations with suppliers.

Country: Mali

Project leader/organisation: AMEDD Consortium, ILRI, DC-Consulting, Huilerie Ba-Mariama and Laham Industrie

Challenge

In Mali, access to inputs for cattle fattening – particularly oilseed meal – is highly unstable. Prices vary considerably depending on the agricultural season, which is itself increasingly unpredictable due to the effects of climate change. Oilcake production depends on private oil mills, which source their supplies from the CMDT ([1]) or on the international market, limiting the bargaining power of livestock farmers.

Every year, the government attempts to subsidise part of the livestock feed. However, these subsidies are often inaccessible to feedlot operators due to the poor organisation of this link in the supply chain and their timing, which does not coincide with the periods most suitable for feedlot operations. In practice, feedlot operators have to make do with what they find on the market, often at high prices, with no possibility of influencing the composition or quality of the feed.

Faced with this situation, the need for a structured, sustainable supply mechanism tailored to the needs of livestock farmers became apparent. The project seized this opportunity to promote direct contracting between innovation platforms (IPs) and an industrial meal supplier in order to secure access to inputs at a competitive price.

Description of the good practice

The good practice is based on the establishment of formalised commercial partnerships between local innovation platforms and Huilerie Ba-Mariama, an industrial player in the oilseed meal sector. The objective is to guarantee a regular supply of high-quality oilseed meal at a controlled price, tailored to the needs of livestock farmers.

1 Malian Company for Textile Development

The innovation lies in the gradual and participatory approach to contracting. The project organised a series of activities to facilitate this partnership :

- Strengthening IPs: training in leadership, planning and financial mobilisation equipped the platforms to engage in a commercial approach.
- Establishing contact with the oil mill: presentation sessions enabled Ba-Mariama to showcase several oilseed meal formulas to livestock farmers, who selected the one that suited them best.
- Factory visit by PI leaders: this visit to Ségou reinforced transparency and enabled the finalisation of the terms of the supply contract, including volumes, payment methods and delivery terms.
- Signing of contracts: the PIs signed an agreement with Ba-Mariama to benefit from a reduced price (1,500 CFA francs less per 50 kg bag), with free delivery and the option of payment in instalments (50% on delivery, 50% after the sale of the cattle).

This entire process was led by the members of the innovation platforms, supported by the project team, with occasional assistance from the government's technical services. The personal commitment of the oil mill director was also a major facilitating factor.

Results achieved and changes observed

The establishment of commercial agreements between the innovation platforms (IPs) and the Ba-Mariama oil mill has produced concrete and significant results, both economically and in terms of organisation and institutions.

For the first time, feedlot operators who are members of the IPs were able to sign a direct supply contract with an industrial meal producer, including advantageous terms: preferential pricing, free delivery and deferred payment. In 2022, thanks to this agreement, the IPs obtained 15 tonnes of oilcake delivered at a price 1,500 CFA francs er 50 kg bag lower than the market price. By way of comparison, the market price of oilseed meal rose from 6,000 to 10,000 CFA francs between January and June, while the platforms maintained a fixed price throughout the year.

In 2023, the experiment was repeated and reinforced. The platforms were able to order an additional 20 tonnes on credit, at 7,000 CFA francs per bag (compared to 9,000 CFA francs on the market), confirming the attractiveness and reliability of the scheme. In addition, a special subsidy of 40 tonnes of oilcake was obtained thanks to joint advocacy by the PIs, the oil mill and the government's technical services.

These economic results had a significant knock-on effect on membership of the platforms: in 2023, 43 new members joined the N'Gountjina IP, including 30 women. This momentum led to better organisation of orders, pooling of resources and stronger collective bargaining power.

On the feed side, the continued availability of livestock feed has made it possible to extend fattening periods, reduce costs, and increase farmers' margins. Faced with increased demand for oilcake, local initiatives have emerged, notably the mobilisation of women to produce more metocour blocks as a complementary substitute.

> *The testimony of Nouhoum DAO, president of the N'Gountjina platform, clearly illustrates the impact: he highlights the decisive role of the agreement with the oil mill in enabling livestock farmers to honour their orders despite cash flow difficulties, and expresses the unanimous gratitude of the members towards the project partners.*

More broadly, the project has improved the level of professionalism among livestock farmers and enhanced the role of women in the value chain, particularly through their involvement in the production of nutritional blocks and their active participation in innovation platforms.

Key success factors, constraints and lessons learned

The success of this good practice is based on several key levers that facilitated its implementation and ownership by the beneficiaries.

The direct link established between the innovation platforms and the Ba-Mariama oil mill was central. It made it possible to bypass speculative intermediaries and secure regular access to a strategic input. The personal commitment of the oil mill director, who supported the experiment and proposed different oilseed meal formulas suitable for fattening, played a decisive role. In addition, the platforms' enhanced capacities through training in leadership, planning and financial management helped to establish the PIs as reliable economic partners.

The project also promoted a participatory and progressive approach: cross-visits, collective choice of feed formulas, open negotiation of contractual terms. This process strengthened trust between stakeholders, transparency and local ownership. Finally, institutional support from government technical services helped to credibilise the contracting process and made it possible to secure an exceptional subsidy of 40 tonnes of oilcake in 2023, thereby broadening the impact of the practice.

Despite the positive results, several constraints were identified. The actual availability of oilcake at the beginning of the year posed a problem: the oil mill itself depended on cotton seed deliveries from the CMDT, which were often delayed. This mismatch between industrial schedules and the needs of livestock farmers affected campaign planning. In addition, payment delays linked to the limited cash flow of the PIs sometimes put pressure on the system. The oil mill's flexibility in accepting deferred payments after the sale of cattle was exceptional but not guaranteed in the long term.

This experience shows that the economic structuring of feedlot operators is possible and profitable when it is based on a strong collective organisation, a balanced industrial partnership and institutional support. The signing of formal contracts is a lever for stabilising prices, improving the quality of inputs and strengthening the influence of local actors on the value chain. However, the reproducibility of the practice depends heavily on the local context: the existence of an industrial unit willing to enter into contracts, functional innovation platforms and effective support mechanisms. Without these elements, the dynamic remains fragile.

Success factors

- Direct partnership between oil mill and IPs, avoiding intermediaries
- Commitment of the oil mill director and adaptation of formulas
- Capacity building (management, leadership) and participatory approach

Constraints

- Supply delays linked to the CMDT
- Limited cash flow of PIs, payment delays
- Dependence on the exceptional flexibility of the oil mill

Lessons learned

- Contractualisation secures prices and supplies
- Collective organisation lends credibility to platforms
- Reproducibility requires industry partners and institutional support

Recommendations

The experiment conducted in the Sikasso region opens up concrete prospects for sustainably structuring the supply of quality inputs to feedlot operators. Several recommendations emerge for project leaders, public decision-makers, and technical and financial partners..

For project leaders. It is essential to support the economic structuring of livestock farmers through platforms or collective organisations capable of negotiating on an equal footing with industrial suppliers. Capacity building in negotiation, financial planning and contract management is a prerequisite for the establishment of sustainable commercial agreements.

Contact with industrial units must be prepared with rigour and transparency, involving stakeholders from the outset. Practical tools such as cross-visits, presentations of feed formulas, or collective negotiation of contractual clauses are strongly recommended.

For public decision-makers and local authorities. Public authorities have a central role to play in facilitating and securing local contracting mechanisms. This involves formally recognising platforms as legitimate interlocutors, but also including them in subsidy or tendering mechanisms.

Local authorities can also mobilise planning or financing tools to support local production of alternative inputs (e.g. metocour blocks) or to promote the installation of storage or processing infrastructure. Specific support can also be provided to women and young people to help them take advantage of the knock-on effects of these dynamics.

- **For donors and technical partners**. It is recommended to support the establishment of productive alliances between producer organisations and manufacturers, providing long-term support and facilitating access to credit or cash advances. In the medium term, partners can encourage tripartite contracting (feeders, suppliers, public institutions) to ensure the fairness and sustainability of the schemes, while limiting the risks associated with speculation.

ECOWAS COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

Agence régionale pour l'agriculture et l'alimentation
4e et 5e étages, Immeuble de la CRBC
Place de la Réconciliation, Cité OUA, Quartier Atchanté
01 BP4817, Lomé 01, Togo
Courriel : araa@araa.org
Site Web: www.araa.org