

#1 - 2023 POLICY BRIEFS

Structuring Action: **WAIDMAS** (West African Irrigation Development and Management Agencies)

#1 - 2023 Project: Review and prospects of the transfer of management to irrigators' associations (IAs) in WAIDMA areas

The transfer of management to IAs in West Africa: towards supported independence

To contribute to the sustainability of hydro-agricultural infrastructures in WAIDMA schemes, it has become necessary to transfer the management of part of these infrastructures to irrigators' associations (IAs)¹. What are the main lessons to be learned from the various experiences of the WAIDMAS and irrigators in this area?



ISSUES AT STAKE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTION

Delegating management to users' associations means applying the principle of subsidiarity, which should make it possible to increase the economic and social relevance of water use and to reduce the cost of managing the infrastructures developed, while guaranteeing their proper maintenance. This involves recognising the role of irrigators, giving them a sense of responsibility and providing them with the material, intellectual and legal resources they need to carry out their tasks. By highlighting and analysing the results achieved and the difficulties encountered by initiatives to transfer the management of large-scale water supply in the Sahel, we can clarify what remains to be done and the lessons to be drawn, either to make progress where the process has begun, or to implement approaches of this type in the future.

The overall issue identified by COSTEA for the WAIDMAS is that of the equitable sharing, sustainable use and management, and optimal development of resources and common goods such as soil and water on the one hand, and the public collective hydraulic infrastructures for which the WAIDMAS are the project owners on the other, for the purposes of agricultural production, the development of rural areas and improving the living standards of the people that live there. The 'transfer' project covered by this policy brief is in the context of this cross-cutting issue and contributes to meeting the following challenges:

- allocating land fairly and over the long term to farmers, both women and men, on irrigated schemes;
- the sustainable management of water resources extracted for irrigation, while respecting the needs of other water uses, in particular those of the natural environment;
- mobilising irrigating farmers to contribute to the proper management of irrigation systems;

KEY MESSAGES

- 1/ Transferring the management of part of the infrastructures to IAs is a dynamic process that involves regular questioning by all of the actors involved;
- 2/ There is no perfect transfer experience or model that can be applied everywhere, but rather a compendium of experiences from the various WAIDMAS to be promoted and the need to set up an ecosystem of complementary actors;
- 3/ Transferring the management of parts of the infrastructures developed by the WAIDMAS to IAs means sharing responsibilities, which requires constant supervision and objective and constructive dialogue between the WAIDMA and the IAs. To achieve this, the WAIDMAS and the IAs must have appropriate human resources;
- 4/ The sustainability of good IA management can never be taken for granted, even the most operational of them go through periods of crisis;
- 5/ The upkeep and maintenance of the infrastructures transferred to IAs are often poorly understood. Improvements require an adequate definition of the cost of the water service and better application of the O&M notices delivered with the infrastructures transferred;
- 6/ The involvement of the West African Network of WAIDMAS (ROA-SAGI) is now necessary to ensure that the messages are properly conveyed within the WAIDMAS and to key actors in the ecosystem.

1. The terminology 'irrigators' associations', considered to be more generic, has been chosen in preference to one of the official names adopted in West African countries, such as 'Water Users' Associations' or 'Agricultural Water Users' Organisations', for example.

- creating the conditions for an economy that benefits farmers' incomes, to enable them to be fully-fledged economic actors in partnership with agricultural production value chains;
- creating the conditions for maintaining the effectiveness of the major public investments made to develop irrigated schemes, through an appropriate distribution of management responsibilities between the actors, by strengthening their capacities and improving their methods, and by adapting irrigation systems to these management methods;
- renewing traditional approaches to engineering irrigated systems by integrating technological and social innovations.

Faced with the difficulties encountered by the WAIDMAs in managing water efficiently and balancing their operating accounts, the 1980s saw a proliferation of reforms aimed at giving users greater weight in the management of irrigated schemes. The promoters of these reforms drew inspiration from the management methods observed in what were known as 'traditional' or 'community' irrigated schemes, where farmers had demonstrated their ability to manage over the long term, without the presence of the State. The structural adjustment plans of the 1990s provided the framework for many governments to initiate reforms of the management of irrigation systems, such as those of 'Participatory Irrigation Management' and 'Irrigation Management Transfer'.

However, while it is now undisputed that the involvement of irrigators in the governance of irrigation is a key to its successful development, these reforms have not always produced results that live up to the expectations of their promoters, particularly in large public schemes.

The general objective of this project is to advance the participatory management of irrigation in the (large and medium) schemes developed in the WAIDMAs' intervention zones (where a transfer policy is required). Progress and policies in this area vary significantly from one WAIDMA to the next, but all agree on the importance of this subject, either to evaluate what has been done, to support what is currently being done, or to better prepare for a possible transfer. To do this, they wish to draw on (i) feedback from the most advanced WAIDMAs, (ii) experience in this field in West Africa and elsewhere in the world, and (iii) the considerable amount of research carried out in this area.

The specific aim of the study was to evaluate and capitalise on the experience of the WAIDMAs targeted in terms of the specificity of the tools and mechanisms for transfer and to support the IAs in their management of the irrigated schemes, while drawing lessons from the difficulties encountered. The lessons learned from the study should be able to be put to good use and shared within each WAIDMA as part of the WAIDMA network. The results of this study should serve to inform discussions on transfer.

The institutional structuring of the agricultural world around water management and hydro-agricultural developments is also an opportunity to encourage structuring around other agricultural issues (ecosystem supporting the IAs: production/ value chain, etc.). A good linkage between agricultural production

structures and those of water users and the efficient distribution of tasks between them are factors of success or difficulties for the development of the territories concerned.

Typical difficulties can arise due to a mismatch between the associations' resources and the scope of their mission, due in particular to:

- the technical skills of the IA members to manage the irrigation infrastructures for which they are responsible;
- the size of the scheme transferred (quantitative aspects), which may be either too large, leading to complex management, or not large enough, leading to a lack of resources;
- the functional scheme delegated, leaving either too much autonomy or not enough;
- insufficient rules or inadequate powers to ensure that these management delegates are able to enforce the water allocation plan between users, ensure that the developed schemes are respected, recover the cost of the water service, or ensure that their elected representatives act with transparency and integrity;
- the presence of surrounding economic or institutional actors that help the associations to function, or whose absence or weakness hinders them;
- the availability of water resources, guaranteed by the State over the long term for agricultural use, as part of an IWRM approach, which can be a factor in the success or failure of the transfer.

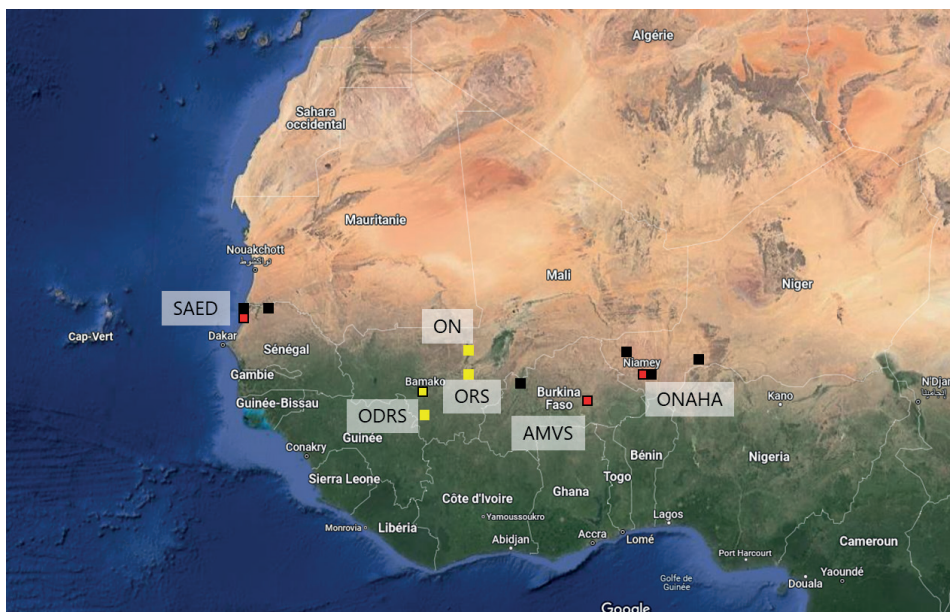
Depending on the human, institutional and economic development of each territory, an optimum scenario and the conditions for success have therefore been analysed to enable a transfer of management that best guarantees the sustainability and economic optimisation of the infrastructures developed and of the water and soil resources concerned.

PRESENTATION OF THE METHODOLOGY AND CONTEXTUAL ELEMENTS

The '*Review and prospects of the transfer of management to irrigators' associations in WAIDMA areas*' project was the first WAIDMA project to be launched, with the contract being awarded to the GRET-SCP consortium in December 2019. It is one of the four thematic projects of the WAIDMA structuring action.

It was organised around several tasks carried out successively:

- the collection and analysis of documentation on the six WAIDMAs concerned and their context (SAED, ONAHA, AMVS, ON, ORS, ODR);
- a comparative and commented overview of the situation in terms of the transfer of management to IAs in the six same WAIDMAs, drawing lessons from the evaluation and capitalisation on experiences in transferring management to IAs. This overview focused on six thematic areas: (i) transfer policy and procedures; (ii) governance; (iii) the technical management of upkeep and maintenance; (iv) administrative,



Location of the WAIDMA stakeholders in the study and of the main sites visited or not during the field diagnoses of stage 3

- Location of the schemes visited
- Head office of the WAIDMAs visited
- Location of the schemes not visited but included in the diagnosis
- Head office of the WAIDMAs not visited but included in the diagnosis

economic and financial management; (v) organisation and professionalisation; (vi) agricultural development.

- an in-depth field assessment of three schemes selected in the areas where SAED, ONAHA and AMVS operate.

Two main types of actor were met during the fieldworks: actors with direct responsibilities in the management and operation of irrigated schemes and actors belonging to the irrigation ecosystem².

The following diagram presents the actors met³ according to the typology presented above.

As with each of the WAIDMA projects, the study was organised around an international service provider in charge of coordinating the work, contributing experts⁴ from the WAIDMAs concerned by the case studies and focal points⁵ from the WAIDMAs concerned by the project but not the subject of a specific case study. At various stages in the study, workshops were held to enable the actors to exchange views on the subject. The comparative analysis was structured around the six themes of management transfer, each analysed by a trio (referent, contributor 1, contributor 2) to avoid working in silos, before re-mobilising them to co-construct an overall analysis and initiate the expected collective learning process.

The lessons that can be drawn at the level of ROA-SAGI come from capitalising on good practices to arrive at the conceptualisation of a hybrid model to be promoted, capable of

adapting to the specificities of each zone. Such a model would not be a reproduction of a case documented in one WAIDMA area to be applied in another, but a compendium of the lessons learned for each theme addressed in this transfer project.

SAED

The transfer of the management of hydro-agricultural infrastructures in the Senegal river valley arose from a long process of evolving national policies in a global context of questioning the intervention of the State in the irrigation sector. The introduction of the Economic and Financial Recovery Plan (PREF) by the IMF and the World Bank in 1980 marked the real beginning of this process, based on the principle of 'less state, better state.'

In Senegal, the very idea of transferring the management of schemes to producers originated in the New Agricultural Policy (NPA) adopted in 1984, which proposed to 'create the conditions for boosting production within a framework that encourages the effective participation and extensive responsibility of rural populations at every stage of the development process, and consequently reduces the intervention of the State to a role of catalyst and driving force.' This process, which has lasted more than thirty years, has been a success in the SAED zone in view of the organisational capacities of the Hydraulic Unions (*Unions hydrauliques*), which are now a reference in the sub-region, as demonstrated by the exchange visits organised to draw inspiration from the SAED model.

While there were initial concerns about the Unions' ability to take charge of their own affairs and assume the functions that had been transferred to them, it is now evident that these IAs are capable of managing schemes of several thousand hectares, forging partnerships and defending their interests.

According to the evaluations, and in line with the transfer policy desired by the central government, this assumption of responsibility is a reality, even if there are still difficulties and challenges for some organisations in a socio-economic and

2. The notion of irrigation ecosystem includes all the actors that have an indirect role in the management and/or development of irrigated areas and thus contribute to the institutional and technical sustainability of the irrigation. The functions of these actors are not necessarily limited to the irrigation sub-sector.
 3. As the diagram only includes the actors met during the field diagnosis missions, it does not aim to describe all of the stakeholders involved in the management of IAs and the irrigated schemes that are transferred to them.
 4. A permanent WAIDMA employee contracted by the international service provider to fully integrate the expert mission and to share and capitalise on it within his/her own structure.
 5. A WAIDMA member in charge of relaying information within his/her institution, who is not under a contract with the international service provider but whose mobilisation is supported by an agreement between AFEID and each of the WAIDMAs.

Presentation of the actors met during the field visits

	AMVS	ONAHA	SAED
Actors directly involved in the management of the irrigated schemes and IAs	COOPERATIVES AWUOS (IRRIGATORS' ASSOCIATIONS) CATG (ICDE consultancy firm)	COOPERATIVES IWUAS (IRRIGATORS' ASSOCIATIONS) THE FEDERATION OF UNIONS OF RICE PRODUCERS' COOPERATIVES (FUCOPRI)	HYDRAULIC UNIONS (IRRIGATORS' ASSOCIATION) FÉDÉRATION DES PÉRIMÈTRES AUTOGÉRÉS (FEDERATION OF SELF-MANAGED SCHEMES) CIRIZ CGER
Actors in the irrigation ecosystem	BAGREPÔLE CILSS	Governors DRGR INRAN	CIFA LBA Insurance ISRA Africa Rice

institutional context beset by several shocks and changes impacting the trajectories of the Unions and other key actors of the 'SAED ecosystem'

A more detailed analysis shows that the governance trajectory of certain Hydraulic Unions follows cycles that take them from good management to average or fair management. The key factors in the success of the transfer include the leadership of the president and of the members of the executive board, the quality of the infrastructure transferred (including the match between the technical choices made and the users' management capacities, their ability to pay, etc.) and an effective support system for the IAs. This 'SAED ecosystem' is impressive in terms of the quality of the actors involved and the complementarity of their skills. In particular, the IAs have privileged relationships with SAED, La Banque Agricole (LBA, [Agricultural Bank]), the Centre de Gestion et d'Economie Rurale (CGER, [Rural Management and Economics Centre]) and the Centre Interprofessionnel de Formation aux métiers de l'Agriculture (CIFA, [Interprofessional Training Centre for Agricultural Occupations]).

The diagnosis in the SAED zone made it possible to document enough dimensions of management transfer to identify points of convergence and divergence with the other WAIDMAs.

ONAHA

The case of ONAHA shows a two-stage transfer process: an initial transfer in the 1980s from ONAHA to cooperatives, and a second since 2016 from the cooperatives to Irrigation Water Users' Associations (French acronym used by ONAHA: AUEI, *Association d'utilisateurs de l'eau agricole*). Apart from the period and context of the transfer, the main difference is that the first transfer concerned both water management and production functions, whereas the second involves assigning the AUEIs the water management functions that had previously been devolved to the cooperatives.

The transfer to the AUEIs is recent. The few years of feedback, coupled with the small number of functional AUEIs, has limited the analysis of certain dimensions of the transfer. Nonetheless, a number of serious trends have emerged from the analysis.

Firstly, the cooperatives show a high degree of inertia, which has sometimes led to management and governance difficulties. The cooperatives in the sample, which were set up over 40 years ago, benefit from local support from the scheme managers, but the latter are finding it difficult to keep up with the organisational and technical changes in a system that has become routine.

Secondly, the producers' environment (described as an 'ecosystem' in the SAED diagnosis) is not very diversified and the number of actors is limited. All of the relations are thus structured around the ONAHA-cooperative-producer axis. Actors that appear key in other WAIDMAs, such as the agricultural bank or research, play a minor role here. The main advantage of this system is that it maintains a strong and long-standing relationship of trust, while its main drawback is that it limits opportunities for development and innovation. It should be noted, however, that the presence of ONAHA is a guarantee of sustainability in many schemes faced with recurrent catastrophic flooding. In these situations, which are beyond the capacity of the cooperatives, only the public forces that ONAHA can mobilise can provide a proportionate response.

With regard to the second wave of transfers from the cooperatives to AUEIs, the diagnosis shows that ONAHA has become aware of a number of constraints and reservations that it intends to overcome before creating AUEIs on all of the schemes. The first of these is technical: the state of the facilities, which no longer allows some cooperatives to be financially viable, must be improved before the AUEI can take over the operation and maintenance of the infrastructures. In other words, the rehabilitation of the infrastructures is a condition for the creation of an AUEI (an approach adopted by SAED and AMVS). The second constraint is organisational: in schemes managed by a single organisation, the creation of AUEIs calls into question the social balances and leaderships since there will no longer be one single president (i.e. of the cooperative), but two: one for the cooperative and one for the AUEI, as well as two offices for the management of the same hydro-agricultural development. The last is financial, since the cooperatives faced with difficulties in obtaining inputs have very often restricted their activity to the management of fees. Reallocating this important source of financial income from the cooperative to

Presentation of the actors met according to their role in supporting irrigators' associations, based on the functions identified

	AMVS	ONAHA	SAED
Structuring work	AMVS	ONAHA	SAED
Design	AMVS	ONAHA	SAED
Decision making	AMVS	ONAHA	SAED - AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL
O&M	Electromechanical engineer (hired)	ONAHA	SAED - DAM and DAGEE Maintenance fund
Admin. and fin. management	Accountant (hired)	ONAHA	CGER
Agricultural inputs	AMVS	CAIMA FUCOPRI	SAED - AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL CGER
Agricultural production	AMVS	ONAHA	FPA Insurance Agricultural council
Agricultural outlets	AMVS	RINI FUCROPI	CIRIZ
Training and R&D	CATG (ICDE consultancy firm)	INRAN	CIFA ISRA, Africa Rice

the AUEI inevitably raises the question of the future financial viability of the cooperatives.

ONAHA is therefore faced with both the challenge of creating favourable conditions for the operation of the AUEIs and that of adapting its system of support to ensure the necessary evolution of the cooperatives in a process of change and innovation. The sustainability of the cooperatives' activities will therefore depend on the capacity of ONAHA, the State's services and FUCOPRI to support their professionalisation in order to make them major actors in the value chains based on hydro-agricultural developments, that are capable of creating their own resources and thus strengthening their legitimacy in relation to the new AUEIs.

AMVS

Numerous innovative factors for improving the transfer of management to irrigators' associations were identified during the AMVS field mission.

The management transfer was undertaken in the AMVS zone with the aim of improving the performance of irrigated systems through a policy of giving greater responsibility to producers. Although the results are not yet fully satisfactory, the AMVS experience shows definite progress compared with situations such as those of BAGREPOLE. Giving producers greater responsibility for infrastructure and water management is at the heart of the philosophy underlying this transfer. This means giving them more weight in decisions about the management of hydraulic and agronomic systems and placing them in a better position to assume their responsibilities.

The roles and responsibilities of the actors are set out in clear, comprehensive contractual documents. Specifications tailored to each type of actor are adapted, negotiated and shared. However, the monitoring and evaluation system that has

been put in place needs to be developed further to enable the continuous improvement of the shared governance system, which could take the form of a collective learning mechanism.

In terms of development standards, the success of the pumping systems was highlighted by the experts, in particular the choice of Archimedes screws with electric motors. The other WAIDMAs showed a keen interest in this technical choice. The concreting of canals is a technical choice towards which the country wishes to move. The primary and secondary canals are concreted while the tertiary canals are in the process of being concreted. This will improve the efficiency of the irrigation network and reduce O&M costs.

All the actors met emphasised the importance of the reform that led to the separation of the water service from production functions.

Maintaining democracy in the internal structures of the agricultural water users' organisations (French abbreviation: OUEA, Organisation d'utilisateurs de l'eau agricole) is a daily challenge. In general, there are two complementary ways of ensuring that these rules are observed: through monitoring and control by the WAIDMA, and by the establishment of checks and balances within the OUEAs. Reaching farmers at grassroots level through training, or more generally, information, is a challenge common to all of the WAIDMAs. This is particularly important in order to create checks and balances within the water users' associations and prevent local elites from monopolising power. The water charges appear to be fairly high, with a difference between new schemes and those that have been rehabilitated, with charges being cheaper in the new schemes. The collection rate varies considerably. While it has improved significantly in recent years (around 70% compared to 40% in the 2010s), it still fluctuates excessively depending on the quality of the crop year and the farmers' ability to sell their produce.

The support system set up is based on the creation of jobs by and for the OUEAs to run the pumping station and do the accounting. The AMVS provides support on an ad hoc basis, particularly for monitoring the crop year with the help of agricultural advisers. The agricultural development shows highly satisfactory results in terms of intensification, diversification and yields. Marketing remains problematic, and ways of securing producers' incomes in the face of fluctuating prices and the usurious methods of buyers are central to possible improvements to the system.

For the three WAIDMAs analysed in the framework of this study, the following diagram presents the institutions in charge of supporting the irrigators' associations according to the function that the latter must assume.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY, KEY MESSAGES AND LIMITS OF THE APPROACH

The analyses resulting from the WAIDMA transfer action have enabled COSTEA to formulate a number of messages and recommendations. These are intended to contribute to increasing the economic and social development of the irrigated territories of the WAIDMAs by:

- establishing good institutional practices between the WAIDMAs and the IAs and establishing good governance practices at IA level (point 1: dynamic processes, and point 2: political will).
- strengthening the economic sustainability of the IAs and the farmers (point 3: constructive dialogue and supervision, and point 4: financial independence).
- increasing the sustainability of the infrastructures (point 5: application of texts and information) to avoid vicious circles of periodic reinvestment in the rehabilitation of schemes.

These recommendations also help to promote a number of innovations implemented by some of the WAIDMAs. This is the case, for example, with the setting up by the WAIDMAs of a 'transfer' unit to guarantee dynamic support over time for IAs and their M&E, the development of a complete ecosystem of support for IAs (management/banking/training, etc.), the widespread use of term deposits and supervision by the WAIDMAs (prior validation) of their use.

1/ Transferring the management of part of the infrastructures to IAs is a dynamic process that involves regular questioning by all of the actors involved. A successful transfer requires permanent but dynamic monitoring that takes into account the 'time for change' needed to ensure ownership of the transfer and the emergence of key actors in the 'ecosystem' (advisory support, inter-profession organisations, etc.). In response to strong incentives from technical and financial partners encouraging transfers in public schemes, the first stage generally aims to set up pilot experiments, then to develop a system of intensive support organised by the WAIDMAs for the new IAs (training, temporary co-management, setting up of the necessary

ecosystem). This support can then gradually slide into a role of observer/ad hoc control by the WAIDMA when the producers are capable of being autonomous and the support ecosystem for the IAs is mature. It is important to consider the changing weight of the various actors after the transfer (the leadership of producers, POs, umbrella organisations) in order to adjust the level of relations between the WAIDMA and the IAs.

2/ There is no perfect transfer experience or model that can be applied everywhere, but rather a compendium of experiences from the various WAIDMAs to be promoted, and the need to set up an ecosystem of complementary actors. The first key to success is to ensure that there is the political will at national and territorial level to initiate a transfer process. Once this will has been clearly expressed, it should be put into practice through the creation and adaptation of a legislative and regulatory framework appropriate to the transfer and specific to the countries concerned. Defining the status of the IAs is part of these preliminary steps, with questions relating in particular to the obligation for the farmers of the scheme to join the IA, and the question of transfer to specific, not-for-profit entities whose sole purpose is the management of water and hydro-agricultural infrastructures and which do not intervene in agricultural production issues. Although there is now a consensus among specialists on the question of specific status, it has not been dealt with in the same way across the WAIDMAs. Some still transfer the management and maintenance of hydro-agricultural infrastructures to cooperatives (Bagrépôle). Others, after an initial experience with cooperatives, are currently carrying out a new transfer to irrigators' associations (the AUEAs of ONAHA). Finally, some have directly opted for a transfer to specific IAs (the OUEAs in the case of AMVS or the Hydraulic Unions in that of SAED), although it has been observed that this has not prevented some Hydraulic Unions from using their term deposit account to purchase agricultural equipment instead of dedicating it specifically to the upkeep and maintenance of their networks as intended.

3/ Transferring the management of part of the infrastructures developed by the WAIDMAs to IAs means sharing responsibilities, which requires objective and constructive dialogue between the WAIDMA and the IAs, but also constant supervision to avoid the kind of deviation mentioned in the previous section concerning the use of term deposits. There is a consensus on the importance of involving irrigators from the design and works phases for both network rehabilitation and extensions. This nevertheless requires the creation/updating of texts setting up joint committees and works monitoring committees, as well as mechanisms for taking into account the observations and corrections made and proposed. The WAIDMAs' proximity to the IAs could be improved by creating temporary or permanent internal WAIDMA structures, that are light and flexible in terms of human resources, dedicated to the monitoring and evaluation of IAs. Careful attention

needs to be paid to the diversification of the IAs' activities (benefits vs. risks) and their propensity to broaden their field of competences (complementarities or risks of conflict with the main mission), sometimes with the need to adapt texts to the new context. Lastly, producers cannot be properly supervised unless they are obliged to join not only the IA, but also the support structures (ecosystem).

4/ The sustainability of good IA management can never be taken for granted, even the most operational of them go through periods of crisis. The financial independence of the actors and the existence of crisis exit mechanisms (insurance, disaster funds, debt relief) are necessary. Poor practices and inertia (social hierarchy, non-compliance with terms of appointment and board renewals) are crisis factors observed in all WAIDMA zones. To ensure the sustainable operation of IAs, it is necessary to: (i) improve governance, with, in particular, a renewal of one-third of the longest serving board members, the limitation of terms of office and overlapping, the selection of board members from capable producers, the adaptation of texts, the dissemination of information (keeping records and general assemblies); (ii) improve the security of IAs' financial resources by introducing financial management that respects budgetary planning and by generalising term deposits, albeit with safeguards for their use (prior validation by the WAIDMAs, etc.); (iii) create the conditions necessary for stable agricultural development by guaranteeing irrigators access to credit, the availability of inputs at strategic times in the crop cycle, protection against flooding, etc.

5/ The upkeep and maintenance of the infrastructure transferred to the IAs are often poorly understood. Improvements require an adequate definition of the cost of the water service and better application of the O&M notices delivered with the infrastructures transferred. In the WAIDMA region of West Africa, the tariff structures for water services are generally fairly well developed and theoretically cover the costs of infrastructure upkeep and maintenance, however, the collection procedures and the application of the tools in place to guarantee this collection could be improved. The transfer of infrastructures to the IAs is generally accompanied by the drafting of a set of texts (regulations, concession contracts, maintenance manuals, etc.) designed to provide a framework and support the IAs in their tasks and responsibilities. The WAIDMAs need to promote and support the IAs in the application of these texts and organise periodic information and reminder sessions on these elements for irrigators and their IAs.

6/ The involvement of ROA-SAGI is now necessary to ensure that the messages are properly conveyed within the WAIDMAs and to key actors in the ecosystem. According to the actors we met at AMVS, the study trips in Burkina Faso were very beneficial, as the producers were able to learn from their peers and exchange experiences in order to set up a collective learning process. This experience could be capitalised on by ROA-SAGI, with a view to organising

cross-visits between WAIDMAs wishing to apply the recommendations. ROA-SAGI could also advocate at the highest levels (national directorates, consular chambers, etc.) with the involvement of ROPPA to raise their awareness of the management transfer modalities.

Limits of the approach

Despite the interesting results obtained, the implementation of this project on the basis of the methodology proposed by COSTEA nevertheless had certain limits. This was the case, for example, with the ability to agree on a common vision within the team and with the WAIDMA focal points (diversity of positions on key issues and of the WAIDMAs' own experiences). The wide disparity in the number and quality of documents collected made comparative analysis difficult at times. The size of the study, with limited mission days, study sites chosen in security-sensitive areas and a particular health context, meant that remote interviews, field visits and feedback had to be organised in a short space of time. Finally, the differences between the WAIDMAs in terms of the stage reached in the transfer process (not all of the trajectories are necessarily comparable) complicated some of the final analyses and recommendations.

COSTEA OUTPUTS IN RELATION WITH THE STUDY

- Inception report (www.comite-costea.fr/actions/sagi)
- Documentary inventory (www.comite-costea.fr/actions/sagi)
- Situational overview report (www.comite-costea.fr/actions/sagi)
- Case study diagnostic reports (www.comite-costea.fr/actions/sagi)
- Final synthesis and recommendations (www.comite-costea.fr/actions/sagi)
- Comparative analysis of large-scale irrigation management structures in West Africa, Morocco and France (www.comite-costea.fr/actions/sagi)
- Comparative diagnosis of 11 WAIDMAs (AMVS, ANADER, BAGRÉPÔLE, ODRS, ON, ONAHA, OPIB, ORS, SAED, SODAGRI, SONADER) www.comite-costea.fr/production/diagnostic-compare-de-11-societes-damenagement-et-gestion-de-lirrigation-en-afrique-de-louest-amvs-anader-bagrepole-odrs-on-onaha-opib-ors-saed-sodagri-sonader
- Documentary database (www.comite-costea.fr/base-documentaire-eau-et-agriculture)