



From Research to Impact: how an AR4D grant is supporting IFAD operations in Togo

Problems addressed and solutions provided by RESADE

In Togo, agricultural production in several lowland and coastal areas—particularly in the Maritime Region—is increasingly constrained by soil salinity, recurrent droughts, and land degradation, resulting in low productivity, limited crop diversification, and heightened vulnerability of smallholder farmers. These constraints are especially acute in the prefectures of Avé (Kévé) and Vo (Vogan), where saline soils and water stress have rendered large areas marginal or abandoned.

Through the Improving agricultural REsilience to SALinity through DEvelopment and promotion of pro-poor technologies and management strategies in selected countries of sub-Saharan Africa (RESADE) Grant, implemented by ICBA in close collaboration with the Institut Togolais de Recherche Agronomique (ITRA) and national extension services, applied research and capacity development activities were deployed to address these challenges. RESADE established two Best Practice Hubs (BPHs)—one in Atti-Apédonkoe and one in Kouénou (Vo)—each covering one hectare of fenced and equipped land dedicated to experimentation, demonstration, and farmer training.

Within this framework, RESADE tested, validated, and disseminated practical solutions, including:

- Drought- and salinity-tolerant crop varieties (rice, sorghum, pearl millet and cowpea);
- Soil management practices such as biochar application, improving water retention and drainage;
- Improved agronomic practices, crop rotation, and water management;
- Community seed banks and seed multiplication approaches;
- Training on value addition, post-harvest handling, and cooperative organization.

These interventions aimed to restore the productivity of saline lands while strengthening farmers' resilience, incomes, and food security.



Why and how the RESADE–ProMIFA collaboration created value

While IFAD grants and IFAD investment projects are designed to be complementary, they often operate in parallel due to differences in timelines, scale, and implementation modalities. In Togo, a deliberate effort was made to bridge this divide.

Shared-risk Agricultural Financing Incentive Mechanism Support Project (ProMIFA), an IFAD-financed national investment programme supporting rice, maize, poultry, and horticulture value chains, recognized that although salinity was not a core focus of its design, RESADE's technical solutions could significantly enhance its results—particularly in production systems, seed systems, value addition, and farmer organization.

THE PROJECTS

RESADE

- USD 7.7 million grant (2019–2026), funded by IFAD and BADEA
- Implemented by ICBA with national agricultural research institutes in 7 Sub-Saharan African countries, including Togo
- Focus on applied research and scaling of:
 - Drought- and salinity-tolerant crops
 - Water and soil management practices
 - Climate-resilient value-chain innovations

ProMIFA

- USD 35.9 million IFAD-financed investment project (2019–2027) implemented in Togo
- Supports inclusive and resilient agricultural and forestry value chains
- Strengthens smallholder farmers' and rural entrepreneurs' access to:
 - Productive assets, finance, markets, and technical services
- Priority value chains: rice, maize, horticulture, poultry, and aquaculture
- Promotes value addition, cooperative development, and income diversification, with a focus on women and youth

From Research to Reach

- Embedded RESADE applied research into ProMIFA's investment framework
- Scaled innovations beyond pilot sites
- Expanded outreach from a few hundred to over 1,100 farmers
- Achieved significant yield increases and greater value addition
- Improved access to markets and finance
- Generated inclusive impact, particularly for women and youth

Starting in late 2023, structured exchanges between RESADE and the ProMIFA Project Management Unit led to a shared understanding of objectives and entry points. The collaboration was operationalized by integrating RESADE's technical innovations directly into ProMIFA's activities, rather than running parallel interventions. This included:

- Joint planning and coordination meetings;
- Use of RESADE Best Practice Hubs as training and demonstration sites;
- Delivery of Farmer Field Schools of Excellence (FFSE) targeting ProMIFA-supported cooperatives;
- Validation and financing of activities through ProMIFA's Annual Work Plan and Budget.

Through this approach, RESADE's applied research outputs were scaled using ProMIFA's financing mechanisms, cooperative networks, and institutional reach.

Evidence of impact of the RESADE–ProMIFA collaboration

The collaboration generated a clear multiplier effect compared to RESADE operating alone.

Between 2024 and 2025, joint RESADE–ProMIFA activities reached approximately 1,100 farmers, compared to about 200 farmers trained under RESADE alone, with more than 50% women and youth. Farmers were organized into ten cooperatives, including six newly created cooperatives in Atti-Apédokoe.

Key results include:

- Rice yields increased by over 50%, from approximately 0.8 t/ha before RESADE to around 1.5 t/ha among trained farmers;
- The share of farmers engaged in processing and value addition increased from 0% before RESADE, to about 10% under RESADE alone, and to 30% under the RESADE–ProMIFA collaboration;
- Cooperatives gained access to ProMIFA input credit schemes (seeds, fertilizers) and rice buy-back arrangements, strengthening market integration;
- Knowledge transfer among farmers created a strong peer-to-peer multiplier effect beyond direct project beneficiaries.

An additional innovative outcome was the piloting of tilapia production in saline water in Kouénou, demonstrating that saline and previously abandoned lands can be productively rehabilitated for aquaculture.



Success factors in managing the collaboration

Several factors proved critical to the success of the RESADE–ProMIFA collaboration:

- Early strategic alignment analysis to identify complementarities;
- Proactive engagement with IFAD country teams and PMUs;
- Joint planning and co-design of activities embedded in investment processes;
- Delivery of accessible, farmer-centered technical packages;
- Institutional integration of grant-supported activities into ProMIFA's operational systems;
- Consistent follow-up to maintain momentum.

Challenges in establishing grant–loan collaboration

The collaboration also highlighted structural challenges common to grant–loan synergies:

- Grants and loans often operate in institutional silos, despite being part of the same organization;
- Different timelines and planning cycles complicate coordination;
- Grants may span multiple countries or focus on specific technical niches, while loans align with national priorities;
- The absence of formal collaboration mechanisms at design stage limits early integration.

Addressing these challenges required proactive facilitation, flexibility, and sustained dialogue among technical teams, PMUs, and IFAD country staff.

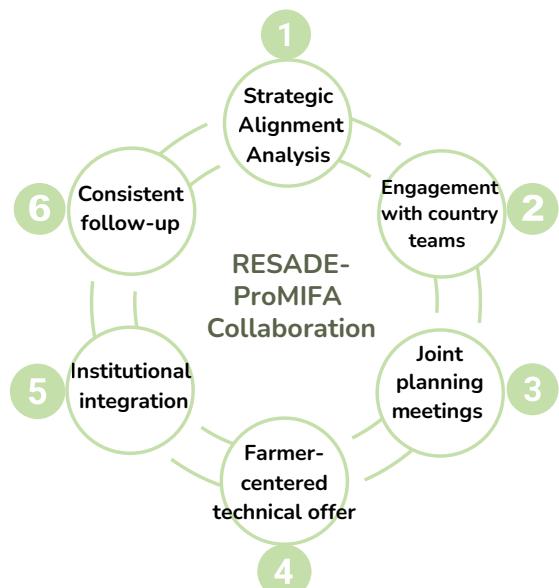


Why grant–loan integration matters

This case demonstrates the critical importance of integrating applied agricultural research into IFAD investment projects to accelerate the adoption of climate-resilient practices and translate innovation into lasting impact at scale. Through the RESADE–ProMIFA collaboration, farmer organizations in Atti-Apédonké gained access to ProMIFA's input credit schemes and rice buy-back arrangements, while good agricultural practices tested under RESADE spread beyond direct beneficiaries through farmer-to-farmer learning across the prefecture. By combining research-driven innovation with financing, market access, and institutional anchoring, the partnership converted salinity and drought constraints into opportunities for productivity, inclusion, and improved food security. The experience sets a strong precedent for future IFAD operations, illustrating how deliberate grant–loan integration can bridge the gap between experimentation and impact and strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of IFAD-supported rural development investments.

Turning Structural Constraints into Enablers of Collaboration

- Established early strategic alignment between grant and investment objectives
- Ensured proactive engagement with IFAD country teams and PMUs
- Applied joint co-design to bridge institutional silos and differing mandates
- Managed misaligned timelines through adaptive planning
- Embedded farmer-centered research outputs into ProMIFA's operational systems
- Maintained continuous dialogue among technical teams and PMUs
- Transformed structural challenges into manageable coordination mechanisms



AUTHORS

CONTACTS

Chantal Goto, ITRA
Tsatsu Koku
Domenyo, ITRA
Hiba Nasrollah, IFAD
Viviane Filippi, IFAD

IFAD:
Viviane Filippi
v.filippi@ifad.org
Amine Belhamissi
a.belhamissi@ifad.org

ICBA:
Rakesh Kumar Singh
r.singh@biosaline.org.ae
ITRA:
Chantal Goto
got_chant@yahoo.fr

