



PAFO-COLEAD INNOVATION SERIES:

Innovations and successes of African farmer-led businesses and SMEs

Satisfaction Survey 2025

CONTEXT:

The [Pan-African Farmers' Organisation](#) (PAFO) and [COLEAD](#) launched the Innovation Series in 2020 to showcase successful African farmer-led businesses and SMEs, and to highlight transformative innovations across agrifood value chains. The sessions are designed to foster knowledge exchange among entrepreneurs, researchers, policymakers, financiers, and farmer organisations, while encouraging collaboration around emerging challenges and market opportunities.

Since its launch, the Innovation Series has delivered 25 sessions, featured 97 entrepreneurs and 57 experts, and attracted more than 19,000 registrations. Discussions have covered a wide range of topics, including production methods, access to markets, product development and value addition, digital and other technologies, nutrition, circular economy approaches, and entrepreneurial skills.

To extend learning beyond the live sessions, several complementary activities have been developed. These include the creation of [Agrinnovators](#), a dedicated hub for agrifood entrepreneurs to connect, learn, discover innovations, and gain visibility.

All information related to the Innovation Series is available on [Agrinnovators](#).

THE SURVEY

In December 2025, the third satisfaction survey, since the launch of the Innovation Series was conducted. Its purpose was to assess participant satisfaction, examine the reach of the Series, and better understand its perceived value and engagement dynamics. The results are intended to support continuous improvement and inform strategic reflection on the future direction of the initiative.

The survey was disseminated online to individuals who had registered for and/or participated in one or more Innovation Sessions, representing a total outreach of 19,740 contacts. To ensure accessibility across regions, the questionnaire was made available in both English and French. A total of 183 respondents completed the survey.

An overview and analysis of the survey results are presented in the following sections.



Funded by
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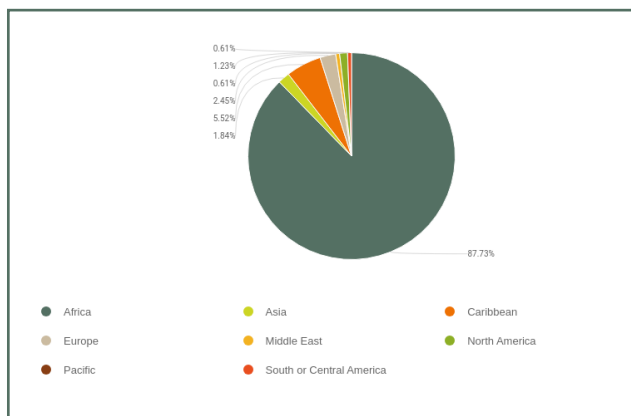
RESULTS

1. Profile of respondents

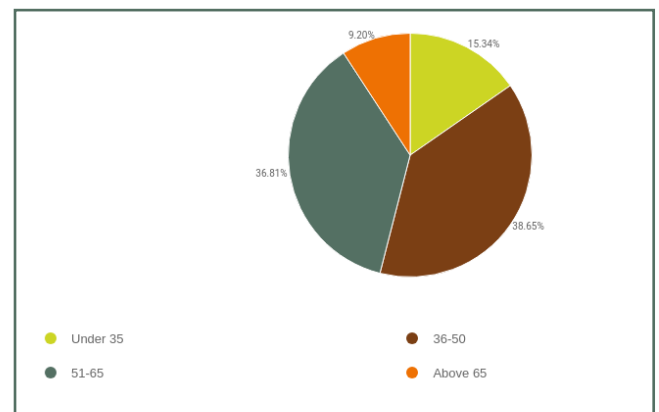
The geographic distribution of respondents shows a clear concentration in Africa, where nearly 88% of the respondents are based. This confirms that the Innovation Series is effectively anchored in its primary constituency. From an age perspective, the respondent's audience is largely composed of professionals aged 36 to 50, with limited representation of younger participants. Respondents' profiles are diversified, composed of consultants, producer organisations, NGOs, public institutions, and support organisations etc.

Gender distribution reveals a notable imbalance, with women representing just over a quarter of respondents.

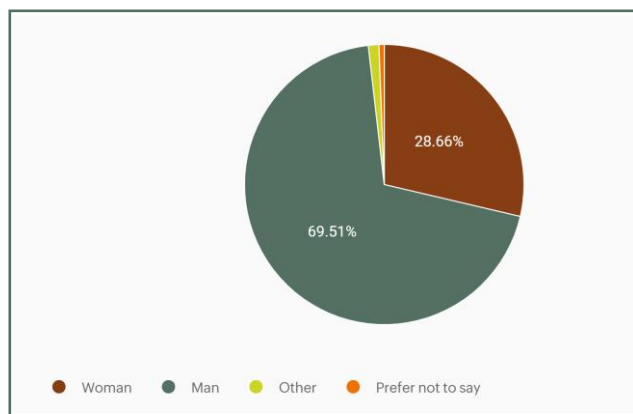
Location



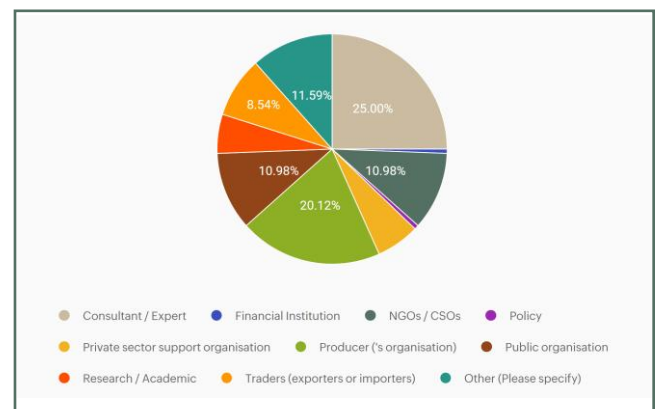
Age



Gender



Professional profile

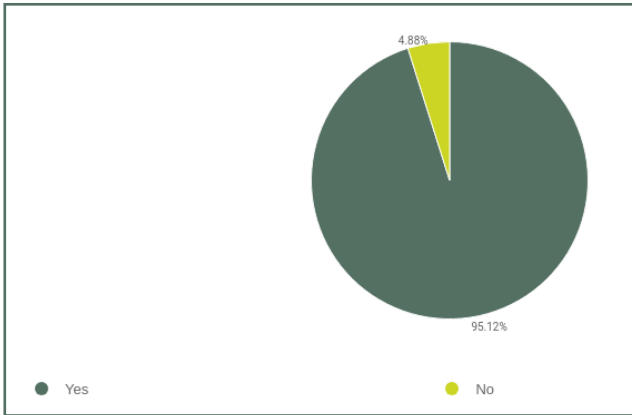


2. The Innovation Series

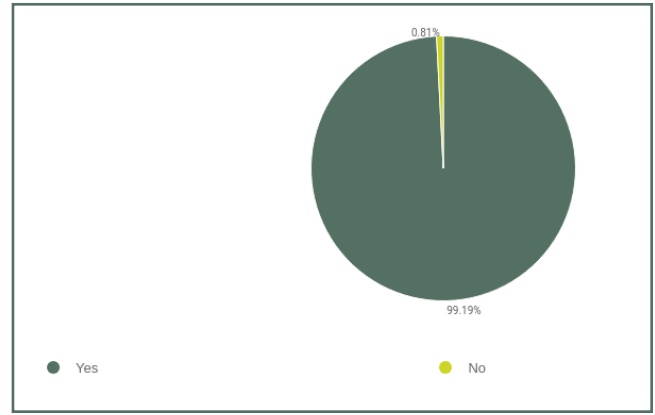
Overall satisfaction with the Innovation Series is very high, 95% of the respondents said they were satisfied with the sessions. In this regard, 99% of the respondents expressed willingness to attend future sessions if possible. In addition, 92% of the respondents indicated that they would recommend the sessions to colleagues or peers.

These results highlight the strong credibility of the Innovation Series and its perceived relevance among participants. High levels of loyalty suggest that the Series has successfully positioned itself as a trusted learning and exchange platform within the agrifood ecosystem.

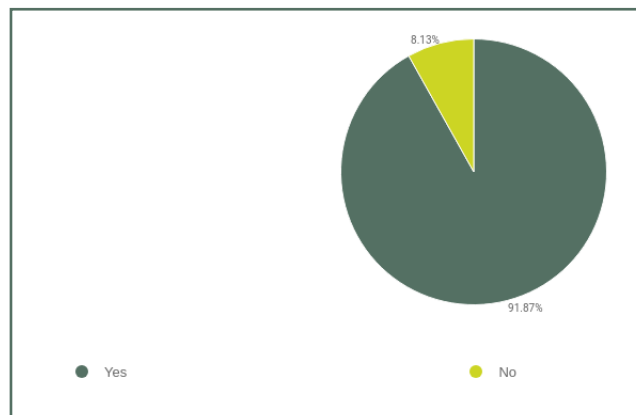
Overall satisfaction



Participation in future sessions



Recommendation of the sessions

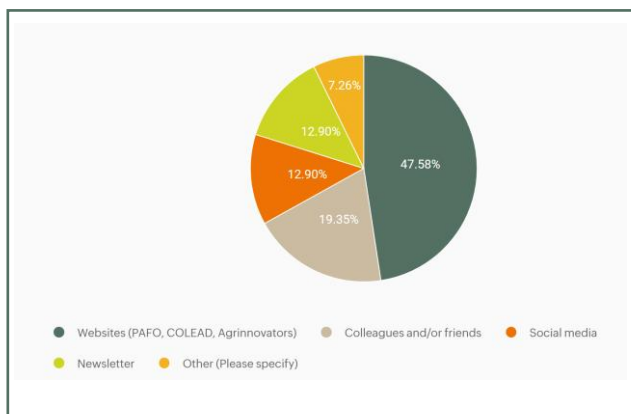


3. Session accessibility

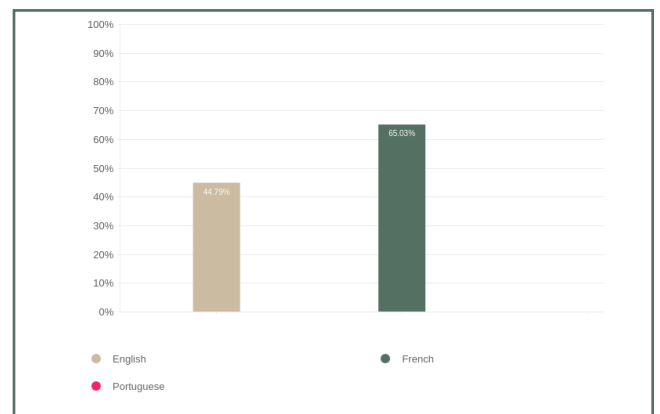
Respondents reported learning about the Innovation Series primarily through PAFO and COLEAD websites, as well as through Agrinnovators. Other important channels included colleagues and professional networks, social media, and newsletters, underlining the role of both institutional communication and peer-to-peer dissemination.

Most respondents followed the sessions in French or English, reflecting the bilingual delivery of the Series. The data also indicates that many respondents attended multiple sessions, suggesting a degree of continuity and sustained interest rather than one-off participation.

Channels of awareness of the sessions



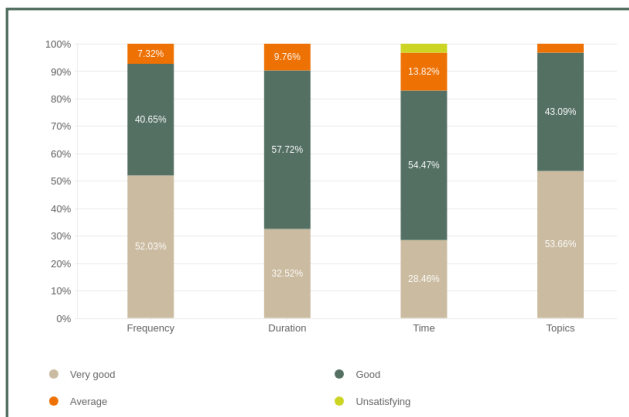
Language



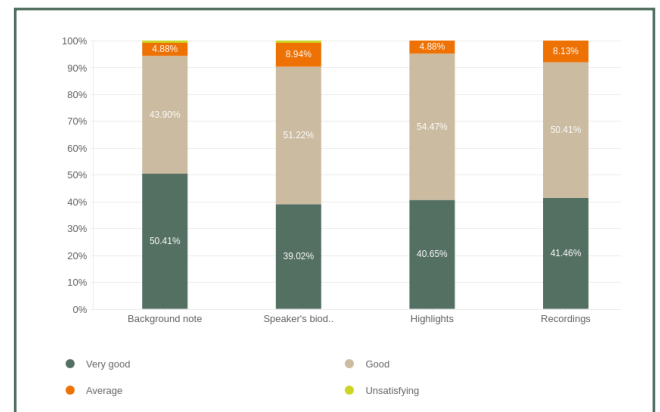
4. Organisation and Quality of the Sessions

Participants expressed strong appreciation for the overall organisation of the sessions. Frequency, duration, timing, and thematic relevance were overall rated as good or very good. Timing received slightly more mixed feedback which may be attributed to differences in time zones that did not equally accommodate all participants. The quality of the panellists (both entrepreneurs and experts) was particularly well rated, reinforcing the importance of practitioner-led testimonies combined with expert perspectives. Supporting materials, including background notes, speaker information, highlights, and recordings, were also positively assessed, confirming their usefulness in reinforcing learning. Together, these results suggest that the Innovation Series has achieved a high level of consistency in its delivery.

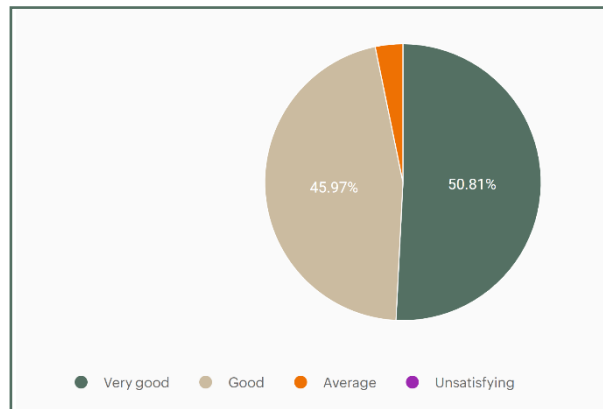
Overall organisation



Provided information



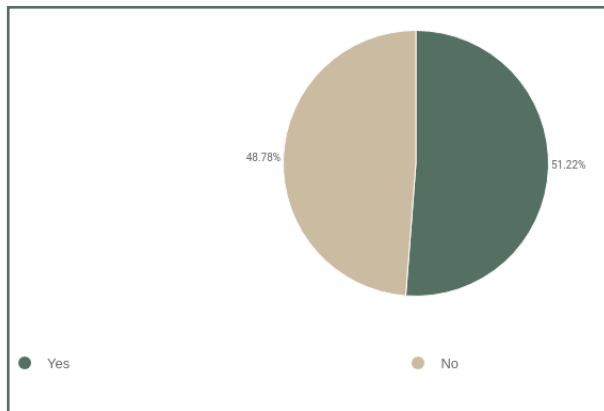
Panellists



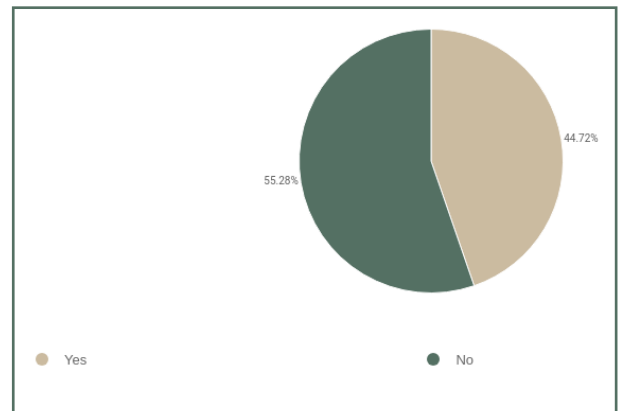
5. Agrinnovators

Engagement with Agrinnovators remains relatively low, which may be explained by limited awareness among community participants of the platform's added value. About half of the respondents reported visiting the platform to access session-related information, while fewer engaged with interactive features such as the forum. This suggests that Agrinnovators is mainly used as an information resource, with potential to further strengthen its role as a space for ongoing exchange and collaboration.

Agrinnovators platform visit



Agrinnovators Forum engagement



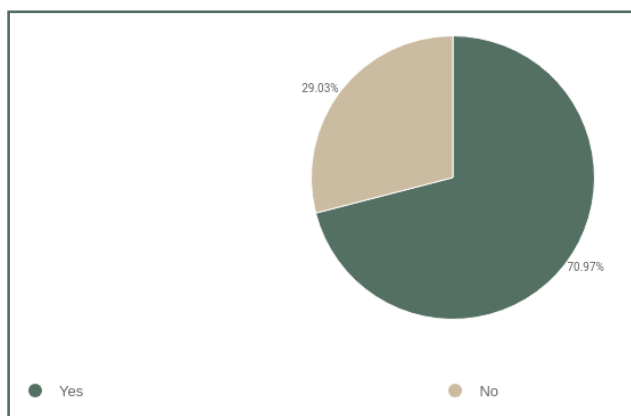
6. Impact of the Series

A clear majority of respondents reported that participation in the Innovation Series had a positive impact on their work or professional network. The most frequently cited outcomes relate to the acquisition of practical knowledge, the strengthening of entrepreneurial thinking, and increased awareness of opportunities within the agrifood sector.

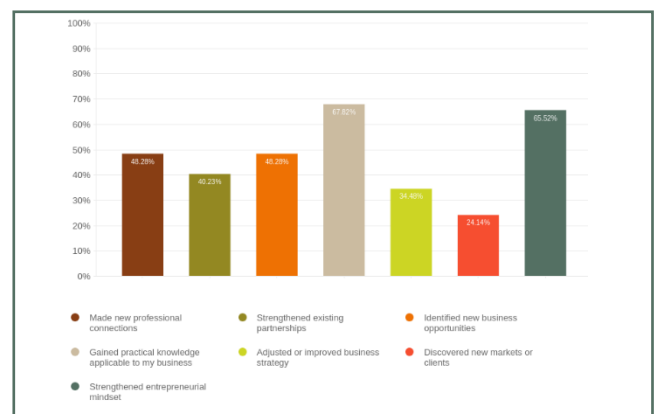
Networking effects were also notable, with respondents reporting new professional connections and strengthened partnerships. Fewer respondents reported direct outcomes such as access to new markets or clients, indicating that the primary contribution of the Series lies in learning, inspiration, and strategic orientation rather than immediate commercial results.

Respondents further explained how they applied the lessons learned, shared knowledge with peers, adjusted their business strategies, or explored new initiatives. At the same time, some highlighted contextual constraints such as limited resources or challenging operating environments that may hinder the translation of learning into tangible outcomes.”

Series impact



Type of impact



7. Suggestions

Participants' suggestions reflect a desire to deepen and extend the value of the Innovation Series. Several respondents expressed interest in more interactive sessions, with increased time for discussion, practical exchanges, and direct engagement with speakers.

There was also a clear demand for more concrete case studies and experience-based learning, as well as for thematic continuity across sessions to allow deeper exploration of selected topics. Suggested themes span a wide range of areas, including finance, market access, digital tools and artificial intelligence, partnerships, entrepreneurship development, agroecology and climate change adaptation. In addition, participants highlighted the importance of accessible supporting materials, clearer follow-up opportunities, and stronger networking facilitation. Some expressed willingness to contribute more actively as speakers or resource persons, indicating interest in a more participatory and co-creative approach.

CONCLUSION

The 2025 satisfaction survey confirms that the PAFO–COLEAD Innovation Series is highly valued by its participants and has established itself as a credible and relevant platform for knowledge exchange and inspiration in the agrifood sector. High satisfaction levels, strong loyalty, and reported impacts on professional practice demonstrate the Series' effectiveness in reaching and engaging its core audience. At the same time, the results highlight areas for further reflection, particularly in relation to inclusiveness, generational reach, and sustained engagement beyond the sessions. Addressing these aspects would strengthen the role of the Innovation Series not only as a learning initiative, but also as a more integrated ecosystem-building instrument supporting long-term collaboration and impact.



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