



Press release
4 October 2024

The Farm'Innov project to boost food security through innovation in Kenya is in full swing!

The cooperation and technical assistance project Farm'Innov, between Kenya and France, is launched and under a busy schedule of events. Supported by the French Embassy in Kenya and Somalia, the project is funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), who commissioned Valorial - a major player dedicated to responsible agri-food innovation in France - to implement it over the next 2 years. Farm'Innov aims to support innovation and competitiveness in the Kenyan agricultural and agri-food sectors, and to strengthen the sharing of experience between Kenyan institutional and private players and members of the Valorial ecosystem from Western France. The first actions of the project are successfully being deployed, notably with the launch of the call for applications for the Acceleration Programme, the 1st inspiring and networking event called "Farm'Innov Connection" held in Nairobi last July, and the visit to France of a 1st delegation of Kenyan representatives from the agriculture and livestock sectors in mid-September. Farm'Innov was also exhibiting at the 4th National Agriculture Summit organised by ASNET on October 1st and 2nd at KICC Nairobi.

The 1st concrete actions of the Farm'Innov project are being deployed

Connecting the fields of possibility is the signature and philosophy of Farm'Innov, shared by all its stakeholders. It is also what guides the deployment of its 1st concrete actions, around 2 main pillars:

- Supporting agricultural & agri-food private sector in Kenya and building partnerships
- Sharing experience and expertise between the 2 countries and strengthening cooperation

Franco-Kenyan delegations to develop exchanges: a successful 1st *Farm'Innov Institutional Visit* in France

Another key initiative of the Farm'Innov project is to develop and strengthen exchanges between the two countries by organising a series of exploratory visits aimed at Kenyan private and institutional players. These visits will take place in France as well as in Nairobi and the surrounding area throughout the project, including visits to sites such as farms, experimental farms and factories, as well as participation in trade fairs, networking with local players and workshops on specific themes. In total, Valorial will lead three exploratory visits, with one mission every six months in France from September 2024, followed each time by an application visit to Kenya two months later.

Through this "return" missions model, the objective is to inspire agricultural and agri-food practices in Kenya by capitalising on the experience acquired by the community of players and members federated by Valorial in the fields of breeding, processing and logistics.

The very first exploratory visit took place from Monday 16 to Friday 20 September 2024 in France, as part of the SPACE show – France's leading annual exhibition for animal farming - held in Rennes. A delegation of 8 representatives from Kenya's agricultural and livestock sectors took part in the event: Doris GATWIRI - Meru Central Dairy Co-operative Union Ltd, Benadatte JEPTOO - Kenya Animal Genetic Resources Centre (KAGRC), Pauline KARIUKI - Kenya Poultry Farmers Association (KEPOFA), Jackson Musee KATHOKA - CKL Africa Ltd (on behalf of ASNET), George Gichingiri MUGWERU - County Government of Laikipia, George MUIGA - Equity Bank, Timothy Mwanzia MULWA - Kenchic Ltd, Ntika MUNORU - Pork Producers Association of Kenya (PPAK).

The aim of this inaugural mission was to highlight know-how and technical and organisational innovations in the field of livestock farming, including genetics, nutrition and animal welfare, as well as high-performance equipment, buildings and machinery for the dairy sector. The focus was on cooperative models and producer groups, and their socio-economic aspects. The delegation benefited from a rich programme of personalised and targeted meetings, site visits and networking sessions with around twenty key players, members of Valorial's community, such as: Chamber of Agriculture of the Brittany region, Innoval, Mg2Mix, GAEC Dyna'Milk, CUMA Ouest, Experimental farm of Derval, Chamber of Agriculture of Pays de la Loire region, IFIP - Pork Institute, IDELE, Innozh, SPACE, Bretagne Commerce International, Crédit Agricole, Yxia, CCPA Group, MiXscience, Invitation à la Ferme, Uniporc, All4feed, Standa, Fermes de Janzé, The Land - CETA, Cooperative Le Gouessant - UFAB, ...

A feedback workshop concluded this week of visits, paving the way for a future expert mission. Valorial plans to mobilise two experts from its network for a trip to Kenya before the end of the year, in order to adapt these models to Kenyan organisations. To carry out this project, Valorial will actively solicit the skills of its community of members and partners, ready to share their experience with Kenyan players.

An Acceleration Programme dedicated to Kenyan agri-food businesses

Major component of the project, the Acceleration Programme call for applications was launched on 1st July 2024. The programme is designed to support between 15 to 20 Kenyan companies to accelerate their growth and transformation. It aims to achieve the following 5 objectives: strengthening food security and sovereignty, support the food transition to limit imports, improve health quality and food safety, strengthen the sustainability of the Kenyan food system, create local economic activities and jobs.

Benefits for accelerated companies

It will provide support to selected companies for 12 months, over the year 2025, based on two different types of assistance: consulting and training, and immersion visits to France.

The accelerated companies will benefit from 10 days of support including a 360° diagnosis, training, coaching and mentoring sessions delivered by Kenyan and French experts, immersion visits to France and networking with French and Kenyan companies.

How to apply

The deadline to apply is currently the end of October 2024. Companies must meet a number of eligibility criteria and present their project for acceleration. To apply and get more information, companies can visit this link: <https://farminnov.org/acceleration-programme/>.

Inspiring events to develop exchanges between Kenyan and French players

The *Farm'Innov Connection's*, or watch and networking events, has been designed to stimulate exchanges between Kenyans and French on topics of interest identified on the ground in Kenya's agricultural and agri-food sectors. Lectures by experts, as well as testimonials and feedback from Kenyan and French companies, will address the various topics chosen.

The 1st *Farm'Innov Connection* was held on 23 July 2024 on the theme of post-harvest losses, a subject of major interest for meeting the objectives of strengthening food security, sustainability, and the development of local economic activities. Organised both at the Mercure Hotel in Nairobi and in webinar, it involved 12 speakers and brought together 70 people. An opportunity to have an open discussion with the private sector on the subject and share innovative solutions to foster increased performances.

8 to 10 events will be organised throughout the duration of the project and will be open to any Kenyan company or structure involved in agriculture or agri-food. Next event will take place in October on the subject of the supply chain.

Key support from local players Equity Bank and ASNET

Backed with its network and expertise to serve this project, Valorial has teamed up with local Kenyan players, in particular to optimise the relevance and dissemination of the Farm'Innov Acceleration Programme. With the support of Equity Bank, a major banking player in Kenya, and ASNET, the umbrella body of the Kenyan agriculture sector, Valorial can draw on essential local expertise in the agricultural and agri-food sectors to ensure that the actions of the Farm'Innov project are adapted to local players, and to complement its expertise.

"We believe that this collaboration with Kenya under the aegis of France will provide enormous opportunities for players in the French agricultural and agri-food sectors wishing to develop technical and commercial cooperation in the coming years. We intend to mobilise all our network and expertise to this end."

Jean-Luc PERROT, Valorial Director

"We are delighted to witness the first concrete actions of the Farm'Innov project taking shape. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering sustainable development and strengthening partnerships between Kenya and France. By supporting Kenyan agri-food businesses and facilitating knowledge exchange, we aim to enhance food security, promote economic growth, and build lasting collaborations."

Anne-Gaël CHAPUIS, AFD Director in Kenya

"It was a very interesting mission and I was delighted to take part of it. I came to find partners in the milking industry, as the cooperative I work for is trying to go for growth, but also for diversification of animal nutrition. Raw materials and equipment are interesting, I was also looking for solutions to develop our producers' skills on genetics, management and organization."

Doris GATWIRI, Project leader, Meru Central Dairy Cooperation Union

About Valorial: Major network dedicated to responsible agri-food innovation with a European and international reach, Valorial brings together 400 members (companies, research centres and higher education bodies), mainly located in Brittany, Pays de la Loire and Normandy, and a community of over 10,000 innovators focusing on smarter food. Valorial advises and supports them in their research and innovation initiatives and projects, which create value for all concerned, based on a shared desire to move towards more sustainable agricultural and agri-food systems and to offer food products that meet the aspirations of their French and foreign customers. Valorial has been awarded the French Competitiveness Cluster label and the European Cluster Management Excellence/Gold label. www.pole-valorial.fr

About AFD Group: Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Group finances, supports and accelerates the transitions necessary for a more just and resilient world. It thus contributes to implementing France's policy on sustainable development and international solidarity. It is with and for communities that we build, with our partners, solutions in more than 160 countries, as well as in 11 French overseas departments and territories.

Our objective: To reconcile economic development with the preservation of common goods: the climate, biodiversity, peace, gender equality, education and health. Our teams are involved in more than 3,600 projects in the field, which are part of the commitment of France and the French people to fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals. For a world in common.

www.afd.fr

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