

# The OACPS Research and Innovation Programme: Advancing the R&I landscape in West Africa

The OACPS R&I Programme works in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries through the ACP Innovation Fund (IF) - for R&I capacity building, research uptake and policy advocacy, and the Policy Support Facility (PSF) - to enhance R&I policies and ecosystems



**40,000+** actors from different economic domains benefitted with new business and job opportunities



**8 incubators, 1 Fab lab and 1 tech transfer office** established, **29 patent applications** submitted



**2,000+** policy makers, innovators and researchers equipped to drive R&I initiatives



**4** policy recommendation reports  
**2 handbooks** on developing R&I policies and innovation funds



**200+** national institutions engaged



**1,000+** R&I actors and innovators trained in research valorisation



**9** R&I ecosystem mappings



Innovations in **digital agriculture** and **Artificial Intelligence** set benchmarks for other countries in Africa



**1** national R&I policy,  
**2** national R&I strategies,  
**1** national R&I fund bill



## WEST AFRICA

OACPS R&I Programme implements IF and PSF at country, regional and multi-country level to enhance technological capabilities, R&I policies, R&I ecosystems, innovation potential and sustainable development.



## Achievements – July 2024

In West Africa, IF finances two Projects:

**Accelerating Inclusive Green Growth through agri-based Digital Innovation in West Africa - [AGriDI](#),**

and **Valorising Research, Results and Innovation in West Africa - [VaRRIWA](#)**



**AGriDI**  
2021 - 2025

► **Implemented by:** International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology ([icipe](#)), Université d'Abomey-Calavi ([UAC](#)), Gearbox Pan African Network ([GB](#)) and Agropolis Fondation ([AF](#)).

► **Objective:** Enhance agricultural productivity through digital innovation, focusing on youth, women and green growth, in line with [ECOWAS](#), national **STI** and **ICT** policies and the [African Union's STI Strategy 2024](#).

► **Selection of Products:**

- [Baseline study of the project in target countries](#)
- [A Survey on Digital Agriculture in Five West African Countries](#)
- [Digital Agriculture Policies and Strategies for Innovations in the Agri-Food Systems](#)
- [Explore Machine Learning Models for Soil Nutrients Properties Prediction: Systematic Review](#)
- [Digital Agriculture Ecosystem in Benin. An Analysis of the Institutional Environment](#) (French)
- [Digital solutions in the agricultural sector in Benin](#)

► [AgriDi-financed projects](#)

Country	Projects	Achievements
<b>Co-development and adaptation of digital innovative solutions to enhance agricultural productivity</b>		
Benin	<a href="#">DigiCLA</a>	Sustainable <b>digital practices</b> for effective and efficient agro-ecological management of the <b>Fall Armyworm</b> in <b>maize</b> production developed and promoted
Burkina Faso	<a href="#">PPeDMaS</a>	A <b>digital pest</b> and <b>disease management system</b> developed
Nigeria	<a href="#">SMARTSOIL</a>	An <b>AI-driven soil information system</b> to improve <b>crop yields</b> and <b>soil management</b> developed
<b>Digital innovative solutions to establish market linkages for farmers' produce</b>		
Benin	<a href="#">BoMeF</a>	A <b>mobile platform</b> for rice and maize supply chains, reaching <b>7,000 value chain actors</b> , developed
Ghana	<a href="#">SAPA</a>	An <b>agri-tech platform</b> connecting smallholder farmers to markets, connecting over <b>23,000 users</b> , established
Ghana	<a href="#">DigiMakt</a>	<b>Digital services</b> bundled for smallholder farmers, used by over <b>13,000 farmers</b> , developed
Nigeria	<a href="#">MarketMap</a>	A <b>digital platform</b> focused on <b>women agripreneurs</b> promoting economic empowerment developed
<b>Development of policies to support digital innovation</b>		
Benin	<a href="#">REPINAB</a>	Policy <b>tools for use of</b> and scaling <b>digital innovations</b> developed
Ghana	<a href="#">EFUDTRIPi</a>	Research conducted on <b>digital tech adoption</b> to increase farm productivity and farmers' income



**VaRRIWA**

2020 - 2025

► **Implemented by:** Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie ([AUF](#)) and national research agencies **AbeVRIT** (Benin), **ANVAR** (Burkina Faso), **ANRSA** (Senegal) and **DRST** (Togo).

► **Objectives:** Enable a conducive environment for technology transfer and sustainable innovation through:

- **Training R&I Stakeholders** on policies and R&I adoption.
- **Supporting Structures** to accelerate transfer, incubate and improve employability.
- **Networking R&I Stakeholders** to enhance cooperation in technology transfer.

► **Selection of Products:**

- Mapping of Actors, Results and Needs in R&I in [Benin](#), [Burkina Faso](#), Senegal and [Togo \(French\)](#)
- [Diagnostic study on the determinants of non-use by scientific research actors of the economic valorisation of their research results \(French\)](#)
- VaRRIWA Networking Platform: [register and connect to the VaRRIWA Platform](#)

► [VaRRIWA-financed projects](#)

Country	Projects	Achievements
<b>Information and Training</b>		
<b>Benin</b>	<a href="#">VABRINOV</a>	<b>Modules</b> in 3 higher education institutions, <b>342 R&amp;I actors</b> trained in intellectual property rights and the socio-economic valorisation of research results
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	<a href="#">CEFEVRI</a>	A training and expertise centre established, <b>319 R&amp;I actors</b> trained on the valorisation of results
<b>Senegal</b>	<a href="#">PFVRIEES</a>	A <b>online training platform</b> in research valorisation developed, <b>128 R&amp;I actors</b> trained on the valorisation of results
<b>Togo</b>	<a href="#">FOR-VARRITO</a>	<b>423 researchers, 120 inventors and entrepreneurs</b> trained on research methodologies on the valorisation of results, particularly their economic exploit
<b>Sustainable Support Mechanisms</b>		
<b>Benin</b>	<a href="#">RVRI-UAC</a>	Valorisation system of <b>incubator</b> strengthened, <b>25 R&amp;I actors</b> trained in result valorisation and invention protection, <b>12 start-ups</b> coached, <b>14 patent</b> applications submitted
<b>Benin</b>	<a href="#">PAVRIB</a>	An <b>incubator</b> established, <b>26 R&amp;I actors</b> trained on research valorisation, <b>12 patent applications</b> filed with OAPI
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	<a href="#">BTI</a>	A <b>tech transfer office</b> established, <b>25 innovators</b> trained on R&I results, <b>12 innovations</b> supported with 2 patents and 10 brand protections submitted
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	<a href="#">CITI-CNRST</a>	An <b>incubation centre</b> established, <b>25 innovators</b> trained on the valorisation of R&I results in IP management and business creation
<b>Senegal</b>	<a href="#">APEX</a>	An <b>incubation centre</b> established, <b>30 researchers</b> trained in business creation, industrial valorisation, and IP management, 10 innovations supported with 1 patent submitted to OAPI
<b>Senegal</b>	<a href="#">VALMEDTRA</a>	A <b>digital platform</b> for developing traditional medicines established, <b>a spin-off</b> for promoting phytomedicines created, <b>8 products</b> developed
<b>Togo</b>	<a href="#">UVIZA</a>	An <b>incubator</b> on agricultural research established, <b>30 innovators</b> trained on the valorisation of agricultural and agri-food R&I results
<b>Togo</b>	<a href="#">CAVRIS</a>	A <b>Fab Lab</b> for support to start-ups established, <b>10 innovators</b> supported, <b>7 businesses</b> created
<b>Networking</b>		
<b>West Africa</b>	<a href="#">PPP-VRI</a>	A <b>regional forum</b> to strengthen partnerships and valorise R&I results organised
	<a href="#">FORUM MICD-AO</a>	A <b>regional forum</b> with exhibitions and seminars organised, an <a href="#">informative website</a> and a <a href="#">digital networking platform</a> developed to stimulate partnerships in <b>sustainable construction materials</b>

## In West Africa, the [PSF](#) has delivered six [Services](#) at national and multi-country level

### PSF at national level

#### [Gambia \(August 2021 – January 2022\)](#)

Assisted the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology ([MOHERST](#)) in developing a **National Innovation Fund (NIF)**

**Achievements:** Gambia has approved the National R&I Fund Bill, allocated 100k Euro to NIF, secured the partnership between MoHERST and the World Bank

▶ **60 policymakers** from **20 institutions** trained on the establishment of the NIF and partnership strategies

#### Products

- [Country Background Report](#)
- [Policy Recommendations Report](#)

#### [Guinea \(December 2022 – August 2023\)](#)

Assisted the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Innovation ([MESRSI](#)) in developing a **National R&I Policy (PNRI)**

**Achievements:** Guinea developed and validated PNRI with a 5-year Strategy, R&I law in progress

▶ **50 policymakers** from **28 institutions** trained in R&I policies and strategies

#### Products

- [Country Background Report](#)
- [Policy Recommendations Report](#)

#### [Mauritania \(July – December 2021\)](#)

Assisted the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research ([MESRS](#)) in developing a first **National R&I Strategy**

**Achievements:** Mauritania approved R&I Strategy, increased budget allocation, launched competitions and scholarship programme

▶ **20 policymakers** from **10 institutions** trained in R&I policies and strategies

#### Products

- [Country Background Report](#)
- [Policy Recommendations Report](#)

#### [Togo \(September 2023 – April 2024\)](#)

Assisted the Ministry of Higher Education and Research ([MESR](#)) in developing a **R&I Support Fund**

▶ **20 policymakers** from **6 institutions** trained in R&I policies and strategies

### PSF at multi-country level

#### [Mutual Learning Exercise on National R&I Funds \(February – October 2024\)](#)

[Facilitated R&I fund knowledge exchange in West Africa](#)

**30 policymakers** from 17 countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, and Togo, trained in establishing national funds for R&I

#### Products

Handbook on R&I Fund development  
(*In preparation*)

#### [Mutual Learning Exercise on R&I Policies and Strategies \(February – September 2023\)](#)

[Collaborative initiative on effective R&I policy development and execution](#)

**45 policymakers** from 15 countries, including Gambia, Guinea, Mauritania, trained in R&I policies and strategies

#### Products

[OACPS Handbook on R&I Policy](#)