



Synthesis of ongoing and planned development initiatives in support  
of rural producer organisations and their role on making markets work  
for pro-poor development

Part 1  
Background and Key Findings

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## Background and methodology

Within the framework of the IFAP-ECART-IFAD *Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets* programme <http://www.esfim.org>, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)<sup>2</sup> invited the European Consortium for Agricultural Research in the Tropics (ECART)<sup>3</sup> to prepare an overview of key ongoing and planned donor and wider development partner initiatives working in support of the empowerment of smallholder farmers in markets (see Annex 1 for Terms of Reference). It is intended that the outputs will contribute to IFAP's commitment to *making markets work* and its longer term business planning. Specifically, it seeks to contribute to the shaping of the phase 2 of the IFAP-ECART-IFAD *Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets* programme (Annex 2) through deepening the understanding of entry points for wider uptake of the IFAP-ECART-IFAD programme.

A list of some key donors and development partners was developed and agreed between IFAP and the ECART team – the latter comprising the Wageningen University (WUR), the Netherlands, the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), UK and CIRAD, France. A questionnaire was developed (Annex 3) and agreed. It included key questions of relevance to the understanding of entry points for potential uptake by the IFAP-ECART-IFAD programme and to identify opportunities for the future programmes' coherence and value addition.

The questionnaire together with the background note on the IFAP-ECART-IFAD programme was circulated electronically to 15 agencies, specifically their rural development teams, during April – June 2007. Six agencies responded including the IFAD, Sida, DGIS, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DFID and FAO. Information was also shared by the Swedish Cooperative Centre whose work is funded largely through the Swedish Agency for Development Cooperation (Sida). Whilst two organisations completed the questionnaire form all respondents provided resource materials and or web links and this was drawn upon to build up this review.

The three programmes in which IFAP is directly involved and/or associated namely the IFAP-ECART-IFAD *Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets* (ESFIM) programme, the GFAR *Linking Farmers to Markets – a Global Partnership Programme*, and the Regoverning Markets Programme were added to the analysis as information on these programmes was readily available. In addition the review also draws on other sources of information in an effort to fill some of the known gaps - the reference source is provided where applicable. Information gathered from the questionnaire, other materials provided and from web sourcing is presented in Part 2 of this report. The output is summarised in as systematised a manner as possible within the limits of the information provided.

The lack of completed questionnaires and incomplete information from other sources means that a full analysis against the key themes identified in the questionnaire cannot be undertaken with any degree of rigour however the findings do offer a starting point for dialogue and shared learning. The key findings listing areas of activity by donor programme based on the information available and best-guess assumptions are given in Annex 4.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ifap.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ecart-eeig.org/>

## Key Issues and Implications

Rural Producers Organisations (RPOs) are strategic actors in economic development and in the fight against poverty. They are private sector organisations set within their own constitutions and the regulatory environment operating in a given country. They are diverse in their nature ranging from cooperatives and producer organisations to unions, federations and confederations. They may specialise in the marketing of a single commodity or undertake a wide range of activities including those in the social sector. They may engage in policy activities (including representation, lobby and advocacy) at local, national, regional and international levels.

This rapid and non comprehensive overview of selected donor and international agency ongoing and planned interventions in support of RPOs raised the **following issues and observations**:

RPOs are, and increasingly so, considered to be *key partners in the fight against poverty*. They are essential organisational structures for supporting and enabling farmers, livestock keepers and fisher men and women access to markets. They are a key to ensuring that public policy, through the voice and participation of RPOs is geared to meet the challenges of the rural economy and of the small family farms in particular. *RPOs are seen as legitimate partners in development*.

Given this importance and profile, donors and other development partners, are in various ways seeking to *support RPOs through a range of interventions* including capacity building, organisational structure development and strengthening, technical assistance for market access, public-private partnerships and intermediation, and direct support to human resource development and capital asset accumulation. Today almost all bilateral donors and international development agencies interact directly or indirectly and at some level with RPOs.

### Observations from the survey:

1 Donors and development partners are working at all levels from the very local and informal association of farmers to the provision of support to formal local and national structures and federations, regional and international bodies. Donor initiatives addressing market development, the strengthening of the market value chain and building competitiveness, touch to differing degrees within their investment programmes on the role and strengthening of RPOs.

2 There is weak coordination between donor programmes supporting RPOs in terms of activities and scope at national and international levels. With the exception of the work of the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) <http://www.copac.coop> there appears to be no donor or development agency network, working in partnership with economic organisations of farmers, in place where shared learning and joint action can take place. There is therefore little no consensus on the principles of engagement with RPOs.

3 Where projects or programmes are undertaking research and /or development of case study/good practice, there is little common or shared understanding of research methods and or evaluation of methodologies in the case of good or innovative practice to enable replication and support scaling up-out.

4 Whilst monitoring and evaluation and impact assessment systems may be in place within programmes, these are not generally well or specifically articulated.

5 Some agencies work directly with and through the RPOs whilst others operate through decentralized support or project offices. The nature of these relationships raises questions of sustainability of the RPOs and of donor dependency.

6 There is a strong focus on sub-Saharan Africa. However, there is little or no cross regional learning and sharing of experiences where real opportunities exist to share for example, between Latin America and South Asia and SSA

7 There are few detailed case examples of: the development of joint ventures; new models of public–public support for better market engagement; kick-starting RPO enterprise (although these may be central to the USAID work of CLUSA and ACDI/VOCA); and the provision of non economic services. However it should be noted that a number of agencies e.g. USAID, DFID and the Netherlands<sup>4</sup> have private sector challenge programmes which may be also be relevant and have not been reported in this survey.

8 The link between interventions that support RPOs and those which support the enabling environment for either group formation and or value chain development (including for example contract law, codes of market practice) is weakly articulated in programme documents.

9 Many agencies report their support to RPOs in such areas as “internal structure and governance”, “internal accountability”. Such tasks are known to be challenging and require significant inputs and time duration raising questions on the robustness and the exact nature of inputs.

10 Regional bodies (for example SACAU, ROPPA, PROCPAC, EAFF and WINFA) are seen as increasingly important actors in linking farmers organisations to the wider policy discourse including in the context of global trade and EPA issues also COPROFAM (Coordinadora de las Organizaciones de Productores del MERCOSUR) and the Association of Cotton Producers (APROCA).

### **Possible implications for the ECART-IFAP-IFAD Programme (ESFIM)**

A number of the points above re-enforce the need for the ESFIM programme (Annex2) and serve to re-enforce its relevance.

1 Most support and intervention is provided at a specific (horizontal) level i.e. local, national, regional and global. There exists an opportunity to address the institutional and organisational relationships between levels e.g. local to regional. This may offer a fruitful entry point for the ESFIM programme both in terms of analysis and specifically in support of broad-based ownership of policy development, influence and advocacy.

2 There is a need for coherence on research methods including shared learning on the methods and analytical tools used for the identification of “good” and replicable practice. This should include better monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment measures.

3 There is a need for more systematised learning between RPOs and those agencies that support them including between regions on all aspects of RPO market empowerment and engagement.

4 There is a knowledge gap in the development and validation of new business models including examples of how RPOs can plan for and execute public-private partnerships and use public intervention to kick-start economic activity/engagement.

5 There is a need to understand better the real content of donor interventions as concerns “support to brokerage and negotiation for market linkages” and “RPO capacity building”. Future work activities might develop and validate good practice models and or codes of practice.

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<sup>4</sup> Programme for cooperation with emerging markets  
[http://www.evd.nl/business/programmes/ProgrammaInt\\_psm.asp?land=psm](http://www.evd.nl/business/programmes/ProgrammaInt_psm.asp?land=psm)

6 The ESFIM programme should take into account regional bodies and ideally link with them as key entry points for both programme development and for outreach. It is noted that whilst such bodies are not IFAP members many of their membership are also IFAP members.

7 In identifying partner countries and institutions for the ESFIM programme, early stage enquiries must be made of ongoing and planned related donor (and other) activity to minimise duplication and to seek value addition. This is an essential component of each country scoping assessment.

8 The findings of this survey (in particular the working notes of section 2) should be reviewed in the context of decisions on the country selection for the phase 2 of ESFIM.

## **Annex 1        Terms of Reference**

### **Synthesis of ongoing and planned development initiatives in support of producer organisation and their role on making markets work for pro-poor development**

#### **Building coherence, value addition and wider linkages**

Within the framework of the IFAP-ECART-IFAD *Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets* programme, IFAP has invited ECART to prepare an overview of key ongoing and planned donor and wider development initiatives working in support of *Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets*. This overview will include the three programmes in which IFAP is directly involved as well as similar initiatives by other donors, including the World Bank, IFAD, DFID, FAO, USAID etc.

The three IFAP programmes are:

- Regoverning Markets
- Empowering Smallholders in Markets
- GFAR

The overview will be written with a view to seeking value-addition and to help both IFAP and its members and donor agencies and partners to better use resources available and to strengthen uptake of good practice. The outputs will contribute to IFAP's commitment to *making markets work* and its longer term business planning. Specifically it will help to shape the phase 2 of the IFAP-ECART-IFAD programme through deepening the understanding of entry points for wider uptake of learning from these initiatives in the IFAP-ECART-IFAD programme. Additionally it will be an input for a joint meeting between and for finding grounds for increasing mutual cooperation between these initiatives and the IFAP-ECART-IFAD programme.

**The terms of reference include**

1. Together with Wageningen UR and IFAP, develop a framework with a set of key questions and key activities to frame the assessment of current and planned programs and initiatives
2. Establish contact with major donors and development partners and seek information on ongoing and planned programmes, (e.g. the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, bilateral including DFID, international agencies and IFIs including IFAD, FAO, and World Bank projects and programmes including GFAR, Regoverning markets and regional bodies including AU, NEPAD and research and policy networks ).
3. Prepare a report which summarizes key relevant activities and outputs of these initiatives and outline entry points for enhanced linkages
4. Submit draft report to IFAP, IFAD and ECART and two copies of final report and electronic version of report to IFAP and IFAD by end June 2007

This work will be undertaken in close collaboration with IFAP and in particular the IFAP Development Cooperation Committee. In addition, the consultant will draw upon recent and ongoing work undertaken by KIT supported by Cordaid which includes a wider inventory of programs.

IFAP plans to host (in early May 2007 possibly in Belgium) a working meeting for representatives of the three key programs that currently work in collaboration with IFAP (IFAP-Regoverning Markets, IFAP-ECART-IFAD and IFAP-GFAR) to explore whether and how best value addition can be achieved. It is assumed that the consultant will join that meeting and could take that opportunity to discuss the framework and key questions used in the research with IFAP.

#### **Time frame**

Start date 15 April 2007 – complete end June 2007. Some four days was allocated to this task.

## **Annex 2      Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets: Inception phase**

### **Goal**

The goal of this inception phase funded by IFAD is to initiate an IFAP-ECART-IFAD research partnership that will strengthen the capacities of smallholder farmers' organisations in developing countries to empower their members in markets, via enabling policy environment and effective economic organisations. It will try to do so by supportive research for producer organisations within the growing IFAP network, in proposing changes in the institutional and legislative context.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the Inception Phase project are the following: (1) develop a shared body of knowledge, by carrying out several preparatory studies, that will support the choices to be made for the full programme; (2) develop an analytical framework and a research methodology; (3) make a selection as to which countries will be incorporated in the full programme; and (4) establish contact with key development agencies and their programmes with a view to maximising opportunities for value addition.

### **Activities**

The Inception Phase of the IFAP-ECART-IFAD research programme consists of the following:

- 1) Preparatory studies
  - a) Review of the existing information on national and international policy initiatives to improve/influence the legal enabling environment for the empowering of small holder farmers and their economic organisations and institutions, covering both initiatives of farmers' organizations and those initiated by governments or donors.
  - b) Review of the existing literature on organisations and institutions introduced by small farmers themselves, with or without support from governments and donors, to improve their capacity to collectively bargain with customers, to improve (market) information exchange, and to set up quality assurance systems. Examples of such organisations and institutions are marketing boards, cooperatives, bargaining associations, and producer groups.
- 2) Country selection: Organize the joint decision making by IFAP - ECART donors on the countries to be considered pilots for the research programme
- 3) Programme development
  - a) Develop an analytical framework and methodology that facilitates the use of research findings to assess the necessary conditions underlying successful farmer empowerment initiatives, and that stimulates learning across Producer Organisations (POs) in developing countries
  - b) Organize a two days International Seminar to discuss the working papers and to develop the framework for the overall IFAP-ECART-IFAD research programme (October 2007)
  - c) Set up a cost-efficient project management system, for the coordination and backstopping of the different country studies, ECART research institutes and local researcher partners, that generates quality output
  - d) Start an interactive research process that articulate IFAP-ECART-IFAD research with policy development and advocacy of IFAP and its network in developing countries.
- 4) Synthesis of other donor and agency programmes working in support of producer organizations.

European Consortium for Agricultural Research in the Tropics (ECART) <http://www.ecart-eeig.org/>

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**Annex 3      Survey questionnaire**

**Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets (ESFIM)**  
**Donor and Development Partner Survey**

The IFAP-ECART-IFAD programme invites you to share information on key ongoing and planned activities in support of *Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Markets*.

Please copy and repeat Q1- Q8 where there is more than one major programme.

Please feel free to send any related files - programme proposals, working reports etc and or weblinks to support your completed survey form.

**Name of agency**

**Name of contact person**

**Email address**

**Telephone number**

**STRATEGY**

**Q1      Does your agency have a strategic objective to support the grouping of economic actors for market access? Please summarise key relevant points or offer reference**

**PROGRAMMES**

**Q2      Title of Programme**

**Q3      Duration of Programme (start and end dates)**

**Q4      Total value of budget allocated (US\$)**



**Q5 Short summary of goal, objectives and expected outputs**

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**Q6 List regions and/or country(ies) of focus**

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**Q7 Which (if any) specific farmer organisation(s) (FO) is/are directly targeted under the programme – name(s)**

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**Q8 What is the focus of your support?**

	Yes	No	Comment
FO capacity building - internal structure and governance			
FO capacity building - building internal accountability			
FO capacity building – advocacy and lobby			
Strengthening the role of FO in use of public resources and economic services e.g. research, advisory services including market information (list services*)			
Technical assistance to FO– direct support for production			
Technical assistance to FO – product development/processing			
Technical assistance to FO– market advice			
Technical assistance to FO - for product quality or other market compliance			
Support for brokerage and negotiation of market linkages between FO and market			
Co-funding (donor and FO) of joint			

venture in new/export markets			
Provision of non-economic services to FO members (name service type*)			
Support to Public or Private agencies that directly service needs of FO – e.g. business services, legal and contract law, research and development (list service*)			
Support to NGOs that directly service needs of FO – e.g. business services, legal and contract law, research and development (list service*)			
Technical assistance to public institutions on legal environment for group formation of economic actors e.g. cooperative laws etc			
Other (add*)			

\*List under comments otherwise comments section can remain empty unless you wish to add further information

#### ANY OTHER COMMENTS

**Q9** Any other comments (please feel free to include here any particular challenges faced and /or roles you see for the IFAP – ECART programme)

Information provided will be collated and we will share with you the synthesis report.

Save file **ESFIM\_(Name of your agency)**

Replies or queries to Felicity Proctor [fjp@proctorconsult.org](mailto:fjp@proctorconsult.org) Tel: 44 (0)20 8580 1821 where possible by 28 May 2007.

If you prefer not to complete a survey form and wish for a short telephone discussion please email and fix a mutually agreed time.

Thank you for your help.

**Annex 4 Synthesis of findings from donor and development agency submissions**

Sheet 1	DFID UK		Sida including SCC Sweden					DGIS Netherlands		MAE France	USAID USA		
	Agri stand	Coop Afric.	Local Bus Dev East Africa	LVDP East Africa	Market Based Prog Southern Africa	SACAU Southern Africa	Sida Fonde Agro	Value Chains	Farmers Fighting Poverty	Market and RPOs	CLUSA	ACDI VOCA	PFID and others
FO capacity building - internal structure and governance		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓?				✓
FO capacity building - building internal accountability		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓?				
FO capacity building – advocacy and lobby	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓?	✓?			
Strengthening the role of FO in use of public resources and economic services e.g. research, advisory services including market information			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓?		✓?			
Strengthening the role of FO (regional and local) to deliver services						✓			✓?	✓?			
Technical assistance to FO – direct support for production			✓	✓	✓								✓
Technical assistance to FO – product development/processing			ind	ind			✓	✓?					✓
Technical assistance to FO – market advice, including market information systems	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓?		✓?			✓
Technical assistance to FO - for product quality or other market compliance	✓		ind	ind	✓		✓	✓?		✓?			✓
Support for brokerage and negotiation of market linkages between FO and market	✓		ind	ind	✓	✓	✓	✓?		✓?			✓
Co-funding (donor and FO) of joint venture in new/export markets													

Sheet 1	DFID UK		Sida including SCC Sweden					DGIS Netherlands		MAE France	USAID USA		
	Agri stand	Coop Afric.	Local Bus Dev East Africa	LVDP East Africa	Market Based Prog Southern Africa	SACAU Southern Africa	Sida Fonde Agro	Value Chains	Farmers Fighting Poverty	Market and RPOs	CLUSA	ACDI VOCA	PFID and others
Provision of non-economic services to FO members													
Support to Public or Private agencies that directly service needs of FO – e.g. business services, legal and contract law, research and development		✓						✓?					
Support to NGOs that directly service needs of FO – e.g. business services, legal and contract law, research and development		✓						✓?					
Technical assistance to public institutions on legal environment for group formation of economic actors e.g. cooperative laws, standards etc	✓	✓											
Strengthening/more conducive the policy environment – global and local	✓	✓				✓							
Global									✓		✓	✓	✓
SSA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
Asia													
Latin America							✓						
Other – research (any)								✓		✓			
Other – lesson sharing – case study								✓		✓			
Other - trade policy						✓							

SHEET 2	Multi - donor			WB	IFAD		FAO	Others	
	Regov MP	GFAR	ESFIM Phase2	West Africa program	RPO and EPA	SACAU	Policy EPA	NEPAD	Africa Challenge Fund
FO capacity building - internal structure and governance			✓	✓		✓			✓
FO capacity building - building internal accountability						✓			
FO capacity building – advocacy and lobby	ind	✓?	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Strengthening the role of FO in use of public resources and economic services e.g. research, advisory services including market information	ind			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Strengthening the role of FO (regional and local) to deliver services				✓		✓		✓	
Technical assistance to FO – direct support for production				✓					
Technical assistance to FO – product development/processing									
Technical assistance to FO – market advice, including market information systems	ind	✓?							
Technical assistance to FO - for product quality or other market compliance		✓?							
Support for brokerage and negotiation of market linkages between FO and market	✓	✓?	✓		✓?				
Co-funding (donor and FO) of joint venture in new incl.export markets									✓
Provision of non-economic services to									

SHEET 2	Multi - donor			WB	IFAD		FAO	Others	
	Regov MP	GFAR	ESFIM Phase2	West Africa program	RPO and EPA	SACAU	Policy EPA	NEPAD	Africa Challenge Fund
FO members									
Support to Public or Private agencies that directly service needs of FO – e.g. business services, legal and contract law, research and development (list service*)	✓								
Support to NGOs that directly service needs of FO – e.g. business services, legal and contract law, research and development (list service*)	✓								
Technical assistance to public institutions on legal environment for group formation of economic actors e.g. cooperative laws, standards etc	ind								
Strengthening/more conducive the policy environment – global and local	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Global	✓	✓	✓						
SSA				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Asia									
Latin America and Caribbean					✓ ACP		✓ ACP		
Other – research (any)	✓		✓						
Other – lesson sharing – case study	✓	✓	✓		✓				
Other - trade policy					✓		✓		

Notes:

Ind – Indirect

Missing columns due to incomplete data – CLUSA and ACDI/VOCA and for FAO many and diverse range of activities.

These working tables are subject to revision and update.