



# SyRIMAO: From dependence to autonomy – Lessons learned from an innovative financing model for West African agriculture

**T**he SyRIMAO project was implemented to control fruit flies in West Africa through a dual funding: international and local via a tax on mango exports. Although having reached 98% of its producer target, the project showed a strong dependence on external funds and suffers from disbursement delays that threaten its sustainability. To sustain the gains, it is crucial to strengthen local funding mechanisms such as mandatory financial contribution and integrate the project into national policies.

## Introduction

### Beyond aid, the race for financial autonomy to save the mango sector

The mango sector faces a major phytosanitary threat posed by fruit flies responsible for the destruction of 50 to 80% of fruit production in West Africa. This situation generates considerable economic losses, estimated at 9 million euros for exporters in the region, or a third of the total value of exports, and negatively impacts food security. The Regional Innovative Fruit Fly Control System Project in West Africa (SyRIMAO) was initiated to address this problem by strengthening preventive control and infestation control. The implementation by the project of actions of (i) development and homologation of new technologies, (ii) monitoring of orchards, (iii) animation of a national multi-actor consultation

framework, requires enough time and resources. The development of a appropriate and sustainable models of financing research, monitoring and control actions promoted by the project is therefore necessary to ensure the continuity of actions. This note aims to share the lessons learned from the experience of sub-regional scope led by the SyRIMAO project and puts emphasis on mobilizing local funding. It is based on a review of national and regional activity reports, online interviews with national actors responsible for implementing project activities at various levels, and field visits in three countries.

## Synthesis of the experience

### A model of financing for national ownership of phytosanitary control



Workshop organized in Saly, Senegal, from November 2 to 5, 2021, one of whose objectives is to develop and validate the 2022 AWPB of national committees.

Source : <https://www.araa.org/fr/actualite/lutte-contre-les-mouches-des-fruits-en-afrique-de-louest-la-cedeao-organise-un-atelier>

The financing of the SyRIMAO project is largely based on a mechanism of **co-financing by international and regional technical and financial partners**. This multi-donor system is designed to mobilize substantial resources and distribute responsibilities among the various donors. The three main external financial partners are the EU, AFD and ECOWAS. In accordance with a co-financing agreement, each partner has committed to financing one or more of the project's four components, depending on its priorities and scope.

The model of financing also aims also **local ownership of the project by mobilizing national resources**. The project promoted a local financing mechanism called **Mandatory Financial Contribution (CFO)**, which consists of levying taxes on exports to ensure a national and complementary source of income to international funding. The collection of the CFO must be legitimized by an official act.

### Between local revitalization and the fragility of the multi-donor model of financing

The plurality of funding sources has reduced operational risks and avoided major interruptions of activities in the event of a donor delay. A notable success is the wide coverage of beneficiaries: 63,827 producers were trained and supported, representing 98% of the initial target.

The project stimulated the establishment of local financing systems, with the operationalization of the CFO in four countries, thus laying the first foundations for sustainability.

The adoption and application of the mechanism of the CFO vary considerably from one country to another, creating two distinct categories. In some countries, **a legally established system** has been put in place to effectively collect the CFO from mango industry players. These countries have a validated regulatory framework and ensure effective recovery of contributions. In Senegal, a single and fixed amount of 15 FCFA per kilogram of mango exported is levied.



FRUIT FLY TRAP (KHOROGO, IVORY COAST)

These funds are then paid into an account specifically dedicated to the project. A flat contribution of 25 FCFA per crate of mango sold or purchased was introduced by a specialized technical commission in Mali. In Burkina Faso, the CFO is framed by an agreement between the actors of the sector, supported by an interministerial decree. Recovery is ensured directly by the mango interprofession. With the recent creation of the **Burkinabe Council of**

**AgroSylvoPastoral Sectors**, the interprofession will have to settle for levies on exports of dried mango. In Côte d'Ivoire, a tax of 2.5 FCFA per kilogram of mango exported is levied as all export sectors. In Mali, the process, which was at the validation stage, failed before the departure of the CN of the project. In Togo, the implementation and fund management manual was adopted at the end of 2025.

In les three countries, the funds mobilized via the CFO make it possible to **finance the functioning of the Interprofessional organizations and partially certain activities of the project** such as orchard surveillance, the conduct of experiments, thus laying the foundations for financial sustainability. In other countries, **the CFO system is being operationalized**, often in parallel with the structuring of their national committees and the organization of the sector. For these countries, although the collection mechanisms are defined, their implementation is blocked mainly by the absence of a validated legal framework (case of Mali and Guinea). The CFO, often formal and based on interministerial acts, :

- can be applied to various products (fresh or processed mango),
- is levied based on different predefined units (kilogram, crate, etc.) and,

- serve for various uses (functioning of interprofessions, conduct of experiments, surveillance of orchards).

This financing model of project has been also éproven by the **significant delays in disbursement of funds** caused by the complexity of procedures. These delays have resulted in the postponement or even non-execution of certain activities, impacting the overall effectiveness of the project. The experience of Côte d'Ivoire, which has suffered unprecedented delays, and Burkina Faso, which has not received of financing during an entire year, illustrates the vulnerability of this mode of financing. In addition, **the funds generated by the CFO have proven insufficient** to cover all needs, with recovery rates that are not always optimal.



MONITORING ORCHARD IN TOUSSIANA, BURKINA FASO



MANGOES FROM THE GAMBIA HORTICULTURAL ENTERPRISE (GHE) PACKING STATION IN YUNDUM, GAMBIA

## Lessons learned

### Factors of success

Several factors explain the project's results in terms of mobilizing funds. The **institutional commitment of States** has proven crucial. In countries such as Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire where governments actively supported national committees, the continuity of activities could be ensured while awaiting disbursements. The **involvement of interprofessional organizations** was also a driver of success, facilitating the mobilization of local contributions via the CFO.

Similarly, a **well-structured mango sector**, as in Senegal, in Burkina Faso or in Côte d'Ivoire, has allowed for better absorption of financing and effective implementation of the CFO. Finally, the **multi-donor system**, although complex, has guaranteed a significant availability of funds.

The main factor of failure is the **delay in the disbursement of funds**, which disrupted planning and reduced the project's efficiency.

The excessive dependence on external funds is a major factor of fragility, as shown by the cessation of funding for certain countries. The lack of structuring of the sector in certain countries has also limited the capacity to mobilize local resources and sustain the gains.

## Conditions for sustainability

To ensure the sustainability of the SyRIMAO project's achievements, several conditions must be met. It is essential to put in place **autonomous financing mechanisms** at the national and regional levels, similar to the CFO, in order to reduce dependence on international donors. The **integration of project actions into national public policies** is another essential condition, as it guarantees a stable institutional framework and budgetary support over the long term.

The **active involvement of interprofessional organizations and the private sector** is also fundamental, as their direct economic interest drives them to commit financially and organizationally to maintain control measures. Finally, a **transparent and effective financial governance**, ensuring the punctuality of disbursements and accountability, is a pillar for building confidence and attracting new partners

## Conditions for scaling up

The replication of the SyRIMAO financing model in other contexts or sectors depends on several factors. **Well-structured agricultural sector** is the basis, as it provides a functional operational framework for mobilizing contributions and coordinating actors. The **institutional commitment of States** is just as fundamental to legitimize and coordinate the dissemination of the model on a larger scale. The **capitalization and sharing of good practices**, such as the operation of the CFO, accelerate the adoption of the model by avoiding past mistakes. It is also crucial to obtain **increased involvement of the private sector**, which can replicate the mechanism in other value chains. The **strengthening of local capacities in financial management** and the

**digitalization of monitoring** are technical levers that improve the system's transparency, efficiency and adaptability, thus facilitating its extension.

## Recommendations

Consolidating the achievements of SyRIMAO requires concerted action at several levels.

- **To the ECOWAS:** ECOWAS must **strengthen regional coordination** to harmonize approaches and effectively supervise national committees. It is also responsible for **capitalizing and actively disseminating good practices** observed, including the CFO mechanism, to inspire other member states.
- **To national actors (Governments and Committees):** It is imperative to **integrate fruit fly control into national agricultural policies** to ensure a sustainable framework and budget. National actors must continue the **structuring of agricultural sectors** to facilitate the mobilization of resources. They must also **strengthen local resource collection mechanisms**, such as the CFO, and work to professionalize its collection to increase equity and reduce external dependence. Finally, **strengthening local technical and financial capacities** and greater **private sector involvement** in governance are key actions to ensure long-term viability.





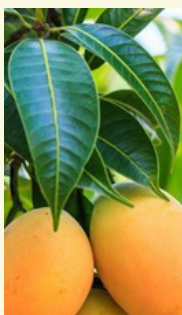
### Financial partners



### Technical partners



*This publication is produced with the financial support of the European Union and the Agence française de développement. Its content is the sole responsibility of ECOWAS and do not necessarily reflect neither the opinions of European Union nor the ones of the Agence française de développement.*



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