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FO4Impact

Farmers' organisations for impact / Farmer-led innovation



OBJECTIVES

The Farmers' Organisations for Impact Programme is aiming at promoting inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient agricultural value chains based on agro-ecological principles through strengthened farmers' organisations (FOs).

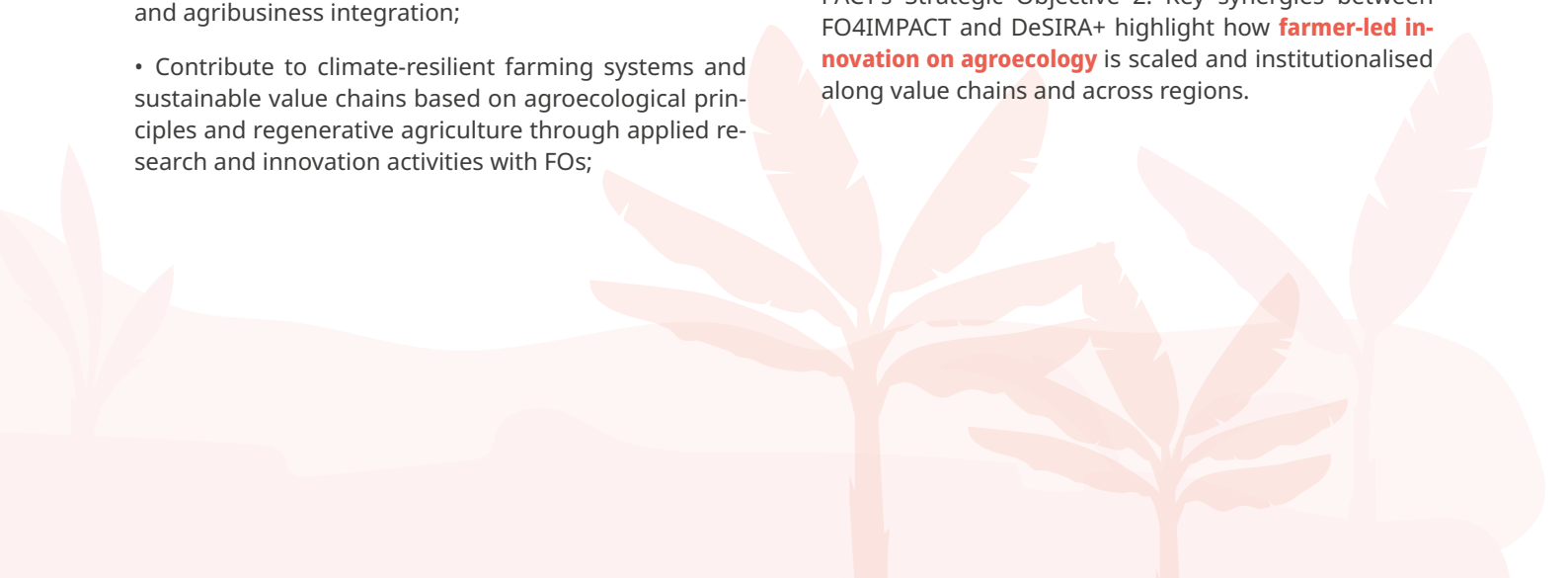
The strategic objectives of FO4IMPACT are:

- Ensure FOs deliver enhanced technical, economic, and financial services to members, focusing on markets and agribusiness integration;
- Contribute to climate-resilient farming systems and sustainable value chains based on agroecological principles and regenerative agriculture through applied research and innovation activities with FOs;

- Ensure FOs influence evidence-based public policies to create a favourable environment for agri-food system transformation;

- Ensure FOs operate as accountable, inclusive, and well-performing institutions capable of effectively fulfilling their roles.

The FO4IMPACT Umbrella Programme is strategically linked and partly funded by DeSIRA+, ensuring coherence with this agenda, particularly through FO4IMPACT's Strategic Objective 2. Key synergies between FO4IMPACT and DeSIRA+ highlight how **farmer-led innovation on agroecology** is scaled and institutionalised along value chains and across regions.





LOGIC OF INTERVENTION

FO4IMPACT is explicitly designed to build on and expand the achievements of the DeSIRA Farmer-led Research and Innovation (FORI) programme, managed by AgriCord, which pioneered a novel farmer-led approach to agroecology and positioned FOs as central drivers of the innovation process.

DeSIRA+ provides structural integration of farmer-led innovation on agroecology by ensuring that FO4IMPACT's specific interventions will focus on applied participatory research and co-innovation scaling up. This intervention ensures that research and innovation are demand-driven and co-generated, moving away from conventional top-down knowledge transfer models. This requires enhancing FOs capacities to support processes of identification and valorisation of local initiatives and indigenous knowledge, which can be supported by scientific experimentation in a logic of co-research with a view to deliver technologies and innovations that are suitable for smallholder producers' socio-economic circumstances and hence widely adoptable. Farmers Field Schools, design and data collection to the documentation of innovations, knowledge sharing among farmers are key ingredients to develop farmer-led innovation. Moreover, the programme also strengthens institutionalised research partnerships between FOs and national agricultural research systems (NARS), providing FOs with the skills and tools to engage in rigorous farmers-led research, thereby reinforcing their role in shaping research agendas and policy processes.

The FO4IMPACT Umbrella Programme is implemented across several continents, with the core regional sub-programs in Africa and Asia-Pacific directly co-financed by the EU and supervised by IFAD. Implementation in these regions is channelled through key regional FOs' networks. FOs are responsible for implementing at least 70% of the budget allocation, and they coordinate, manage and report in collaboration with the technical partners.

These efforts are institutionalised through the IFAD Farmers' Forum (FAFO), which serves as a vital platform for policy dialogue, strengthening FOs institutional capacities at all levels and ensuring their strategic involvement in development initiatives.



MAIN INTERVENTIONS/COMPONENTS

The programme is structured into four components:

Component 1 focuses on services, finance, and agro-ecological transitions with a sub-component on farmer-led innovation.

Component 2 focuses on developing advocacy and policy tools and strengthening representation.

Component 3 focuses on capacity development in areas such as governance, accountability, and institutional performance (using tools like the Farmers Empowerment Assessment Tool-FEAT).

Component 4 (IFAD Coordination) provides supervision and implementation support.



STATE OF PLAY OF THE PROJECT

FO4IMPACT builds directly on the experiences and achievements of prior long-term EU and IFAD-supported FO programmes, including the Support to Farmers' Organisations in Africa Programme (SFOAP), the Medium-Term Cooperation Programme (MTCP), FO4ACP, FO4A, and FO4LA. This situation allowed IFAD to co-design FO4IMPACT by mobilising resources of previous programmes. Several identification missions in regions has been done to adapt the interventions to the needs on the ground. The contract between IFAD and EU will be signed before the end of the year.

BASIC INFORMATION

Contracting entity: IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development)

Implementing partners: IFAD, continental, regional and local farmers' organisations and cooperatives, AgriCord.

Countries: Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the program maintains a global scope and will gradually expand to other regions including Asia-Pacific with EU funding and Latin America with IFAD funding.

Start: November 2025.

Duration: 5 years.

Funding: The project is funded by the European Union and benefits from a 6M€ contribution from DeSIRA+.