



IFAD and Farmers' Organizations

Partnership in progress: 2012-2013

Report to the fifth global meeting of the Farmers' Forum
in conjunction with the thirty-seventh session of
IFAD's Governing Council

17-18 February 2014

**Volume I: Overview and Conclusions
Main Report**

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The Farmers' Forum was created in February 2005 at a workshop organized by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), La Via Campesina (LVC) and the Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et Producteurs Agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (ROPPA). Participants in the workshop agreed on a brief yet far-reaching statement that formed the basis of the Farmers' Forum initiative. A Steering Committee, composed of representatives of IFAD and seven networks of farmers and fishers, was then constituted to guide the process. It was agreed that the global meeting of the Forum would be held every two years, in conjunction with IFAD's Governing Council, and that national and regional consultations would be carried out between each global meeting.

The Farmers' Forum was thereby established as a permanent process of consultation and dialogue between farmers' and rural producers' organizations (FOs), IFAD and governments, focusing on rural development and poverty reduction. Its first global meeting was held in Rome in February 2006. At its conclusion, the Steering Committee agreed on a list of recommendations, which were presented to the IFAD Governing Council. In May 2006, the President of IFAD participated in the World Farmers Congress of IFAP in Seoul. In his keynote address to the Congress, he responded to the recommendations of the Farmers' Forum and made a number of commitments on behalf of the Fund. One of these was to monitor the progress in IFAD's engagement with FOs and to regularly report on it to the Farmers' Forum. This report, *Partnership in Progress*, is the instrument through which IFAD reports to the global meeting of the Farmers' Forum.

Reporting on IFAD-FO partnership. IFAD's previous "Partnerships in progress" reports to the Forum were prepared in February of 2008, 2010 and 2012, presenting the evolution of IFAD's partnership with FOs over the biennia 2006-2007, 2008-2009, and 2010-2011 respectively. The present report reviews the evolution of this partnership over the biennium 2012-2013.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AFA	Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
ANARBOM	Association Nationale des Arboriculteurs de Montagne
ANPFa	All Nepal Peasants' Federation Association
APR	IFAD Regional Division for Asia and the Pacific
AROPA	Support Project for Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Service Centres
AsiaDHRRA	Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia
ASPRODEB	Senegalese Association for the Promotion of Small Development Projects (Association Sénégalaise pour le Promotion du Développement à la Base)
AWPB	Annual Work Plan and Budget
BP	Business Plan
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAPAD	Confédération des Associations des Producteurs Agricoles pour le Développement
CBD-COP	Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity
CBP	Capacity Building Plan
CIOEC-Bolivia	National Platform of Economic Smallholder Organizations in Bolivia (Coordinadora de Integración de Organizaciones Económicas Campesinas de Bolivia)
CLAEH	Latin American Centre for Human Economy (Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana)
CLCOP	Local Committees for Coordination of Farmers' Organisations
CNCR	National Council for Rural Consultation and Cooperation (Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux) (Sénégal)
CNOP	National Confederation of Farmers' Organizations (Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes)
COPROFAM	Coordination of Family Farms of MERCOSUR
COPSA-C	Coobsa Agricultural Service Provision Cooperative
COSOP	Country Strategic Opportunity Programme
CPM	Country Programme Manager
CPMT	Country Programme Management Team
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EAFF	Eastern African Farmers Federation
EC	European Commission
ESA	IFAD Regional Division for East and Southern Africa
ESFIM	Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets
FAF	MERCOSUR Fund for Family Farming
FAFO	Farmers' Forum
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FERT	Formation pour l'Épanouissement et le Renouveau de la Terre
FFF	Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives
FIDA	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
FIER	Rural Youth Vocational Training, Integration in Agricultural Value-chains and Entrepreneurship (Formation professionnelle, Insertion dans les filières agricoles et appui à l'Entreprenariat des jeunes Ruraux)
FIP	Fisheries Investment Project (Yemen)
FO	Farmers' and Rural Producers' Organization
FUN	Farmers' Union Network
GAFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Program
HTD	How To Do Note (IFAD knowledge management tool)
IG-SSF	International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries

IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFAP	International Federation of Agricultural Producers
IYFF	International Year of Family Farming
KM	Knowledge Management
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFI	Micro-Finance Institution
MERCOSUR	Southern Cone Common Market (Latin America)
MIJARC	International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth
MoA	Memorandum of Agreements
MTCP	Medium Term Cooperation Programme
LAC	IFAD Regional Division for Latin America and the Caribbean
LVC	La Via Campesina
NEN	IFAD Regional Division for Near East, North Africa, Europe and Central Asia
NOB	National Oversight Board (Nepal)
NFO	National Farmers Organization
NPC	National Peasant Coalition (Nepal)
OECOM	Communitarian Economic Peasant Organisation (Organización Económica Comunitaria)
PAFO	Pan-African Farmers' Organization
PDCRE	Smallholder Cash and Export Crops Development Project
PDR	Project Design Report
PIFON	Pacific Island Farmers Organization Network
PNAFA	National Programme to Support Agricultural Value Chain Actors (Guinea)
PNOPPA	National Platform of Farmers' Organisations and Agricultural Producers of Benin (Plate-forme Nationale des Organisations Paysannes et des producteurs Agricoles du Bénin)
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PRICE	Project for Rural Income through Export
PROCASUR	Regional Programme for Rural Development Training
PRODAM	Agricultural Development Project in Matam, Senegal
PRODEFI	Agriculture Value Chain Development Programme (Le Programme de développement des filières)
PROMER	Rural Markets Promotion Programme
PROPAC	Subregional Platform of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa
PSAOP	Agricultural Services and Producer Organizations Project
PTA	IFAD Policy and Technical Advisory Division
REAF	Specialized Meeting on Family Farming
RFO	Regional Farmers' Organization
ROPPA	Network of Peasant and Agricultural Producers' Organizations in West Africa (Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et Producteurs Agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)
RWLP	Rural Women's Leadership Programme
SACAU	Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions
SAO	Operational System of Empowerment
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association (India)
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SFOAP	Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Programme
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSF	Small-Scale Fisheries
UMAGRI	Union Maghrébine des Agriculteurs
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
VNFU	Viet Nam Farmers' Union
WCA	IFAD Regional Division for West and Central Africa

Overview and conclusions

Eight years have passed since the first global meeting of the Farmers' Forum and the partnership between IFAD and Farmers' and Rural Producers' Organizations (FOs) is now part of the *modus operandi* of IFAD.

This report is the most comprehensive attempt in IFAD for taking stock of the different experiences in collaborating with FOs and identifying the emergence of regional trends. This provides the starting point for scaling-up and broadening successful approaches in other countries and contexts. The report analyses the modalities of the ongoing partnership over the biennium 2012-2013, highlighting successful stories and achievements within IFAD country programmes and grant portfolio. The report is based on the results of a survey completed by IFAD country programme managers, interviews with relevant IFAD staff and an in-depth desk review of documents concerning ongoing and new projects, as well as selected regional grants and country programmes.

The report deal with different elements of the partnership: at country level with the involvement of FOs in the design and implementation of IFAD country strategies and investment projects; at regional levels through umbrella grant programmes to FOs; and at the global level through supporting FOs in developing common advocacy positions and policy standards on key issues related to sustainable smallholder and family farming.

This report is IFAD's contribution to the fifth global meeting of the FAFO, intended to provide a basis for discussion and an opportunity to identify new ways of strengthening the partnership and building on its achievements.

The report addresses the concerns raised during the global meeting of the Farmer's Forum (FAFO) in 2012. Sections IA, IB and II of the report, provide feedback to requests contained in the final 2012 Synthesis of Deliberations for the systematic engagement of FOs in in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Country Strategic Opportunities Program (COSOPs), programmes and projects. The request to strengthen FOs' capacity for knowledge management is partially addressed in section IC on specific tools and strategies used to facilitate the partnership between IFAD and FOs. Section ID provides feedback the request to establish a dedicated grant window, within IFAD's grant programme, to provide direct and inclusive support to FOs. The same section contains a response to the request to support selected global FOs' advocacy efforts, such as the one on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGs) or the one on RIO+20. Feedback on the recommendations that emerged during the 2012 Special session are treated in section III.

Country-level partnerships in ongoing IFAD-funded investment projects

Partnership supported through the implementation of on-going IFAD-funded projects accounts for the most important relationship between FOs and IFAD. The analysis¹ shows that 76 per cent of the partnerships that were foreseen at project design during the period 2006-2011 are still on-going in 2012-2013. Among the FOs involved, 55 per cent are FOs operating at sub-national level,² 29 per cent are national farmers' unions or platforms, and 14 per cent are FOs organised around specific agricultural commodities.

The analysis illustrates that the purpose of these partnerships is balanced between supporting the provision of economic services and FOs' institutional capacity building. The analysis also founds that "advanced partnerships", empowering FOs to directly participate in project planning, implementation, and monitoring are found in 19 per cent of the projects analysed.

Figure 1 Types of support that projects approved during 2006- 2011 provide to FOs

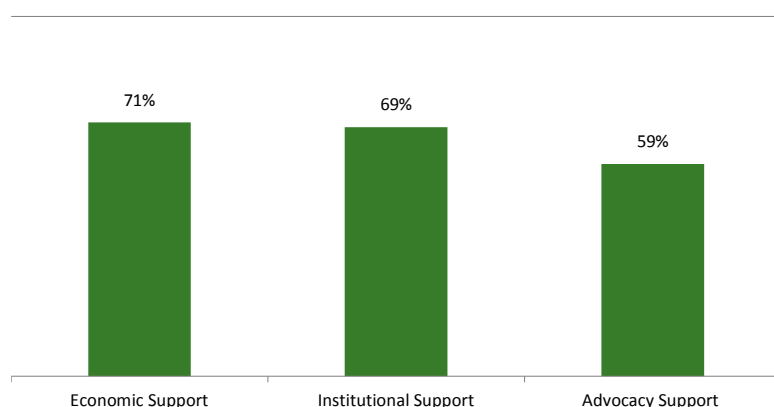
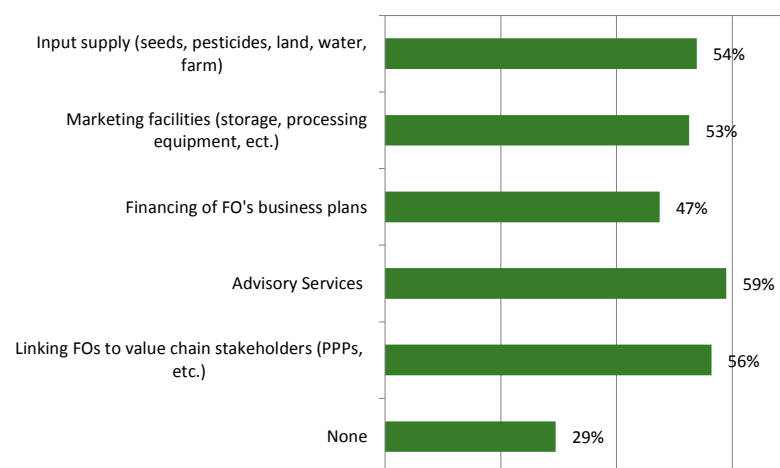


Figure 2 Breakdown by type of economic support



Note: The analysis only includes ongoing projects approved during 2006-2011 which foresaw partnership with FOs at project implementation.

¹ During 2006-2011, IFAD approved 197 projects for a total value of US\$ 3.9 billion. Of these projects, a subset of 115 projects, for a value of US\$ 2.4 billion, envisioned collaboration with FOs at project implementation. Analysis on the ongoing projects presented in this report is based on the review of partnerships within this subset of projects, carried out by means of a survey completed by IFAD country programme managers (CPMs). Survey results cover 78 projects, or 68 per cent of the aforementioned subset. Out of these 78 projects, 59 promote partnerships with FOs at implementation stage.

² FOs operating at sub-national level range from local FOs to regional FO Federations.

Partnerships developed through IFAD's funded projects account also for the most innovative approaches and results at the grassroots level:

- mapping and profiling tools have been used for monitoring results of the partnerships so as to improve them on the basis of the maturity of the Farmers' Organizations (such as with PRODAM in Senegal and PPR in Paraguay and other projects in LAC and WCA regions)
- support to cooperatives/FOs business plans (such as projects in Latin America) and PPP initiatives (for example in Liberia and Sao Tome and Principe) are promoting the development of sustainable and viable business models for the promotion of family farmers through the support to FOs;
- development of a new model (like the PNAFA project in Guinea) for national FOs networks organised through regional Federations enabled FOs to be in the driving seat for the implementation of IFAD's funded projects through their multi-year action plans.

Regional trends in the partnerships between IFAD and FOs

Tailor-made approaches over the last eight years resulted in a portfolio of projects that promotes investment in smallholder and family farming in partnership with FOs. This occurred in different ways across regions.

a) Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC)

In LAC region, the main regional trend continues to be supporting first-tier FOs through a progressive combination of institutional and technical capacity building, as well as financing of FO business plans.

Different approaches are taken to support the FO business plans:

- In Paraguay, support is provided through a two-step process. FOs first propose and receive funding for a capacity building plan (CBP) to improve institutional management, governance, credit management, and technical skills related to their major crops. In a second step, the FOs design investment plans (or business plans) and then request the project to fund them. This approach is combined with an assessment of FOs' maturity which determines the type of support that the project will provide. The process strengthens FO capacities, as well as empowers them by putting them in charge of managing the funds for CBP and business plans.
- In Honduras, support is also provided to CBPs in combination with development plans, but the latter depends on the level of development of the concerned FO: (i) stronger FOs that are bulking products to market and with stable relationships with buyers are requested to submit business plans, while (ii) weaker FOs prepare productive development plans focused mostly on food security issues. Both types of plan include investments in collective and private productive assets of farmers, as well as training.

In addition, in the LAC region and in particular in the MERCOSUR sub-region, strong linkages have been developed through regional grant initiatives in support of policy dialogue between governments, regional institutions and FOs on one side and IFAD national programmes on the other side. This is the case of the REAF-MERCOSUR initiatives whereby regional level policy dialogue has had positive impact on the targeting strategy of IFAD country programmes: based on the experience in Brazil, where national registers have been successfully used for targeting for many years, similar national registers of family farmers have been created in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. This has enabled IFAD projects in these countries to significantly improve their targeting methodologies.

b) West and Central Africa (WCA)

In WCA region, the focus during the biennium 2012-2013 has been on enhancing FOs' participation in projects/COSOPs designs; thus, 56 per cent of new projects and 100 per cent of new COSOPs have involved FOs as 'special players'. This positive trend has been fostered by two sets of good practices: (i) the mapping and/or profiling of FOs in 67 per cent of newly designed projects; and (ii) the use of a large grant to AgriCord to strengthen the capacity of FOs to participate in IFAD country programmes.

The IFAD portfolio in WCA showcases some very innovative project set-ups, which are empowering FOs as responsible for the management of one or more project components, e.g. the ongoing PNAFA in Guinea and the completed Agricultural Services and Producer Organizations Project (PSAOP2) in Senegal. Financial support for FO business plans has been provided in Sao Tome and Principe, Liberia, and Senegal. Innovative public-private partnerships (PPP) have been pursued in Senegal, where the Agricultural Value Chains Support Project (PAFA) is supporting a partnership mechanism between FOs and market operators in specific value chains. In Liberia, a private exporter of cocoa has been engaging cooperatives to supply their products and to support their members in the rehabilitation of 1,000 hectares of cocoa growing smallholder farms. Moreover, the SFOAP grant has been strengthening the institutional and advocacy capacities of the members of ROPPA and PROPAC.

c) East and Southern Africa (ESA)

In **ESA region**, the partnership with FOs has been evolving in two directions: contracting FOs as service providers or involving FOs in value chains as shareholders of processing enterprises.

For example, the Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP) has been contracted by the Smallholder Horticulture Marketing Programme (SHoMaP) to enhance the structuring of value chains and foster the demand from local FO members. Likewise, the Zambian National Farmers Union (ZNFU) has been contracted by the Smallholder Agribusiness Promotion Programme (SAPP) to consolidate its SMS-based services for farmers and traders/processors.

In some ESA countries, this strategy is evolving towards the promotion of **farmer-driven processing enterprises** with FOs as shareholders. In Rwanda, the Project for Rural Income through Export (PRICE) aims to upscale and improve the PPP business model developed in the Smallholder Cash and Export Crops Development Project (PDCRE) to support tea cooperatives' investment as shareholders of tea factories. In Uganda, the IFAD-created Kalangala Oil Palm Growers Trust (KOPGT) works within the Vegetable Oil Development Project Phase 2 (VODP2) as an intermediary with the private sector on behalf of smallholder farmers, and provides technical support and financing to foster the development of these farmers.

d) Asia and Pacific (APR)

In **APR region**, IFAD's partnership with FOs has been taking place in the context of Medium Term Cooperation Programme (MTCP), successfully supporting FOs in promoting the interests of rural smallholders in policy consultations at national, sub-regional and regional levels (e.g. in Viet Nam and Nepal). Moreover, at national level, IFAD-funded projects have focused on value chain driven approaches and PPP (e.g. in China), and financing of micro-project proposals (e.g. in Papua New Guinea). Less emphasis has been given to the involvement of FOs in project design, in preference for strategic partnering during the implementation of the country programme. An exception is Viet Nam, where the Viet Nam Farmers Union (VNFU) and its members have been involved from the outset in the COSOP consultation process and subsequent project activities.

The biennium 2012-2013 was a transition period for the MTCP, which concluded its first phase MTCP1 (2009-2012). The design of the second phase MTCP2 was characterized by a highly participative and innovative approach involving all FO platforms. Thus, if MTCP1 was mostly managed by technical agencies (e.g. the Self-Employed Women's Association [SEWA] in India, and the Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO]), MTCP2 plans to partner only with FOs' platforms and/or consortiums for management purposes. Accordingly, IFAD has been providing support to the formation of the **Pacific Island Farmers Organization Network** (PIFON) and building its management capacity. As a result, PIFON is now a key partner in the implementation of MTCP 2 that has been expanded to the Pacific Islands sub-region.

e) Near East, North Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe (NEN)

The high diversity of national contexts in the NEN region complicates the identification of a regional trend, but also creates opportunities for learning and exchanging experiences. One of the common trends at country level is the promotion of **business-driven approaches** through the promotion of partnerships between FOs and private enterprises dealing with specific commodities (e.g. the West Noubarya Rural Development Project (WNRDP) in Egypt and the Fisheries Investment Project (FIP) in Yemen). The support to FOs is thus focused on their capacity to develop value chain partnerships and comply with market requirements.

More advanced FOs are sometimes contracted within IFAD-funded projects as service providers to their peers (e.g. the Rural Financial Services and Agribusiness Development Project in Moldova). In North Africa, IFAD-funded projects commonly adopt value chain approaches that involve commodity-based FOs at the local level. However, these FOs are usually treated as direct beneficiaries; i.e. they are not empowered to implement project activities and manage associated funds (e.g. the Agricultural Value Chain Development Programme in the Mountain Zones of Taza Province in Morocco).

At the regional level, the SFOAP Main Phase has been extended to North Africa through the Union Maghrébine des Agriculteurs (UMAGRI). The SFOAP's implementation modalities will provide UMAGRI institutional support for the first two years of the five-year implementation period, as well as with support on policy dialogue issues.

Partnership in formulation of country strategies and design of new projects – trends in 2012-13

Progress in the partnerships between IFAD and FOs in the formulation of country strategies (COSOPs) and design of new investments projects has flattened during 2012 and 2013 following a steady increase during the years 2006-2011.

The review of 16 Country Strategic Opportunity Programmes (COSOPs) and 58 projects approved during the biennium 2012-2013 shows that the **overall participation** of FOs in various modes during the design phase remained relatively steady. However, their **active participation** (as special players) in the COSOP and project design process has declined. This might be explained by the lack of appropriate corporate instruments and tools to guide the process, and/or certain external factors, e.g. the nature of projects that did not call for participation, unfavourable political contexts, or issues with FOs' capacity and credibility at national level.

Figure 3 Evolution of frequency of FO participation in COSOP formulation over the last four biennium (2006-2013)

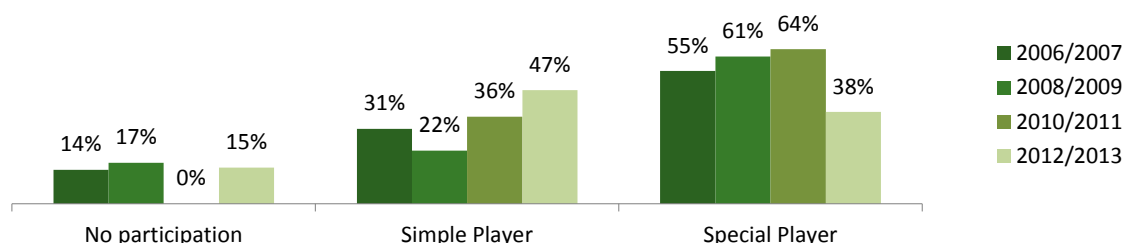
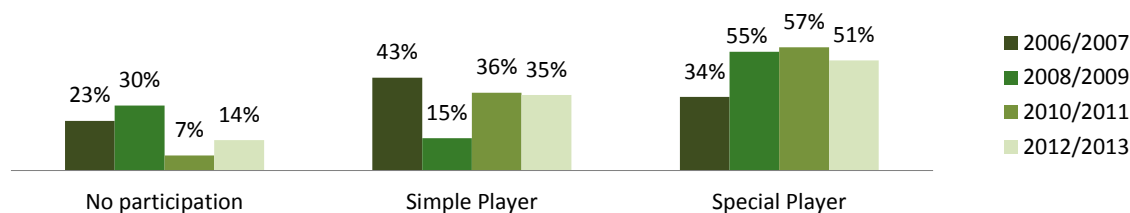


Figure 4 Evolution of frequency of FO participation in project design over the last four biennium (2006-2013)



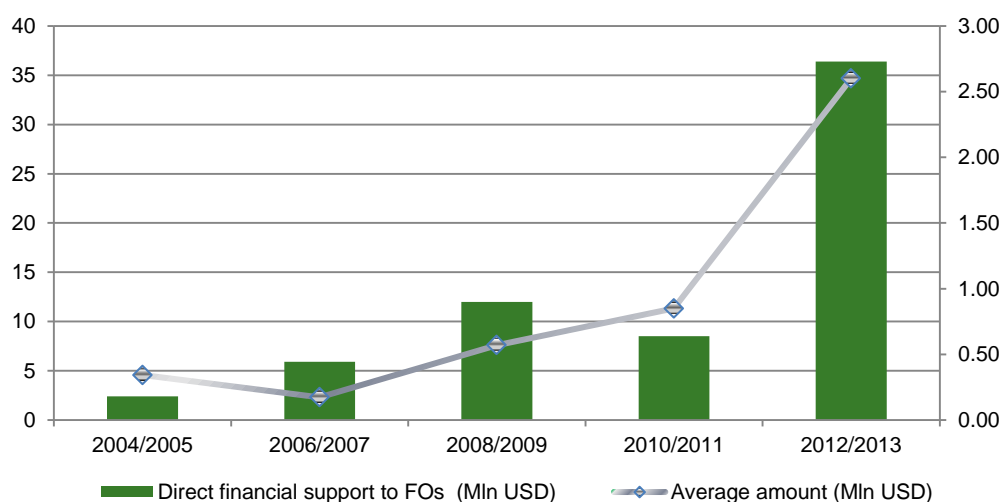
Various tools and strategies developed during the biennium 2012-2013 could help in overcoming some of the challenges mentioned above, for example:

- **Knowledge management (KM) tools** on *"How to engage in efficient partnerships with FOs"* was developed by the IFAD West and Central Africa (WCA) Division;
- **Mapping and profiling of FOs** has taken place in 61 per cent of new projects and has enabled IFAD to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of various FOs, and thus improve the selection of implementing partners and the targeting of project beneficiaries;
- **M&E tool to measure the level of autonomy and progress made by FOs** supported by IFAD projects was developed by the pioneer Agricultural Development Project in Matam (PRODAM) in Senegal, and subsequently replicated in IFAD's portfolio in Guinea. Similar tools were developed in Paraguay, Mozambique and Zambia, as well as in Asia and the Pacific region;
- **The adaptation of project implementation requirements to FO realities** was undertaken by PNAFA in Guinea, which included the development of a simplified manual of procedures and associated trainings for FOs on its use, as well as the introduction of new contracting arrangements with FOs through a biannual memorandum of agreements; and
- **Support to apex FOs** was provided by the Agricultural Value Chains Development Programme (PADEF) in Congo, in order to foster the structuring of FOs from the local to the national level.

Direct financial support to FOs

A global overview of IFAD grants strategy and financial investments directed to FOs shows that **regional grant programmes** are the source of 86 per cent of direct financing provided to FOs and, since the approval of the second phase of programmes in Africa and Asia, have increased 4.3 times in comparison to the previous biennium – passing from US\$8.5 million to US\$36.4 million. Grant financing has also become more selective and strategic; while the number of grants has only slightly increased, the average grant size has grown from US\$0.86 million to US\$2.6 million.

Figure 5 Direct financial support to FOs: total volume of grant programme and average amount



An analysis of data the 14 grants to FOs approved during the 2012-2013 biennium reveals the following trends:

- a. Regional programmes have been demand-driven and empowering, given that regional grants are initiated in response to, are largely managed by, and address the needs of, regional farmer organizations' (RFO) platforms and their FO participants.
- b. Important alliances amongst donors have been developed through these regional-level programmes: European Commission (EC), Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and IFAD in the context of the SFOAP, and IFAD and SDC co-financing the MTCP. With these two programmes a total of US\$26.4 million of co-financing (85 per cent of the total cost of the two programmes of which US\$19.5 million was contributed by EC) has been leveraged by IFAD.
- c. The alliance with EC has gone beyond the SFOAP. EC financial support to AgriCord Farmers' Fighting Poverty in Africa (FFP/A) programme is channelled through IFAD. As a result, the SFOAP and FFP/A are complementary efforts to support national and regional FOs (through the SFOAP) and lower level FOs (through FFP/A programme).
- d. Regional programmes have also fostered long-term engagement, as described below:
 - **Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Programme (SFOAP)** was launched as a pilot programme in 2009 to strengthen the capacity of FOs and their regional and pan-African networks to influence policies and support programmes affecting agriculture, rural development and food security in Africa. SFOAP main phase has been extended for a five-year period (2013-2017) and expanded to cover a larger geographical area, supporting 68 national farmers' organizations (NFOs) in 49 countries, five regional networks and the Pan-African Farmers' Organization (PAFO).

- **Medium Term Cooperation Programme with Farmers' Organizations in Asia and the Pacific Region (MTCP)** was launched in 2009 with the objective to improve the livelihoods of poor rural producers by: (i) strengthening the networks of FOs; (ii) strengthening the involvement of FOs in policy processes; and (iii) promoting the involvement of FOs in IFAD country programmes. The second phase of MTCP, designed in a participative manner, will extend its activities and support to more countries of South and South-East Asia, as well as the Pacific region, and switch a more FO-driven implementation set-up.
- **IFAD-MERCOSUR-REAF Programme in Latin America** has been promoting an inclusive regional policy dialogue in the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) region for nearly 15 years. One of its main achievements has been the creation of Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF), a platform including high-level government and national farmers' representatives, which has made several significant contributions towards the development of public policies and institutions supporting family farming, among them: the creation of National Registries of the Family Farming in Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay; the design and implementation of pilot projects on insurance for family farming in Argentina and Paraguay; and support to institutional reform processes dedicated to family farmers in Argentina and Uruguay. A new grant has been developed during the 2012-2013 biennium to continue supporting the inclusion of family FOs in policy dialogue and sharing the REAF-MERCOSUR experience with other countries and regions.

In addition, eight small regional grants have been developed during the 2012-2013 biennium to **foster FOs' participation in high-level meetings dealing with the sustainability of family farming** as an answer to global food security.³

IFAD grants have also been used to support FOs at national level through:

- **Provision of technical assistance**, in collaboration with AgriCord. Currently implementing three sets of IFAD-funded or channelled grants, AgriCord supports weaker FOs through institutional strengthening and stronger FOs through peer-to-peer coaching and awareness-raising on policy dialogue issues. The key outcome of these grants has been the leverage acquired by the beneficiary FOs that has enabled them to mobilize further support.
- **Financing of pilot initiatives**, including (i) Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets (ESFIM), which supported collaborative work between NFOs and research institutes to generate analysis on market issues, in order to influence public policies in favour of small-scale farmers in 10 pilot countries; (ii) Testing warehouse receipt systems (WRS) as a possible model for supporting marketing and seasonal credit access for smallholders in Burkina Faso and Mauritania.

³ These grants : (i) supported FOs' participation in the process to develop the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGs), as well as the International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (IG-SSF); (ii) supported FOs' participation in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 (RIO+20); and (iii) promoted the International Year of Family Farming at global level. A grant was also designed in 2013 to support the Intercontinental Network of Organic Farmers' Organisation (INOFO) in empowering and promoting the role and interests of organic farmers in the partnership with national and international institutions.

Growing focus on specific groups within IFAD-FOs' partnership

Since the establishment of the FAFO in 2006, IFAD has progressively committed to give special attention to specific groups within FOs, or organizations structured around specific livelihoods. During the fourth global meetings of the FAFO, the farmers called upon IFAD to: further engage in supporting women's leadership within FOs; address issues pertaining to rural youth; and focus on small-scale fisheries in order to promote the understanding of their role in food security and increase their recognition and visibility among policy makers.

a) IFAD's strengthened commitment to support women's leadership within FOs

In 2012, IFAD's "Gender equality and women's empowerment policy" was approved, expressing IFAD's corporate commitment to promote women's leadership. One of its three strategic objectives is *"to enable women and men to have equal voice and influence in rural institutions and organizations"*. Accordingly, IFAD has engaged in a set of concrete initiatives and interventions to reinforce women's leadership in rural organizations:

- **The Rural Women's Leadership Programme (RWLP)** was implemented in 2010-2012. Its objective was to increase the responsiveness of national policies, programmes and institutions to the needs and potential of rural women farmers, working on the creation of an enabling environment and, concurrently, capacity-building of rural women leaders.⁴
- **The "Rural Women Leadership" grant** has been designed to further and scale up the impact of the RWLP by strengthening capacities and representation of rural women in FOs in six additional countries in APR region.⁵
- **The "Knowledge Management and Learning on Gender Empowerment of Producer Rural Groups in East and Southern Africa" grant**⁶ also capitalizes on the momentum created by the RWLP, aiming to amplify the voices of rural women and smallholder farmers in decision-making processes.

Additional activities comprised the development of manuals on how to foster women's leadership within FOs;⁷ and the creation of MERCOSUR Mujeres, a specialized committee addressing issues of rural development and women in family farming.

b) IFAD's commitment to supporting Rural Youth

In response to the recommendations of the global meeting of the FAFO in 2012, which advocated for support to rural youth, IFAD has undertaken a number of related activities at the corporate level during the 2012-2013 biennium. These included the appointment of **youth focal points** in each of IFAD's regional divisions, the **development of a policy brief** on improving young rural women's and men's livelihoods, as well as a number of other IFAD and external studies, reviews and knowledge management tools. Six new grants dedicated to youth were developed during the biennium 2012-2013 and are now at implementation stage.

⁴ The programme was implemented in Madagascar, Nepal, the Philippines, and Senegal.

⁵ Maldives, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Pacific, and Lao People's Democratic Republic.

⁶ Activities implemented in Tanzania, Uganda and Malawi.

⁷ Developed and adopted by IFAD projects in Guinea, Benin, Mauritania, and Ivory Coast

While the link between youth empowerment and the potential role youth could play within FOs is not yet explicit within IFAD's approach, a few projects have begun to link support to young people and support to FOs. The most outstanding among them has been the Rural Youth Vocational Training, Integration in Agricultural Value-chains and Entrepreneurship (FIER) project in Mali, which involved FOs and rural youth organizations in the design process and intends to introduce vocational training for young people with linkages to economic opportunities related to the development of family farms.

c) IFAD's commitment towards small-scale fishers

During the global meeting of the FAFO in 2012, a working group on sustainable fisheries was organized to discuss how fishers' organizations and their collective actions could contribute to the sustainable management of marine resources while improving incomes. The group highlighted the need to increase the sector's visibility and recognition of its contribution to food security and poverty alleviation, as well as to support it through institutional and technical capacity building, and partnerships.

IFAD's support towards small-scale fishers has so far focused mainly on enhancing their participation in the design process of the **International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (IG-SSF)**, led by FAO. For this purpose, two complementary IFAD grants were initiated. The consultations supported by the grants generated many lessons and, hence, opportunities to strengthen IFAD's support to fisheries-oriented projects and fishers' organizations.

Conclusion

After eight years of existence, the Farmers' Forum process has demonstrated its relevance. It has indeed changed the way IFAD and FOs are working together. However, the evidence of the recent flattening of progress in the depth of collaborations at project design stage suggests that the existing process is saturated in this core areas. This may appear as a paradox when opportunities to collaborate on smallholder agriculture development projects increase with FOs' own capacity building efforts. The process of the Forum needs to be reformed to adapt to IFAD's and FOs' internal changes, to greater openness of Intergovernmental Organizations to civil society (as for the GAFSP and CFS processes), and more importantly to have a quantum leap in terms of long-standing and continuous partnership with FOs – from the ground up.

The trend of the partnerships over the last eight years has evolved around specific opportunities, such as the country-level partnership developed in Guinea; SFOAP and MTCP at regional levels; and the support to FOs' advocacy campaigns to selected policy agendas such as the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure or the IYFF recently. This pragmatic and opportunistic approach has many advantages but progress in the partnership remains fragile and achievements can be lost in the absence of an organised feedback mechanism.

There is still a lack of organized and on-going feedback from the meetings between IFAD staff and FOs at country or regional level. Therefore the agenda of the global meeting in conjunction with the Governing Council and the selection of participants are decided late instead of building upon a continuous process.

Introduction

The present report reviews, from the perspective of IFAD staff, the evolution of the partnership between IFAD and farmers' and rural producers' organizations⁸ (FOs) over the biennium 2012-2013. The report highlights evolving practices, achievements and lessons learned, and pinpoints areas where improvements are needed.

Methodology.⁹ The report is based on the results of a survey completed by IFAD country programme managers (CPMs), meetings held with divisional focal points on the partnership with FOs to identify common trends among partnerships with FOs at regional level, bilateral interviews with CPMs and other relevant resource persons. These were complemented by an in-depth desk review¹⁰ of available information on ongoing projects (aide memoires, Supervision reports, and project completion reports) and new projects (project design reports [PDRs] and working papers), as well as selected regional grants and country programs.

Scope of the report. In addition to assessing the current state and recent evolution of the partnership between FOs and IFAD, the report also provides an analysis of the modalities of the ongoing partnership, highlighting successful stories and achievements within IFAD country portfolio of projects and IFAD's grant strategy. It therefore goes beyond the former format of "Partnership in Progress" reports, normally organized around the main recommendations formulated during previous meetings of the Forum. It does, however, respond to the concerns raised during the global meeting of the Farmer's Forum in 2012.

Content. This report is comprised of three core sections followed by the annexes.

- **Section I** presents the overall trend in the partnership between IFAD and FOs, highlighting modalities of involvement of FOs within IFAD country programmes and strategies, their designs and the complementary grants mobilized for direct funding to FOs.
- **Section II** presents an overview of the regional trends of the partnership between IFAD and FOs, highlighting examples of partnership modalities developed within country programmes and/or with grants' support, as well as outcomes of projects completed during the biennium 2011-2012.
- **Section III** reviews IFAD's commitments for the biennium 2012-2013, in particular the attention given to special groups within FOs, specifically women, youth, and small-scale fishers' organizations.

This report is a contribution to the fifth global meeting of the Farmers' Forum that will be held in February 2014. It is meant to provide a basis for discussion and an opportunity to identify new ways of strengthening the partnership and building on its achievements.

⁸ FOs are defined as membership-based organizations that are structured beyond the grass-roots or community level, at local, regional or national level.

⁹ See more detailed methodology and detailed results in Annex 2.

¹⁰ A list of key references is provided at the end of this report.

Section I. Global overview of the IFAD-FO partnership in the 2012-2013 biennium

Recommendations of the 2010 Farmers' Forum on IFAD-FO partnership in country programmes:

- Direct country teams to systematically and actively engage the participation of FOs in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Country Strategic Opportunities Program (COSOPs), programmes and projects. FOs have capacities and expertise to carry out diverse roles. IFAD should support initiatives to create and strengthen existing spaces for dialogue between FOs and governments at regional levels.
- Institutionalize the participation of FOs in Monitoring & Evaluation systems so that they can influence projects and have access to key information. Develop indicators to assess the impact of IFAD support extended to FOs from the grass-roots levels up to the national level.

A. Country-level partnerships in ongoing IFAD funded investments projects

1. The analysis carried out in this section draws on the review of partnerships between IFAD and FOs within IFAD-funded projects approved between 2006 and 2011. The design of these projects, which are currently under implementation, foresaw collaboration with FOs¹¹ at country level, making it possible at this stage to analyze their progress and identify trends.

2. First, the analysis shows that 76 per cent of the partnerships are still ongoing.¹² Among FOs involved in project implementation, 55 per cent are FOs operating at sub-national level,¹³ 29 per cent are national farmers' unions or platforms, and 14 per cent are FOs organised around specific agricultural commodities.

3. Second, the analysis illustrates that the partnership is balanced between supporting the provision of economic services and FO institutional capacity building. Third, the gathered analysis shows that in less than a quarter of all cases analyzed, FOs are playing a special role in the partnership (see Box 1 below).

a. Types of support provided by the project

4. The partnership with FOs is balanced between the provision of economic support services to FOs and the strengthening of FOs' institutional capacity (71 per cent and 69 per cent respectively).

5. **Support to FOs' economic functions** focuses on value chain integration (i.e. fostering of partnerships with other value chain stakeholders, found in 56 per cent of analysed partnerships), provision of advisory services and marketing facilities, and streamlining of input supply. An interesting feature is the development of financing of business plans (47 per cent of analysed partnerships) – a common feature of partnerships with FOs in Latin America and the Caribbean, and evolving in West and Central Africa (for example, in Liberia, as well as Sao Tome and Principe).

6. **Institutional support** has been primarily oriented towards capacity building to improve FOs' administrative and financial management (67 per cent of partnerships) and thus promote accountability and transparent use of financial resources. An example of such support can be found in China, where projects supporting cooperatives' development are planning to undertake institutional capacity building as part of the "cooperative support module" (see also section I.D on direct support to FOs through grant financing).

¹¹ During the period 2006-2011, IFAD approved 197 projects for a total value of US\$ 3.9 billion. Of these projects, a subset of 115 projects, for a value of US\$ 2.4 billion, envisioned collaboration with FOs in project implementation. The analysis presented in this section is based on the review of partnerships within this subset of projects, carried out by means of a survey completed by IFAD country programme managers. The survey results covered 78 projects, or 68 per cent of the afore-mentioned subset.

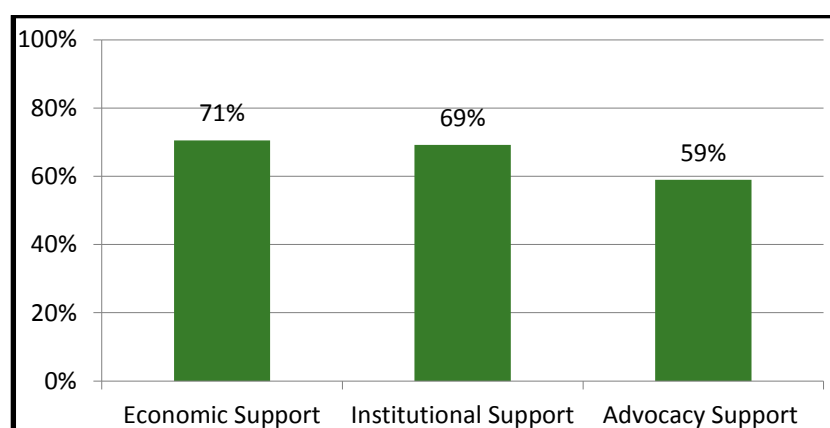
¹² Out of 78 projects analysed, 59 are promoting partnerships with FOs at implementation stage.

¹³ FOs operating at sub-national level range from local FOs to regional FO Federations.

7. Institutional support has also been directed towards supporting the vertical integration of FOs (in 53 per cent of analysed partnerships). Less emphasis has been placed on supporting FOs' statutory functions (such as strategic planning development and organization of general assemblies), and supporting HR and FOs staffing needs (41 and 35 per cent respectively).

8. Less emphasis has been put on activities related to advocacy support (59 per cent of the partnerships), in line with the trend observed prior to the period under review. This is explained by the fact that advocacy activities are normally supported through grant financing and mainly target national and sub-regional FO networks, whereas partnerships within projects are more oriented towards FOs at sub-national level and focus on medium- to long-term institutional and economic support functions.

Figure 3 Types of support that projects approved during 2006-2011 provide to FOs



Note: The analysis only includes on-going projects approved during 2006-2011 that foresaw partnership with FOs at project implementation stage

Figure 4 Breakdown by type of economic support

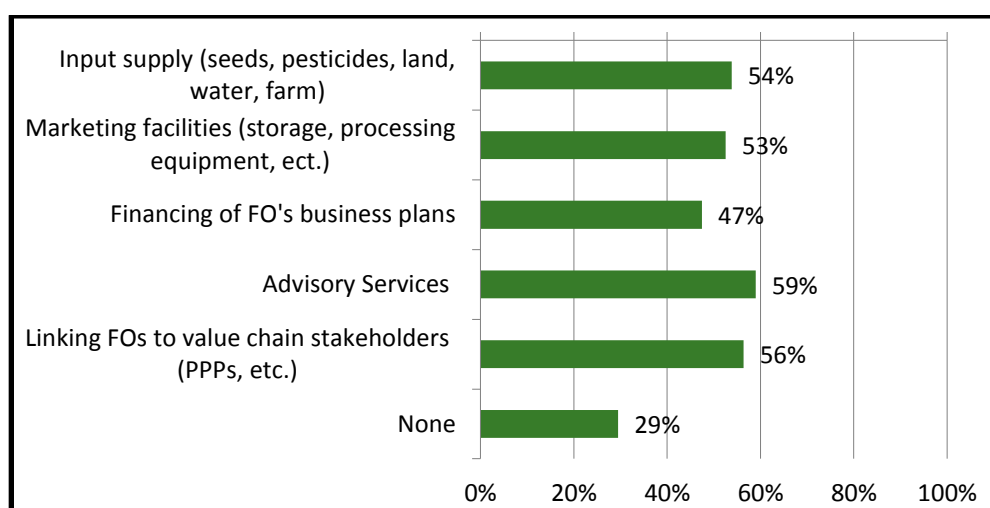


Figure 5 Breakdown by institutional support

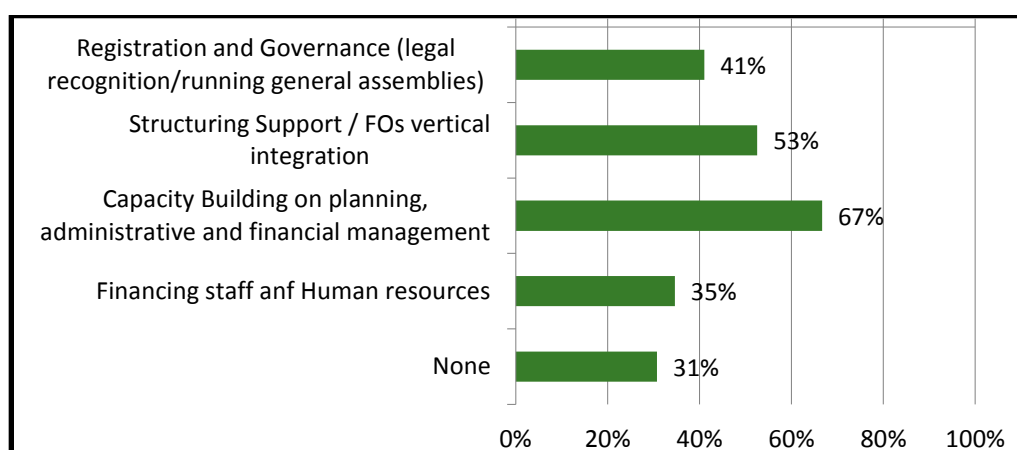
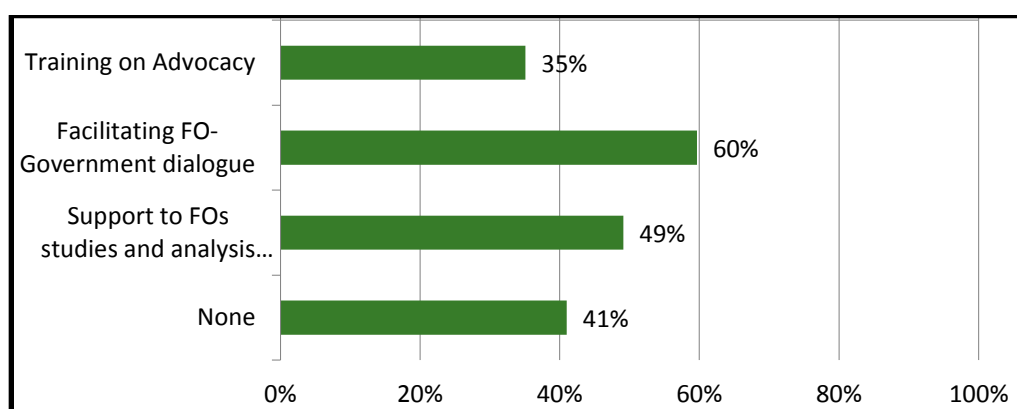


Figure 6 Breakdown by advocacy support

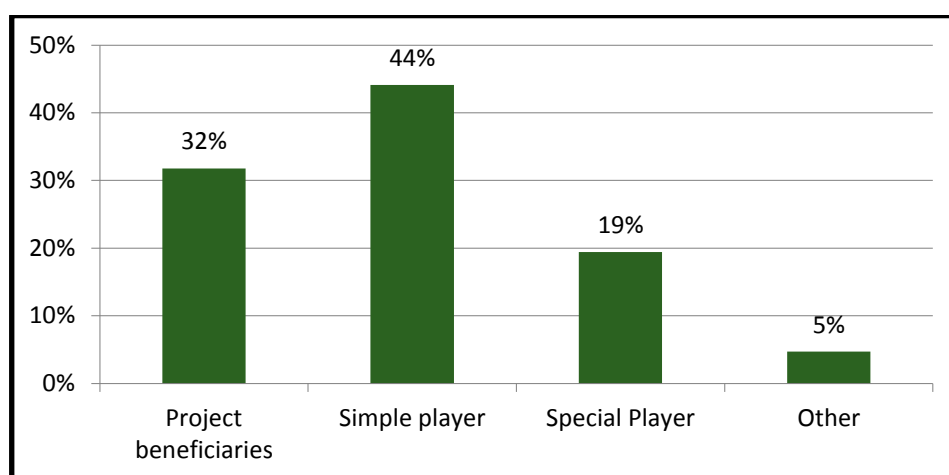


Note: Analysis only considers ongoing projects approved during 2006-2011 that foresaw partnership with FOs at project implementation stage.

b. FO responsibilities in implementing project activities

9. While the nature of partnerships – and hence the degree of responsibility granted to FOs in project implementation – varies from country to country, the analysis reveals that FOs (and their members) are direct beneficiaries of the project in one third of the partnerships. Advanced partnerships (categorized as special players, see Box 1 below) are found in less than a quarter of the projects analyzed.

Figure 7 Modality of ongoing partnership with FOs (2006-2011 projects)



Note: Analysis considers only ongoing projects approved during 2006-2011 that currently have a partnership with FOs.

Box 1 Categories of partnerships at project implementation: simple and special players

The analysis of the partnership between IFAD and FOs is systematically undertaken classifying the collaboration during the implementation of projects along the following categories:

Special player: this category gathers all the modalities whereby FOs are recognized as a special stakeholders at project implementation stage: FOs are assigned full responsibility for the management of one or more components; FOs as formal members of the project Steering Committee.

Simple player: this category includes the modalities whereby FOs are contracted as service providers, FOs as implementing partners and managing project funding for implementing a set of project activities (below the component level) or with FOs as members of the in-country Country Programme Management team (CPMT).

Project beneficiaries: this category includes FOs as direct beneficiaries of project activities but without management responsibilities in their implementation.

10. The analysis identifies only one exceptional case (within the category 'other') – that of the National Programme to Support Agricultural Value Chain Actors (PNAFA) in Guinea – where FOs are strategic partners in charge of the implementation of project components, members of the Steering Committee (with a majority share), as well as responsible for planning, monitoring and reporting. The reasons behind such a high-level partnership merit special mention in order to guide the development of similar partnerships elsewhere:

- i. **FOs are primarily economic players, thus also play a role in the policy arena.** The national umbrella network of FOs is composed of regional federations that play an important role in the economy at sub-regional level by engaging in input bulk purchasing, bulk selling, quality control, stocking of production, and advisory services.
- ii. **Level of cohesiveness and inclusivity.** Regional federations specialize in selected agricultural commodities and value chain partnerships, e.g. rice, potatoes, onions, yam, palm oil, etc. All organized groups of farmers (at third level, i.e. regional federations of local unions) can apply to become members of the National Confederation.

- iii. **Segregation of roles and responsibilities between regional federations and the umbrella National Confederation (CNOP-G).** At national level, the Confederation – which has a central Secretariat and four regional antennas – plays the critical role of advocating farmers' needs and interests in the realm of the national policy agenda, and provides technical/institutional support (e.g. planning, management, maturity assessments, etc.) to the federations. Regional-level federations are primarily oriented towards the provision of economic services to their members developing chain partnerships along the value chains.
 - iv. **High-level recognition in the national level policy debate.** The National Confederation is an important player in the shaping of the national policy framework, given its influence over the production and processing capacity controlled by its members.
11. The difficulties of replicating similar partnerships lie in the following:
- i. IFAD currently lacks an articulated set of standard modules to facilitate the development of partnerships with FOs, for example:
 - **at design stage.** Tools to map and/or profile FOs, modules to guide discussions with FO counterparts on the type of partnership to be developed, tested approaches for designing partnerships with FOs, taking into account assessments of FOs' maturity and capacity to provide economic services to smallholder farmers, etc.
 - **at implementation stage.** Tested approaches in partnership modalities, including reporting requirements and fiduciary arrangements, the role of service providers, etc.
 - ii. In some countries, FOs are not fully into the business of economic services' provision to their members.
 - iii. IFAD projects have heavy reporting, fiduciary and technical requirements and FOs rarely have the capacity needed to directly manage and report on the use of funds.
 - iv. FOs have limited or no monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity, hindering the development of partnerships due to the inability to meet project technical monitoring and reporting requirements.

B. Country-level partnerships supported by the design of new country strategies and projects

12. The analysis carried out in this section draws on the review of the interaction between IFAD and FOs during the formulation of IFAD country strategies – known as Country Strategic Opportunity Programmes (COSOP)¹⁴ - and the design of IFAD-funded projects. The review covered the period 2012-2013, during which 16 COSOPs and 58 projects were approved.¹⁵

Overall participation at design stage over the last two years is similar for COSOPs and projects (85 per cent and 86 per cent of the analysed projects respectively) and it has remained relatively steady. However, **active participation** (as special players) in the design process has declined. While it is difficult to identify specific reasons for this inversion in the trend over the last two years, a possible cause could be the fact that IFAD does not have specific instruments and tools to facilitate the participation of FOs at design stage of COSOPs and projects.

¹⁴ In most of its borrowing member states, IFAD engages on the basis of a Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) which is discussed with partners and agreed upon with governments. Once reviewed by IFAD's Executive Board, COSOPs define IFAD-supported operations in a country, including loan-funded investment projects, grant-funded projects and policy dialogue initiatives for a period of 4-5 years.

¹⁵ The response to the survey covered 14 COSOPs (88 per cent) and 41 projects (71 per cent).

Box 2 Categories of partnerships in COSOP and project design: special and simple players

The analysis classified collaboration between IFAD and FOs in the design of either COSOPs or projects as follows:

Special player. This category includes all modalities in which FOs were recognized as special stakeholders closely involved in the COSOP and projects formulation process, including participation in design-related workshops, and holding full membership in Country Programme Management Teams (CPMTs) and project design teams.

Simple player. This category includes all modalities in which FOs were invited, among other IFAD stakeholders, to participate in the COSOP or project design process, but were not assigned a specific role in shaping the direction of the design. Such modalities (which were sometimes employed in combination) included: participation in the COSOP/project validation workshops; bilateral meetings with the CPM, or the COSOP and project formulation team; and participation in multi-stakeholder consultations.

No participation: FOs not invited to participate in either COSOP or project design.

Figure 8 Evolution of frequency of FO participation in COSOP formulation over the last four biennium (2006-2013)

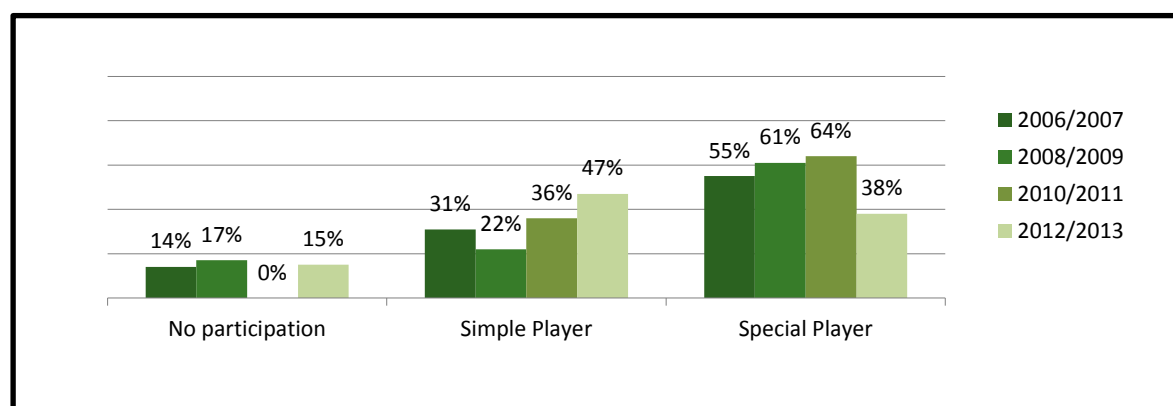
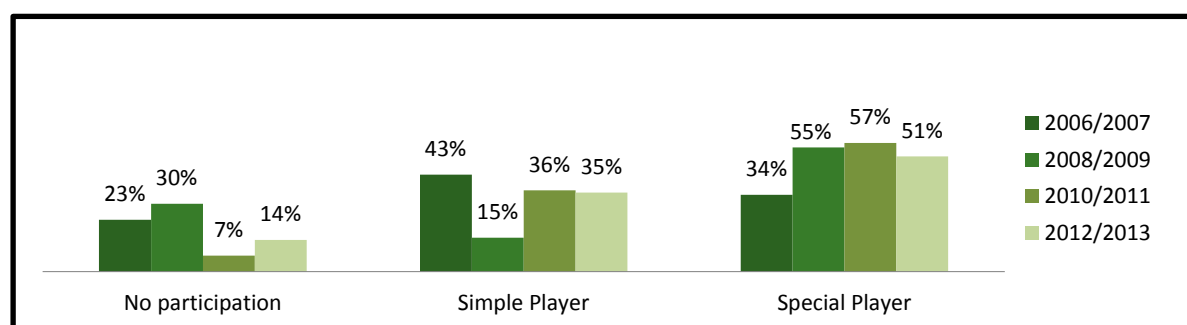


Figure 9 Evolution of frequency of FO participation in project design over the last four biennium (2006-2013)



13. Nonetheless, the analysis shows that FO recommendations have been reflected in most COSOP orientations (82 per cent of analyzed projects), as well as in the definition of project components (80 per cent of cases).

14. In some countries, certain factors precluded the involvement of FOs in COSOP and project designs, including: an unfavourable political context (such as in Eritrea and Venezuela); the nature of the project (e.g. rural finance), which did not call for inputs from traditional FOs (as in the case of Uganda); problems with the credibility and legitimacy of the national farmers' organizations (NFOs), which lacked linkages with the membership at the local level (as in the case of Ghana). Moreover, in some countries, e.g. Viet Nam, although the FOs are envisioned to become important implementing partners, as well as service providers to the informal farmers groups, they have not yet assumed an active role in the project design phase.

15. Specific examples of FO involvement in COSOP and project design are provided below:

COSOPs

- i. In **Cambodia**, FOs participated at all stages of the year-long process and provided inputs, in particular in the context of policy seminars hosted by the Supreme National Economic Council on key thrusts of the COSOP strategy.¹⁶
- ii. In **Haiti**, FO proposals and recommendations have been reflected in: (i) continued capacity building of local communities; (ii) support for the highly demanded literacy training; (iii) efforts to boost market access.
- iii. In **Rwanda**, issues raised by FO representatives were discussed with the Government and other stakeholders; issues deemed relevant (e.g. support to cooperatives, etc.) were addressed in the COSOP.
- iv. In **Honduras**, FO proposals and recommendations have been reflected in the COSOP to: (i) highlight the relevance of associations and organizations in IFAD's current and forthcoming operations and policy dialogue; (ii) foster partnerships; (iii) determine value chains with a high potential of commercial success.
- v. In **Uganda**, a mapping of FOs was undertaken during the new COSOP's design mission identifying the main areas for developing the partnership with FOs (presented as an appendix of the new COSOP).

Projects

- i. In **Brazil**, FOs participated intensively during the fieldwork and discussions with different stakeholders and thus could be regarded as members of the design team.
- ii. In **Mali**, the design process of the project focusing on the Rural Youth Vocational Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship Support Project (FIER) included a workshop in which FOs discussed the draft design document and gave their inputs;
- iii. In **Niger**, an in-depth study on FOs (and other key partners related to FOs, such as networks of Chambres d'Agriculture) was undertaken prior to the design of a new programme in order to provide guidance on engagement with FOs;

16. It is also interesting to note that, during the 2012-2013 biennium, **mapping or profiling of FOs** was undertaken during the design process of 61 per cent of new projects. In some cases - such as in Brazil,

¹⁶ The perspectives and voices of the FOs were heard and amplified by supporting videos of interviews with farmers in the field. However, it should be recognized that FOs in Cambodia are still at an embryonic stage of their development. Their involvement in the COSOP was more of an eye-opener for them on the opportunities offered by the IFAD programme, as well as an accelerated learning programme on policy issues. The dedicated website www.cambodiagreen.org played an important role as a knowledge management platform that was extensively used by FOs.

China, Kenya, Venezuela, Paraguay, Laos, Peru, and Tunisia - the mapping process has allowed to better target the beneficiaries and the relevant potential partners. In other cases – such as Guinea, Gambia, Eritrea, and Afghanistan – the mapping process revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the FOs. The following are other noteworthy examples:

- i. In **DRC**, during the design process of Kinshasa Food Supply Centres Support Programme (PAPAKIN), a Working Paper on “Structuring of FOs” was written, which delivered a mapping of FOs for two selected sets of commodities in the targeted area of the project. A rapid typology of FOs was made, from grassroots’ level to the regional level, followed by a short description of each Union/Federation and a rating of their level of maturity;
- ii. In **Sierra Leone**, the mapping allowed to assess the challenges and financial constraints of FOs and, subsequently, design tailored financial products;

17. Moreover, the use of grant facilities (further details are provided in section I D) has been instrumental in enhancing the quality of partnerships with FOs in some countries, especially those in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA):

- i. The mobilisation of the ongoing large grant to AgriCord – aiming to foster the involvement of FOs in IFAD country programmes - and the new grant to fund the participation of FO specialists within the Quality Enhancement (QE) process, significantly improved the quality of the involvement of FOs in SSA (see section I C).
- ii. Component 3 of the Medium Term Cooperation Programme (MTCP), which had a similar objective, also demonstrated a positive impact (see section I D 2).

C. Specific tools and strategies used to facilitate the partnership between IFAD and FOs

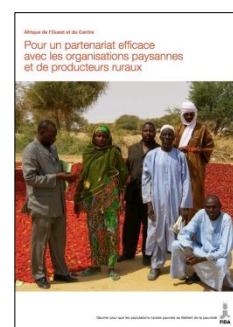
Recommendations of the 2012 Farmers' Forum on strengthening knowledge management:

- Strengthen knowledge management and support FOs' capacity for knowledge management to enhance their organizational and professional capacity for better service provision and income generation. Identify good practices carried out by family farmers and their organizations and increase investments (finance, technology, capacity building) in their up-scaling and replication.

18. During the last biennium, IFAD has benefited from a growing set of implementing tools, which could help overcoming some of the challenges listed above and thus strengthen partnerships with FOs within IFAD country programmes. Some of these tools are the following:

- i. **Mapping and profiling of FOs, and formulation of business plans to link smallholders to markets through their organizations:** IFAD Policy and Technical Advisory Division (PTA) is developing a Knowledge Management (KM) tool – referred to as the "How To Do Note" (HTD Note) - specifically on **"How to engage with farmers' organizations for the purpose of linking smallholders to markets."** This HTD Note, still in draft form, aims to provide guidance on how to design projects that support the development of linkages between poor smallholder farmers and market opportunities through strengthening of organizations that provide them with relevant economic services. It is comprised of two modules: (a) 'How to conduct a mapping and/or profiling of FOs' and (b) 'How to select relevant business models (BMs) for FOs to foster smallholders' access to markets.' The HTD Note is intended as a reference for CPMs, project design teams, peer reviewers, project managers and project management units and will be discussed during a working session of the forthcoming FAFO global meeting.

- ii. **Facilitating M&E of activities implemented by FOs:** In **Senegal**, the Agricultural Development Project in Matam (PRODAM) was the pioneer project in West and Central Africa (WCA) to design and use an M&E tool to measure the level of autonomy of FOs supported by the project, in order to identify gaps to be addressed and to evaluate improvements made over the years. This operational system of empowerment – *Système opérationnel de l'autonomisation (SAO)* – tool was then replicated, adapted and further developed in Guinea's portfolio (see Annex 4).
- iii. **Targeting the most vulnerable farmers within FOs:** In **Madagascar**, the Support Project for Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Service Centres (AROPA) has committed to select at least 50 per cent of its beneficiaries amongst the most vulnerable farmers in the planned five areas of intervention. A special mechanism to recapitalize these vulnerable farmers was set up, on the one hand, to revive their production and, on the other hand, to guide their involvement in value chains supported by the project (see box in Section II-ESA). Provision to support FOs in adopting a gender-friendly strategy has also been incorporated in IFAD-funded activities (see Section III).
- iv. **Adapting project implementation requirements to FOs' realities:** In **Guinea**, PNAFA is the only IFAD country programme where the apex FO is fully responsible for the implementation of a whole component. In order to facilitate administrative implementation requirements, the project has made significant progress over the last biennium in adapting its administrative tools to the context of FOs in Guinea: (i) a simplified manual of procedures was finalized in 2012 and followed by trainings for FOs on its use and other related areas (procurement, financial management, etc.); (ii) in order to simplify the administrative procedures, PNAFA is testing in 2013 new contracting arrangements with FOs through biannual memorandum of agreements (MoAs) that are linked to a biannual participatory planning of activities. The simplified planning schedule and biannual MoAs aim to prevent administrative delays that might jeopardize the positive outcomes of agricultural activities directly implemented by contracted FOs.
- v. **Providing support in a comprehensive and sustainable manner:** In **Congo**, the Agricultural Value Chains Development Programme (PADEF) plans to support the apex FO, Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du **Congo** (CNOP Congo), by building its capacity to foster the structuring of FOs (referred to as **Groupe d'intérêt économique communautaire** [GIEC]) from the local level to the Union¹⁷ level.
- vi. **Providing global guidance on "how to engage in efficient partnerships with FOs":** WCA Division recently published a KM booklet¹⁸ on the topic: "How to engage in efficient partnership with farmers organizations", based on a review of all existing good practices, challenges and recommendations concerning the support IFAD projects provide to FOs. Comprised of 12 notes and 1 CD-ROM, this publication is to be used by CPMs and country project teams to facilitate the involvement and empowerment of FOs in sustainable partnerships within IFAD-funded projects. In addition it also provides a wide range of capitalization, success stories, and other KM tools and documents from sources outside IFAD regarding "how to strengthen FOs".



¹⁷ Unions in the report are FOs made of groups of people – hence secondary level FOs.

¹⁸ Currently published in French only: « Pour un partenariat efficace avec les organisations paysannes et de producteurs ruraux » : See web link: http://www.ifad.org/pub/pa/wca_partenariat_f.pdf.

D. Direct financing support to FOs: global overview of IFAD's strategy to develop FO-directed grants

Recommendations of the 2012 Farmers' Forum on direct support to farmers' organizations:

- Establish, together with other development partners (such as the European Commission and bilateral donors), a dedicated grant window, within its grant programme, to provide direct and inclusive support to the organizations representing small-scale rural producers, family farmers, pastoralists and artisanal fishers (FOs).
- Support the implementation of the voluntary guidelines on responsible governance of land tenure and fisheries and the voluntary guidelines on small scale fisheries, at national level, and facilitate FO participation in these processes.
- Support FO engagement with Rio+20 processes by providing information on events and financial support for participation and the organizing of side-events. Similarly support FOs' engagement and activities to maximize the opportunities to promote smallholder agriculture and family farming around and during the 2014 International Year of Family Farming.

19. IFAD also provides “direct” financial support to FOs through two modalities: either the FO in question becomes the direct recipient of the funds, or it designates another recipient when it cannot be the formal recipient for reasons related to its institutional, administrative or legal status. IFAD's grant facility is its main instrument for directly financing FOs' own projects, although IFAD has also provided direct financial support through supplementary funds, direct “institutional contracts” with FOs, and demand-driven technical assistance. Partnerships with FOs provided through loan-supported projects (currently the predominant form of IFAD's support to FOs) is discussed in Section I.A.).

1. Overview of IFAD grant strategy and FO-directed financial investments

20. IFAD grants targeted directly to FOs aim to:

- **At national level:** (i) foster quality FO involvement in design and implementation of public programmes; (ii) build economic, institutional and advocacy capacities of NFO networks; and (iii) finance pilot initiatives on specific topics.
- **At regional level:** strengthen and enable regional/continental FOs' networks to become articulated platforms, linking NFO learning experiences and needs to regional policy dialogue frameworks. Consequently, IFAD programmes also channel resources to support national FO platforms, as in the case of Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Programme (SFOAP) and, to some extent, MTCP in Asia.
- **At international level:** support FO-representing institutions to develop common advocacy positions and policy standards on key issues related to promoting sustainable family farming for global food security.

21. An analysis of data on 14 grants approved during the 2012-2013 biennium reveals the following major trends:

- a. Regional programmes are becoming the main instrument for the provision of direct financing to FOs at regional and national levels, accounting for 86 per cent of all direct financing to FOs. As a result, since the approval of the second phase of programmes in Africa and Asia during the biennium 2012-2013, the grant programme in support of FOs increased 4.3 times if compared to the previous biennium – passing from US\$8.5 million to US\$36.4 million.;

- b. Important alliances amongst donors have been developed through these regional-level programmes: European Commission (EC), Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and IFAD in the context of the SFOAP, and IFAD and SDC co-financing the MTCP. With these two programmes a total of US\$26.4 million of co-financing (85 per cent of the total cost of the two programmes of which US\$19.5 million was contributed by EC) has been leveraged by IFAD;
- c. The alliance with EC has gone beyond the SFOAP. EC financial support to AgriCord Farmers' Fighting Poverty in Africa (FFP/A) programme is channelled through IFAD. As a result, the SFOAP and FFP/A are complementary efforts to support national and regional FOs (through the SFOAP) and lower level FOs (through FFP/A programme)
- d. The analysis makes evident the emerging strategy to use grant financing in a more selective and strategic manner; while the number of grants has only slightly increased, the average grant size has grown from US\$0.86 million to US\$2.6 million.

Figure 10 Evolution of direct financial support to FOs (US\$ million per biennium)

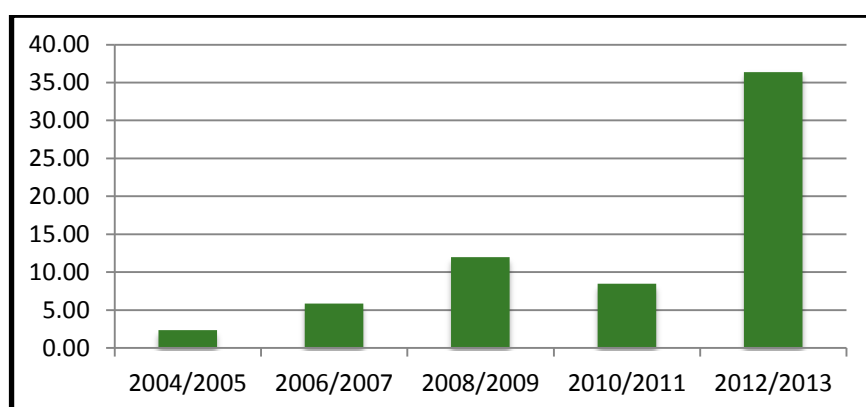


Figure 11 Direct financial support to FOs: number of grants and average amount per grant

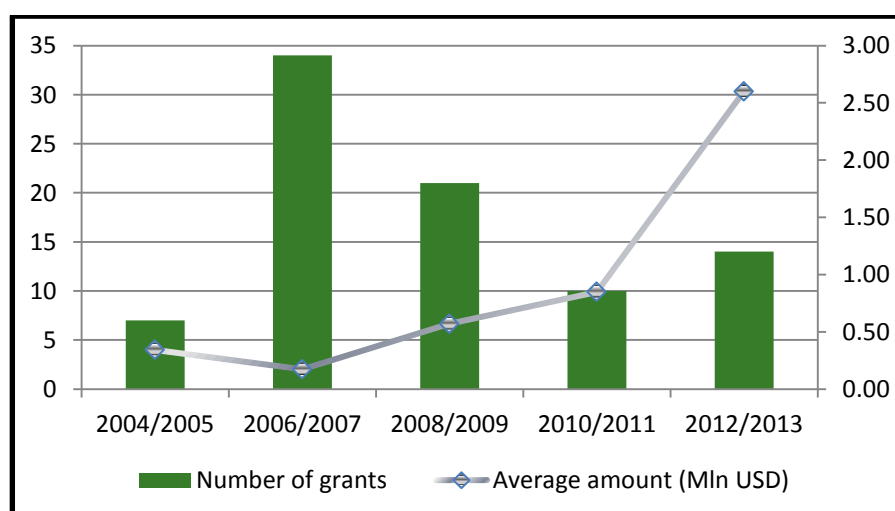
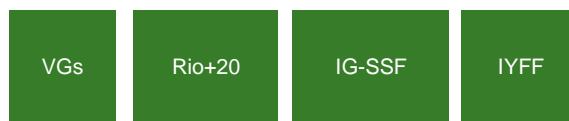


Figure 12 Global trend in IFAD grant provision to support FOs during the 2012-2013 biennium

International level¹⁹

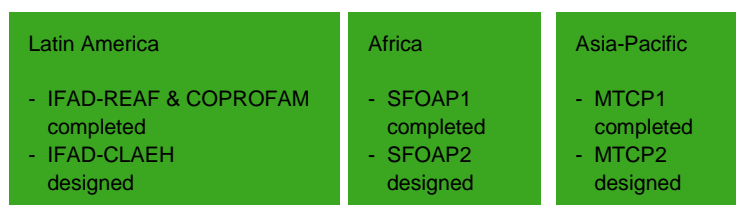
Small grants to foster the participation and inclusion of FOs in key international policy dialogue meetings



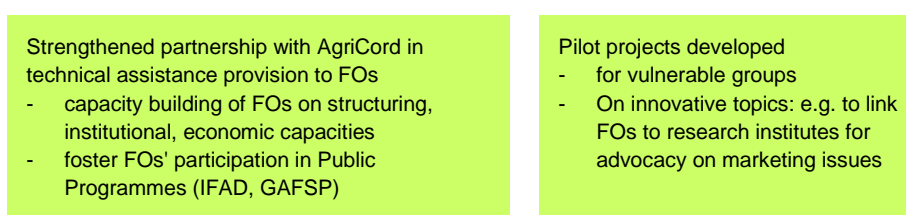
Regional level²⁰

Direct funding to FO regional platforms

Supporting FO participation in national and regional policy dialogue



National level



2. Consolidation of the FO grant strategy within regional programmes

a. Main trends and benefits of regional support to FOs

22. During the biennium 2012-2013, IFAD's support to FOs has concentrated at the regional level through direct financing to regional FOs' platforms and their members, national FOs. Examples of such regional efforts include:

- Engagement in long-term support - second phases of SFOAP and MTCP represent long-term support to FOs involved in the Africa and Asia regional programmes. In Latin America, IFAD has engaged with the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF) platforms for almost 15 years;
- Focus on institutional capacity building and support to FOs' participation in policy dialogue;
- Support towards a demand-driven process - the regional programmes in Africa and Asia were born in response to demands from and consultations with regional farmer organizations' (RFO) platforms;
- Support to FO-led programmes - FOs are well represented in the steering committees of the regional programmes;
- Empowerment of FOs - regional grants are managed directly by RFOs and NFOs.

23. Moreover, support towards RFOs fosters synergies between regions and countries, and reduces administrative management requirements.

¹⁹ VGs=Voluntary Guidelines, IG-SSF= International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries, IYFF: International Year of Family Farming

²⁰ REAF=MERCOSUR Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (La Reunión Especializada de Agricultura Familiar del MERCOSUR), COPROFAM= Confederation of Family Farmers' Organisations of MERCOSUR (Confederación de Organizaciones de Productores Familiares del MERCOSUR), CLAEH=Latin American Centre for Human Economy (Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana), SFOAP=Support to Farmers' Organisations in Africa Programme, MTCP=Medium Term Cooperation Programme with Farmers' Organisations in Asia and the Pacific Region

b. Overview of setups and outcomes of the regional grants to FOs' platforms

➤ In Africa: Support to Farmers' Organizations in Africa Programme (SFOAP)

24. SFOAP is the first continental programme in Africa. It initiated by four regional FO networks based in sub-Saharan Africa - Eastern African Farmers Federation (EAFF), Subregional Platform of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa (PROPAC), Network of Peasant and Agricultural Producers' Organizations in West Africa (ROPFA) and Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) – aspiring to work together within a single programme in support of the institutional development of FOs from national to pan-African level. It was launched as a pilot programme²¹ in 2009 with an overall objective to strengthen the capacity of FOs and their regional and pan-African networks to influence policies and support programmes affecting agriculture, rural development, and food security in Africa. Following a successful independent evaluation (see box below), the main phase of the SFOAP expanded its geographical coverage with the inclusion of a fifth regional network, the Union Maghrébine des Agriculteurs (UMAGRI). The programme will support 68 NFOs in 49 countries, their five regional networks and the Pan-African Farmers' Organization (PAFO) over five years (2013-2017).

25. The SFOAP main phase aims to further strengthen and consolidate the institutional capacities of FOs and give them a greater say in agricultural policies and programmes. In addition, the main phase supports – through an additional component – the development of FOs' economic services to facilitate the integration of smallholder farmers in value chains. The support focuses on a limited number of cases, aiming to assess their results and impact and systematize successful experiences through knowledge generation and sharing.

26. The SFOAP main phase is cofinanced by the European Union for EUR 15 million, and IFAD, SDC and AFD for EUR 4.9 million, altogether covering the total programme cost of EUR 19.9 million.

Box 3 Burundi SFOAP's support to CAPAD to engage in policy dialogue

The Confédération des Associations des Producteurs Agricoles pour le Développement (CAPAD) is a young national apex organization created in 2003 as a federation of 72 smallholders cooperatives (about 20,000 members in 2010, covering 10 of the 17 provinces of Burundi). The strategic objective of CAPAD is "to promote a strong farmer movement capable of influencing public policy and increasing the incomes of cooperatives' members through professionalization of agriculture". CAPAD is a member of EAFF.

CAPAD realized that to achieve concrete results it could not work alone and that it required a large group of farmers to stand behind its demands to gain government recognition. In view of this, the organization started mobilizing local FOs within and also beyond its own membership. The campaign, financed by SFOAP, was the first opportunity for CAPAD to be involved in lobbying activities with the government. This process led to the establishment of the Forum des Organisations des Producteurs Agricoles du Burundi (FOPABU), bringing together CAPAD and the national federations of tea, coffee, cotton, and palm oil producers.

The SFOAP has also been instrumental for CAPAD to achieve specific policy outcomes, to strengthen the Burundian farmers' movement in general and to create a partnership with IFAD country projects. With the backing of SFOAP, CAPAD commissioned two studies on the impacts of the East African Common Market on Burundian producers and adapted agricultural models. Studies were followed by the elaboration and dissemination of concrete demands or policy positions on key issues, such as financing for agriculture, the role of the farmers' movement in agricultural development, access to inputs and to land, and food security. These lobbying documents were made public through a set of activities, including radio broadcasts, meetings with parliamentarians, journalists, and donors, as well as publications, a press conference and an agricultural show.

²¹ See main results of SFOAP pilot phase in Annex 3.

Table 1 Main recommendations from the SFOAP pilot evaluation

OECD evaluation criteria	Main findings
Relevance	Relevance of SFOAP is rated as high. Strengthening FOs at all levels is a logical and necessary means of contributing to improved livelihoods, food security and poverty reduction of smallholder farmers, but the expectations were unrealistic for such a short timeframe (initially three years).
Effectiveness	The SFOAP has major outcomes, but there is a need for consolidation. SFOAP effectiveness has been satisfactory. SFOAP has contributed to FOs emerging as significant rural development actors, who asserted themselves <i>vis-a-vis</i> sectorial institutions. Their governance, legitimacy, reputation, credibility and visibility have all been significantly improved. Similarly, their representativeness and capacity to interrelate with their members, to communicate and manage information has been strengthened. Enhanced networking capacity, as well as their heightened reputation, has enabled them to become almost unavoidable actors in agricultural policy identification processes.
Efficiency	In terms of efficiency, the main problem had been the administrative, financial and reporting processes, which were (or were perceived to be) complicated and time consuming. Nevertheless, as a continental project, SFOAP has operated with relatively limited funds but achieved significant results, though much still remains to be done. The programme has demonstrated good capacity to adapt to the variety of needs of an extremely diverse FO population operating in no less diverse conditions. The fact that the programme worked on the basis of FO strategic plans and AWPB is undoubtedly one of the reasons for this adaptability.
Impact	Though it has not been possible to measure it concretely, there has been an impact on farming community poverty in instances where FOs' advocacy has influenced policy change with regard to input subsidies, budget increases, trade policies, etc. The impact has been strongest with less mature FOs but significant in all cases.
Sustainability	Sustainability is still a challenge and donor support remains prominent in the budgets of all NFOs and RFOs. Financial sustainability needs to be promoted during the SFOAP main phase to increase accountability of FOs vis-à-vis their members and not to the donors.

➤ In Asia and the Pacific²²: the Medium Term Cooperation Programme (MTCP)

27. MTCP was the result of a series of consultations with a number of leading FOs in Asia and the Pacific region conducted in 2005-2006 as part of the Farmers' Forum launching process. The MTCP was designed in 2006 with the objective to improve the livelihoods of poor rural producers and enable small farmers' organisations in Asia and the Pacific region, as well as their networks, to influence policies affecting their members. The MTCP is articulated around three components: (i) strengthening the networks of FOs; (ii) strengthening the involvement of FOs in policy processes; and (iii) promoting the involvement of FOs in IFAD country programmes.

28. The first phase of the Programme (MTCP1) was implemented between November 2009 and December 2012. The total programme cost was US\$1,953,000, covering ten countries in the region. The implementing partners were: (i) the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for the MTCP's region-wide activities, plus those specific to the South-East Asia and the sub-programme in China; and (ii) Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) of India for the South Asia sub-programme.

29. Over the last biennium 2012-2013, a second phase of MTCP has been designed in a very participative way (see Box in Section II-APR), extending its activities and support to other countries of South Asia and South-East Asia, as well as the Pacific region, and switching to a more FO-driven implementation

²² Further details on MTCP 1 and 2 are provided in Annex 3.

set-up. To ensure adequate financing for this Programme, IFAD and its FOs partners have worked to bring other donors on board; from a budget of US\$15 million, IFAD provides US\$2 million and has negotiated cofinancing of US\$3 million with SDC. Moreover, the implementing agencies, i.e. FOs at regional and sub-regional level, have been requested to seek additional sources of financial support.

30. **Outcomes of MTCP1.** MTCP1 has successfully raised awareness on the importance of supporting FOs' providing services for the disadvantaged smallholders, and enabled FO platforms at national, sub-regional and regional levels to take part in a number of policy consultations and dialogues. Among the main successes of MTCP1 are the following:

- MTCP1 has successfully catalysed and sustained the important process of FO networking and platform-building in the region, which has positively contributed to the policy engagement of FOs with governments and IFAD at the national and sub-national levels. In this regard, the Farmers' Forum - as a platform for exchange of information and joint activities - has not only provided FOs with opportunities to apply their collective capacities in policy engagement and coalition work, but has also clearly impacted on the extent to which concerned governments and other development stakeholders have responded to their various advocacies.
- MTCP1 fostered the successful, direct involvement of FOs in IFAD country programmes in the region.

Box 4 Nepal: MTCP's success story of FOs' networking and engagement in policy dialogue

MTCP helped to bring all the major FOs in Nepal to form a unique policy dialogue entity: despite the diversity and differences between FOs in Nepal, the MTCP helped to build solidarity among them through concrete cooperation on various issues, including the formulation of common agendas and goals. The National Peasant Coalition (NPC), an existing broad-based platform of various FOs in Nepal, was mobilized for MTCP-related cooperation. The NPC created the National Oversight Board (NOB) and three Regional Oversight Boards, with broad-based representation at the local levels and a noteworthy efficiency in representing local issues in national fora and policy dialogues. To further strengthen the voice of the grass roots, regional farmers' forums were also organized and supported, with the Regional Oversight Boards taking the lead role in this regard.

MTCP fostered NPC's lobbying, advocacy and campaigning agenda, leading to policy intervention on farmers' issues: the NOB representation has engaged the government in the revision of two key programmes of strategic relevance to FOs: (i) the national Agricultural Development Strategy (ADS), and (ii) the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) cooperation. The NOB is now represented in the various working committees of the GAFSP and has acquired four seats in the steering committee of the ADS (although initially only one was foreseen). Other important results of the Farmers' Forum initiative include: an increase in the budget for the agricultural sector in 2012; the monitoring of market food and vendors to ensure food safety and quality; the compensation to the victims of rice and maize crop failure; the fixing of a minimum support price for sugar cane; and the provision of agricultural inputs, which effectively addressed existing shortages. Moreover, the government, IFAD and other stakeholders have ensured proper representation of the FOs in the designing and planning of various agricultural programs. For example, the Agriculture Development Ministry has started to engage farmers in its policy process and some joint advocacy programs have already been organized.

➤ **In Latin America: two sets of complementary IFAD grants, completed and assessed during the last biennium, supported the involvement of FOs in policy dialogue in the MERCOSUR region**

31. **The first set of grants has been supporting the IFAD-MERCOSUR-REAF Programme** for almost 15 years, and is among IFAD's biggest successes in terms of supporting policy dialogue that is inclusive of representatives of poor smallholder farmers at regional level. One of its main achievements is the creation of REAF, a platform including high-level government representatives and national farmers' representatives, the objective of which is to discuss public policies concerning family farming at national and regional levels (see Annex 3).

32. At regional level and within some countries, REAF has made several significant contributions towards the development of public policies and institutions supporting family farming within the expanded MERCOSUR area (see Box 5 below).

Box 5 Examples of successful policy design supporting family farming within the IFAD-REAF-MERCOSUR Programme

Through IFAD's grant to the IFAD-MERCOSUR-REAF Programme, REAF has been instrumental in:

- persuading countries to take an official common position on the definition of family farming;
- creating National Registries of the Family Farming in Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, based on the experience in Brazil. These registers have the potential to be a powerful tool to improve the relevance, focus and efficiency of policies and programs for family farmers;
- supporting, along with government-sourced funding, the implementation of the Regional Program for the Training of Rural Youth, who seen as agents of change and innovation, and future social leaders;
- supporting the formulation of policies and legislation on concentration and foreign ownership of land in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. This is an issue that in recent years has had a strong public and political connotation, and in which family farming has a clear interest;
- fostering discussions on public procurement systems for food produced by family farmers in Uruguay and Paraguay;
- pressing for the design and implementation of pilot projects on insurance for family farming in Argentina and Paraguay, drawing on the knowledge and experience REAF acquired in Brazil, Chile and Uruguay, and encouraging horizontal cooperation between these countries; and
- supporting institutional reform processes dedicated to family farmers, for example, in Argentina and Uruguay.

33. To ensure the sustainability of the above-mentioned support, the MERCOSUR Fund for Family Farming was created in 2009 (see Box 6 below).

Box 6 Sustainability through the MERCOSUR Fund for Family Farming

One measure of success, among others, of all efforts to date is the creation in 2009 of the MERCOSUR Fund for Family Farming (FAF), in view of IFAD's planned phasing out of the REAF process. Its establishment is aimed at ensuring the sustainability and evolution of the REAF platform once IFAD's financial support ends. The FAF can already count on sufficient resources to finance REAF operations for a period of five years, starting in 2012. MERCOSUR and other participating members are contributing to the FAF. The FAF will ensure the regular operations of the REAF Secretariat, such as holding regular sessions of the Specialized Meeting and promoting the activities of its different thematic groups and National Sections. It is also expected that the FAF will support activities related to the establishment of National Family Farming Registries, which are being implemented in the four MERCOSUR permanent member countries, as well as the implementation of specific policies and/or instruments in the field of small-scale agricultural insurance, funding and public procurement. Other initiatives, such as the Rural Youth Training Programme and the Gender Equality Programme, will also be strengthened. Once consolidated into a permanent institution in MERCOSUR, the FAF would eventually be in a position to serve as an investment fund for family farming in the region.

34. **The second IFAD grant** called *"Strengthening Rural Organizations to promote Policy Dialogue in South America"* has been supporting the Confederation of Family Farmers Organizations in expanded MERCOSUR – referred to as the Coordination of Family Farms of MERCOSUR (COPROFAM) - between 2009 and 2013. It was complementary to the first grant, as it aimed to strengthen COPROFAM as a representative of civil society and an active counterpart of the governmental members of REAF, in which COPROFAM has played and continues to play a key role. This programme has (i) enabled COPROFAM to advocate as a regional network for the promotion of family agriculture in the appropriate regional and international fora and (ii) helped to build the capacity of national members, especially those in less developed countries that require sustained support for both analytical work and the development of new policy approaches and proposals.

35. Moreover, during the period under review, a new grant was developed in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region to continue the support process on inclusion of family FOs in policy dialogue, aiming to build on the successful experience of REAF-MERCOSUR Grant. The new Programme - *"Public policy dialogue on family farming and food security in the southern cone of Latin America"* - plans to undertake research and analysis for scaling up and sharing the REAF-MERCOSUR experience with other countries and regions.

c. Support to FOs in developing common advocacy positions and policy standards on key issues related to sustainable family farming at international level

36. Over the last biennium, IFAD has developed eight small grants, six of them through direct funding to FOs, for a total of US\$2.1 million (US\$1.8 million through direct funding) to foster FOs' participation in high-level meetings on key subjects dealing with the sustainability of family farming as an answer to global food security. It has mainly supported the involvement of FOs in broader civil society groups and mechanisms, aiming to adopt a common understanding and build advocacy positions on biodiversity issues and natural resource management, as well as promote the International Year of Family Farming at global level. Table 2 below provides a description of these grants and their objectives:

Table 2 Grants developed in 2012-2013 to promote the involvement of FOs in international policy dialogue

Grants	Objectives
Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests 2 grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support a group of FOs (La Via Campesina,²³ World Rural Forum [WRF],²⁴ etc.) participation in the final negotiation round during CFS39²⁵ (channelled through AIAB²⁶). To promote and foster the implementation of those VGs at country level.
International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (IG-SSF) 2 grants See details in Section III.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support a series of stakeholder consultations (in Bangladesh, Congo [Brazzaville], Eritrea, Mozambique and Yemen) to develop recommendations for the IG-SSF that were being prepared by FAO. To (i) develop a consensus among civil society stakeholders in artisanal fisheries on a common vision and position, and on key issues to be included in the IG-SSF; (ii) promote the formal and effective involvement of civil society stakeholders in the decision-making processes.
FO's participation in RIO+20²⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support FOs' participation in RIO+20 event in Brazil
FOs and the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) 2 grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support FO-inclusive national consultations in preparation for the IYFF. To foster the involvement of RFOs (AFA, PAFO, Via Campesina, COPROFAM) in the Regional Dialogues, organised in late 2013.

37. In addition to the above, a grant for capacity-building for the Intercontinental Network of Organic Farmers' Organisation (INOFO) was designed in 2013. Channelled through the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the grant aims to empower organic farmers collectively and their leaders individually to represent their interests before national and international institutions, and to press the latter to acknowledge the significant role of smallholder organic farmers. The initiative foresees several action lines: (i) mapping; (ii) institution and capacity-building; (iii) sharing farmers' knowledge; and (iv) facilitation of market access.

3. IFAD grants to support FOs at national level

a. Major technical partnership with AgriCord to support FOs at national level

38. Since commencement of the FAFO process, IFAD has been developing and deepening its collaboration with AgriCord in the provision of technical assistance to FOs. This partnership has been instrumental in building the capacities of FOs at national level. Currently, AgriCord is implementing three sets of IFAD-funded or channelled grants:

- **Farmers Fighting Poverty/AFRICA Programme (FFP/Africa)** is one of the two components of Farmers' Africa, a wider EU-funded programme with a total cost of EUR 40 million, which supports African FOs (the second component of this programme is the SFOAP). The funds from EU for FFP are channelled to AgriCord through IFAD. The FFP Programme is complementary to IFAD grants, as it mainly supports the FOs' economic activities, while IFAD grants mainly concentrate on institutional and policy dialogue activities.

²³ <http://viacampesina.org/en/>

²⁴ <http://www.ruralforum.net/default.asp?id=en>

²⁵ 39th session of the Committee on World Food Security

²⁶ Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica

²⁷ United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20-22 June 2012

- **Two IFAD grants designed to support FOs' quality involvement in design and implementation of national public programmes, including:** "Capacity-building for FOs involved in IFAD country programmes", implemented in three countries of the *Near East, North Africa and Europe* (NEN) region²⁸ and six countries of SSA; and "Supporting FOs' involvement in Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP)", implemented in five SSA countries and four Asian countries.

39. **The methodology adopted** by AgriCord members is the following:

- Where FOs are weak (as in Liberia and Sierra Leone), the approach is to focus on their institutional strengthening to improve accountability and streamline internal procedures, increase recognition through mobilization of membership, build linkages with other civil society organizations (CSOs), etc.
- Where FOs are stronger (as in Burundi), the approach is to provide coaching by farmers' leaders from other countries in order to raise awareness concerning policy dialogue issues and strategies, and enhance participation in key government policy decisions.

40. **Key factors of success include:** (i) the use of peer-to-peer support/coaching by African leaders and/or European farmers, which has shown that African leaders in particular can play key roles in raising awareness of governments, project teams, and donors on the importance of supporting FOs; and (ii) the commitment of AgriCord, CPMs and FOs to partner, which has been instrumental in grant mobilization through a tri-partite agreement.

41. **The key outcome** of these grants has been the leverage power acquired by the beneficiary FOs that has enabled them to mobilise further support. In **Burundi**, the overall capacity-building support provided to CAPAD has led to empowerment and recognition, giving them the confidence to apply for the position of an implementing partner in a new project as well as negotiate a supplementary country grant with IFAD. In Liberia, the mobilisation of two grants was instrumental in capturing another grant with Italian Supplementary Financing (see Box 7 below).

Box 7 Liberia: combined use of IFAD grants to support the Farmers' Union Network (FUN)

The intervention of the African leader Mamadou Cissokho and the agri-agency Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires (CSA) helped FUN to define a nationwide consultative process for attracting new members, and improved the positioning of FUN in relation to its national partners, such as the NGOs, the Government of Liberia and the donors. This has strongly influenced the Government's and development partners' recognition of the need to involve FUN in the design and implementation of their food security programs, rather than directly organizing farmers to implement those programs. It also raised their awareness concerning the importance of building the capacities of such FO networks as a means of reaching the poorest farmers within the country. AgriCord provided such support using both the GAFSP and the "Capacity building for FOs" grants in a complementary approach. Subsequently, the IFAD CPM of Liberia also pursued an Italian Supplementary Fund to support FUN's institutional strengthening, which materialized in 2013 with the allocation of direct funding of US\$680,000 to FUN.

b. Grants to finance pilot initiatives on specific topics

42. Some pilot grant-funded projects, which tested innovative approaches with FOs, have been completed during the biennium 2012-2013. These projects aimed at:

- **Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets (ESFIM Grant):** The objective of this grant was to support collaborative work between NFOs and research institutes to generate analysis on market issues, in order to influence public policies in favour of small-scale farmers. Implemented in 10 pilot

²⁸ In the NEN region, this grant has specifically focused on linking FOs to domestic and international markets in three pilot countries.

countries, this grant produced interesting outcomes, especially in terms of (i) institutional and partnership development, and (ii) development of advocacy strategies (see Annex 5). This pilot initiative also had many positive outcomes regarding the involvement of apex FOs in policy dialogue, especially in Bolivia and the Philippines (see Box 8 below). However, one of the main limits of this grant was the lack of linkages with other IFAD country programmes and regional grants. For example, in **Benin**, the ESFIM grant funded a pilot project in the maize sector in partnership with an apex FO, Fédération des Unions de Producteurs de Bénin (FUPRO), but the outcomes were not promoted within the value chain-oriented Rural Economic Growth Support Project (PACER), nor in the national policy dialogue activities undertaken by the National Platform of Farmers Organisations and Agricultural Producers of Benin (PNOPPA) within the SFOAP grant.

Box 8 Bolivia: outcomes of the ESFIM grant

In Bolivia, the National Platform of Economic Smallholder Organisations, the Coordinadora de Integración de Organizaciones Económicas Campesinas de Bolivia (CIOEC-Bolivia) is an apex organisation that comprises more than 200 economic grassroots organisations that are organised around collective marketing and processing. Supported by ESFIM, CIOEC-Bolivia decided to foster the approval of the Draft Law on Rural Economic Organizations (OECAs) with an emphasis on the regulation of the constitution, organisation and organisational functioning of the OECAs, and tax rules (special rules for OECAs). Through the work of CIOEC-Bolivia and supported by ESFIM, the OECA Law was accepted onto the agenda of Parliament in August 2012. The proposal was approved in November 2012 in Parliament and President Evo Morales proclaimed the initiative to law on 26 January 2013.

Box 9 Burkina: a pilot on inventory credit in support of COPSA-C

The Coobsa Agricultural Service Provision Cooperative (COPSA-C) is a third-level farmers' organization operating in south-western Burkina Faso. It has approximately 3,000 members, organized in three storage cooperatives' unions (i.e. cereal banks practicing warehouse receipt system) and five rice producers' unions. COPSA-C's mission is to increase agricultural incomes of its members, improve their economic conditions and food security. Since its creation in 2009, COPSA-C supports its members in: (i) access to inputs and composting techniques; (ii) agricultural training; (iii) purchase, processing and marketing of paddy rice, in collaboration with the rice farmers' unions and a group of women steamers; (iv) implementation of a warehouse receipt system to ensure optimal use and management of the local agricultural production.

Financed by IFAD with a grant from the Italian Supplementary Funds, the Rural Business Development Services Programme [Programme d'Appui et de Promotion du Secteur Privé en Milieu Rural](PROFINDER) started its activities in five regions of Burkina Faso (South-West, North, Centre-East, Hauts Bassins, Boucle du Mouhoun) in 2008. In the context of this project, the Italian NGO Community, Engagement, Service, Volunteering [Comunità Impegno Servizio Volontariato](CISV) introduced inventory credit in the South-West region, in collaboration with COPSA-C. After more than 5 years of implementation, it is clear that the scheme has made a very significant contribution to the farmers' livelihoods. A key success factor has been the excellent functioning of the COPSA-C and its ability to establish a trust relationship with the local microcredit institution, the Réseau des Caisses Populaires (RCPB).

Today, the inventory credit scheme is operated autonomously by COPSA-C, in cooperation with UDCCS Departmental Unions of Cereal Storage and Marketing Cooperatives (UDCCS) and Cereal Banks (BC). Quantitative data on the six campaigns implemented so far are summarized in Table 3.

M&E and KM issues

a. M&E and FOs, a key subject

43. It is essential to conduct regular M&E of the support provided to FOs in order to take stock of its impact and use M&E results to further advocate on the relevance of engaging with FOs and their networks to support the poor rural farmers in an efficient and sustainable manner. Moreover, M&E and reporting procedures should be redesigned as **tools that help FOs with future planning, knowledge management and exchange with donors**, and should evolve from FOs' own M&E systems. Thus, a participatory discussion on programme reporting procedures is needed. FOs need to further develop communication between local, national, regional and continental levels, and develop mechanisms that can synthesize and optimally utilize the experience gained. Developing mechanisms for peer-to-peer evaluation at regional level could be another way forward, coordinated by the RFOs in a manner that enables evaluation and simultaneously strengthens exchanges between FOs.

44. **During the period under review, the main M&E activities supported by IFAD grants were:**

- A preliminary study on the Proposed Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) Framework for the SFOAP Main Phase: this study was undertaken jointly with funds from SFOAP and AgriCord grants. The study proposed a revised framework for M&E within SFOAP, on the basis of consultations with all regional FOs involved in SFOAP2, AgriCord's technical advice and IFAD. A synthesis of indicators developed per component is presented in Annex 3.
- The draft study's outputs were shared with RFOs during the start-up workshop of the SFOAP Main Phase (Addis Ababa, March 2013). Agreement was reached on the need to further support RFOs in the development of their M&E systems based on the proposal.
- One-week workshops were organized with the RFOs to further discuss their existing PM&E systems and develop an upgraded PM&E system for SFOAP, which took into account and, to the extent possible, was integrated with the institutional PM&E systems of the RFOs and their members. Three such workshops have been held during the second half of 2013 with EAFF, SACAU and ROPPA/PROPAC.

b. Support to knowledge management for FOs and their networks

45. Through its grants, IFAD has funded various sets of activities to support and develop knowledge management (KM) within FOs:

- In the SFOAP Main Phase (SFOAP2), a new component has been added that deals with the "provision of economic services" and enables FOs to (i) provide advisory services for integration into value chains, and; (ii) generate, share and capitalize on knowledge and experiences.
- In MTCP 2, IFAD plans to enhance knowledge management with the development of a dedicated website.
- The Learning Routes Programme²⁹, cofinanced by IFAD and managed by Procasur³⁰, provides opportunities to organize learning visits between FOs. For example, **in the NEN region**, a Learning Route was organized in 2013 in Morocco on the topic of Farmers' Organizations. A similar Learning Route will be organized in early 2014 for representatives of African FOs.

²⁹ <http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/pl/knowledge.htm>

³⁰ <http://www.procasur.org/>

Section II. Regional partnership trends between IFAD and FOs

A. Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC)

46. In LAC sub-region, there has not been any major change between the biennium 2010-2011 and the biennium 2012-2013 in the way IFAD and FOs are partnering. Thus, it can be said that the trend of cooperation between IFAD and FOs, both at national and regional levels, is becoming 'business as usual'. The main trends emerging are the following:

i. Support to FOs through a progressive combination of capacity building & investment plans

- In many LAC region countries, IFAD-funded projects support farmers' groups and their associations at a very local level through the financing of their business plans, usually conditioned to a certain level of institutional capacity, which is also supported when needed. The approach aims to be flexible, demand-driven, and empowering, as funds for the implementation of business plans are most of the time directly channelled to FOs. However, there are some differences in the approaches taken to support the afore-mentioned business plans, as described below. **Paraguay**, in the context of the Paraguay Rural Project (PPR), support is provided through a two-step process. In the first step, FOs propose a capacity building plan (CBP) to improve institutional management, governance, and credit management, as well as a technical capacity building package related to their major crops. The project funds are channelled directly to the FOs, which implement this CBP by contracting some external technical assistance. This process can take up to one year. In the second step, the FOs design investment plans (or business plans) and then request the Project to fund them. **The positive outcomes are:** (i) the FOs acquire institutional capacities required to undertake economic activities; and (ii) the FOs are empowered from the very beginning of the process, when they take charge of the funds to implement their CBPs.
- In **Honduras**, in the context of the Project for Competitiveness and Sustainable Development in the South-Western Border Region (PRO-LENCA), support is also provided to CBPs in combination with business plans, but the latter depends on the level of development of the concerned FO (see Box 10 below). Some outcomes of this support on cooperatives' development are described in Annex 4.

Box 10 Honduras: two-step strategy to support FOs within the new project PRO-LENCA

Based on the positive experiences of IFADs programmes in Honduras, the newest project, PRO-LENCA, foresees in its design a strategy in support to FOs. In the first step, FOs will implement plans for organizational strengthening, focused on internal governance structure and administrative capacities, in addition to capacity building packages on sustainable production, commercialization and access to rural financial services, as well as trainings on gender and youth. Subsequently, and following an intensive participatory consultation to analyse gaps, skills and needs, the FOs will formulate development plans. These can be of two kinds: (1) business plans for the stronger FOs that produce enough to market and show capabilities to have stable relationships with buyers; and (2) productive development plans focused mostly on food security issues for the weaker FOs that require further development. The funds for the implementation of these business plans and productive development plans are transferred directly to FOs. Both types of plans include investments in collective and private production assets of the FOs, as well as funds for training and technical assistance.

47. Some of the new value chain-oriented projects in the LAC region have added contracting conditionalities to support FOs' business plans. For example, the new **Paraguay Inclusivo** project aims to enhance the capacities of FOs through a four-step approach: (i) provision of institutional capacity building to the FOs, if the rating of an FO deems it necessary; (ii) development of commercial links through formal agreements with agribusinesses/commercial enterprises (mandatory); (iii) provision of support to FOs in the formulation of their investment plans; (iv) provision of funding for the implementation of the investment plans. Other projects pursue the value chain-driven objective by combining support to FOs with support to service providers (see Annex 4 on **Cuba**).

ii. Tools and grants to facilitate M&E and to enhance the quality of the partnership

- Within the **Paraguay portfolio**, specifically the PPR, a rating system was developed to assess the improvements made by FOs as a result of the capacity building efforts. It is based on three criteria, rated from 0 to 3 (see Box 11 below). The rating system monitors the progress made by FOs and assesses their ability to transition from one stage of institutional development to the next.

Box 11 Paraguay PPR: classification criteria to support FOs

During the implementation of PPR, all 300 of the supported FOs were rated. The rating focuses on three operational criteria: (i) marketing of selected products regarding the business plan's objectives; (ii) credit management; and (iii) sustainability of the FO. Each criterion is scored from 1 to 3; therefore, the total score ranges from a minimum of 3 points to a maximum of 9 points for each assessed FO. Depending on the score it receives, an FO is classified either as "in difficulty" (score < 6), or "in consolidation process" (6 < score < 9), or "consolidated" (score = 9). Consequently, this classification determines the type of support that the project will provide to the concerned FO.

48. A country grant to the Federation of Production Cooperatives [La Federación de Cooperativas de Producción] (FECOPROD) was designed in 2013, after the final assessment of FOs supported by the PPR showed that some of them remained weak. The grant's objective is to enable FECOPROD to provide capacity building assistance to such FOs, noting that FECOPROD was instrumental in PPR implementation by connecting local FOs to financial services, with successful results.

iii. Support to FOs' participation in policy dialogue at all geographical levels

49. During the biennium 2012-2013, IFAD has developed new grants and other schemes to enhance FOs' participation in policy dialogues.

- Within **Brazil's** portfolio, the *Dom Helder Project* enabled FOs to improve accountability and thus become potential recipients of public funds, through their participation in local policy dialogue platforms (see Box 12 below).

Box 12 Brazil: Supporting FOs' involvement in local policy dialogue

The Dom Helder Project aimed to work with second and third-tier organizations at municipal and state levels on policy dialogue and coordination issues. Among the main successes of this project was the fact that it fostered FOs' participation in local coordination groups. These groups, which include NGOs, municipal governments and other key stakeholders, convene to discuss and agree on various issues, including public programme orientations, allocations of resources, coordination of activities implemented by NGOs, etc., in order to provide guidance to local institutions for territory policy coordination.

In the newly designed project Paole Freire, a great part of the investment is targeted towards the state-level FO unions in order to strengthen the participation of municipal unions in state coordination meetings. The project is considering to channel some funds directly to the Unions to undertake activities.

50. **At the regional level**, IFAD and REAF-MERCOSUR have jointly designed a new grant project (CLAEH – see Section I) to build on the good practices and success stories accumulated during the 15 years of IFAD's support of family FOs' participation in national and regional policy dialogue platforms in the MERCOSUR countries (within the IFAD-REAF-MERCOSUR grant).

51. Indeed, **the IFAD–REAF-MERCOSUR grant** has had many positive impacts on national public policies concerning "family farming" and associated institutional reforms (see Box 5 in Section I). For example, in Argentina, it led to the formulation of a new policy favouring small-scale farmers, in addition to the existing policy that has focused primarily on large-scale farmers (see Box 13 below).

Box 13 Argentina: The impact of IFAD–REAF-MERCOSUR grant on the institutionalization of public policies

In late 2004, REAF launched a joint initiative in Argentina with organizations representing family farming and what was then the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fishery and Food (SAGPyA), in order to address some issues of the regional agenda. This experience of political dialogue set the basis for the National Forum on Family Farming, which was inaugurated in December 2005 and formalized in March 2006, through Resolution SAGPyA # 132. The Forum gathered a large number of farmers' and family farmers' organizations, and in a relatively brief time, the Forum managed to: (a) produce a remarkable and comprehensive diagnosis involving multiple participants; and (b) develop strategic guidelines for a rural development policy. Both documents highlight the need to develop differential policies to support family farming, as recorded in a national registry, as well as a plan to institutionalize family farming.

The consolidation of differential support for family farming under a form of "state policies" – i.e. policies sustained by civil society and transcending administration terms – requires a sound public institutionality. Hence, on 23 October 2007, the government announced the creation of an Under Secretariat of SAGPyA, devoted to Rural Development and Family Farming, which was formally established through a decree-law passed in April 2008. This institutional consolidation process is still ongoing, since the SAGPyA has recently gained ministerial status and, consequently, the Under Secretariat for Rural Development and Family Farming has now become a State Secretariat.

52. Moreover, the IFAD-REAF-MERCOSUR grant has improved the strategy of support provision to FOs within some IFAD country programmes. First of all it has had positive impact on **the targeting strategy** of IFAD country programmes: Based on the experience in Brazil, where national registers have been successfully used for targeting for many years by the IFAD project portfolio, similar national registers of family farmers were created in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. This has enabled IFAD projects in these countries to significantly improve their targeting methodologies. Furthermore, the fact that former IFAD project directors became coordinators of the national sections of REAF in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay helped a lot to promote linkages between the regional grant to REAF-MERCOSUR and the national country programmes.

53. Last, but not least, **the IFAD COPROFAM grant** (see Annex 3), which ended during the biennium 2012-2013, has been pivotal in the process of promoting family farmers' involvement in the regional policy dialogue taking place through the REAF-MERCOSUR platform. Its impact can be accounted for in many countries of the region, among them Paraguay and Brazil. In **Paraguay** for example, with the support of IFAD's grant to COPROFAM, the family farming policy is currently being developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and a Family Agriculture Directorate was created within the Ministry of Agriculture. In **Brazil**, the strong involvement of the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) on family farming issues has inspired and leveraged REAF activities in MERCOSUR, as well as in other sub-regions where the importance of family farming in production and food security has been positioned on the international agenda. Moreover, as a result of IFAD's grant to COPROFAM: (i) progress has been made on the reinterpretation of the law on land concentration and the topic of rural settling by the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform [Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária](INCRA); and (ii) a public procurement system for family farming has been developed.

B. West and Central Africa (WCA)

Involvement of FOs in design processes

54. **During the biennium 2012-2013, there has been a growing trend within the WCA portfolio to focus on enhancing FOs' participation within projects/COSOPs designs.** Indeed, 56 per cent of new projects and 100 per cent of new COSOPs have involved FOs as special players.

55. This trend was fostered by two sets of good practices: (i) the mapping and/or profiling of FOs; and (ii) the use of the large grant from AgriCord to build the capacity of FOs to participate in IFAD country programmes.

56. **The extensive task of mapping and/or profiling** of FOs operating in the countries of the region, or specifically in the areas targeted by the projects under design, has enabled IFAD to better understand the FOs' dynamics and, therefore, better tailor the support provided to them. Over the last biennium, **67 per cent** of newly designed projects have undertaken mapping/profiling of FOs. The same has been done within those ongoing projects in which a need was felt to better engage with FOs, especially in terms of achieving market-related objectives (e.g. in Benin and Nigeria). The case of Niger deserves special mention. IFAD has invested (using Italian Supplementary Funds) in an in-depth study³¹ on FOs and other key partners in **Niger**, such as the networks of Chambres d'Agriculture, prior to the design of a new intervention, the Food Security and Development Project in the Region of Maradi [Projet d'Appui à la Sécurité Alimentaire et au Développement dans la région de Maradi] (PASADEM). This approach had two advantages: it broadened the knowledge of issues concerning the institutional dynamics of FOs operating within the area, and also facilitated the selection of strategic FO partners for IFAD-funded projects prior to the commencement of implementation. It thus guaranteed that the identified FOs would be key partners in the implementation process, without having to be in competition with other, more traditional, service providers such as NGOs.

57. **The large grant to AgriCord, provided to build the capacity of FOs** to participate in the design of IFAD country programmes, became available during the last biennium. This grant facility, established on the basis of a tri-partite agreement between IFAD's CPM, the FOs and an agri-agency member of AgriCord, has already been used in five countries,³² resulting in various achievements (see Box 14 below). For example, during the last biennium, the FOs in Mali have been closely involved both in the review and the design process of the COSOP. The key success factors were that: (i) the overall process was led by the apex FO CNOP-Mali, which involved all FOs' networks, including the Chambers of Agriculture; and (ii) all choices and actions were made in consultation and coordination with IFAD staff, including the CPM and the field programme coordinator.

³¹ Available at http://www.reca-niger.org/IMG/pdf/Etude_OP_Niger_FIDA_2013.pdf

³² Benin, Togo, Liberia, Guinea and Mali (Ghana and Niger were also targeted but the process was not achieved)

Box 14 Some outcomes of AgriCord's grant in WCA region

In **Togo**, AgriCord engaged a Senegalese farmer leader, Mr Mamadou Cissokho, to provide peer-to-peer expertise and facilitate discussions within the apex FO, Togolese Coordination of Peasant Organizations and Producers [Coordination Togolaise des Organisations Paysannes et de Producteurs Agricoles](CTOP). AgriCord's strategic proposal was for CTOP to join a broader civil society group in Togo to engage with greater influence in policy dialogue with the Government of Togo (GoT). CTOP used this consultation capacity and its knowledge of its FO members to feed the discussions with GoT and thus position itself as a credible partner of the latter. The dialogue between IFAD, GoT and FOs was the first step towards better involvement of FOs in IFAD country programme's activities.

In **Liberia**, the partnership with AgriCord had three objectives: (i) to raise awareness and generate interest among donors and the Government of Liberia (GoL) to engage FOs within their programmes; (ii) to build the institutional capacities of the Farmers' Union Network (FUN, the apex FO in Liberia) to improve accountability; and (iii) to strengthen FUN's membership and, consequently, involve it in regional consultations, leading to participation in the national Farmers' Forum meeting. An AgriCord member, Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires (CSA), and Mr Cissokho jointly assisted FUN to design this consultation strategy. The latter drew the attention of IFAD and encouraged it to continue strengthening the institutional capacities of FUN by providing a grant of US\$680,000 from the Italian Supplementary Fund – an activity which commenced in January 2013. The leverage that FUN received as a result of this support led to it being commissioned in September 2013 to host the event celebrating the 10th anniversary of the African Union Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa.³³

Although the grant to AgriCord has demonstrated some successes, it is still premature to measure its full impact on FOs' involvement in project design and implementation; as such, it would be comprehensively reviewed in the next Partnership in Progress report.

³³ <http://www.nepad.org/nepad/knowledge/doc/1787/maputo-declaration>

Involvement of FOs in project implementation: FO role, support provided and partnership tools

58. WCA's portfolio can showcase some very innovative project setups, which are empowering FOs by making them responsible for the management of one or more project components, e.g. the ongoing PNAFA in Guinea and the completed PSAOP2 in Senegal. Within Senegal's portfolio, two projects that engaged in strong partnerships with FOs were assessed during the last biennium and showed outstanding results. These were the PSAOP2 with one its components managed by the Senegalese Association for the Promotion of Small Development Projects (ASPRODEB) and the PRODAM2 which provided structuring and capacity building support to FOs (see Box 15 below).

Box 15 Senegal: outcomes of PSAOP2 and PRODAM in terms of FOs' empowerment

In **PSAOP2**, the overall approach was focused on building the capacity of FOs to provide relevant economic services to their farmer members and to channel their voices into policy dialogue consultations. An entire project component was dedicated to the provision of support to FOs, with the following objectives: (i) to facilitate the functioning of 168 Local Committees for Coordination of Farmers' Organizations (CLCOP), key local dialogue and planning platforms for FOs; (ii) to strengthen the capacity of five FO federations representing producers in their sector; (iii) to establish a network of seed producers to meet the needs of agricultural production in at least five regions; (iv) to develop and implement a suitable financial service to make credit available for at least one production season in at least two regions. All set targets were reached or even exceeded.

PRODAM2 has enabled the empowerment of FOs through a combination of institutional and financial support, including: provision of technical and management trainings, as well as training in functional literacy, formation of umbrella FOs (federations) and development of partnerships. *Economic impact:* the provision of equipment, made possible by facilitating access to credit, and initiatives such as the care and maintenance of irrigation schemes, have helped to increase and diversify agricultural and non-agricultural income of FO members and, therefore, promote sustainable economic development in targeted areas. Thorough preparation for the farming season and the rigorous application of technical itineraries has allowed FOs to significantly increase agricultural production and productivity. Through application of management plans for pastoral areas, the cattle breeders' organizations in Ferlo region have significantly increased the production of milk and meat, and thus improved their incomes. *Social impact:* the capacity building programs have fostered the emergence of many grass-roots organizations and community networks, which became platforms for dialogue, resource mobilization, self-help, leverage and alternative solutions. The implementation of management plans for pastoral areas has significantly reduced territorial conflicts between herders and farmers, as well as between transhumant and indigenous peoples. Moreover, women's leadership has emerged and begun to assert itself within FO structures.

59. **Further support to link FOs to value chains.** In the context of further development of value chain projects in WCA, IFAD has enhanced its partnership with FOs by giving the latter the implementation mandate for specific activities, with some promising results.

60. In **Sao Tome and Principe**, within the Participatory Smallholder Agriculture and Artisanal Fisheries Development Programme (PAPAFPA), financing support for FOs' business plans commenced over ten years ago and has, from the outset, pursued the objective of sustainability. As a result, one of the supported cooperatives has recently reached its break-even point.

61. In **Liberia**, within the Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project (STCRSP) launched in early 2013, progressive support has been provided to selected cooperatives in the form of financing for their business plans. An innovative public-private partnership (PPP) has also been developed with a strong involvement of the private sector (see Box 16 below).

62. In **Senegal**, the Agricultural Value Chains Support Project (PAFA) is supporting a partnership mechanism between FOs and "market operators" in specific value chains. FOs are thus connected with marketing entities and supported by the Project to contract with those stakeholders.

Box 16 Liberia: The launch of a new PPP approach

In Liberia, a very promising, the-first-of-its-kind public-private partnership has been instituted between the Ministry of Agriculture, the Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project (STCRSP) and the Liberia Agriculture and Asset Development Company (LAADCO), a private sector exporter of cocoa and coffee. In an innovative move, the public sector has engaged LAADCO as a key implementing partner in the rehabilitation of an initial 1000 hectares of cocoa- and coffee-growing smallholder farms (on average, 1 hectare per farmer).

Design of the support to cooperatives: the project aims to help cocoa and coffee farmers to rehabilitate their farms, increase productivity and obtain a fair price for their produce by utilizing their cooperative's capacity to provide rehabilitation and marketing services. The project's strategy was (i) to select the most promising cooperatives in Lofa County, and (ii) provide direct but progressive financing to the selected cooperatives in order to build up their operational capacities.

Innovation: LAADCO is not only providing technical and extension services, but is also co-financing the project to the tune of over US\$1 million in various forms of investment, including: human resources, capacity building of district teams of technical extensionists, vehicles to facilitate cooperatives' mobility and transportation of goods, as well the provision of much needed pre-financing for cooperatives' working capital (US\$15,000 per cooperative at induction), enabling the latter to mobilize and purchase cocoa from member and non-member farmers for further commercialization.

Outlook: Today, preparations are underway for LAADCO to enter into agreement with other cooperatives involved in the project. Overall, STCRSP aims to support the rehabilitation of 15,000 hectares of cocoa and coffee farms. To meet this objective, LAADCO has committed a total of US\$5 million in co-financing.

Tools and grants to facilitate M&E and enhance the quality of partnerships

63. In **Senegal**, the PRODAM (phases 1 and 2) was the pioneer project in WCA to design and use a M&E tool to measure the level of autonomy of FOs supported by the project, in order to address identified gaps and evaluate improvements made over the years. The SAO³⁴ tool that was designed was then replicated and adapted in Guinea's portfolio.

64. In **Guinea**, a set of implementation mechanisms was designed specifically to improve IFAD-FOs' partnership in a context of direct implementation of specific project activities by the apex FO CNOP-G: this led to the production of a simplified manual of procedures and planning modalities (see Box 1 in Section I). This adaptation of procedures was seen by CNOP-G as key to ensuring the efficiency of IFAD-funded programmes partnering directly with FOs.

³⁴ SAO=Stade d'autonomisation opérationnelle

Support FOs institutional and advocacy capacities at regional level

65. **At regional level**, IFAD-FOs' partnership has been developed over the past two years using mainly the SFOAP grant, which has been tapped to provide support to ROPPA and PROPAC networks of the subregion and NFOs' members. In the case of PROPAC and central African NFOs, the main focus was on Component 1 of the Programme, i.e. institutional strengthening, as NFOs' capacities were generally low. Accordingly, the provided support concentrated primarily on human resources to improve the functioning of executive secretariats, as well as programme and financial management, governance, and other institutional capacity-building needs (see Box 17 below).

Box 17 DRC: Professionalization of the secretariat of the COPACO

Before SFOAP, the Confédération Paysanne du Congo (COPACO) was hosted in a small room that did not offer adequate working conditions and had no paid staff. As a result, the organization's visibility and credibility were poor. It was essential for COPACO to ensure that it had basic conditions and capacities to fulfil its mission as a national platform of FOs. With SFOAP funds, COPACO was able to: (i) rent a new office with adequate workspaces and a meeting room, (ii) recruit a permanent secretary and assistant accountant, (iii) purchase office equipment (e.g. computers, chairs, projectors, printers, scanners, accounting software, etc.), (iv) cover operational costs (electricity, water, Internet), (v) purchase a generator.

Outcome: The professionalization and, consequently, the improved capacity of COPACO has enabled the organization to be systematically involved in agricultural sector projects and policy initiatives in the country and establish regular exchanges and collaboration with sectoral ministries.

66. In Western Africa, ROPPA focused on the involvement of FOs in policy dialogue, given the opportune timing whereby: (i) the regional agricultural policy of the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) was being discussed at high level, with consultation space given to FOs' representatives; and (ii) the national agricultural investment programmes (PNIAs) of many countries were also discussed and NFOs mobilized to speak out for their members (see Box 18 below). For the main phase of the Programme, ROPPA is planning to invest resources from SFOAP in two ambitious programmes: the observatory of family farming and the farmers' university.

Box 18 Benin: SFOAP's success story in Benin in supporting PNOPPA in policy dialogue

The SFOAP pilot phase (see section I) has generated very positive outcomes in Benin. The overall objective was to enable PNOPPA to lobby the Government of Benin (GoB) to take into account the role of family farming in its Strategic Plan for Reviving the Agricultural Sector (PSRSA). Specifically, PNOPPA aimed to: (i) better position the FOs as key actors in agricultural development in Benin; (ii) contribute to the improvement of PSRSA as a tool for the development of the sector for the next five years; (iii) defend the definition of a consensual multi-stakeholder institutional framework; and (iv) improve the participation of FOs within the mechanisms of reflection, decision-making, implementation and M&E related to the Plan. PNOPPA's lobbying and advocacy activities resulted in the following: (i) the new version of the PSRSA gave a prominent place to family farming; (ii) the PSRSA laid down some guiding principles for its implementation, namely, accountability of all stakeholders according to their mandate, capacity building of stakeholders and participation of stakeholders in consultative bodies and decision making; (iii) PNOPPA established a framework for dialogue with the Ministry; and (iv) the credibility and visibility of PNOPPA vis-à-vis their membership base and partners significantly improved.

C. East and Southern Africa (ESA)

67. Within ESA portfolio, over the last biennium, FOs were generally involved in the partnership with IFAD more during the implementation stage of projects rather than during their design of both projects and COSOPs.. An exception to this occurred in **Uganda**, where a mapping of FOs was undertaken during the COSOP design mission and presented as an appendix of the new COSOP.

FOs mainly involved as service providers

68. One of the most common trends in the ESA region is to contract FOs as **service providers** (SPs), especially those that are already well developed. In **Kenya**, the apex FO Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP) has historically been contracted by IFAD-funded projects for the provision of specific services. The newly designed Kenya Cereal Enhancement Initiative (KCEI) project plans to engage this FO as technical service provider (see Box 19 below). In **Zambia**, the **Zambian National Farmers Union (ZNFU)** has been supported by the Smallholder Agribusiness Promotion Programme (SAPP) in the consolidation of its SMS service, as well as in exploring further possibilities, such as SMS-based payment services and other economic services to farmers and traders/processors.

Box 19 Kenya: FOs as service providers

KENFAP is an apex FO, which has been developing into a business-oriented professional organization. Within the Smallholder Horticulture Marketing Programme (SHoMaP), KENFAP was contracted to enhance the structuring of value chains by identifying the value chain stakeholders and fostering the demand from local FO members for the project's activities. The Smallholder Dairy Commercialization Programme (SDCP) contracted KENFAP as a service provider to deliver technical trainings on the biogas concept to the local breeders and to facilitate farmers' access to credits offered by MFIs responsible for the provision of subsidies.

The new Kenya Cereal Enhancement Initiative (KCEI) to empower FOs: During the last biennium, KENFAP participated in the design of the new KCEI project, the first component of which aims to "support farmers' organizations development and empowerment, so that they can articulate an effective demand for support services and strengthen their linkages with other value chain stakeholders". The Cereal Growers Association (CGA), a member of KENFAP will be involved in the implementation of some activities as a technical service provider. This choice of an implementing partner was based on three critical considerations: (i) CGA is the main commodity-based farmers' organization focusing on cereals at grass-roots level; (ii) working with a member-based association would increase the number of farmers' organizations involved in umbrella organization and would increase awareness among the farmers to be federated; and (iii) CGA has already proven its ability to provide technical advisory services to farmers' groups and promote farmers' empowerment in other similar projects within the same area of intervention, with the support of other donors, e.g. the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), etc.

69. Normally, FOs are engaged as service providers following a call for tender, for which they must compete against other types of stakeholders, such as NGOs. In **Malawi**, within the Rural Livelihoods and Economic Enhancement Programme (RLEEP), an agricultural commercialization fund has been put in place to provide large grants for marketing investments projects to be submitted by stakeholders in the Project area. The National Farmers Associations (NASFAM) won the bid to become a service provider responsible for the implementation of a project funded through this grant window, namely *"Increasing incomes of smallholder farmers through enhancing their participation in the groundnut value chain"*.

FOs as shareholders for business-driven activities

70. Another common trend in the ESA region is to **promote and partnering with FOs as business-oriented organizations** that can foster smallholder farmers' participation in downstream activities of the value chains. In **Mozambique**, in the new Pro-Poor Value Chain Development in the Maputo and Limpopo Corridors Project (PROSUL), FOs were strategically chosen to enhance linkages between smallholders and market opportunities. In addition to acting as service providers responsible for the implementation of selected activities, these FOs will also become owners of the "Hubs", marketing and for-profit organizations to be created to provide processing and financing facilities to FOs. As the FOs are still too weak to manage these Hubs independently, the PROSUL intends to hire a management team to operate the Hubs, with the FOs leading the team selection process.

71. In some ESA countries, this strategy is evolving towards the promotion of farmer-driven processing enterprises, i.e. private companies involved in specific value chains, with FOs as shareholders. In **Rwanda**, the new Project for Rural Income through Export (PRICE) aims to upscale and improve the business model developed within the Smallholder Cash and Export Crops Development Project (PDCRE), which used a PPP business model to support tea cooperatives' investment as shareholders of tea factories (see Box 20 below and Annex 4). In **Uganda**, an IFAD project created the Kalangala Oil Palm Growers Trust (KOPGT) - in which both public services and farmers are represented – to work within the Vegetable Oil Development Project Phase 2 (VODP2) as an intermediary with the private sector on behalf of smallholder farmers growing oil palm, and to provide technical support and financing to foster the development of these farmers. KOPGT holds 10 per cent of the shares in the private business. Recently, the farmers represented in KOPGT formed an FO – the Kalangala Oil Palm Growers Association (KOPGA) – to safeguard their interests and enhance their bargaining power with the private sector in the project.

Box 20 Rwanda: Support to tea farmers' cooperatives through PPP and equity sharing

With support from the **PDCRE**, tea cooperatives have partnered with private investors to establish tea factories in the project area, i.e. the Nshili and Mushubi districts. Moreover, IFAD has enabled two tea cooperatives (COTHENK and COTHEGAB) to become shareholders in the tea factories that purchase their green leaves.

The main impacts of PDCRE were: (i) larger volumes of tea sold and improvements made in quality; (ii) higher prices commanded (as a result of the new greenleaf pricing mechanism adopted by the Government of Rwanda, farmers' incomes have increased between 11 per cent and 40 per cent); (iii) employment opportunities created; (iv) long-term contractual arrangements put in place; and (v) access to services improved (financial services, supply of inputs, access to health insurance increased from 28 per cent to 94 per cent).

Support provided by the PRICE had enabled the cooperatives to acquire between 30 per cent and 40 per cent of equity shares in the factories planned to be built on four greenfield sites. Moreover, the FO structure is being supported by the project from the greenfield to the national level, i.e. the Fédération Rwandaise des Coopératives de Théiculteurs (FERWACOTHE), which is composed of 18 cooperatives comprising 35,000 members and divided into five unions. Specific financial and technical assistance will be provided to two cooperatives on existing greenfield sites and to four cooperatives on new greenfield sites, in order to improve their managerial skills in preparation for their future participation as shareholders in the ownership of the processing plants.

72. A remarkable case whereby strong partnership with FOs has been developed was the case of AROPA in **Madagascar**, where FOs were involved from the outset in project design and took part in workshops organized to foster their coordination and facilitate their involvement in the design process. FOs are also heavily involved in the project's implementation). In this specific project, an interesting approach was developed to foster the inclusion of the most vulnerable farmers as beneficiaries of AROPA's intervention and thus enable them to benefit from the economic services which FOs provide (see Box 21 below).

Box 21 Madagascar: a targeting approach through FOs inclusive of the most vulnerable farmers

In Madagascar, about 20 per cent of family farmers are members of FOs. Very few among them are vulnerable farmers, given the constraints that vulnerable farmers face in joining and contributing to FO activities. To overcome this, the AROPA has committed to select at least 50 per cent of its beneficiaries from among the most vulnerable farmers in the planned five areas of intervention in Madagascar. This objective has been preliminarily shared with stakeholders. The targeting process experienced strong participation of the beneficiaries, i.e. FOs and grassroots communities. A special mechanism to recapitalize these vulnerable farmers was set up, on the one hand to revive their production, and on the other hand to guide their involvement in value chains supported by the project. The regional FOs were sensitized to include vulnerable farmers in their objectives to increase their membership and develop services for their members. Thus, the project was able to reconcile a local FOs demand-driven approach with economic support activities, facilitated by the development pathways that favoured the gradual integration of vulnerable farmers within FOs.

Tools and grants to facilitate M&E

73. In **Mozambique**, an FO classification tool was designed in the context of the Rural Markets Promotion Programme (PROMER). Based on the lessons learned from an earlier IFAD project in Mozambique, the FO graduation system was introduced and guidelines for its implementation were developed. This M&E tool has two objectives: (i) to identify the types of services that FOs require to improve their overall capacity and thus provide orientation for the support design process; and (ii) to assess the progress made by supported FOs.

74. In **Zambia**, a similar approach will be adopted within the new Smallholder Productivity Promotion Programme (S3P). The S3P sub-component "Strengthening FOs and their federations" aims to strengthen and enhance the services that FOs provide to their members. The type of support that the Programme must extend to participating FOs is to be determined by the development stage that the latter have achieved. The assessment of maturity will be done using a guiding tool. Once an FO is deemed mature enough, the S3P will assist it to link up with financial institutions.

Support FOs institutional and advocacy capacities at regional level

75. At **regional level**, over the past two years, IFAD-FOs' partnership has been developing mainly in the context of the SFOAP pilot (see Section I.B.2.). This programme has been supporting EAFF and SACAU networks of the ESA subregion, as well as the members of its NFOs. During the pilot phase of SFOAP, the afore-mentioned RFOs adopted a selective targeting approach, aiming to support only the most vulnerable and less developed NFO members.

76. In terms of interventions, EAFF and its targeted members have been involved in the implementation of both institutional strengthening and policy dialogue components. In **Burundi**, a combination of various IFAD interventions (see Box 22 below) created very positive outcomes in terms of: (i) the recognition of CAPAD as a key stakeholder by the Government of Burundi (GoB) and other partners; (ii) the impact on national policies by CAPAD's lobbying activities, e.g. new law on pre-cooperative groups approved, tax exemption on agricultural inputs enacted, subsidies for fertilizers provided; and (iii) the impact on budget allocations to agriculture (in response to FOs' calls to respect the Maputo Declaration, the GoB increased the share of the agricultural budget from 3.6 per cent in 2010 to 6.7 per cent in 2011 and 10 per cent in 2012).

Box 22 Burundi: Mobilizing FOs for greater policy impact: success of combining support tools

IFAD's Country Programme gives a central role to FOs and public recognition to CAPAD; the second strategic objective of its COSOP - "Strengthen poor people's organizations, enabling them to access services and resources and participate in rural development policies" - is fully dedicated to this purpose. Moreover, within the COSOP, IFAD recognized CAPAD as a key partner and a possible implementing stakeholder, a key element for CAPAD's public recognition.

IFAD grants for capacity building of CAPAD as a strong and representative network of FOs: CAPAD understood that in order to achieve concrete results it could not work alone and required a large group of farmers to stand behind its demands to gain government recognition. The organization started mobilizing local FOs within and beyond its own membership. The campaign, financed by SFOAP, was the first opportunity for CAPAD to be involved in lobbying activities with the government. This process led to the establishment of the Forum des Organisations des Producteurs Agricoles du Burundi (FOPABU), bringing together CAPAD and the national federations of tea, coffee, cotton and palm oil producers. Moreover, the AgriCord grant was used to finance South-South cooperation with the National Council for Rural Consultation and Cooperation (CNCR) and ASPRODEB in Senegal, enabling CAPAD to learn from their experience.

IFAD grants to support CAPAD in policy dialogue: The SFOAP has been instrumental for CAPAD to achieve specific policy outcomes, to strengthen the Burundian farmers' movement in general and to create a partnership with IFAD country projects. With the backing of SFOAP, CAPAD commissioned two studies on the impacts of the East African Common Market on Burundian producers and adapted agricultural models. Studies were followed by the elaboration and dissemination of concrete demands or policy positions on key issues, e.g. financing for agriculture, the role of the farmers' movement in agricultural development, access to inputs and land, and food security. These lobbying documents were made public through a set of activities, including radio broadcasts, meetings with parliamentarians, journalists and donors, publications, a press conference and an agricultural show. Moreover, the AgriCord grant was used to fund a national campaign demanding to increase public finance to agriculture, provide input subsidies, issue a new law on cooperatives and FOs, and create the Agriculture Advocacy Group (GPA), bringing together eight national FOs and 11 support NGOs and think tanks.

77. On the other hand, SACAU focused on Component 1 of the Programme, i.e. Institutional Strengthening, given that NFOs' capacities were generally low. It thus concentrated primarily on developing human resources to facilitate the operation of executive secretariats, support to management, financial capacities, governance, and other institutional capacity building needs.

D. Asia and the Pacific (APR)

78. In APR, IFAD's partnership with FOs has been limited to the context of MTCP, which is focused on enabling the FOs in Asia and the Pacific region to engage in active policy consultations concerning the interests of rural smallholders at national, sub-regional and regional levels, with some positive outcomes.

Involvement of FOs in designs of Projects/COSOPs

79. The involvement of FOs in the design of IFAD country programmes and strategies is directly linked to the outcomes of MTCP1's Component 3. The objective of this component is *"to strengthen FOs' participation in IFAD country programme activities"*. Although this component is considered to be the most challenging, it has nonetheless produced some noteworthy success stories. In **Viet Nam**, the partnership started with the involvement of the **Viet Nam Farmers Union (VNFU)** in the new COSOP consultation process. Subsequently, members of VNFU took part in the project supervision missions and, eventually, were made responsible for the implementation of a full component. As a result, within the APR region, Viet Nam is the only country where all projects have been systematically involving FOs since 2010 (see Box 23 below).

Box 23 Viet Nam: MTCP fosters VNFU's involvement in IFAD programme

VNFU has been in existence since 1930, with a membership exceeding ten million nationwide and an organizational structure that is ordered at the national, provincial, district and commune levels. Over the last two years, MTCP has supported VNFU's objective of strengthening its provincial chapters through various capacity-building activities, such as participation in policy workshops and dialogues.

The MTCP has encouraged a progressive and increasingly systematic involvement of VNFU in IFAD country programmes. Thus, VNFU participated in the review of IFAD country programmes in September 2011, took part in two joint missions, signed a Partnership Agreement with IFAD, and got its provincial members to sit on the Project Management Board of IFAD-funded projects. To facilitate VNFU's involvement in the implementation of IFAD-funded projects, VNFU and the MTCP Project Management Unit have met with IFAD country representatives, directors of IFAD provincial programmes and leaders of 11 provincial farmers' unions to work out an action plan, aiming to realize the objectives of the VNFU-IFAD Country Programme Partnership Agreement. The proposed activities focused on economic services, including:

- (i) **Marketing:** VNFU staff and members of 11 provincial farmers' unions were trained to provide marketing-related services, such as marketing analysis, marketing strategy for products, business management, value chain management, branding, negotiation, pricing, and contract farming;
- (ii) **Farmers' group development and credit:** in collaboration with IFAD country programme, the 11 provincial farmers' unions benefited from training courses on agricultural production technology, farmers' group management and development, as well as assisted farmers' interest groups to develop their production and access loans from IFAD's Community Development Fund and other financial institutions, such as the Social Policy Bank, Agribank, etc. As a result, most members of the farmers' unions are now capable of developing their production, delivering products to the market and increasing their incomes.

80. **MTCP2: a good experience of FO involvement in IFAD project design.** The biennium 2012-2013 was a transition period for the MTCP, which concluded its first phase in 2012 and designed the second phase, over a 9-month period between 2012-2013. The design of MTCP2 is characterized by a highly participative and innovative approach involving all FO platforms' stakeholders (see Box 24 below).

Box 24 MTCP 2: A participative design process

Initiated in July 2012, **the design process of MTCP2** was conducted in a participative manner, facilitated by three key approaches:

- **A mailing list** of the Steering Committee members, including representatives of FO platforms involved in the MTCP1 process, was created in order to collect their inputs and contributions to all design-related draft documents in a cost-efficient manner. The mailing list was first used to collect inputs on the concept note and, subsequently, to gather contributions to the draft project document before it was finalized and passed through the IFAD reviewing process.
- **A methodological note** was prepared and shared with all subregional implementing partners in order to guide the channelling of contributions from FOs' platforms to the first version of the concept note drafted by the Steering Committee.
- **Workshops** were used to mainstream the outputs of some brainstorming sessions in order to: (i) define the main orientations and expected results of the second phase of the MTCP (Nanning Workshop, October 2012), and (ii) discuss, following the conclusion of the design mission in November 2012, the proposed design of MTCP2.

Involvement of FOs in project implementation: role of FOs, type of support provided, any specific tools used to enhance the partnership

81. At **national level, a strong focus on value chains and PPPs development.** In many Asian countries, IFAD-funded projects are focused mainly on value chain driven approaches and PPP.

82. A common feature of IFAD-funded projects in the region is the use of a specific fund to finance FOs' micro-project proposals, intended for independent implementation or in partnership with a private enterprise. For example, in **Papua New Guinea**, the FOs and their private sector partners intend to submit a joint business proposal to the fund associated with component 2 of the Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project (PPAP), the objective of which is to *"increase the integration of smallholders in performing and remunerative value chains by developing and implementing productive alliances between smallholders and the private sector, aiming at improving market linkages."*

83. In **China**, IFAD-funded projects have been developing and strengthening their support to cooperatives and, concurrently, their support to value chain development (see Box 25 below). Even though the strategy of direct support to FOs has not really been adopted, some positive outcomes are arising. For example, within the China Dabieshan Area Poverty Reduction Programme (DAPRP), which is about to be concluded, the cooperatives supported were sufficiently empowered to implement directly some of the activities – a situation not foreseen at the planning stage.

Box 25 China: Strong focus on supporting cooperatives

Background on cooperatives development in China: The cooperative movement in China is almost a century old and has developed quite differently in various areas of the country. After the 1980s, farmers tried several types of economic organizations in response to the change from a planned to a market economy. Before 2007, different types of cooperatives developed in China due to the lack of cooperative policy and law, and other guiding government influences. Since 2007, with the release of the Farmers' Specialized Cooperatives Law and various government support policies, farmer cooperatives developed very rapidly in rural China. According to the data from the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), by June 2010, there were 310,000 registered farmer cooperatives comprising 26,000,000 farmer households (about 10 per cent of the national total). These farmer cooperatives have shown remarkable results in the acceleration of the agricultural development and an increase in farmers' revenue (Yuan, 2008). Therefore, the development of farmer cooperatives has become a highlight in the innovation of China's agricultural management organizations and systems (MOA, 2011).

IFAD country programme in China is increasingly focusing its support on cooperatives' development, especially through a value chain- driven approach. The ongoing Guangxi Integrated Agricultural Development Project (GIADP), the Dabieshan Area Poverty Reduction Programme (DAPRP) and the newly designed Yunnan Agricultural and Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (YARIIP) are strengthening cooperatives through the implementation of "cooperative support modules" (see below). The DAPRP has given some cooperatives progressive ownership of the implementation process for certain activities, even though this was not originally planned. Meanwhile, the newly designed Hunan Agricultural and Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (HARIIP), YARIIP and the Shiyuan Smallholders Agri-business Development Project (SSADeP) are even more centred on cooperative and PPP development.

The main challenges facing cooperatives' support in China: Even though the context of cooperative development in China has been recently formalized and the Government is very supportive of enhancing the cooperatives' development capacities, there are many challenges to overcome in order for that support to become pro-poor driven: (i) there is no harmonized structure among the cooperatives and, more specifically, their operating systems, while some cooperatives need to be diagnosed to ensure that they are not hampered by individuals; (ii) the way cooperatives are run does not comply with the international definition of a cooperative; (iii) many cooperatives in China are "owned" by private individuals, who independently manage them and deal with farmers only for supply-related purposes; and (iv) until now cooperatives were only business-driven and did not benefit from institutional support.

The following key issues and possible solutions should be taken into consideration for future support to cooperatives: (i) clear targeting criteria should be articulated to facilitate the selection of appropriate partner cooperatives at the beginning of the implementation process, so as to ensure that only "real" cooperatives become involved; and (ii) capacity-building addressing various institutional weaknesses should be undertaken and targeted broadly to cooperatives' members, rather than only to their leaders.

84. At **regional level, IFAD provided** support to the restructuring efforts of the Pacific Island Farmers Organization Network (PIFON), which aimed to become an **RFO partner within MTCP2**. It should be noted that, during its first phase, the MTCP did not support the FOs located on the Pacific islands because (i) the FOs in this region were in the process of structuring at regional level (they have been receiving support from the EU and FAO for a number of years for the purpose of institutional structuring and strengthening) and (ii) the associated logistical challenges and high costs, of having to deal with individual FOs on various islands. However, when MTCP2 was about to be designed, IFAD decided to extend institutional support for the official launching of the PIFON (see Annex 3).

85. **MTCP had also empowered NFOs by enhancing their managing capacities.** Thus, if MTCP1 was mostly managed by technical agencies (e.g. SEWA, FAO), MTCP2 will only partner with FOs' platforms and/or consortiums for management purposes (see Annex 3).

Tools and grants to facilitate M&E

86. The third component of MTCP aimed at fostering FOs' participation in IFAD country programmes. However this component didn't meet the expectations that were foreseen. In order to address this challenge, a tool was designed during the last review mission in order to better monitor and evaluate the progress made under this component. The tool categorized varying levels of FOs' participation in IFAD country programmes as follows:

- **Level 1** indicated that engagement with IFAD was limited to invitation/ correspondence/ participation in consultations, meetings, dialogues, discussions.
- **Level 2** indicated a more intensive FO participation and efforts to influence objectives, targets, target areas, resource allocations, etc., which translated into recommendations that were accepted/ integrated by the concerned governments into current/ new IFAD-funded country projects.
- **Level 3** indicated that FOs' efforts to engage and influence their governments led to active roles being assigned to the concerned FOs in the implementation of IFAD-funded projects, among other benefits.

87. Moreover, some key success factors of this component 3 were highlighted in the final review of MTCP1 and are presented in Box 26 below.

Box 26 Keys for success for the MTCP Component 3

Pivotal to the success of this component is the openness of both FOs and IFAD country to collaborate, and to engage the national and local governments responsible for the project implementation. The success in component 1 of consolidating a strong voice among FOs also redounds to the FOs success in being integrated in public programs such as the IFAD country investments. The IFAD CPMT's disposition and leadership to translate its expected role as bridge and facilitator is equally important. The FOs own capacity to constructively engage both IFAD and government is also key to success. Finally, the country governance context is important in finding viable strategies for action. To operationalize ideas and plans, it is imperative that at country level, all parties agree to setting up a mechanism for coordination and information sharing, without which the aspirations will remain aspirations and the progress at Level 1. The IFAD CPMTs have to be involved or consulted in the design stage of the next phase to build better ownership of the new MTCP. Their participation should not only be activity-based but in supporting the over-all strategic agenda of the MTCP and the participating FOs.

Support to FOs' institutional and advocacy capacities at regional level

88. **Impact and success stories of the regional support provided by MTCP to FOs in APR:** MTCP1 can showcase a wide range of successes, but the most significant among them is the fact that it enabled FOs' networks to join forces at the national level and together define a common agenda and develop joint proposals for their governments.

89. A good example of such success can be found in **Nepal**, where MTCP1's support not only gave NFOs the opportunity to develop a common vision and voice, but also produced concrete results in terms of policy changes (see Box 4 in Section I) and potential for scaling up (see Box 27 below).

Box 27 Nepal: Innovation in and scaling up of the MTCP activities

The strengthening of a broad-based peasant network of FOs affiliated to various political parties is an innovative feat in the context of Nepal, which remains politically in transition. The social capital building through the MTCP is an important milestone, whose impact should redound to the long-term agenda of the smallholder farmers and agricultural development in the country. IFAD's role in the cooperation is pivotal in bringing the diverse sector towards a programming agenda that goes beyond party politics, responding to the socio-economic well-being of the rural people. The farmers' forums in Nepal can be scaled up to include other marginalized sectors and FO groups (e.g. cooperatives, producers' associations, women's groups, Dalits). The scaling up will not only be in terms of the number of participating FOs, but also in the level and scope of activities, so as to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of the farmers' forum for a majority of FOs. While in the other sub-regions MTCP activities revolved mainly around national groups and processes, in South Asia the MTCP has successfully catalysed sub-national FAFO processes at state and regional levels, with decentralized responsibility and resources made available to strengthen local FAFO governance. This broad-based FO process is essential both as the means and the end in pursuing an inclusive growth in the countryside.

90. MTCP1 implementation has also been successful in **Viet Nam** in terms of institutional capacity-building of FOs and the impact of the farmers' forum on policies (see Box 28 below). Other achievements of MTCP1 are reported in Annex 3.

Box 28 Viet Nam: MTCP's outcomes on institutional and advocacy capacities of the VNFU

Outcomes of MTCP's institutional support and capacity building of VNFU:

- VNFU has a strong project team that performs well and has the capacity to successfully collaborate with IFAD consultants, relevant ministries and farmers' unions at all levels in the implementation of project activities.
- VNFU can formulate work plans and manage activities in a timely and efficient manner.
- VNFU has improved its financial management, including book-keeping, cash flow, production of financial reports, etc. With MTCP support, VNFU has conducted training courses on marketing and policy/advocacy to improve the capacities of some farmer leaders and staff members.

Outcomes of MTCP's support to advocacy and policy dialogue: In the framework of MTCP, VNFU has conducted researches, national farmers' forums and national policy workshops in order to make recommendations and proposals on the policies related to agricultural and rural development, as well as farmers' livelihoods, including:

- Policy on promotion of cash crop consumption through contracts;
- Recommendations on policy adjustment for the pilot implementation of agricultural insurance for farmers during the period 2011-2013; and
- Revisions and additions to the cooperative development policy in Vietnam, specifically on issues such as tax policy, provision of credit and land for agricultural cooperatives, etc. These policy consultations enabled VNFU to expose its members to emerging issues confronted by farmers in the country.

E. Near East, North Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe (NEN)

91. In the NEN region, the high diversity of geographic spaces (Northern Africa, Middle East, Eastern Europe and Central Asia) is - on the one hand - making the exercise of defining partnership trends rather difficult, but - on the other hand - creating many opportunities for learning and exchanging experiences among these sub-regions, within the overall regional dynamic. When it comes to the trends of partnership between IFAD and FOs over the last biennium in this region, a set of good practices, success stories and newly designed programmes can be highlighted.

Involvement of FOs in project implementation: role of FOs, type of support provided, any specific tools used to enhance the partnership

92. At country level, one of the common trends in the region is the promotion of business-driven approaches through development of partnerships between FOs (existing or created by the projects) and private enterprises dealing with specific commodities. The support to FOs is thus very much focused on their capacity to engage with businesses and comply with market (i.e. export companies) requirements.

93. In **Egypt**, within the West Noubarya Rural Development Project (WNRDP), the overall support was guided by the market demand for the commodities in question. Thus, the project had a strictly business-oriented approach and the support to FOs was strongly influenced by this strategy. The main focus was to support or create Farmers Marketing Associations (FMAs) to overcome the problem of disorganized farmers who could not meet the market demand, and the fact that export companies preferred to deal with only one partner. Thus, the challenges to overcome were: (i) quality; (ii) quantity; and (iii) timing of production to meet exporters' expectations. The project did not provide direct support to FMAs' activities, instead channelling it through an NGO implementing partner. Some results of this approach are presented in Box 29 below.

Box 29 Egypt: Support to FMAs in contracting with export companies

Background: the WNRDP supported the creation of six FMAs, which it linked to 18 export firms. The project engaged an implementing partner to carry out capacity-building of the FMAs and farmers (e.g. in negotiation and contracting skills), as well as provided credit. The new Promotion of Rural Incomes Through Market Enhancement (PRIME) project in Egypt plans to build on WNRDP's success and upscale its approach in enabling FMAs to contract with export companies.

The strengthened role of FMAs is a key achievement of the project. There appears to be a widespread consensus among project beneficiaries on the relevance and effectiveness of collective marketing through FMAs, as well as the importance of contractual farming arrangements in assuring a market for farmers' products and timely and efficient procurement of inputs. According to a review conducted in 2012, the total membership reached 30,571 smallholders, comprising 24,625 in the FMAs and 5,946 in agricultural cooperatives working with the FMAs. The FMAs collect service charges from the companies with which they sign marketing contracts for the supply of agricultural produce, amounting to 1 per cent of its value.

The table below provides evidence on the impact that the creation of FMAs has had on farm gate prices.

Difference in farm-gate prices between FMA members and non-members

Crop	Unit	Wholesale market		Processing		Export Market	
		Farm-gate w/out FMA	Farm-gate with FMA	Farm-gate w/out FMA	Farm-gate with FMA	Farm-gate w/out FMA	Farm-gate with FMA
Potato	ton	500	750	-	-	500	1,200
Tomato	ton	1,000	850	500	650	-	700
Artichoke	flower	0.31	0.50	0.21	0.40	-	0.65
Cauliflower	ton	500	800	n/a	1,200	-	-
Pepper	ton	1,250	1,500	-	-	-	2,000
Sugar beet	ton	250	250	-	-	-	-
Peanuts	75kg	330	360	-	-	-	400
Guava	ton	1,200	1,250	-	-	1,300	1,500
Orange	ton	800	n/a	-	-	800	1,100

94. In **Yemen**, the implementation of the Fisheries Investment Project (FIP) has commenced using a two-pronged approach, entailing: (i) provision of support to relatively advanced cooperatives; and (ii) support for the creation of new fishers' community-based organizations. Complementary support to the apex FO, the Fisheries Cooperative Union (FCU), is also foreseen (see box 30 below).

Box 30 Yemen: Support to fisheries' organizations through a two-pronged approach

Background: In Yemen, the Fisheries Investment Project (FIP) has been designed to provide support to the Fishery Cooperative Union (FCU) in the form of capital investments and other financial services, integrated with capacity-building on management, technical assistance, and market linkages. The planned investments of the project will be managed by the Economic Opportunities Fund³⁵ (EOF), whose Board is composed of representatives of the FCU and the Agricultural Cooperative Union, the Union of Chambers of Commerce, banks, the public sector at the ministerial level and the private sector.

The selection and capacity-building of cooperatives: will enable the EOF to identify cooperatives that :

- (i) are suitable partners for project implementation and participation in venture capital financing arrangements. Such cooperatives would have strong management and administration, demonstrate good governance and ability to provide benefits to their members, have a sufficiently large membership to justify the investment, including significant numbers of poor or very poor fishers, and have sufficient financial resources to participate in the venture capital investment;
- (ii) have the potential to become project partners, but require capacity building; and
- (iii) should be closed and replaced with new cooperatives established with the support of the project.

Only the best ten fisheries' cooperatives will be partners of the project. The project will finance capacity building and advisory services for these cooperatives in:

- general management of the cooperative and accountability to governing body members;
- financial and accounting procedures and controls;
- conflict resolution;
- design and implementation of new products and services for members;
- pricing of products and services;
- gender and environmental issues; and
- policy dialogue with the Ministry of Fish Wealth

Assistance in creating new fishers' community-based organizations: In locations where existing cooperatives do not comply with regulations and good practices, or where no cooperative exists, the project will assist the local fishers to form their own community-based organizations. Project support will include:

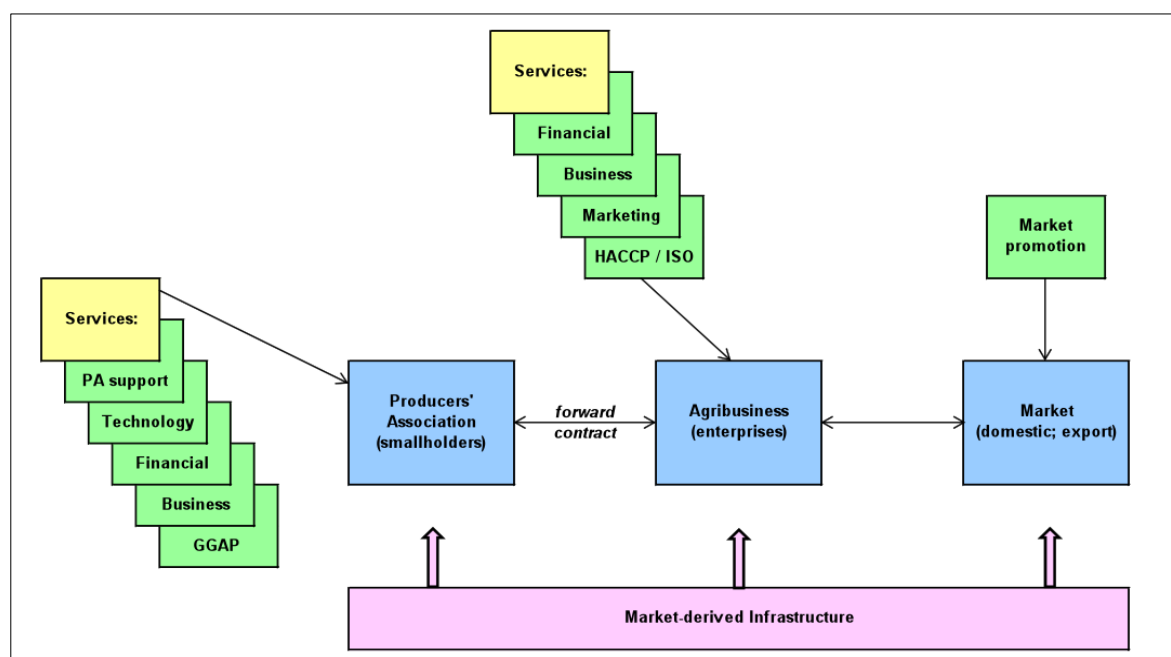
- (i) sensitization of the population;
- (ii) assistance in the legal registration of the organization, either in the form of a cooperative or an association;
- (iii) provision of capacity-building and advisory services to governing bodies' members, staff and leaders of the fishers' community; and
- (iv) additional technical training similar to that offered to the existing cooperatives.

³⁵ Created in 2010 by Government decree under the IFAD-financed Economic Opportunities Programme, the Economic Opportunities Fund (EOF) is a public-private partnership working to improve the economic status of poor women and men in rural areas. Its objective is to create sustainable economic opportunities for poor women and men in the programme areas by: stimulating growth and technological improvement of selected value chains and rural business activities; promoting linkages between producers' organizations and markets through contractual arrangements; promoting compliance with national and international food quality and safety standards; developing public economic infrastructure in support of selected value chains; and, expanding the rural outreach of financial institutions and enhancing access to sustainable rural financial services.

95. **The foreseen support to the apex organization FCU:** The project will also explore working with the FCU to establish mentoring relationships between strong and weak cooperatives, or to facilitate the expansion of strong cooperatives into areas where fishers currently do not have access to such support. The project will work closely with the current FCU management to determine the typology of services that are required by fishers' cooperatives and other fishers' organizations in all domains - organization, management, accounting, compliance with regulations and laws, marketing, advocacy and lobbying, training - and will assist the FCU management to implement these services. The project will finance a study tour in a neighbouring country for FCU senior managers in order to help them understand the role of an apex institution and the types of services provided. The project will also finance training and equipment for the FCU to facilitate its activities. Finally, the project will ensure that a proper financing mechanism is put in place to assure the sustainability of the FCU through fees paid by each of its members, including newly created fishers' organizations.

96. In IFAD-funded projects such as the WNRDP in **Egypt**, assistance is provided to both FOs and agribusiness enterprises through a "support package" to attain market efficiency. The scheme below shows the content of the package provided to each stakeholder (shaded green).

Figure 13 Support packages that IFAD-funded projects provide to FOs and agribusiness enterprises



97. FOs are sometimes used within IFAD-funded projects as **service providers, which are tasked** to assist less capable organizations. In **Moldova**, within the Rural Financial Services and Agribusiness Development Project (RFSADP), the National Federation of Farmers "AGROInform" has been contracted as a service provider to support prospective project beneficiaries (i.e. value chain FO members) in business planning, as well as provide appropriate services for young entrepreneurs.

98. In North African countries such as **Morocco** and **Tunisia**, IFAD-funded projects commonly adopt value chain approaches that involve sector FOs at the local level. These FOs are usually treated as direct beneficiaries of packages of support and trainings, but not empowered to directly implement project activities and independently manage associated funds. An example of such partnership can be found in Morocco within the Agricultural Value Chain Development Programme in the Mountain Zones of Taza Province (PDFAZMT), where support to a sector apex organization is planned (see Box 31 below).

Box 31 Morocco: Planned engagement with ANARBOM in the provision of support to farmers and their organisations

The PDFAZMT is considering contracting l'Association Nationale des Arboriculteurs de Montagne (ANARBOM) to provide support to local FOs. This association is governed by statutes that allow it to perform a wide range of activities which are consistent with the Programme's aim to develop the olive and almond sectors in targeted areas. However, an earlier IFAD-funded programme had tried to partner with ANARBOM without much success due to the fact that the organisation has weak institutional and management capacities. In view of this, the agreement between the PDFAZMT and ANARBOM will be limited to the:

- (i) creation of a regional branch of the association in Taza to promote the Programme's activities and act as its representation in potential future developments; and
- (ii) organization of exchange and learning visits at the association's representation office in Asni (Al Haouz province) for farmers and FOs' leaders for the transfer of know-how and good practices in tree production.

Tools to facilitate targeting

99. An interesting approach was taken within the early stages of implementation of the FIP in Yemen to select the cooperatives that the project would partner with. Given that the project planned from the outset to work with a selection of relatively advanced cooperatives, it hired an audit company to undertake a mapping/profiling of all cooperative members of the FCU. To meet the Project's expectations, the selection criteria were quite high-level in nature (see Box 32 below).

Box 32 Yemen FIP: A selective approach in partnering with fishers' cooperatives

During the design of FIP, IFAD funded an assessment of the fisheries cooperatives that are members of the FCU. The objective was to select the ten most successful cooperatives among the existing 160. An audit company conducted the mapping on the basis of the following key criteria:

- **Management and Board.** An assessment of the caliber of the cooperative management team and its staff. Through interviews and numerous discussions, the audit company attempted to gauge the mission, qualifications, and overall attitude of the staff and management board, and sought to understand the current governance structure.
- **Financial.** The financial analysis included a thorough review of the cooperative's historical and projected financial position, including earnings potential, operating efficiency, and liquidity.
- **Legal and tax.** The analysis focused on compliance with the Cooperative Law and regulations, as well as compliance with the Tax Law (especially the payment of the 3 per cent contribution levied on auctioned fish and any arrears in payments and means of record-keeping of weight of fish landed and value etc.).
- **Membership and Services offered to members.** The assessment reviewed the socioeconomic status of the members [% owners, % part owners, % crew] as well as examined the level of services and products offered by the cooperative to its members, their pricing, sustainability, effectiveness, monitoring and outreach.

Support to FOs' institutional and advocacy capacities at regional level

100. **Regional level: extension of SFOAP2 to North Africa.** During the period under review, IFAD designed and invested in two interesting approaches to develop its partnership with FOs in the NEN region. The first approach is linked to the design of the SFOAP Main Phase (SFOAP2), which extended its geographical area to North Africa through the support to its RFO platform, Union Maghrébine des Agriculteurs (UMAGRI) (see Box 33 below). Because UMAGRI is still a relatively weak RFO, the SFOAP's implementation modalities in North Africa will follow a different approach:

- (i) Institutional support will be provided to UMAGRI for the first 2 years of the 5-year implementation period, to conduct its institutional diagnosis, undertake a mapping of FOs in its area of coverage and conduct a consultation process for the purpose of revitalizing its credibility and membership.
- (ii) Support will be provided to UMAGRI, NFOs and local FOs' partners on policy dialogue issues.
- (iii) FERT, an AgriAgency member of AgriCord, will be brought on board to take charge of institutional (mainly structuring) and economic support of national FOs targeted in the member countries. FERT, in collaboration with national FOs in Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia and Sudan, will identify and fund pilot projects for local development of collective economic activities, agricultural entrepreneurship of rural women, the establishment of value chains, and facilitation of access to inputs.

Box 33 UMAGRI and support activities within SFOAP2

UMAGRI is a regional professional organization established in 1989. Its membership includes seven national FOs from North African countries – Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia. UMAGRI aims to engrain team spirit among FOs in the region to promote cooperation, coordination of efforts and joint programmes, in light of regional and international economic developments related to agriculture. UMAGRI supports the intensification of intra-regional cooperation to address the challenges facing the agricultural sector in the region.

The objectives of UMAGRI as a platform for agricultural cooperation in the region are to:

- (i) focus on partnership with Arab, African & Euro-Mediterranean organizations operating in the agricultural sector;
- (ii) create a common agricultural market in the Maghreb;
- (iii) develop a strategy for increasing basic agricultural products;
- (iv) improve the competitiveness of agricultural products and guarantee a better positioning in local and international markets; and
- (v) Adopt a common plan against desertification and for the protection of the environment, and the sustainable management of natural resources.

Objectives of SFOAP2 in North Africa. The overall objective of SFOAP in North Africa is to "empower FOs to become successful, reliable and stable entities, able to effectively represent their members and advise farmers on their farms." The expected initial outcome of SFOAP is revitalization of UMAGRI in terms of:

- (i) enhanced representativeness of UMAGRI within the farmer' movement in North Africa (i.e. increased membership);
- (ii) clear strategic vision which is shared with its members;
- (iii) better recognition of UMAGRI by national and regional bodies as the key body representing farmers;
- (iv) improved internal governance, with a clear involvement of members in decision-making and transparent functioning of the governance instances;
- (v) AWBP prepared and implemented with its members;
- (vi) institutional and financial capacities developed to ensure greater autonomy to run the network; and
- (vii) provision of specialized services to its members.

The expected outcomes of SFOAP with regard to national and local FOs would be:

- (i) FOs have strengthened governance and autonomy;
- (ii) FOs are integrated in national bodies; and
- (iii) a number of innovative pilot activities are developed, including services to the members, partnerships with the private sector, marketing facilities, etc.

Section III. Growing focus on specific groups within IFAD-FO partnerships

101. Since the establishment of the FAFO in 2006, IFAD has progressively committed to give special attention to specific groups within FOs, or organizations structured around specific products, such as small-scale fisheries. During the global meeting of the FAFO in 2008, the farmers called upon IFAD to further engage in supporting **women's leadership** within FOs. Consequently, a special session was organized in 2010, which resulted in a number of recommendations³⁶. Similarly, in response to farmers' requests in 2010 to address issues pertaining to **youth**, IFAD organized a special session on the topic in 2012³⁷. At the FAFO 2012, **small-scale fishers** recommended to organize a special session on small-scale fisheries during the FAFO 2014 to promote the understanding of their role in food security and increase the recognition and visibility of their sector among policy makers. This section aims to assess the progress made by IFAD during the biennium 2012-2013 in addressing the specific needs of these groups.

A. IFAD's strengthened commitment to support women's leadership within FOs

Review of IFAD's engagement since the 2010 Farmers' Forum

102. The **2010 Farmers' Forum was a starting point for IFAD's promotion of women's leadership within FOs**. The 2010 global meeting of the FAFO hosted a special session on "Promoting Leadership in Farmers' and Rural Producers' Organizations". The theme of the session was: *"How IFAD can work with FOs to promote women's leadership within the latter from the grass-roots level upwards and, overall, amplify the voice of women farmers at the policy table"*. The key areas of engagement identified during the special session were delivered in a statement at the session of the Governing Council (see summary in Annex 6), and became the cornerstone of a number of IFAD commitments, helping to shape subsequent programmes and grants.

103. In **2012, IFAD's "Gender equality and women's empowerment policy" was approved, confirming** IFAD's corporate commitment to promote women's leadership. One of the three strategic objectives of IFAD gender policy is *"to enable women and men to have equal voice and influence in rural institutions and organizations"*. In order to deliver on this strategic objective **and the commitments of the 2010 FAFO declaration**, IFAD has engaged in a set of initiatives and interventions to reinforce women's leadership in rural organizations:

- i. **The Rural Women's Leadership Programme (RWLP)** was implemented in 2010-2012 with financial support from the Government of Norway. Its objective was to increase the responsiveness of national policies, programmes and institutions to the needs and potential of rural women farmers, working on the creation of an enabling environment and, concurrently, capacity-building of rural women leaders. This entailed the following:
 - building regional/national capacities to train and mentor rural women leaders;
 - developing the capacities of women members of producer organizations to become leaders and change agents in their organizations;
 - fostering enabling environments for women's leadership;
 - building the capacity of FO women leaders to advocate and engage in national, regional and global policy processes; and
 - creating sustainable networks of FO women leaders, support organizations and agriculture ministries.

³⁶ See section 1 of <http://www.ifad.org/farmer/2010/doc/report.pdf>.

³⁷ See Annex 1 for the Synthesis of Deliberations of the FAFO 2012 Special session - Youth in Agriculture.

104. The programme was implemented in four countries (Senegal, Madagascar, Nepal and the Philippines) and different strategies were adopted depending on the context, the opportunities and the partners in each country.

105. As a follow-up to the RWLP, the following new initiatives were developed:

- In **Asia, the "Rural Women Leadership" Grant** was designed to further and scale up the impact of the RWLP in strengthening capacities and representation of rural women in FOs in a new group of countries. Specifically, the project addresses a critical need for qualified trainers who could support women's leaders in Maldives, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Pacific and Lao People's Democratic Republic, and ultimately aims to improve women's social, economic and professional status.
- In **ESA, the "Knowledge Management and Learning on Gender Empowerment of Producer Rural Groups in East and Southern Africa"** Grant also capitalized on the momentum created by the RWLP. The objective is to: amplify the voices of rural women and smallholder farmers in decision-making; highlight their tremendous contribution to agriculture and rural livelihoods, and; enable them to obtain better representation in producers' organizations in Tanzania, Uganda and Malawi. One strategic objective focuses specifically on women in FOs and aims to "strengthen women's leadership capacities and decision-making skills in order to increase their influence and participation in decision-making within FOs and at the local, national and regional level."

RWLP lessons learned in mainstreaming gender in the IFAD-FO partnership process

106. The RWLP has produced interesting outputs that have been analysed and transformed into recommendations (see Annex 6). Some of the key recommendations on how to foster gender mainstreaming within the IFAD-FO partnership are presented below.

i. How to enhance FOs' targeting of women within FOs' activities

107. **Quotas for women beneficiaries, to guide FOs' beneficiary selection for IFAD-funded activities, could be introduced** to complement bottom-up collective action by women. Quotas are controversial, but can help to establish the necessary critical mass of women as members and leaders, and to bring about change in policy and institutional culture. Quotas should therefore be specified in farmer organizations' statutes, planning and monitoring tools and systems.

Box 34 Targeting criteria used for the selection of FOs can inadvertently exclude women's organizations

'Formal registration' is typically one criteria that FOs must meet in order to be selected for participation in IFAD-funded projects. However, most women's organizations are informal and are thus excluded. This consideration must be taken into account when designing a programme in partnership with FOs.

108. **Gender mainstreaming strategic plans** - which have been adopted by some FOs - offer a possible entry point for making these organizations more welcoming of women and representative of their priorities. For example, in **Senegal**, RWLP supported the inclusion of gender issues into the Strategic Plan of the CNCR (2011–2015). Currently, the EC- and IFAD-supported SFOAP plans to draw on the RWLP experience and provide support to apex organizations in Africa to develop and implement gender mainstreaming plans.

ii. Typology of essential support for women's leadership development

109. **Economic empowerment is a powerful entry point.** The RWLP confirmed that mobilizing women to act collectively around economic activities is often a starting point for them to take on leadership roles. As women's contribution to the family and community economy increases, so does their experience, standing within the community and its decision-making processes. This was the case in **Nepal**, where the RWLP enabled women to access local development funds. As a result, the women were able to meet their priorities and felt empowered to take on new challenges.

110. **Women's leadership is built on a mix of skills, including** leadership and negotiation skills, technical knowledge, entrepreneurial and marketing know-how, among others. The RWLP demonstrated positive outcomes of the leadership training for women. In **Senegal**, the RWLP was instrumental in building the capacity of members of the women's wing of CNCR through training sessions on FOs' management and governance, alongside trainings in soft skills, such as communication, negotiation, lobbying and advocacy. Manuals on how to foster women's leadership within FOs were developed and translated into two indigenous languages native to the areas targeted by the project. Moreover, the afore-mentioned training was conducted as a training of trainers and thus generated a multiplier effect. The evaluation of the project revealed very positive results. Significant improvements in the gender composition of FOs were brought about; in fact, two women became chiefs of their organizations. Within CNCR itself, significant improvements in women's leadership occurred, particularly within its technical committees, where women became much more active, able to put forth their requests and include their priorities in the discussions. The manual has found widespread application beyond IFAD's portfolio in Senegal; it is being adopted for the PNAFA project in Guinea, Rural Economic Growth Support Project (PACER) in Benin, Value Chains Development Programme for Poverty Reduction (PROLPRAF) in Mauritania, and Support to Agricultural Development and Marketing Project (PROPACOM) in Ivory Coast.

iii. Women's voices need to be heard at high level

111. **RWLP beyond national borders: supporting rural women's participation in international fora:** The RWLP facilitated the participation of rural women leaders of FOs in national, regional and global policy processes, such as the World Food Summit, the Civil Society Organizations Consultation Workshop on GAFSP, the World Food Summit in Rome; the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD-COP 10); COP 15, COP 17 and the Global Farmers Forum 2010, where they a chance to take part in the special session on "*Promoting women's leadership in farmers' organizations*".

Other outcomes of IFAD's support to projects or crosscutting activities on gender

112. **The "closing the gap" methodology³⁸: a relevant tool to assess the "gender-sensitivity of an FO"** was developed many years ago to measure the degree of gender equity achieved by rural organizations, including FOs. The use of the tool also raises awareness within the organizations on gender equality issues, facilitating the implementation of dedicated interventions to promote women's active membership and inclusion of young people.

113. **Many interesting outcomes are also emerging from IFAD-funded country programmes.** The recent study, "*Promoting women's leadership in producers' organizations: an overview of IFAD's experiences and lessons learned*", provides an overview of these outcomes. Among them are:

- The creation of MERCOSUR Mujeres, a specialized committee addressing issues of rural development and women in family farming, as a result of IFAD's support to REAF/MERCOSUR;

³⁸ See the Handbook to guide rural organizations towards gender equity available online: <http://www.fidafrique.net/IMG/pdf/GenderMainstreamingLatineAmericaEng.pdf>

- The professionalization of women fishmongers through transition from informal to formal groups within the Participatory Artisanal Fisheries Development Support Programme in Benin. The project enables women fishmongers to improve their position on the value chain by increasing value added and therefore revenues.

Next steps for gender-mainstreaming in IFAD-FOs' partnership

i. A need to scale up and use RWLP's findings in other FO-oriented grant programmes

114. One of the lessons learned is that initiatives such as the RWLP work best when linked with IFAD country programmes and projects. For example, the RWLP in **Madagascar** built on a tradition of working with farmer organizations, especially within AROPA, and RWLP events involved participants from existing projects. Further linkages between pilot grants, such as RWLP, and larger grants to FOs, such as SFOAP or MTCP, is needed in the future.

ii. A renewed call to IFAD to strengthen its engagement with women's leadership within FOs

115. As the synthesis of deliberations of the 2010 global meeting of the FAFO stressed, there is a need for IFAD to give renewed attention to the following recommendations concerning its projects' design and implementation strategy towards FOs:

- Open spaces for women farmer leaders to participate in country and global policy processes, and also in IFAD country strategy consultations;
- Establish quotas for women in the design of the projects and programmes that work with farmers' organizations (where possible, not less than 30 per cent, with a view to reaching 50 per cent over time), provide incentives for producer organizations to achieve these targets, and monitor their implementation;
- Invest more grant resources in increasing the capacity of farmers' organizations to address gender issues and empower women, and to strengthen women's leadership – where possible channelling funds directly to women's structures within organizations;
- Involve women leaders of farmers' organizations in the supervision and monitoring of development programmes.

B. IFAD's commitment towards Youth: 2012-2013 focus on corporate actions

116. During the 2012 global meeting of the FAFO, a special session on youth was organized and led by the findings of a study undertaken by International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth (MIJARC)³⁹ in collaboration with FAO and IFAD, titled **"Facilitating access of rural youth to agricultural activities."** The session concluded with a Synthesis of Deliberations (see Annex 1) specifically focused on the main areas that the FAFO and IFAD should give attention to when supporting youth (see below).

Recommendations of the 2012 Farmers' Forum Youth session:

- **stronger representation:** "we advocate for having our own organizations", "we want to be involved in policy making processes from design to implementation, monitoring and evaluation", "we need human, technical and financial support to build and strengthen our institutional capacities", "we demand more consideration, including more space to express our voice and specificity within FOs", "we ask the Farmers Forum Steering Committee to set up a quota of at least 30 per cent of young farmer representatives for future Farmers' Forums. At least half of these young farmer representatives should be women";
- **More specific supports to Youth:** higher percentage of programmes' budgets allocated to specific youth-related interventions;
- **Access to natural resources,** especially land. "Promotion of cooperatives can also be a way to lease a plot of land more easily by doing so collectively rather than individually"
- **Access to markets** "we recommend that our abilities to learn new technologies are properly valued, particularly our skills in using ICTs"
- **Access to financial services:** "we advocate for incentive measures to help start new activities and promote our initiatives".
- **Access to Knowledge:** "we recommend that agriculture be included in the school curricula, from primary education onwards". "Furthermore, inter-generational knowledge sharing should be enhanced and mechanisms should be developed to enable rural communities to benefit from the knowledge acquired by the youth who migrate to urban areas.

Youth-related activities undertaken by IFAD in 2012-2013 at corporate level

117. During the period under review, most of IFAD's engagement regarding youth took place at corporate level in the form of new policies, studies, events and knowledge management, in addition to taking stock of IFAD's experience on the topic:

- **"Youth focal points"** were appointed in each IFAD regional division.
- **Policy brief on improving young rural women's and men's livelihoods** was written in 2013. It highlights the importance of enabling the youth to (i) participate in decision-making of their societies; (ii) access decent work opportunities both on and off farm; and (iii) access market-relevant education and training. It also stresses the importance of increasing the liveability of rural areas and enhances the options of those young people who choose to migrate.
- Studies, reviews and KM tools:
 - a. In 2012, IFAD and the International Labour Organization (ILO) undertook a study on **"the work of IFAD in promoting youth employment"** and, in particular, the four pillars of decent work – job creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue.

³⁹ Download the study here: <http://www.ifad.org/farmer/2012/youth/report.pdf>

- b. In 2013, the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD (IOE) conducted an evaluation **synthesis on Rural Youth**.
 - c. In 2013, the IFAD Office of the **Strategy Knowledge Management (SKM)** developed a **"Guidance note on designing programmes that improve young rural people's livelihoods"**. It outlines the steps that should be taken to develop programmes and projects targeting socio-economic groups that include the rural youth, or that exclusively benefit them.
 - d. IFAD PTA is conducting a study on 19 IFAD projects to identify best field-tested approaches to empower young people in rural areas and help them develop income-generating agriculture-related activities (to be published by the end of January 2014).
- Youth-related events organized by IFAD
- a. In June 2013, SKM and the **Programme Management Department (PMD)** organized an in-house event on **"Improving rural youth livelihoods – why should it be a priority?"** - presenting Felicity Proctor 's study⁴⁰ on the importance of investing in smallholder agriculture and the rural youth, IFAD's involvement in the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth, and the activities of PMD supporting youth within IFAD's portfolio.
 - b. In November 2013, LAC Division organised a workshop gathering almost a hundred young people living in rural areas and professionals working on rural development- from 15 different countries. The workshop was aimed to generate dialogue among rural youth and technical experts from rural development projects. The workshop was concluded with the development of action plans for each country that will provide a road map to improve the inclusion of rural youth in development projects.

118. Moreover, during the period under review, the global grant to MIJARC for "Facilitating access of rural youth to agricultural activities" was completed and its outcomes presented during the 2012 FAFO. Its objectives and main outcomes are summarized in the Box 35 below.

Box 35 Objectives and outputs of the grant to MIJARC

Objectives:

- To enhance the knowledge of national and regional FOs in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, concerning: (i) the specific challenges facing poor young women and men in agriculture, and; (ii) successful policies and programs to address these challenges;
- To translate this enhanced knowledge and understanding into specific proposals and recommendations to governments and development partners.

Outputs:

- **Mapping of young farmers' organizations** conducted and, subsequently, a survey of members carried out to identify challenges young farmers face;
- **Three regional consultation meetings** in Africa, Asia and Latin America convened to discuss results, share experiences and draw up regional recommendations.

119. The MIJARC report illustrated that **organizations can help young farmers to overcome constraints** in accessing land, markets, finance, technologies and capacity-building.

⁴⁰ The study can be downloaded at:

<http://www.hivos.net/content/download/80738/698584/file/youth%20web%20small%20scale%20farming.pdf>

New youth-related grants designed in 2012-2013

120. **IFAD's LAC Division** has exerted significant efforts in the course of the biennium 2012-2013 to support entrepreneurial young rural people, especially young women, through specific new grants dedicated to youth. These efforts commenced with the historic launch of a pioneering grant-supported project, **Nuevas Trenzas**, which was approved before 2012-2013 and specifically targeted young rural women, aiming to understand their life strategies and constraints. Since then, LAC Division has developed a new set of grants (see Table 5 below) to expand the opportunities and capacities of young rural people to participate more fully in economic development processes, which can have a concrete impact on the development of the rural territories where they live and work.

Table 3 New youth-oriented grants designed in 2012-2013 by the LAC Division

GRANT TITLE	GRANT OBJECTIVE
1385 - UN Women (approved in August 2012)	strengthen and broaden economic and financial opportunities for young rural women in Central America
1369 - ACUA: Programme to increase visibility and strengthen the entrepreneurship of rural Afro-descendant communities in Latin America (approved in May 2012)	advocate for the reduction of structural poverty affecting Afro-descendant populations, focusing on young people and women
PROCASUR: Support and guidance for the inclusion of rural youth in development initiatives (approved in October 2013)	promote the inclusion of rural youth in IFAD operations in the LAC region by identifying and supporting the implementation of products and services that suit their aspirations and life strategies

121. **WCA Division**, in cooperation with the PTA Division, has developed a new recently-approved joint grant that focuses on "Creating opportunities for rural youth".

122. **NEN Division** developed a regional grant to assist financial institutions in developing specific products and complementary non-financial services for young people, which would enable the latter to enhance their skills and employability.

IFAD youth-oriented projects: new designs in 2012-2013 and innovations within the ongoing portfolio

123. The link between youth empowerment and the potential role youth could play within FOs is not explicit within IFAD's strategy. Only a few among new IFAD projects designed in 2012-2013 build on the MIJARC study's conclusion, which asserts that *"organizations can help young farmers to overcome constraints in accessing land, markets, finance, technologies and capacity building"*. **The newly designed project FIER in Mali** is a pioneer in this regard, as its design process has been participative and inclusive of FOs. A workshop was organized with FOs to understand their expectations in general and the expectations of the rural youth organizations in particular concerning the design of the FIER project. Moreover, the FIER project intends to work closely with FOs in the design and implementation of vocational training for young people that would have close linkages with economic opportunities related to the development of family farms.

Box 36 Examples of youth-oriented innovations within ongoing and newly designed projects

Dominican Republic - Development project for poor rural economic organizations of the Border Area

- Priority in funding given to microbusiness proposals submitted by youth; the matching grant capitalisation fund has a specific window for poor young people.
- The market access component of the project provides training on market orientation and business management to sons and daughters of producers.
- International students join networks with local youth to facilitate youth-to-youth exchanges.

Sierra Leone

- Rural Finance and Community Initiatives Project (RFCIP) II: involves the establishment of several youth-friendly Financial Services Associations (FSAs), owned and operated predominantly by local young people.
- Rehabilitation and Community-based Poverty Reduction Project (RCPRP): during a training session with the young people contracted to work on the rehabilitation of valley swamps, they were challenged to create a rice marketing cooperative. As a result the cooperative was created and has started its activities in 2013.

Senegal - PROMER II

- Supports enterprises through training aimed at increasing profitability, employment, and enhanced provision of services to local farmers;
- Has shown considerable success in job creation/improvement for young people; of the 1,100 micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and 3,000 jobs created/improved, 63 per cent have been for young people.

Argentina - Rural Development Project for the Northeastern Provinces (PRODERNEA)

- Trains young people as leaders and agents of change: a pilot course was undertaken and aimed specifically at fostering the leadership role and capacity of young rural people to support the process of organizational development and strengthening of FOs.

India - Orissa Tribal Empowerment and Livelihoods Programme (OTELP)

- Uses young people as Community Resource Persons (CRPs) for settlement of land to landless,
- Trains young women in book-keeping in order to create service providers who would support local self-help groups in systematic management of their affairs, in view of the extremely low level of literacy in the programme areas.

C. IFAD's commitment towards small-scale fishers

During the global meeting of the FAFO in 2012, a working group was organized to discuss *"How fishers' organizations and collective actions can contribute to sustainable management of marine resources while improving incomes"*. The recommendations that came out of this working group are presented in the box below.

Main recommendations from the FAFO 2012 working group on sustainable fisheries and of the FAFO synthesis of deliberations

1. Sectors visibility:

- Recognition is needed of the contribution of small-scale fisheries (SSF) sector to food security and poverty alleviation. Issues faced by SSF are similar to the ones of other small-scale producers;
- SSF needs to be more visible on international and national agendas, including IFAD's agenda on development, poverty reduction, food security, etc.;
- Access and tenure rights need to be ensured.

2. Capacity development:

- Fishers' organizations need to be fully empowered to actively participate in policy dialogue, engage in decision-making processes and lobby political will;
- Fishers need better representation in FAFO;
- South-South learning should be encouraged;
- The role of women needs to be fully recognized and youth educated and enabled to engage in fisheries as a form of sustainable livelihood.

3. Technical capacity development:

- Post-harvest practices should be improved to reduce post-harvest losses and increase the sector's contribution to food security;
- Cold-chain facilities should be established where necessary;
- Landing sites should be improved;
- Food safety aspects should be addressed.

4. Partnerships:

- International organizations, such as IFAD and FAO, should aim to bridge the gap between governments and CSOs, and build up the political will to facilitate the development and implementation of better policies;
- Implementation and monitoring of activities should be participatory.

5. On the FAFO process:

- Hold a special session on small-scale fisheries during the next global meeting of the Farmers' Forum to promote understanding of their role in food security and increase the recognition and visibility of their sector before policy makers.

IFAD's support of small-scale fisher participation in the IG-SSF process

124. Since 2011, IFAD's support towards small-scale fishers focused mainly on enhancing their participation in the design process of the **International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (IG-SSF)**. To this end, two complementary IFAD projects were initiated through grants:

i. Towards IG-SSF

125. In early 2012, PTA mobilized a grant from the Finland Supplementary Fund to support a series of consultations with civil society organizations to develop recommendations for the IG-SSF that were being prepared by FAO. The consultations were held between May 2012 and February 2013 in five countries – Bangladesh, Congo, Eritrea, Mozambique, and Yemen – where IFAD provides support to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Each consultation produced a national consensus document outlining main findings and recommendations of the national workshops that would then feed into the final text of the Guidelines. Local partners in each country organized these consultations, with preference being given to national-level CSOs representing small-scale fishers. The main findings and recommendations of this process are reported in Annex 7. Some key outputs and outcomes are presented in Box 37 below.

Box 37 Main outputs and outcomes of the five national consultations contributing to the IG-SSF

- Five national consultations successfully held in Bangladesh (July-November 2012), Congo (December 2012), Eritrea (October 2012), Mozambique (January 2013) and Yemen (December 2012-February 2013).
- Five national reports and consensus documents produced as inputs to the Guidelines.
- Over 850 participants took part in the consultations, including from government, civil society and private sector, fishers and fishers' organizations, altogether representing 20 million people who depend on SSF in the five countries.
- Governments in all concerned countries endorsed the recommendations and committed to take action in response to them, in order to assure the participants that their voices were heard.
- In Bangladesh, a 'National Forum for Solidarity of Small-Scale Fishers' was formed as a result of the national consultations, to follow up on the actions which Ministry officials promised to take.
- In Eritrea, several key pieces of fisheries-related legislation are being revised with the full participation of SSF representatives and new projects are being planned to support SSF.
- In Yemen, in part due to these consultations, IFAD was invited to co-chair the Fisheries Donor Coordination Forum with the Ministry of Fish Wealth.

ii. "Civil society engagement and artisanal fishers: International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (IG-SSF)"

126. In 2013, IFAD developed this grant to be channelled through the NGO Crocevia. This grant builds on the achievements of the previous grant, which facilitated the consultation workshops, aiming to:

- a. develop a consensus among civil society stakeholders in artisanal fisheries (including artisanal fishers and fishworkers' organizations and support NGOs) on a common vision and position, and on key issues to be included in the IG-SSF; and
- b. promote the formal and effective involvement of civil society stakeholders in the decision-making processes at national, regional, and international level, which affect the life and livelihoods of resource-poor rural communities that depend on artisanal fisheries.

Guidelines and recommendations for new IFAD projects aiming to support SSFs

127. Following the IG-SSF consultation process, a number of important lessons were generated both for IFAD fisheries-oriented projects and IFAD's support to fishers' organizations (see details in Annex 7). The key lessons among them were:

- i. Priority placed by SSF communities on improving social services and infrastructure, even above direct concerns regarding fisheries;
- ii. Strong awareness and commitment of SSFs towards improved management of fish resources;
- iii. Demand to be engaged as partners in policy development and implementation, on an even playing field with other sectors, and commercial and industrial fisheries;
- iv. Need for improved disaster preparedness and disaster recovery mechanisms, including insurance, improved weather forecasting and early warning system;
- v. Inter-generational concerns and wishes of small-scale fishers for their children to have access to a greater range of economic and employment opportunities;
- vi. Importance of broad protection of marine and coastal environments, and management of diverse users, including inter-sectoral concerns; and
- vii. The lack of strong national fishers' organizations in many countries around the world, which makes it difficult for SSFs to engage in policy dialogue and develop linkages with development financiers.

128. Moreover, in 2011, IFAD contributed to the writing of "**Guidelines for Integrating Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Options for Fisheries and Aquaculture into Project Design**".⁴¹ The overall purpose of this effort was to gather the knowledge and best practices in adaptation and mitigation measures for climate change as related to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, and to use these to draw up guidelines for IFAD project design.

⁴¹ The document can be downloaded here: <http://asia.ifad.org/home/-/news/3765/newsletter>

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