



# Royal Tropical Institute

## KIT Development Policy & Practice

### **Improving Development Practices: The Producer's Perspective**

Farmers Fighting Poverty: Producers' Organizations Support  
Programme

### **Development Policy & Practice**

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background and justification

Producers' organizations, as rural membership-based organizations, are key stakeholders when designing and implementing strategies for poverty reduction that are based on the development of the agricultural sector. Organizing themselves around common interests and pooling their resources is a way for producers to strengthen their position as stakeholders in this sector. Agriculture is the main source of income for agricultural producers and the development of the sector also has a spin off for other social and professional categories in rural areas.

Besides their role in the economic growth of the agricultural sector (e.g. through their links with the private sector for accessing and developing markets), producers' organizations are also democratically functioning organizations that voice the needs and concerns of their members (e.g. participating in decision-making on policies). The course agricultural development takes shapes the life and future of the majority of agricultural producers. As such, producers' organizations seek to develop relations and interact with other stakeholders in the agricultural sector.

Nowadays, producers' organizations actively reinforce their role in a context of challenges and opportunities which emerge through worldwide processes such as political democratization, economical liberalization and privatization of services. The come back of agriculture on the agenda of international development cooperation (i.e. through the World Bank's World Development Report 2008) has led to a renewed attention for farmers and their organizations. Nowadays there is a diversity of producers' organizations which differ in origin, legal status, membership base, functions and services they provide to their members, and the scale and level of their operations.

Through the "Farmers Fighting Poverty" - Producers' Organizations Support Programme (FFP programme, 2007 -2010), producers' organizations, with the support of agri-agencies, aim to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by strengthening their role in both economy and society. The FFP programme is implemented by agri-agencies, all members of the AgriCord alliance, in close collaboration with producers' organizations.

## 1.2 Two studies from two different perspectives

During the launch of the FFP programme in Arnhem, the Netherlands, in May 2006, the programme donors expressed the wish to reflect on their experiences with direct support to producers' organizations, either through donor-funded projects that are managed by producers' organizations or through the peer-to-peer support that is facilitated by agri-agencies. After consultations with representatives from the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Netherlands, AgriCord and the Dutch Agri-ProFocus network, it was decided to conduct a desk study on perceptions of donors, in consultation with agri-agencies, on lessons learnt for support to producers' organizations. The results of that first study have been published

and were presented to the International Federation of Agricultural Producers' Development Cooperation Committee (IFAP-DCC).<sup>1</sup>

For their part, the agri-agencies also insisted on including the views and the experiences of producers' organizations in developing countries, and hence draw lessons for enhancing the implementation of the FFP programme. Consequently IFAP confirmed the need to change the point of view and to investigate farmers' perceptions on support to their organizations (through different channels including NGOs, government programmes etc.). Producers' organizations also have their point of view on support to them, which might not always be documented and different from the perception of agri-agencies and donors and thus include 'eye openers'. Therefore this second, follow up study goes beyond a desk study and investigate issues and opinions that are raised by producers' organizations.

It should be noted that the two studies (the desk study and the interviews) are based on experiences and opinions, documented or not, of representatives of donors, agri-agencies and producers' organizations. The emphasis on reflections on experiences makes that both studies are foremost of all an input for learning-by-doing in the FFP programme. Both studies used results of programme and project evaluations, particularly during the first study, though as such they are not evaluations.

### **1.3 Aim of this study**

The overall goal of this investigation is to enhance the implementation of the FFP programme, and thereby contribute to realizing its objectives and reinforce the desired impact. This is done through analyzing the experiences with working directly with producers' organizations, with a special attention for the peer-to-peer support that is organized through agri-agencies. Agri-agencies follow another approach than government services or NGOs do when supporting producers' organizations. Agri-agencies are rooted in farmers' organizations, and hence equality and reciprocity are their guiding principles.

This investigation on the perspective of producers' organizations seeks to provide an answer to the following main question: What are, from a producers' organization's perspective, appropriate support mechanisms and modalities for enhancing the role of these organizations in economic and social development? More specific questions are: (i) What is currently being done to support producers' organizations? (ii) What, according to the producers involved, works well? What (partly) fails? And what is lacking? (iii) What is the way forward to improve support to producers' organizations? (iv) What is appropriate support? Under which conditions? And pursuing which aims?

### **1.4 Methodological approach**

The following principles were adopted for conducting the investigation:

<sup>1</sup> Wennink, B., S. Nederlof and W. Heemskerk (2007). *Improving Support to Producers' Organizations. Lessons Learned from Experiences by AgriCord Members and Donors for the Farmers Fighting Poverty Programme*. KIT/DEV, Amsterdam.

Nederlof, S. and B. Wennink (2008). *Feedback on the Report "Improving Support to Producers' Organizations. Lessons Learned from Experiences by AgriCord Members and Donors for the Farmers Fighting Poverty Programme". Results of a D group consultation*. KIT/DEV, Amsterdam.

- The study reflects on the future, and goes beyond lessons learnt from the past, through the identification of issues that need to be addressed in order to improve impact of support to producers' organizations.
- The issues, which are identified and raised by producers' organizations, as well as the possible answers provided (e.g. lessons learnt), are based on recent and current experiences and have a link with the topics covered by the of FFP programme.
- The answers and issues brought forward by producers' organizations were identified by these organizations. It was therefore essential to gather the point of view of producers' organizations independent from the supporting agencies.

The steps undertaken to conduct this investigation include:

- *Development of a conceptual framework.* The framework that was developed during the first study<sup>2</sup> (see Annex 1) is being used for systematized collection and (meta-) analysis of information. The framework allows looking at support to farmers' organizations from different perspectives and in addition allows for a comparison.
- *Interviews with representatives of producers' organizations.* Representatives of producers' organizations were approached and interviewed during the 37<sup>th</sup> IFAP World Congress Warsaw, Poland, in May-June 2008 (see Annex 2). The framework guided the open questions that were discussed with the interviewees. In some cases the interviewers obtained additional documentation or websites were indicated where more information could be obtained.
- *Synthesis and analysis of information.* The gathered information was processed by the study team<sup>3</sup>, in line with the framework, to identify the key issues (see Annex 3).<sup>4</sup>
- *Validation of the results.* The (questioned) producers' organizations were invited to discuss and validate the key findings and preliminary conclusions through a web-based discussion D-group.<sup>5</sup> Their reactions as well as new points of view expressed are integrated in this report.

The method of collecting information during the IFAP congress had some limitations: (i) there was no systematic sampling of interviewees to ensure representation of geographical areas and types of producers' organizations; (ii) the majority of the interviewees were representatives from national IFAP member organizations (see Tables 1 and 2); these members organizations have different experiences with support from agri-agencies while AgriCord support also reaches non-IFAP members (see Table 3); and (iii) the interviews were done in the margins of the congress (breaks, evenings etc.), which, in some cases, made time a constraint for in-depth interviews.

**Table 1: Composition of the sample of producers' organizations**

	Near East	South-East Asia	Sub-Sahara Africa	Latin America
<b>IFAP members</b>	2	6	20	2
<b>Non-IFAP members</b>	0	0	1	1

Source: <http://www.ifap.org/en/members/members.html> (last consulted on February 19, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> A synopsis of each interview is presented in a separate document.

<sup>4</sup> This analysis will be followed by a comparison with the results and conclusions of the first study (perceptions of donors and agri-agencies). The comparison will be subject of a separate document.

<sup>5</sup> Nederlof, S. (2008). *The Producer's Perspective on Support to Farmer Organizations: Results from a D group consultation*. KIT/DEV, Amsterdam.

**Table 2: Characteristic's of the producers' organizations that were interviewed**

Characteristics	Nb. of producers' organizations
Regional federations providing advocacy services	1
National associations/federations providing mainly advocacy services	13
National associations/federations providing advocacy and capacity strengthening services	6
Sub-national associations/federations providing capacity strengthening and advocacy services	3
National cooperative societies providing advocacy and capacity strengthening services	4

Sources: <http://www.agricord.org/?view=home&menu=home&page> under *Organisations* (last consulted on February 19, 2009) and websites of the organizations concerned. For five organizations information was not available on the AgriCord website or websites were not available or accessible.

**Table 3: Number of AgriCord projects per producers' organization**

Region	Producers' organizations interviewed (abbreviation and country)	AgriCord support projects (Nb. and period)
Near East	JFU Jordan *	2 (2007 – 2010)
	PFU Palestine *	2 (2007 – 2008)
South-East Asia	CAMFAD Cambodia *	4 (2006 – 2010)
	CIFA India *	1 (2008 – 2009)
	NCF Nepal	-
	FFFCI Philippines *	6 (2004 – 2010)
	VCA Vietnam <sup>3)</sup>	<sup>1)</sup>
	VNFU Vietnam *	8 (2003 - 2010)
Sub-Saharan Africa	FUPRO Benin *	25 (2003 – 2010)
	CPF Burkina Faso <sup>3)</sup>	1 (2007 - 2010)
	FENAFER Burkina Faso	<sup>1)</sup>
	SNAC Comoros	<sup>1)</sup>
	SYDIP DR of Congo *	32 (2003 – 2010)
	FPFD Guinea Conakry *	4 (2004 – 2010)
	ANAPROCI Ivory Coast	-
	KENFAP Kenya *	41 (2003 – 2010)
	FIFATA Madagascar *	2 (2007 - 2010)
	RSOA Madagascar *	4 (2006 – 2010)
	FUM Malawi <sup>3)</sup>	<sup>1)</sup>
	FCMN Niger * <sup>3)</sup>	7 (2007 - 2010)
	CNCR Senegal *	6 (2004 – 2010)
	AGRISA South Africa	1 (2003)
	SACAU Southern Africa region <sup>2)</sup>	2 (2004 – 2006)
	MVIWATA Tanzania *	16 (2003 - 2010)
	UNFFE Uganda *	16 (2003 – 2010)
	UCA Uganda *	1 (2008)
	NUCAFE Uganda	4 (2005 – 2009)
	ZNFU Zambia *	6 (2004 – 2010)
	CFU Zimbabwe	-
Latin America	UNICAFES Brazil *	3 (2007 – 2011)
	CONFECAMPO Colombia *	2 (2007 – 2010)
	FECORAH Honduras <sup>2)</sup>	<sup>1)</sup>

Sources: <http://www.agricord.org/?view=home&menu=home&page> under *Organisations* and *Projects* and <http://www.ifap.org/en/members/members.html> (last consulted on February 19, 2009).

\* Organizations that currently (2008/2009) collaborate with agri-agencies.

<sup>1)</sup> Organizations which currently don't collaborate with agri-agencies within the FFP programme. <sup>2)</sup>

Non IFAP member. <sup>3)</sup> Member of the IFAP Development Cooperation Committee (DCC).



The sample of producers' organizations is dominated by national associations or federations that provide advocacy and capacity strengthening services to their members (see Table 2) and have relations with agri-agencies (see Table 3: 21 from 32 organizations whose leaders were interviewed).

All the lessons learnt and issues presented in this report are distilled by the investigating team from the information gathered through the interviews. The report (chapters 3 till 6) presents in a synoptic way the lessons learnt and issues which were mentioned by several interviewees at a time (usually more than three interviewees) and were illustrated through experiences by the same interviewees. The lessons learnt and issues in this report have not been confronted with the views from agri-agencies and as such they present the perceptions and opinions of the representatives of producers' organizations who have been interviewed.<sup>6</sup>

## **1.5 Basic concepts**

The conceptual framework integrates five elements (see Annex 1):

- The context of support to producers' organizations (international developments, government and donor policies, perceived role of producers' organizations by governments and donors etc.);
- The types of producers' organizations reached by support programmes and projects (according to membership base, mission, functions and purposes, national/sub-national level etc.);
- The design of support to producers' organizations (constraints that are addressed, planning, monitoring and evaluation, accountability etc.);
- The modalities for implementation of support (funding mechanisms, types of activities, role of agri-agencies etc.);
- The principles underlying external support (the values and norms, shared or not, that underpin collaboration between producers' organizations and support partners).

For each element, general facts and trends were identified as well as lessons learnt and issues. The following guidelines were used:

- Lessons learnt are outstanding, beneficial insights or practices obtained through experience in a given situation. They have a potential for a beneficial use in other situations (i.e. strengthening the role of producers' organizations in economy and society).
- Issues are challenges that are presented but not yet fully taken up, key questions without any clear answers, or subjects of ongoing discussions between stakeholders. Discussing these issues among producers' organizations and agri-agencies may allow for enhancing their collaboration for strengthening the role of the first.

## **1.6 Structure of this report**

This report presents a synthesis and analysis of the information gathered during the interviews with representatives of producers' organizations during the 37th IFAP World Congress in Warsaw as well as through the documents provided by the interviewees. The report presents the results of the collect and analysis of the points of view that are expressed by producers' organizations.

<sup>6</sup> Note of the authors: In the chapters 3 till 6 we therefore use expressions like, "Interviewees feel that ...", "Farmer leaders think that ..."etc.

After a brief description of the FFP programme (Chapter 2), the report follows the conceptual framework: context of support to producers' organizations (Chapter 3); types of producers' organizations reached (Ch. 4); design of support (Ch. 5); and modalities for implementing support (Ch. 6). For each element, some general facts and trends are presented, followed by lessons learnt and issues that were raised by the interviewees. In the last chapters, the investigating team from the Department of Development Policy and Practice of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT, Amsterdam) presents the conclusions (Ch. 7) and suggestions for issues to be discussed by AgriCord (Ch. 8).

## 2 The Farmers Fighting Poverty programme

### 2.1 Aims and approach of the programme

The FFP programme (2007 -2010) aims to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs by strengthening the role of producers' organizations in both economy and society. Particularly the achievement of MDG1, eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, is considered essential for rural people. The main impacts that are pursued by the programme include: good governance, democratic relations, economic development and a better and more equal distribution of incomes. The FFP programme focuses on the organizational strengthening of producers' organizations as membership-based and member-led associations, and their role in facilitating economic initiatives.<sup>7</sup>

The FFP programme is implemented by agri-agencies, in close collaboration with producers' organizations. Agri-agencies are development cooperation organizations that are supported by the national associations of the agricultural sector (producers' organizations, service cooperatives, etc.) and the rural population in the northern, developed countries. Agri-agencies have structural ties with both the agricultural business world and the producers' associations. Agri-agencies specialize in supporting producers' organizations in rural areas in the southern, developing countries through mutual consultancy, exchange of experiences and information, counseling and direct funding. The AgriCord alliance of agri-agencies links the contributions from several donors for the funding and implementation of the FFP programme.

The FFP programme is implemented through projects that have been developed and submitted by producers' organizations. Implementation of the approved projects is facilitated through funding by the programme and support by agri-agencies. The producers' organizations involved benefit from consultancy and advisory services that are being provided with the support and intermediation of the agri-agencies.

### 2.2 Areas of intervention

The FFP programme document identifies nine thematic areas for its activities:<sup>8</sup> (i) organizational development; (ii) agricultural development; (iii) services to agriculture; (iv) increasing the support base; (v) gender and women in development; (vi) information and communication technology; (vii) diversified agriculture; (viii) processing of agricultural products; and (ix) monitoring and evaluation. The FFP programme foresees also the implementation of so-called "flanking policies" that aim to increase the support for producers' organizations as preferred partners for development cooperation and to enhance gearing of activities for the benefit of producers' organizations in both the south (developing countries) and the north (developed countries).

In due course of the implementation of the programme, nineteen so-called work areas were defined and all support projects under the FFP programme are categorized according to these areas (see Table 3).

<sup>7</sup> Agriterra, 2006. *Farmers Fighting Poverty. Producers' Organizations Support Programme DGIS-Agriterra 2007-2010*. Agriterra, Arnhem.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 1.

**Table 4: Distribution of support projects among the FFP working areas**

Work areas	Nb. of projects among all POs	Nb. of projects among POs interviewed	Work areas	Nb. of projects among all POs	Nb. of projects among POs interviewed
Participatory policy making	34 (9,4%)	4 (4,6%)	Market and chain development	56 (15,5%)	10 (11,4%)
Financial management	7 (1,9%)	0 (0%)	Research for development in agriculture	1 (0,3%)	0 (0%)
Internal organizational strengthening	62 (17,2%)	12 (13,7%)	Other services to agriculture	6 (1,7%)	8 (9,1%)
Institutional development	30 (8,3%)	5 (5,8%)	Gender and women in development	13 (3,6%)	1 (1,2%)
Grass roots participation	31 (8,6%)	7 (8,1%)	Information & Communication Technology	10 (2,8%)	4 (4,6%)
Development of training tools	8 (2,2%)	2 (2,2%)	Diversification in agriculture (off-farm)	7 (1,9%)	5 (5,8%)
Agricultural development (crops)	29 (8,0%)	7 (8,1%)	Processing of agricultural products	24 (6,7%)	8 (9,1%)
Banking and credit sector	11 (3,0%)	1 (1,2%)	Strengthening of support (northern POs)	12 (3,3%)	3 (3,5%)
Inputs for agriculture	5 (1,4%)	2 (2,3%)	Planning, monitoring and evaluation	6 (1,7%)	7 (8,1%)
Farmer-to-farmer agric. extension	9 (2,5%)	1 (1,2%)	Total of projects	361 (100%)	87 (100%)

Source: [http://www.agricord.org/?search\\_program\\_categories\\_id\[\]=1&page=1](http://www.agricord.org/?search_program_categories_id[]=1&page=1) under *Programmes* and *Farmers Fighting Poverty* (last consulted on February 19, 2009).

It should be noted that the distribution of projects has been distilled from the AgriCord data base without considering the actual content of the projects. The data indicate that the distribution of projects among the producers' organizations whose representatives were interviewed follows the same lines as the projects among all producers' organizations within the data base; with the exception of the areas participatory policy making, farmer-to-farmer extension, other services to agriculture (which includes several projects of sensitization and information on HIV/AIDS, diversification in agriculture and planning, monitoring and evaluation).

### **3 The context of support to producers' organizations**

#### **3.1 Facts and trends**

The producers' organizations that have been interviewed come from an array of countries with different policy and institutional contexts (e.g. political systems, development policies, market institutions etc.). This determines the position and role of producers' organizations as well as their perceived strengths and weaknesses. Priorities and needs for strengthening the role of producers' organizations are therefore context specific. A commonality of national policies is the focus on poverty reduction based on the development of agriculture and related sector reforms.

It is being observed that producers' organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa, where liberalization and privatization are still on their way, express the need for productive investments in the agricultural sector, while organizations in Latin America particularly require capacity building to deal with other sector stakeholders (e.g. banks and other support services). This has largely to do with the available options for rural finance. The producers' organizations in South East Asia are somewhere in between and present a mix of the above-mentioned needs.

Democratization of political systems and particularly liberalization of the agricultural sector are mentioned as stimulus for the emergence of new producers' organizations besides those created by or under the control of the state (e.g. the revival and repositioning of SNAC on the Comoros). Traditional export commodities (e.g. coffee, cacao, cotton) still remain an important pillar of many national agricultural economies and a motive and means to organize producers. This gives 'political' weight to those producers' organizations. In some cases staff is even on the government payroll (e.g. VCA Vietnam) or has been appointed by the government. The downside is the risk of political interference within decision-making processes of producers' organizations. The decentralization process in Sub-Sahara Africa equally led to a wide variety, if not a proliferation, of farmer groups, associations, cooperatives etc.

Many agricultural sector programmes, supported by multi-lateral and bilateral development partners, foresee a role for producers' organizations and have developed institutional arrangements for involving and supporting them in order to empower them. Most of the national and local producers' organizations managed to develop relationships with many partners and support agencies. Overtime, regional or international producers' organizations, besides the regional IFAP structures, are being created and developed. Most of the encountered national producers' organizations are member of networks such as ROPPA (West Africa), EAFF (East Africa) and AFA (South East Asia). The membership of international and regional organizations has enhanced contacts and exchanges between leaders of producers' organizations.

#### **3.2 Lessons learnt**

There is a general consensus among the interviewees about the recognition of agriculture as a key sector in economic development and poverty reduction in rural areas. Debates are going on at the international level (e.g. bio fuel, food prices) while at national levels agricultural policies are being reviewed (e.g. privatization of parastatels, funding of agricultural services). Producers' organizations (and private entrepreneurs) are given a more prominent role in both policy making and implementation and acknowledged as full-fledged

partners by governments while facing the challenge to fully play their role (e.g. KENFAP in Kenya competing with NGOs ). Positive or negative impacts of the proposed and ongoing reforms on the members (farmers) till now remain undetermined and are not fully grasped by producers' organizations. Under liberalization schemes the demise of the traditional cooperative organizations led to a fast growing movement of farmers' organizations that represents a highly diverse picture (e.g. the MVIWATA farmer network in Tanzania). These developments provide opportunities for producers' organizations to strengthen their roles on behalf of their members and call for consultation and coordination among organizations.

A consequence of the attention for producers' organizations, whether it being in agricultural sector programmes or not, is that there is growing competition for support. Competition is being observed at several levels; between producers' organizations and between producers' organizations and NGOs; examples were given for Benin where two similar national organizations benefit from support from the same agri-agency. Competition for external support which is based on the quality of support project proposals is considered healthy by farmer leaders. It remains questionable if this should include competition between national producers' organizations, each of them submitting proposals. It is therefore essential to coordinate the support to producers' organizations at the national level; for example in Madagascar where the Chamber of Agriculture provided a platform for coordinating support to the farmer movement.

The national producers' organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa struggle particularly with what should be their core functions. They are torn between the needs of their members, the ideas of their leaders, and the way partners, including national governments, see their roles. These organizations are recognized at the national level and still require strengthening at the sub-national level in order to enhance the links with grassroots organizations.

Many national producers' organizations are members of regional and international organizations. These organizations can be either commodity based (e.g. APROCA in West and Central Africa) or multi-interest (e.g. ROPPA in West Africa). Several arguments are being forwarded for active membership: the platform function for sharing experiences, learning from each other and lobbying on regional issues that increasingly affect national policies. Some producers' organizations mention also the opportunity to access opportunities for funds (e.g. from IFAD) and technical support. There is a general consensus about strengthening this level and its role when organizing agricultural producers and lobbying for their interests (e.g. SACA in the Southern African region).

### **3.3 Issues raised**

Agricultural sector policies and programmes nowadays recognize the role of producers' organizations in enhancing sector performance. Yet, they often stop short of supporting the actual development of producers' organizations. Besides, farmer leaders think that their national governments listen more to the multi-lateral agencies, such as the World Bank, than to the producers' organizations when formulating policies (e.g. in Jordan). It requires a timely involvement and an appropriate capacity of producers' organizations; i.e. co-design policies and their implementation modalities. Despite this shift in attention, producers' organizations still face the challenge to fully play their role, to lobby for the necessary institutional arrangements (e.g. enabling policies for smallholder member organizations in Colombia and Uganda; an

appropriate, conducive legislative framework for agricultural cooperatives and their access to markets in Uganda) or to influence and take advantage of opportunities created by sector reforms (e.g. the reform of a parastatal in charge of marketing agricultural products in Malawi).

Currently many agricultural sector policies and programmes are based on agribusiness development concepts and approaches (e.g. value-chain development). Producers' organizations are given a prominent role by governments in enhancing the competitiveness of national value chains (e.g. the role given to ZNFU in Zambia). It is a market-oriented strategy based on the value chain approach, which guides such policies and programmes and leaves little room for more general considerations (livelihoods approach) that concern smallholder farmers (e.g. the case of AGRI in South Africa that seeks to involve and organize smallholders).

In some of the countries where economies rely heavily on export commodities, the producers' organizations involved represent an important part of the smallholder farmers who gain a considerable share of their income through the export commodities (e.g. coffee and cacao growers organizations such as ANAPROCI in Ivory Coast and UNICAFES in Brazil). This gives them political weight and draws interest from politicians. These organizations frequently struggle with cooption by national politics (e.g. the case of ANAPROCI in Ivory Coast) or the burden of a recent past (e.g. the affiliation between Agri-SA and the predominantly smallholder National African Farmers Union in South Africa).

There is growing interest for international producers' networks (e.g. the creation of a coffee network in Latin America; the need for a regional network in the Middle East). Regional organizations could become 'international watchdogs', a role now often taken over by international NGOs, on global issues such as the rising of food prices and biofuels (as proposed by CIFA, India). Initiatives are being taken and supported by different multi-lateral organizations to create regional organizations without any apparent coordination. This is seen as a potential source of conflict between national and regional producers' organizations (e.g. the relations between the regional IFAP committees and the Asian Farmers' Association and the Pan-African Alliance of farmer networks) and the multi-lateral and bi-lateral development partners involved.

Many national producers' organizations from developing countries are dominated by smallholder farmers and their organizations. In several countries (e.g. the Southern African Region) though, the well-established national producers' organizations were initiated by large scale farmers; a characteristic that is also related to history and issues such as land tenure. National poverty reduction strategies as well as producers' organizations increasingly pay attention to smallholders. This poses the challenge how to deal with interests of both large scale farmers and smallholders within the same organization and make their voices heard and listened to (e.g. KENFAP in Kenya, ZNFU in Zimbabwe). Yet, such organizations can also link smallholders with opportunities provided through large scale farmers, such as access to markets.

## 4 Types of producers' organizations reached

### 4.1 Facts and trends

The producers' organizations that have been interviewed are mainly associations and federations (19 organizations) that intervene at the national level through advocacy on behalf of their member organizations and providing capacity strengthening services to their members (education, training, advisory services, business development services etc.). Three of the interviewed organizations intervene at the sub-national level while four organizations are umbrella organizations of agricultural cooperatives (see Table 2). This typology is based on the legal form, level of intervention and types of services provided; criteria that are used in the AgriCord data base on producers' organizations.<sup>9</sup>

Another feature for distinguishing the organizations is their origin and membership base; this allows for putting the organization within its context. For example: umbrella organizations (e.g. ANAPROCI in Ivory Coast) of the traditional commodity-based farmers' organizations that were created by parastatals; organizations that were originally set up by large scale farmers, and include businesses as members, and have an agri-business focus (e.g. AGRI in South Africa); and national associations of smallholder organizations that were created by civil society organizations or farmer leaders and focus on collective action for access to services and markets for a wide array of commodities (e.g. MVIWATA in Tanzania). Some producers' organizations are therefore hard to distinguish by outsiders from NGOs (e.g. the case of FENAFER in Burkina Faso) and others were even rooted in NGOs (e.g. such as CAMFAD in Cambodia).

Although producers' organizations may belong to a similar type (according to the above-mentioned criteria), they all state that they have smallholder farmers among their membership. A general trend observed is that some of the well-established producers' organizations start organizing themselves around distinctive purposes and activities; e.g. agribusiness development (e.g. AGRI in South Africa) and capacity strengthening activities (e.g. FPDF in Guinea Conakry).

### 4.2 Lessons learnt

The representatives from the different types of producers' organizations all mention one common challenge: enhance the financial autonomy and sustainability of their organizations. Current sources for sustaining the financial resource base of the organizations include levies, membership fees, grants from governments and multi-lateral and bilateral development partners. There is a general consensus among the interviewees about the fact that improving incomes of members is the way forward in strengthening the resource base of a producer organization and hence its financial sustainability (e.g. UNAFFE in Uganda, ZNFU in Zambia, CIFA in India, FIFATA and RSOA in Madagascar). Indicators for financial sustainability therefore need to be developed and used during the 'organizational profiling' exercise of producers' organizations.

Particularly the federations of farmer associations, groups etc. which are not primarily organized around commodities, mention the challenge of financial sustainability. Their budgets are generally speaking assured for two-thirds by

<sup>9</sup> See the AgriCord data base: : <http://www.agricord.org/?view=home&menu=home&page> under *Organisations*



external sources (e.g. through support projects for relatively young organizations such as SYDIP in the DR of Congo). Although financial autonomy and sustainability are key challenges, farmer leaders feel that this issue should not be overemphasized since institutional sustainability entails more than just the financial aspects. A gradual but sustained increase in financial autonomy is considered essential. Yet, ownership of the process/strategy by member farmers' organizations is considered more important and also contributing to overall institutional sustainability; as for example stated by MVIWATA in Tanzania.

From the point of view of poverty reduction, producers' organizations declare providing several services to their members; varying from advocacy for policy change for effective rural poverty reduction to direct support for economic development at the grassroots level. According to the interviewees, the emphasis on and the nature of service provided depend first of all on the membership characteristics and needs; e.g. cooperative as members, urban or rural based (e.g. FECORAH in Honduras), landless, women, youth, etc. In combination with local opportunities, farmer leaders consider them the main challenges to be addressed by producers' organizations when developing intervention strategies and subsequently mobilizing resources and partners for support. Some organizations explicitly use a livelihoods approach<sup>10</sup> for defining strategies and support activities (e.g. CONFECAMPO in Colombia, VNFU in Vietnam) while others, mainly the cooperative organizations use an agri-business approach (e.g. the value-chain approach used by VCA in Vietnam).

The majority of national producers' organizations undertake lobbying and advocacy activities. Many support projects contribute to developing the required skills in this area. The experiences have led to the insight at several producers' organizations that such activities also require appropriate structures (e.g. platforms for consulting the grassroots as developed by UNAFFE in Uganda and CPF in Burkina Faso), specific skills for the management of processes and relations (e.g. moderation skills), and partnerships with other institutions (e.g. members of the JFU in Jordan are also members of parliament).

### **4.3 Issues raised**

All interviewed producers' organizations declare "providing services to their members". Many of them admit struggling with organizing service provision around the 'core business' of their grassroots members (e.g. FPDF in Guinea Conakry) while being under the influence of governments, donors and other partners. For them it is often a continuous balancing act between the changing policy and institutional environment (e.g. the government interventions in the cotton sector in Benin and the cacao sector in Ivory Coast), the needs of their members, and the conditions put forward for support by development partners.

The majority of the producers' organizations provide an array of services to their members. This comes back in their strategic plans and has consequences for the requested support and its efficiency. It comes to one basic issue for

<sup>10</sup> The livelihoods approach aims to improve the livelihoods of poor people. It adopts a holistic point of view and takes in account the main factors that affect people's livelihoods and the typical relationships between these factors. The value-chain approach considers the position of farmers and their households in (supply) chains and analyses their relations with other market agents and support services. It aims to contribute to strengthening the position of farmers and their organisations as well as other actors within a chain from a point of view of economic development.

many of the interviewees: the effectiveness and efficiency of service provision by a producers' organization to its members compared to that of public and private (profit and non-profit) service providers. Or as a farmer leader from Niger phrased it: "How far producers' organizations need to go in taking over functions of public agricultural services that are chronically understaffed and underfunded".

Farmer leaders feel that agri-agencies emphasize organizational capacity strengthening at the national level, particularly for lobbying and advocacy. In fact, national policies (e.g. in Zambia) and innovative concepts and approaches, also introduced by agri-agencies (e.g. with CIFA in India), are more and more based on value chain and agri-business development approaches. Furthermore, many national producers' organizations have commodity-based farmer organizations among their grassroots members. This would require, according to the interviewees, a reorientation of capacity strengthening of their organizations for enhancing grassroots economic development.

Those national organizations that were interviewed and currently benefit from support by agri-agencies are mainly members or aspirant members of IFAP (with the exception of 2 organizations). IFAP membership is considered by many farmer leaders to be an advantage; for some of them it is a prerequisite for eligibility for support by AgriCord. Producers' organizations often are members of various regional and international organizations. Interaction between different organizations at different levels is considered essential by farmer leaders. It enhances political leverage on national and regional issues. Multilateral development agencies (as SACA in the Southern Africa region experienced) make no distinction in membership of international organizations when funding support projects.

The national producers' organizations that were interviewed regroup different categories of farmers, some of whom have their own special organizations or branches within the national organization (e.g. the FENAFER member organization of CPF in Burkina Faso; the youth branch of KENFAP in Kenya). This is considered by many farmer leaders as a strategy to reach and serve specific target groups. The landless, depending on the definition, are often also members of grassroots organizations. Some national organizations (e.g. the FFF in the Philippines) even include labor unions which also organize other categories of the rural poor, i.e. the landless, agricultural laborers.

## **5 Design of support to producers' organizations**

### **5.1 Facts and trends**

Producers' organizations benefit from financial and technical support by quite a few partners; particularly national organizations that have a 'good' reputation (e.g. KENFAP in Kenya). Others, through focusing on specific commodities and value chains attracted support from both agri-agencies and bilateral development agencies (e.g. SNAC on the Comoros and FMCN in Niger work with the French agency for development as well as agri-agencies). Farmer leaders point out that each partner has its own specific requirements for reporting and financial accountability (as is for example emphasized by FPDF in Guinea Conakry). This often implies different reporting procedures for the staff and leaders of the producers' organizations.

Several producers' organizations that have been interviewed have longstanding relationships with agri-agencies. Farmer-leaders state that the design of support by agri-agencies goes beyond mere funding. It distinguishes itself through the emphasis on ownership (strategic plans, support projects etc. are formulated by the organizations themselves), quality and mutuality through linking with producers' organizations in both the North and the South which provides for learning opportunities. Furthermore, several producers' organizations observe that agri-agencies increasingly coordinate support among themselves and even with other donors and development partners (e.g. the case in Madagascar).

### **5.2 Lessons learnt**

Three principles for designing external support projects and programmes emerged through the interviews with farmer leaders. Firstly, maintaining unity and cohesion within their organization. Secondly, producers' organizations are membership-based organizations and led by members who approve the organization's strategic plans for the future. Thirdly, organizational sustainability is a major concern of producers' organizations (for example for UNAFFE in Uganda, ZNFU in Zambia, FUPRO in Benin, SIDYP in the DR of Congo, SNAC on the Comoros, UNICAFES in Brazil). For farmer leaders autonomy and sustainability explicitly implies political independency and preparing the younger generation for taking over leadership.

Producers' organizations increasingly develop strategies to contribute to poverty reduction in rural areas. Such strategies are inspired by national policies and are seen as a condition for accessing donor funds. The strategies developed depend on the level of intervention and the services provided by a producers' organization. They include elements such as lobbying and advocacy for an enabling environment (e.g. land tenure), economic development at the local level (e.g. accessing production means and agricultural services), and a particular attention for the position of social categories (e.g. female-headed households, young farmers).

A considerable number of the producers' organizations that were approached have developed plans based on long-term visions. These strategic plans have proven to be useful tools when discussing and negotiating support with development partners, including agri-agencies (e.g. FUPRO Benin organized a round table for development). AgriCord members usually support the development of such strategic plans, which, in combination with appropriate

management systems and procedures, open the door for budget support (e.g. in the case of ZNFU in Zambia).

Other elements that facilitate the design of support are an appropriate legal status of the producers' organization (i.e. in line with its core mission and for proper handling of funds) and the definition of its core business and the related services provided to members. Farmer leaders feel that such clarity also facilitates mobilizing partners and funds for capacity strengthening; e.g. the case of FPDF in Guinea Conakry that focused on the development of the potato supply chain and that of SNAC on the Comoros that targeted vanilla and onions. In these cases it allowed for defining and also reaching tangible results.

Support at the national level (e.g. lobbying and advocacy) is considered useful by farmer leaders when linking it vertically with grassroots activities or organizing (e.g. enhanced organization of smallholders as intended by CFU, Zimbabwe) or targeting particular social groups (e.g. strengthening the role of women and young farmers at the local level as proposed by FUM, Malawi; reinforcing primary cooperatives and stimulating agribusiness development by FECORAH, Honduras).

Proposals for support that are submitted to agri-agencies and other partners for support are often short-term and not always clearly linked to long-term strategic plans (e.g. the case of FCMN in Niger; it developed a series of proposals that are in line with the so-called "work areas" of the FFP programme). Projects funded through agri-agencies are usually small and 'pilots' while the pilots are not always designed and developed for up scaling purposes. It is therefore suggested by several interviewees to establish learning mechanisms during the implementation of support projects (as proposed by VCA, Vietnam).

IFAP membership or being affiliated to IFAP member organizations is considered by many interviewees to be a criterion for eligibility (as for example perceived by ANAPROCI in Ivory Coast and FMCN in Niger). Furthermore, relationships with agri-agencies are also seen as a plus when accessing support programmes such as the FFP programme (as stated by VNFU in Vietnam and FIFATA and RSOA in Madagascar).

### **5.3 Issues raised**

Agri-agencies stimulate producers' organizations to develop their own proposals for support projects. This is part of the much appreciated principle by farmer leaders to enhance ownership of support projects. In addition, leaders feel that support projects may be more effective if they are linked with strategic plans; (a concern expressed by CAMFAD, Cambodia). Management of several support projects by one organization (quantity) also require a capacity to deliver the (quality) results (e.g. as experienced by UNAFFE in Uganda).

Farmer leaders agree that tangible results at the grassroots level are needed (i.e. poverty reduction) to justify support vis-à-vis donors as well as their grassroots members. The latter often perceive support as solely beneficial for the national level and leaders; e.g. SNAC leaders from the Comoros regularly have to account for the "their paid-for overseas trips".

Communication with agri-agencies on priorities and needs of producers' organizations is considered essential for enhancing the relevance of support. Farmer leaders perceive a priority by agri-agencies for organizational

strengthening when designing support for national organizations. Leaders though emphasize the need for more grassroots support, for example for agri-business development opportunities (e.g. as expressed by KENFAP from Kenya, SNCA from the Comoros, CPF from Burkina Faso and SYDIP from DR of Congo). Producers' organizations also feel that during the design process donors and others sometimes put issues on the agenda (e.g. HIV/AIDS was mentioned) which are not always local priorities.

Farmer leaders brought up issues related to the ownership, effectiveness and efficiency of support. First of all, producers' organizations need to develop programmatic frameworks which would facilitate alignment of support activities from partners. Secondly, organizations should put in place (financial) accountability systems that are transparent and trustworthy (e.g. toward basket funding and budget support). These conditions would allow for donors and other partners to harmonize their support (as was for example emphasized by the apex organizations in Zambia and Benin).

Coordination (by agri-agencies and others) of support to producers' organizations is a key issue for farmer leaders. This also implies a minimum effort of coordination between producers' organizations themselves (e.g. CPF in Burkina Faso tries to fulfill such a function for its member organizations while at the same time applying the subsidiarity principle when it comes to grassroots support activities.). Interaction is also needed at the national level to address policy issues that affect farmers, whether smallholders or larger holders (e.g. the institutional linkages between FUM and NASFAM in Malawi).

Farmer leaders experience that there are differences between agri-agencies in the design of and conditions for support. Some agri-agencies implement support projects funded by other donors (as a result of tenders or based on agreements). This is for example the case of SCC that has a considerable programme in the southern Africa region and UPA-DI that tendered for a CIDA funded support project in Guinea Conakry. The aims of individual agencies and therefore criteria for support are considered much clearer than those used by AgriCord (read: the FFP programme) since criteria are often experience-based (as for example mentioned by UNICAFES, Brazil, and JFU, Jordan).

The uncertainty about screening criteria, and the long presence of agri-agencies in some countries, are explanations forwarded by farmer leaders for the perceived unequal distribution of support projects among Sub-Sahara Africa, Latin America, South-East Asia and the Middle East (particularly by some farmer leaders from the Middle-East (Jordan) and Latin America (Colombia)). There is a lack of information among the interviewees about procedures and criteria (e.g. the issue of priority setting or not for proposals between regions and countries and within the work areas of the FFP programme). Procedures for the development, screening and approval of full proposals are also perceived as long (6 to 12 months) and suffer from insufficiency in communication.

Several producers' organizations that benefit from support by AgriCord members have been subject of the so-called "profiling" exercise (e.g. CAMFAD in Cambodia and FCMN in Niger). This results in an extensive description of the producers' organization and scoring of its performance. Areas for capacity strengthening are then identified that can be subject of support projects. For many farmer leaders, the status of profiling remains unclear; whether it is a service provided by AgriCord or a criterion for its support.

## **6 Modalities for implementing support**

### **6.1 Facts and trends**

Nowadays producers' organizations are involved in and supported through specific projects, agricultural sector programmes and budget support. Each of them has its specific support modalities. Many of the producers' organizations that were interviewed have developed relationships with bilateral development partners, international NGOs and agri-agencies. The consequence of this variety of partner organizations and related support projects is that producers' organizations have to deal with different financing and reporting modalities.

The majority of producers' organizations that were interviewed have experiences with support from agri-agencies (see Tables 3 and 4). The key characteristics of support through agri-agencies which are mentioned are: (i) the exclusive focus on strengthening producers' organizations; (ii) organizing farmer-to-farmer support, from one farmer organization to another either through exchange visits or counseling missions by experts from producers' organizations from the North; (iii) linking with other national producers' organizations and with regional farmers' organizations; and (iv) giving producers' organizations a sense of responsibility over the support (gradually becoming "project owners" as SNAC on the Comoros and FCMN in Niger experienced).

Farmer leaders observe that the different agri-agencies increasingly strive to enhance coordination of their specific support activities in some countries. There are agreements and arrangements between agri-agencies (e.g. between AfDI and Agriterra) for funding and delivering support. In that respect farmer leaders feel that AgriCord's role could be reinforced.

### **6.2 Lessons learnt**

The relationships with agri-agencies are maintained by the producers' organizations since they provide stepping stones for developing partnerships with other development partners (e.g. the case of FMCN, Niger). Particularly the organizational strengthening (e.g. financial management systems and procedures) is considered by farmer leaders to contribute to the positioning of producers' organizations vis-à-vis other partners. In some cases, agri-agencies even facilitated discussions with other development partners.

The farmer-to-farmer approach is for the majority of interviewees a striking feature of the support provided by agri-agencies. While counseling from northern peers is appreciated by those who have the experience for its pragmatism, exchange visits by southern producers' organizations to northern countries have a limited impact. They make farmer leaders more confident in defending the cause of agricultural producers. Yet, much of what they see overseas is often hard to implement because of contextual factors (policies, institutions etc.) and cultural barriers. Considering this, south-south exchange visits and peers' counseling is seen as a way forward by farmer leaders.

Farmer leaders see another feature that is rather unique for agri-agencies and their way of operating: agri-agencies are rooted in the agricultural sector and they know through experience what farmers' and producers' organizations are about and the challenges they face. Agri-agencies consider agriculture as more than just a practice, it is also a profession. They do not use blue-print approaches; agri-agencies are rather pragmatic. As one farmer leader phrased

it, they allow us to make errors and learn from it. Agri-agencies also invest in long-term relationships, which may have their ups and downs, and this ensures continuity of projects and programmes.<sup>11</sup>

Compared to agri-agencies, farmer leaders see that NGOs though tend to provide short-term support and they are often tied to donors with their conditions and procedures. This is also the case with support that comes through sector programmes which are funded by multi-lateral development partners. Such sector support programmes merely support the development of specific activities of producers' organizations, not their organizational strengthening. In both cases farmer leaders feel that it is difficult to keep a focus on the real needs and priorities of their membership base and to maintain the autonomy of the organization's leadership.

The longstanding and close relationship between agri-agencies and producers' organizations also has its downside. There is a risk of interference by agri-agencies in strategies and approaches that have been developed by producers' organization. It requires a regular evaluation of the partnerships in order to avoid taking things for granted and redefine the underlying principles of the partnerships.

### **6.3 Issues raised**

The role of NGOs in capacity strengthening of producers' organizations is looked upon with a critical view by farmer leaders. NGOs can contribute to capacity strengthening in the short-term (e.g. training of individuals). According to farmer leaders, NGOs, in comparison with agri-agencies, pay less attention to organizational sustainability and ownership of the process (e.g. continuous dialogue with producers' organizations about options, scenarios etc.). Contracting of NGOs by producers' organizations for provision of capacity strengthening services requires appropriate modalities to monitor service delivery (e.g. the experience of FDFP in Guinea Conakry).

One issue was raised by leaders from well-established national producers' organizations that undertake specific activities to enhance organization of smallholders for joining the national farmer movement (e.g. CFU in Zimbabwe and FFFCI in the Philippines). The national organizations involved thus support strengthening of grassroots farmers' organizations. In that respect, they consider themselves operating as agri-agencies which could receive direct funding.

The issue concerning the focus of support was again raised by several interviewees; i.e. organizational strengthening of national organizations versus economic development at the grassroots level involving institutional development. Farmer leaders feel that agri-agencies should contribute more substantially to supporting grassroots activities (e.g. strengthening of primary cooperatives by UCA in Uganda) and facilitate and mediate for improved access to rural finance, co-investments by the private sector in processing and marketing facilities etc.

Several producers' organizations have played or still play a role in providing farmers with basic services in conflict situations (e.g. Eastern part of the DR of Congo and post-electoral violence in Kenya). Farmer leaders question the role

<sup>11</sup> This issue was discussed with all interviewees and doesn't come out in the overview table (Annex 3).

of NGOs in post-conflict situations (e.g. experiences by SIDYP in the DR of Congo) where they don't contribute to sustainable institutional development and hamper self-help initiatives that are supported by producers' organizations.

Support by agri-agencies usually doesn't involve large funds. However, according to farmer leaders, disbursement procedures can be very cumbersome and might hamper efficiency of support (e.g. as experienced by FFFCI, the Philippines, FIFATA and RSOA in Madagascar, and SYDIP in the DR of Congo). They also require more information about the share of financial support for consultancies, overseas study tours, handling fees charged by agri-agencies and NGOs etc. as compared to in-country productive investments (as expressed by MVIWATA, Tanzania).



## 7 Conclusions

### 7.1 Lessons learnt

The synthesis and analysis of the information that was obtained through the interviews provide a series of trends and lessons learnt (see Table 5). Those trends and lessons learnt that were mentioned or illustrated by several interviewees are discussed as well as some suggestions that are made by the investigating KIT team to take the lessons learnt forward.

**Table 5: Overview of trends and lessons learnt**

	<b>Trends</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>
<b>Context</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Political democratization and economic liberalization are stimulus for organizing farmers</li> <li>– Agricultural sector policies and programmes acknowledge the role of producers' organizations</li> <li>– Priorities and needs for strengthening of producers' organizations are context specific</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Emerging opportunities for producers' organizations to strengthen their roles</li> <li>– Competition for support among national producers' organizations</li> <li>– Need for enhanced consultation and coordination among organizations</li> <li>– Impacts of reforms on (smallholder) farmers are not yet fully grasped</li> <li>– Need for strengthening the sub-national level for effective links with grassroots organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Types of organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– National producers' associations and federations that advocate on behalf of their members and provide capacity strengthening services</li> <li>– All (interviewed) national organizations have smallholder farmers among their members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Common challenge for producers organizations: enhance financial autonomy and sustainability</li> <li>– Need for enhanced income generation for members in order to achieve autonomy and sustainability</li> <li>– Ownership of the organizational development process contributes to the organization's sustainability</li> <li>– Types of services provided depend on members' priorities and needs</li> <li>– Lobbying and advocacy require appropriate structures, procedures, skills and alliances</li> </ul>
<b>Design of support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Development partners have their specific requirements (reporting and financial accountability)</li> <li>– Agri-agencies increasingly coordinate support projects (even with other development partners)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strategic plans are useful when negotiating support from partners</li> <li>– Projects by agri-agencies require scaling-up and learning mechanisms</li> <li>– Producers' organizations aim to contribute to rural poverty reduction; inspired by national policies</li> <li>– Poverty reduction focus: a condition for accessing support from partners</li> <li>– Principles for design: (i) maintain cohesion of the organization; (ii) members' approval; and (iii) enhance organizational sustainability</li> </ul>

**Table 5 (continuation)**

	<b>Trends</b>	<b>Lessons learnt</b>
<b>Modalities of support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Producers' organizations deal with different financing and reporting modalities</li> <li>– Support to producers' organizations by agri-agencies goes beyond mere funding</li> <li>– Characteristics of support by agri-agencies: (i) organizational strengthening; (ii) farmer-to-farmer support; (iii) linking with national and regional organizations; and (iv) farmer ownership</li> <li>– Agri-agencies enhance coordination of their specific support activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support at the national level requires links with grassroots (organizing or targeting social categories)</li> <li>– Counseling from northern peers is appreciated for its pragmatism</li> <li>– Exchange visits to northern countries have a limited impact (contextual factors)</li> <li>– Agri-agencies do not use blue-print approaches ("errors are allowed" and learning stimulated)</li> <li>– Agri-agencies also invest in long-term relationships (continuity of support)</li> <li>– Relationships with agri-agencies open the doors to other partners</li> <li>– Strengthening financial accountability is essential for attracting (other) funds</li> <li>– Longstanding, close relations between agri-agencies and producers' organizations include risks of interference by agri-agencies</li> </ul>

#### *7.1.1 Context and types of organizations*

The overall context is favourable for agricultural producers to organize themselves and national organizations are increasingly involved in policy making and implementation. At that level, producers' organizations face three major challenges: anticipate on the reforms foreseen by national policies, in terms of opportunities for strengthening their role and assess the (positive and negative) impacts of reforms on smallholder farmers; coordinate support to producers' organizations; and strengthening the linkages with their membership through reinforcing organization at the sub-national level. The first challenge would require timely involvement and appropriate capacity (i.e. co-design policies and their implementation modalities). The sub-national level could play a key role in facilitating the interaction between policy and practice. It forms a junction and as such has a learning function since grassroots activities are usually more economic development oriented. Grassroots experiences can feed policy making and influencing at the national level.

The interviewed organizations are predominantly national level entities with smallholder farmers among their membership. They are all members of regional and national producers' organizations. The organizations undertake advocacy and lobbying activities and provide capacity strengthening services to their members. Advocacy and lobbying is considered a core activity for which they benefit from support by agri-agencies that provided some valuable insights (see Table 5; lessons learnt for types of organizations).

All organizations have in common that they seek to enhance their autonomy and sustainability, particularly through developing a sound financial base. Active involvement of the grassroots members in developing the national organization as well as income generation at the grassroots level are considered essential for achieving overall autonomy and sustainability. In that respect, national organization should understand the phenomenon of poverty

at the grassroots level in order to provide the appropriate services to their members.

### *7.1.2 Design and modalities of support*

The majority of the national producers' organizations have developed relationships with a wide array of development partners, leading to financial and technical support through projects, each of them often with their specific requirements. Agri-agencies are among the first partners who engage in support projects. More recently agri-agencies enhanced the coordination of support by agri-agencies which is seen as a step forward in harmonizing support activities. In that respect agri-agencies are considered by producers' organizations to be front runners. Experiences indicate that strategic plans for organizational development facilitate the design of support projects and their alignment with the organization's policies and procedures. The support from agri-agencies for developing strategic plans is therefore much appreciated by producers' organizations. This would allow for a gradual shift from a project to a programmatic approach and (earmarked) budget support. AgriCord could take the lead in a "Paris Declaration on effectiveness of support to producers' organizations". Such programmatic frameworks would allow projects by agri-agencies to be innovation and learning opportunities.

Nowadays producers' organizations aim to contribute to poverty reduction in rural areas in general and more specific among their members. This often is considered a condition for accessing support from development partners. In that respect, a clear relation between the organizational strengthening and improvement of members' livelihoods, through the services provided by the organization to its members, should be established. In the view of farmer leaders, the design of support to their organizations, which are in essence membership-based, require participation and approval from members as well as targeting specific social categories. Support activities should not contribute to creating or strengthening inequalities among the leadership and the membership base. Producers' organizations therefore give or intend to give specific attention to aspects and groups such as gender, land tenure, young farmers and HIV/AIDS affected people etc.

Farmer leaders often compare support from agri-agencies to support provided through NGOs. Agri-agencies' support though is specific because of its farmer-to-farmer approach (north-south or south-south). Furthermore, agri-agencies support the actual development of producers' organizations. Agricultural sector policies and programmes often stop short of supporting effectively producers' organizations. Farmer-to-farmer support is specifically considered to be useful and promising in its south-south form (i.e. similar contexts and challenges, partnerships with linked-minded organizations etc.). As for organizational strengthening, support for establishing reliable financial accountability systems is considered essential since it allows for mobilizing financial support from other sources.

The support through agri-agencies is particularly appreciated for its ownership by the producers' organization (including the opportunity to learn from it) and suitability to local situations (excluding blue-prints). This strengthens the sense of responsibility at the level of producers' organizations. Experiences by farmer leaders though differ. Several of them feel that during the process issues are put on the agenda which do not correspond to their priorities and needs while it remains unclear for what reasons these issues are put forward. Agri-agencies are considered partners who maintain relationships (based on equality and

mutuality) and facilitate the development of relationships with other actors in the agricultural sector. NGOs though tend to provide short-term support and they are often tied to donors with their particular conditions and procedures.

## **7.2 Issues raised by farmer leaders**

Numerous issues were raised during the interviews and those most frequently mentioned by the interviewees and/or considered relevant for the FFP programme by the KIT investigation team are dealt with. The issues raised by the interviewees are opinions and perceptions based on their experiences and related to: (i) challenges for producers' organizations in pro-poor development; (ii) the areas of support provided through the FFP programme; (iii), and procedures for accessing support through the programme.

### *7.2.1 Producers' organizations and pro-poor development*

Smallholder farmers make up the majority of farmers in the agricultural sector, which is a key sector in many national poverty reduction strategies, in Africa, Asia as well as Latin America. Several producers' organizations have smallholders as well as large scale farmers among their members. It poses the challenge to farmer leaders of dealing with the, often diverging, interests of both groups. Some mixed organizations and traditional large scale farmer organizations undertake activities to strengthen smallholder grassroots organizations and subsequently take in account their needs and priorities for activities at the national level. This has become increasingly relevant since national policies aim to enhance the market-orientation and access of farmers through integrating value chains, while not all social categories dispose of the necessary assets.

Producers' organizations struggle with defining their core business, that is to say the key services to provide their members when enhancing income generation of smallholders. There is general agreement among farmer leaders that the priorities and needs of the members should be the leading principle. Still, governments, development partners, but also their members, make producers' organizations develop services that may be provided more effectively and efficiently by the private sector or even the public sector. This is particularly the case in contexts where public services are being privatized.

### *7.2.2 Areas and levels of support*

There is concern among farmer leaders about a balance between support by agri-agencies to organizational strengthening, lobbying and advocacy, and viable economic activities, i.e. access to markets and services for economic development. Support to economic activities is considered relevant for several reasons: many national organizations have commodity-based farmer organizations among their grassroots members; enhancing income generation is a priority for individual members while it also allows for creating a sound financial basis for the organization; and tangible results are needed to "keep members and donors aboard".<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Data from the AgriCord data base indicate that about 27% of the support projects of the FFP programme concern participatory policy making and organizational strengthening while about 23% are related to banking and credit, agricultural inputs, market and chain development, and diversification of agriculture (see Table 4).

Reasons forwarded by farmer leaders for channeling support through national organizations are: these organizations are in a better position to influence policies through lobbying and advocacy; they have programmes and plans that are in line with national policies; and they have the capacity to allocate resources and monitor their use for economic development at the grassroots level. Both types of support, at national and grassroots levels, are considered complementary: policy influence by national organizations contributes to an enabling environment for development at the grassroots level, under the condition of clearly distinguished and defined roles of the two levels<sup>13</sup>

### *7.2.3 Accessing support by the FFP programme*

Farmer leaders mention competition among national producers' organizations for support by donors, agri-agencies etc. In the same time they observe and appreciate the efforts of agri-agencies to coordinate the support they provide. National producers' organizations, according to some leaders, should also take their responsibility: talk in a single voice, when seeking external support, and consequently coordinate support and consult with donors, agri-agencies etc. A single voice is particularly needed for enhancing empowerment at the national level; i.e. united action and reflection by farmers on policies. Some practical proposals were made by farmer leaders to deal with this issue: clearly define mandates and roles of national organizations (having different membership bases); and create a national platform or forum (not a structure substituting existing organizations) with a coordination and learning function.<sup>14</sup>

Two issues stand out concerning the procedures for accessing support by the FFP programme:

- Perception prevails among farmer leaders that the FFP programme is only supporting IFAP member organizations, affiliated entities and at best aspiring IFAP members. IFAP membership is considered by many farmer leaders to be an advantage; it is at least considered a prerequisite for eligibility for support by AgriCord and/or agri-agencies.<sup>15</sup>
- Farmer leaders feel that the process for developing support projects needs clarification by developing instruments and communication with producers' organizations; e.g. conditions for a producers' organization to position itself as a partner of AgriCord (e.g. a membership that is inclusive for the poor, availability of a capacity strengthening and investment plan, accountability mechanisms), criteria and procedures for screening and approving proposals (e.g. key justification for getting support, formats) etc.

<sup>13</sup> Results from the D-group discussion. See Nederlof (2008).

<sup>14</sup> Results from the D-group discussion. See Nederlof (2008).

<sup>15</sup> Note of the authors: IFAP membership is not a condition for support by AgriCord.

## 8 Issues for discussion at AgriCord

Based on the above-presented conclusions, the KIT investigating team identified the following issues that could be discussed by AgriCord and IFAP:

- Capacity strengthening (organizational development) and productive investments (economic development) for pro-poor development;
- Organizational strengthening, institutional development and learning-by-doing;
- Farmers as a generic target group or targeting the poor among farmers and other agricultural workers;
- Project support, programmatic approach and funding mechanisms (see Chapter 7.1.2).

The FFP programme aims at enhancing poverty reduction in rural areas. This requires an analysis of poverty among the grassroots membership of producers' organizations, the identification of viable economic development activities and the definition of strategies to include the poor and the very poor. In that respect it is essential for producers' organizations at the national level to have a proper understanding of what poverty is at the grassroots level. This would allow for the definition of the producers' organization's role in reducing poverty and, maybe even more important, the alliances it has to develop with the public and private sector and other farmer-led institutions.

Poverty reduction can be achieved through pro-poor economic development when rural livelihoods are enhanced in a balanced and sustainable way. A greater emphasis on economic development, which is in line with priorities and needs of many grassroots organizations, would lead to more rightful balance between support to national and local levels as well as between producers' organizations which provide different services. Development of viable economic activities requires the involvement of and interaction between the private sector (driving economic growth) as well as the public sector (maintaining a focus on livelihoods and poverty), and particularly the producers' organizations (giving voice to the farmers for the proper focus at grassroots level). This goes beyond organizational strengthening and includes institutional development.

While there are examples of strengthening of interaction with the policy makers and mediation in some countries with financing institutions, support to stakeholder interaction at grassroots level seems less developed.<sup>16</sup> Although producers' organizations often request direct investment in economic activities (also for sustaining the national level), which would be difficult to implement under the FFP programme, the emphasis on economic activities could be in the support for mediation and facilitation, or at best based on pilot learning-by-doing. Another platform for learning are the sub national and regional fora and networks, whether thematic or commodity-based. Projects under the FFP programme only to a limited extent support regional networking other than through the IFAP structure. The FFP programme needs to consider at least supporting the interactive learning modality of such open-to-all networks.

The quasi-exclusive focus on agricultural producers' organization makes support projects excluding agricultural workers as a target group. On the one hand, some producers' organizations are registered as labor unions and there are some examples of strong interaction between farmers and agricultural workers. Some national organizations even include labor unions which involve other categories of the rural poor, e.g. the landless, agricultural laborers. On

<sup>16</sup> The work areas of the FFP programme (see Table 4) indicate that the programme can include or includes "institutional development".

the other hand, producers' organizations mostly exclude landless farmers or agricultural workers. There seem to be no projects that add to capacity development of agricultural workers, who are employed by viable agricultural enterprises, in their contribution to rural poverty alleviation.

## Annex 1: Conceptual framework

Context:	
Key question and proxies	Issues
How does the changing context impact on POs and their support?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Trends affecting farming and smallholder farmers</li> <li>□ National policies in place</li> <li>□ Consistency of external support with national policy priorities</li> <li>□ Relations of Producers' Organizations with other POs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Effects on PO priorities</li> <li>□ Role of POs in policy implementation</li> <li>□ Alignment of external support with PO priorities</li> <li>□ Initiatives by POs to harmonize external support</li> </ul>

Types of producers' organizations reached by external support:	
Key question and proxies	Issues
What types of POs are reached and with which type of support?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Membership base of PO</li> <li>□ Functions of PO</li> <li>□ Services provided to members</li> <li>□ PO partners who provide support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Challenges faced by members</li> <li>□ PO's contribution to poverty reduction</li> <li>□ PO capacities that need strengthening</li> <li>□ Partnerships that have been initiated by the PO</li> </ul>

Design of external support to producer organizations:	
Key question and proxies	Issues
How is the support to POs designed?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Modes of support</li> <li>□ Level of organisation targeted</li> <li>□ Role focus</li> <li>□ M&amp;E systems</li> <li>□ Learning and interaction modalities</li> <li>□ Accountability mechanisms</li> <li>□ Alignment and harmonization of external support with PO systems/procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Strengths/weaknesses of modes</li> <li>□ Support modes and levels</li> <li>□ Modes and roles</li> <li>□ Changes in M&amp;E, interaction &amp; learning, and accountability</li> <li>□ Conditions for effective alignment/harmonization</li> </ul>

Implementation of external support:	
Key question and proxies	Issues
What are the modalities to implement the support to POs?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Focus of capacity development activities</li> <li>□ Modalities for planning/funding support activities</li> <li>□ Levels and types of financial contributions by the PO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Support modes x capacities</li> <li>□ Specific support activities for each mode</li> <li>□ Financial sustainability</li> </ul>

Principles underlying external support:	
Key question and proxies	Issues
What are principles underlying the support to POs?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Policies by the PO on poverty related and cross-cutting issues</li> <li>□ Values and norms guiding the PO in its construction/operations</li> <li>□ Partnerships with external support organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Setting of policy agendas/influence by external partners</li> <li>□ Value sharing with external partners/ways to make them explicit</li> <li>□ Equality of partnerships/degree of equality according to partners</li> </ul>



## Annex 2: Producers' organizations interviewed

Regions/Countries	Producers' Organizations	Representatives interviewed
<i>Near East</i>		
Jordan	Jordan Farmers' Union (JFU)	Samir Abuhelaleh / <a href="mailto:Abuhelaleh103@hotmail.com">Abuhelaleh103@hotmail.com</a> Zeinab Ahmad Al-Momany / <a href="mailto:Zeinab_almoumani@yahoo.com">Zeinab_almoumani@yahoo.com</a>
Palestine	Palestinian Farmers' Union (PFU)	Issa Elshatleh / <a href="mailto:issa@pafu.ps">issa@pafu.ps</a>
<i>Latin America</i>		
Brazil	Uniao Nacional de Cooperativas da Agricultura Familiar e Economia Solidaria (UNICAFES)	Jose Paulo Crisostomo Ferreira / <a href="mailto:zepaulounicafes@yahoo.com.br">zepaulounicafes@yahoo.com.br</a>
Colombia	Confederación Empresarial del Campo de Colombia (CONFECAMPO)	Carlos Simancas / <a href="mailto:kasimancas@yahoo.com">kasimancas@yahoo.com</a> and <a href="mailto:confecampo@yahoo.com">confecampo@yahoo.com</a>
Honduras	Federacion de Cooperativas Agropecuarias y Empresas de la Reforma Agraria de Honduras Ltda (FECORAH)	Obdulio Ayala / <a href="mailto:Tulio61@hotmail.es">Tulio61@hotmail.es</a>
<i>South-East Asia</i>		
Cambodia	Cambodian Farmers' Association Federation for Agricultural Development (CAMFAD)	Sok Sotha / <a href="mailto:soksotha@camfad.org">soksotha@camfad.org</a>
India	Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations (CIFA)	Chengal Reddy / <a href="mailto:Chengal.p@gmail.com">Chengal.p@gmail.com</a>
Nepal	National Cooperative Federation (NCF)	Deepak Prakash Baskota / <a href="mailto:ncfnepal@yahoo.com">ncfnepal@yahoo.com</a> / <a href="mailto:dbaskota@hotmail.com">dbaskota@hotmail.com</a>
Philippines	Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives, Inc. (FFFCI)	Raul Montemayor / <a href="mailto:freefarm@mozcom.com">freefarm@mozcom.com</a>
Vietnam	Vietnam Farmers' Union (VNFU)	Nguyen Quoc Cuong / <a href="mailto:pmgt-nvdm@fpt.vn">pmgt-nvdm@fpt.vn</a>
Vietnam	Vietnam Cooperative alliance (VCA)	Vu Van Dzung / <a href="mailto:vvdzung@yahoo.co.uk">vvdzung@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>		
Benin	Fédération des Unions des Producteurs (FUPRO)	Tiburce Kouton / <a href="mailto:tiburcek@yahoo.fr">tiburcek@yahoo.fr</a>
Burkina Faso	Confédération Paysanne du Faso (CPF)	Bassiaka Dao / <a href="mailto:cpf@cpf.bf">cpf@cpf.bf</a> / <a href="mailto:tressapoulou@yahoo.fr">tressapoulou@yahoo.fr</a>
Burkina Faso	Fédération Nationale des Femmes Rurales (FENAFER)	Napotene Oualy and Marcelline Simporé
Comoros	Syndicat National des Agriculteurs Comoriens (SNAC)	Issa Mahji / <a href="mailto:snac-fm@comorestelecom.km">snac-fm@comorestelecom.km</a>

<b>Regions/Countries</b>	<b>Producers' Organizations</b>	<b>Representatives interviewed</b>
DR of Congo	Syndicat de Défense d'Intérêt des Paysans (SYDIP)	Kakale Wanzirendi / <a href="mailto:sydirprdcongo@yahoo.fr">sydirprdcongo@yahoo.fr</a> and <a href="mailto:wanzirendi@yahoo.fr">wanzirendi@yahoo.fr</a>
Guinea Conakry	Fédération des Producteurs du Fouta Djallon (FPFD)	Moustapha Balde / <a href="mailto:fpfd2002@yahoo.fr">fpfd2002@yahoo.fr</a>
Ivory Coast	Association Nationale des Producteurs Café Cacao de Côte d'Ivoire (ANAPROCI)	Benoît Behi / <a href="mailto:benoitbeh@hotmail.com">benoitbeh@hotmail.com</a> and <a href="mailto:behib@firca.ci">behib@firca.ci</a>
Kenya	Kenya Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP)	Daniel Moronge / <a href="mailto:mwitamo@yahoo.com">mwitamo@yahoo.com</a> Nduati Kariuki / <a href="mailto:producers@kenfap.org">producers@kenfap.org</a>
Madagascar	Association pour le Progrès des Paysans (FIFATA)	Mamy Rajohanesa / <a href="mailto:fi.fa.ta@moove.mg">fi.fa.ta@moove.mg</a>
Madagascar	Réseau Syndical des Organisations Agricoles (RSOA)	Marcel Rasolonirina / <a href="mailto:reseausoa@netclub.mg">reseausoa@netclub.mg</a>
Malawi	Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM)	Abiel Banda / <a href="mailto:Abiel.banda@farmersunion.mw">Abiel.banda@farmersunion.mw</a> Peace Mthekana / <a href="mailto:pmthekana@farmersunion.mw">pmthekana@farmersunion.mw</a>
Niger	Fédération des Coopératives Maraîchères du Niger (FCMN)	Idrissa Bagnoum / <a href="mailto:fcnniya@intnet.ne">fcnniya@intnet.ne</a>
Senegal	Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux (CNCR)	Samba Gueye / <a href="mailto:cncr@cncr.org">cncr@cncr.org</a>
South Africa	AGRISA: Milk Producers' Organizations (MPO)	Johannes Moller / <a href="mailto:moller@lantic.net">moller@lantic.net</a> Etienne Terre'Blanche (MPO) / <a href="mailto:etienne@mpo.co.za">etienne@mpo.co.za</a>
South Africa	AGRISA: Rooivleis Producente Organisasie (RPO)	Arnold Brand (RPO) / <a href="mailto:pabrand@telkomsa.net">pabrand@telkomsa.net</a> GM Schutte (RPO) / <a href="mailto:rpo@lantic.net">rpo@lantic.net</a>
Southern Africa	Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU)	Ishmael Sunga Vashee
Tanzania	MVIWATA	Andrew Hepelwa / <a href="mailto:Mviwata@africaonline.co.tz">Mviwata@africaonline.co.tz</a>
Uganda	Uganda National Farmers' Federation (UNAFFE)	Frank Tumwebaze / <a href="mailto:franktumwebaze@yahoo.co.uk">franktumwebaze@yahoo.co.uk</a> Arinaitwe Rwakajara Katambuka / <a href="mailto:rwakajara@yahoo.com">rwakajara@yahoo.com</a>
Uganda	Uganda Cooperative Alliance Ltd (UCA)	Tibamwenda Tom Wa-ighoma / <a href="mailto:twakighoma@yahoo.com">twakighoma@yahoo.com</a> Bernard Tayebwa / <a href="mailto:btayebwa@uca.co.ug">btayebwa@uca.co.ug</a>
Uganda	National Union of Coffee Agribusiness and Farm Enterprises (NUCAFE)	Gerald Ssendaula / <a href="mailto:nucafe@ungandacoffee.org">nucafe@ungandacoffee.org</a>
Zambia	Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU)	Ndambo Ndambo
Zimbabwe	Commercial Farmers' Union of Zimbabwe (CFU)	Hendrik Olivier / <a href="mailto:dir@cfu.co.zw">dir@cfu.co.zw</a> Doug Taylor-Freeme / <a href="mailto:romsey@mweb.co.zw">romsey@mweb.co.zw</a>

### Annex 3: Synoptic overview tables of issues raised by farmer leaders

Producers' Organization Country	Context	Type of organization	Design of support	Implementation of support	Principles
Jordan Farmers Union (JFU, Jordan)	Government listens more to WB than to PO.	Strategy in place Some members in parliament.	Communication with AgriCord on presented priorities not clear	No approved projects; priority issue?	Role of women farmers given attention Interest in exchange between Dutch and Jordan farmers
Palestinian Farmers' Union (PFU, Palestine))	Interest in sub-regional networking (Middle-East)	Network of cooperative associations	Role of AgriCord in support for PFU unclear	Bureaucratic and lengthy process	Poverty not addressed in strategic plan
União Nacional de Cooperativas da Agricultura Familiar e Economia Solidária (UNICAFES, Brasil)	How to organize apex organizations of small and large farmer unions?	Small-scale farmers' organization to be registered and member of IFAD with certification of quality	Agri-agencies have clearer objectives than AgriCord.	Building trust is central; e.g. for obtaining funds from banks at acceptable rates	Maintaining sustainability and independence
Grupo Empresarial del Campo (CONFECAMPO, Colombia)	Struggling with political context; e.g. the guarantee fund approved by parliament but not implemented	"Grupos empresariales del campo" have sort of livelihoods approach Mediocre capacity of some cooperatives	More transparent priority setting needed Perception is that all is going to Africa Emphasis needed on mediation/coaching	Agribusiness development is main priority	Sub-regional networking; e.g. on coffee, biofuel, rural finance needed
Federacion de Cooperativas Agropecuarias y Empresas de la reforma Agraria de Honduras Ltd. (FECORAH, Honduras)	National union not yet established for IFAP membership Government policy on biofuels prohibitive	Sub-national organization of cooperatives; no apex yet	Weak cooperatives need support,; coordination needed at sub-national level	Support on bio-energy issues needed Agribusiness development, management and policy issues	Many cooperatives are for the urban poor and not rural poor
Cambodian Farmers' Association Federation for Agricultural development (CAMFAD, Cambodia)	Just starting to interact with policy makers Getting some government support (in kind) Offices outside town: cheaper	Change in 2006 from NGO to farmers' organization. Strong bottom-up organization	AgriCord as coordinating mechanism not clear Before Agriterra mainly on mediation with finance institutions	Longer term support needed, otherwise it will be limited to individuals	Strong goal of supporting rural poor farmers Mainly female farmers, but less in leadership

<b>Producers' Organization Country</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>	<b>Design of support</b>	<b>Implementation of support</b>	<b>Principles</b>
Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations (CIFA, India)	POs can position themselves international watchdogs on global through key issues (e.g. food crisis)	Major differences between Asia and Africa e.g. market in Asia always guaranteed	Agriterro emphasized value chain development and policy influencing		How to become sustainable membership fees)? NGOs never good in developing lobbying capacity
National Cooperative Federation of Nepal (NCF, Nepal)	The cooperative principles were part of the socialist agenda of the former ruling party NCF founding member is a former minister	NCF a strongly promotes the cooperative identity and related values	Support by national governments endangers autonomy of the PO Membership of IFAP facilitates access to external support	Support modalities (of the government) are adapted to 'poor' and 'rich' areas of the country Need to focus support on developing niche markets and technological innovations	Strengthening both cooperative management and governance
Federation of Free Farmers' Cooperatives (FFFC, Philippines)	Potential conflicts with regional IFAP committee and AFA network Relation with AFA not clear.	Apex of labor union and economic cooperatives	Contribution to be used in-country and not by consultants; e.g. local agri-agency	Slow process and no proper feedback (only website) Competition with NGOs, which are grant dependent	Sustainability criteria and indicators in profiling?
Vietnam National Farmers' Union (VNFU, Vietnam)	International quality coffee cooperative project	Mainly community and socio-economic orientation	Long-term collaboration with Agriterro	Support projects on quality products for the market and development of rural tourism	Village groups based on participation
Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA, Vietnam)	ICA and IFAP member VCA central staff on government payroll	Mainly economic orientation, developed in recent years	Emphasis on learning (study tours, etc.)		Strong government role, although being 'new' cooperatives

<b>Producers' Organization Country</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>	<b>Design of support</b>	<b>Implementation of support</b>	<b>Principles</b>
Fédération des Unions des Producteurs (FUPRO, Benin)	Cotton growers were the financial backbone of FUPRO; they now have their own apex This requires repositioning of FUPRO Agri-agencies also support 'competitors' of FUPRO in Benin		Strategic plan is the framework for mobilizing support (e.g. round table) Management of support projects is a source of income One agri-agency's support is part of the FFP programme; no information on aims etc.	Partners have their own strategies for tackling rural poverty Partners cling to their reporting formats Ambition to evolve toward programmatic support and basket funding; requires solid accountability mechanisms	Enhancing financial sustainability of the PO Effective poverty reduction requires activities at the grassroots level
Confédération Paysanne du Faso (CPF, Burkina Faso)	CPF facilitates negotiation/coordination for external support according to the subsidiarity principle	CPF lobby/advocacy activities on transversal issues	Two visions confronted during design: focus on grassroots (economy) or national level (organization)	Need to decentralize support (e.g. access to inputs, strengthening primary cooperatives) PO has management responsibility	Transparent, trustworthy (financial) accountability mechanisms
Fédération Nationale des Femmes Rurales (FENAFER, Burkina Faso)	No or little coordination between CPF and FENAFER (CPF member) for participation in the IFAP congress (representation of rural women)	Special interest group: initiative from people with NGO experience	Through its (paid-for by an international NGO) participation in the IFAP congress, FENAFER intends to mobilize external support		
Syndicat National des Agriculteurs Comoriens (SNAC, Comores)	Liberalization of the sector offered new opportunities for the since 1994 dormant SNAC		Commodity focus facilitated mobilization of donor support (concrete results) Design/organize external support around value-chain development Support organizations impose their issues	SNAC is being prepared to become project owner Support should target grassroots levels; tangible results	Enhancing institutional and financial sustainability of the PO

<b>Producers' Organization Country</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>	<b>Design of support</b>	<b>Implementation of support</b>	<b>Principles</b>
Syndicat de Défense d'Intérêt des Paysans (SYDIP, DR of Congo)	Post-conflict area: need for organizing farmers (security) Aid flows through NGOs; rather opportunistic. Emergency aid creates an attitude of wait-and-see.	Reputation based on legal aid to farmers (land tenure) Ambition to go national (questioned by the agri-agency)	Need to design support around viable, initiatives with an impact at farmer's level	Liaison officers improve mutual understanding Need for flexibility and smoothness when providing (financial) support)	Enhancing financial autonomy of the PO Mutuality/reciprocity
Fédération des Producteurs du Fouta Djallon (FPFD, Guinée Conakry)	Competition between support organizations within the FPFD region Need for coordination of external support; either by the Government or by support organizations	Organization of support activities around the core business of members	Support to be based on a long-term vision; this requires commitment from partners During the design, issues are 'put' on the agenda by northern support organizations (e.g. HIV/AIDS)	Several support organizations: various financing/reporting modalities Contracting out to local NGOs requires monitoring capacities of the PO	No interference of support organizations on the FPFD policy influencing agenda Enhance financial autonomy and services to members of the PO
Association Nationale des Producteurs Café Cacao de Côte d'Ivoire (ANAPROCI, Ivory Coast)	Co-manage a commodity sector (formerly managed by parastatels) ANAPROCI risks to be co-opted by national politics Coffee/cacao growers do not talk with one voice	Member of ANOPACI It co-managed a levy-based fund (e.g. for capacity strengthening); this mandate was withdrawn by the Government	For AgriCord support ANAPROCI has to go through ANOPACI (IFAP member) Availability of sector funds (e.g. FIRCA); ANAPROCI is pro-active in attracting support (e.g. feasibility studies on processing units)	ANAPROCI: no experience with AgriCord Support should deal with strengthening the legal position of POs (become policy actors) and learning mechanisms	POs should speak in one voice when negotiating external support POs should provide well-established investment plans
Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP, Kenya)	NGOs were too dominant in policy and national decision-making and in terms of attracting funds	Special Youth Branch	More emphasis on support to business proposals at grassroots needed Sustainability remains a challenge.	Access to investment mediation needed NGOs are competitors for donor funds; they have a bureaucratic and lengthy process	How to bring interests of small and large scale farmers together?

<b>Producers' Organization Country</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>	<b>Design of support</b>	<b>Implementation of support</b>	<b>Principles</b>
Association pour le Progrès des Paysans (FIFATA, Madagascar)  Réseau Syndical des Organisations Agricoles (RSOA, Madagascar)	Need for enhanced coordination between POs as well as between support organizations	Difficulties for grassroots organizations to sustain themselves; based on improved revenues for members	Concerted demand (FIFATA/RSOA) for support was facilitated through the Chamber of Agriculture Support from AgriCord requires relationships with agri-agencies Part of support funds going to gender (data provided by the POs)	Support by agri-agencies: PO responsibility in management of support (easier procedures) Need for financial contribution to grassroots activities Need for smooth procedures to address demands for support	Value-chain development as a leading approach
Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM, Malawi)	The reversing of the ADMARC privatization is an opportunity for FUM	FUM could also become the apex organization when NASFAM joins FUM	Need for specific young farmer issues Role of women in POs at local level Mandate conflicts with some donors	Balance between capacity development and investment needed PO reports in one format to all donors	Attention for HIV/AIDS; Invitation to large scale farmers to become members Access to land an issue for young farmers
Fédération des Coopératives Maraîchères (FCMN, Niger)	FCMN is member of a national platform (PPN) and an international platform (ROPPA)	How far POs should go in taking over public sector services (underfunded, understaffed)?	Support based on the profiling exercise Proposals for support prepared for each FFP programme work area Membership of IFAP is considered a pro for accessing FFP programme Comprehensive support needed (sectors x levels)	Need to respect to the POs management systems and procedures PO responsibility in management of support Partnership relations imply 'learning-by-doing'	Support by agri-agencies based on partnership relations
Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux (CNCR, Senegal)	CNCR platform takes strong, outspoken stands on national policy issues	The prevailing institutional context forces CNCR to take also interest in service provision to members	Transparency (partners) is essential during design Procedures for support projects (AgriCord) are too long Suggestion: appoint focal points, increase moments of decision-making	Positive in agri-agency: dialogue between partners, field visits, exchange visits, networking Less positive: liaison officers at distance, disbursement procedures	Financial autonomy of the PO: maximum financial support (budget)

<b>Producers' Organization Country</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>	<b>Design of support</b>	<b>Implementation of support</b>	<b>Principles</b>
AGRI-South Africa (milk producers' organization)	Use of socio-economic principles vs economic principles in policymaking Improving relation with government	Agri-SA affiliation with NAFU but politicized and weak	Evidence-based policy making needed e.g. on mentorship programmes and outsourcing services	Access problems to AgriCord and agri-agency recognition	Poverty addressed in strategy and interest to support smallholder programme
Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU, Southern Africa region)	Interest in regional networking	Regional network including non-IFAP and sub-national organizations	AgriCord Committee is too much IFAP dominated Support needs to be longer term	Long delays leads to sustainability issues	Multinational donors fund networks which make no distinction between IFAP, LVC ICA or sub-national organizations
MVIWATA Tanzania	Fast-growing due to demise of cooperative movement Resources for local investment difficult to obtain	Own ideas very important and leading	Annual council decides on priorities for ownership reasons	Funds need to go to MVIWATA directly and not through NGOs Some agri-agencies do not respect the MoU	Small-scale farmers and recognition of strategic plan Process with AgriCord requires transparency
Uganda National Farmers' Federation (UNAFFE, Uganda)	What are policies in place favourable for farmers' organizations playing their roles?	National level emphasis on policy change through advocacy from membership-based organizations	No overall plan for attracting advocacy support (some from Agriterra)	Need for financial sustainability Not too many projects at the time in order to have capacity to deliver themes	How to become sustainable? The role of membership fees as input and funding into policy research
Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA, Uganda)	National Cooperative legislation and policies on market integration		Access to investment mediation needed	Comparative analysis of the experiences various agri-agencies needed	Grassroots capacity development needed
National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises (NUCAFE, Uganda)	International coffee networking needed		Emphasis on institutional development and innovation		Coffee ownership for sustainable livelihoods



<b>Producers' Organization Country</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>	<b>Design of support</b>	<b>Implementation of support</b>	<b>Principles</b>
Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU, Zambia)	National value chain competitiveness focus in national policies ZNFU recognized at policy level in this respect	Financial independence needs not to be overemphasized, rather gradual increase PO in the coordinator role, for ownership	Ownership Basket or programme funding Slow increase in financial sustainability	Core funding needed as in recent past (e.g. by SCC) Basket funding or budget support to overall programme	How to become sustainable (through membership fees)? Proper mix of small and large scale farmers as autonomous development rather than donor driven
Commercial Farmers Union of Zimbabwe (CFU, Zimbabwe)	Need for interaction small and large scale farmers	Three POs need to work together (large-scale, small-scale and cooperatives)	Support for apex organization needed	CFU is supporting ZFU but not recognized as agri-agency work	How to overcome AgriCord and SCC reservations or new apex organization strategy?
IFAP's African Platform	African network supported by and driven by IFAP No relation with African Alliance of sub-regional Farmers' Organizations (AAFO)	Open to all farmers' organizations Need to interact with LVC and ICA members	Procedures not perceived as transparent	Market information and agribusiness investment taking off	