



## ESFIM's impact on capacities for evidence-based advocacy

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The ESFIM programme aims to create a research interface between national farmer organisations (NFOs) on the one hand and researchers and topic experts on the other. Evidence on specific themes have been collected and analysed to create an active advocacy strategy. NFOs need specific capacities to steer the advocacy process, so that they can articulate propositions that will contribute to policies enhancing market access for smallholder farmers. In order to gain insight into the specific capacities of the NFOs and the role of ESFIM in improving these capacities, a baseline and monitoring project was designed and implemented in the various ESFIM countries in 2012.

There is broad consensus on the benefits for civil society organisations to use evidenced-based advocacy to influence policy development processes (Blagescu 2006). Using, for example, the INTRAC Praxis Programme, the Participatory Generation of Policy proposals (Gouet 2011), and advocacy for pro-poor policy literature (Reisman 2007; Ringsing and Leeuwis 2007), (Interreseaux Developpement Rural 2011), we considered the following to be relevant building blocks of a successful advocacy.

Advocacy for a pro-poor policy development process generally starts with a phase of reflection, consultation and articulation of the key problems i.e. “what are the ‘hot’ issues and concerns of stakehold-

*“Advocacy is a way of influencing decision-making on problems that concern people, especially those who have been marginalised and left out of the policy process.”*

ers?”. This results in a ‘Thought Paper’, giving an up-to-date overview of the topic. This is often an exercise based on practical knowledge and experiences of the stakeholders, requiring them to articulate their needs and prioritise them.

The second phase involves a discussion on what information needs to be verified and/or elaborated on for example: whether best practices to deal with similar issues can be identified; which formal policies and laws apply to the subject, etc. Research goals are defined so that detailed and validated information can be obtained. Legal and expert information is compared and mutual learning stimulated. The process is often supported by desk and field research, as well as case study analysis, which help the lead organisation to understand what is at stake.

In the third phase, translating facts and knowledge into concrete proposals can contribute to overcoming institutional barriers. It is about defining the message in such a way that it influences decision makers and informs the public at large, giving shapes to the advocacy strategy. Good communication skills are needed to identify the right language and tone for the target audience. Advocacy includes campaigns, lobbying and capacity building and can be defined as pleading a cause, or helping others to plead a cause. Advocacy is a way of influencing decision-making on problems that concern people, especially those who have been marginalised and left out of the policy process. Advocacy should not be seen as isolated events but as processes of change that are woven into societal contexts. It requires mapping the major stakeholders in decision making in terms of their interest in and power to influence the relevant issue, as well as the identification of opportunities to access key decision makers and to build strategic alliances. Generally, this needs to be backed with sufficient exposure in the media to gain popular interest and support.

Table 12 presents a framework and summarises this process of evidence-based pro-poor policy development and the capacities that are needed in the four different phases. This indicates the type of activities needed to undertake in evidence collection and the advocacy process, which are the starting point for capacity-strengthening activities.

TABLE 12 EVIDENCE-BASED PRO-POOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

PHASE	1. IDENTIFYING INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS/ ISSUES	2. COLLECTING EVIDENCE	3. IDENTIFYING POSITIONS AND PREPARING PROPOSALS	4. DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING STRATEGIES
KEY ACTIVITIES	Situational analysis Consultation Prioritising	Define information needs Prepare a search strategy Interact with experts/ and knowledge networks Evaluate the evidence Synthesise the results Validate and disseminate the results	Translate evidence to message and position Validate Generate (public) support	Identify relevant decision makers, their position and power. Build up strategic networks
KEY CAPACITIES	Context analysis Communication	Set research agenda Define research strategies Learn through networks Make sense of results Dissemination and communication	Make stakeholder analyses Network Build strategic alliances Work with the media Implement advocacy and service delivery activities	

### ESFIM intervention logic

The ESFIM programme focuses on the capacities defined above to empower NFOs, so they can better engage in advocacy to improve market access for smallholder farmers. However, this pro-poor policy development and advocacy process is not at all a linear process, as many factors besides ESFIM-activities may influence the final outcomes. Therefore, we need to focus on those outcomes to which the ESFIM activities are likely to contribute directly, and that are real indicators of change rather than just outputs resulting directly from planned activities. To distil these key outcome areas and find appropriate signs of impact, we differentiated between immediate outcomes of activities, intermediate outcomes that result from these immediate outcomes, and ultimate outcomes of the advocacy strategy of the NFOs. Attributing changes to ESFIM activities is high when considering immediate outcomes: when these changes are positive, ESFIM can claim success, but ESFIM can be held responsible for negative changes. However, attribution is less obvious when intermediate and ultimate outcomes are concerned: ESFIM is at most one of the contributing factors in a constellation responsible for changes in these areas (Ton, Vellema et al. 2011).

One of the major other factors that underpinned the capacities of the NFOs was the donor support by Agriterra. This support facilitated the presence of human and financial resources to organise member consultations and support several economic initiatives of their grassroots member organisations (see Table 13)

TABLE 13

ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP 2008	AGRITERRA-FUNDING 2007-2012 (EURO)
KENFAP	Kenya	650,000	1,912,927
FUPRO	Benin	450,000	1,363,953
UNFFE	Uganda	300,000	177,216
FFAAP	India	75,900	723,850
FFF	Philippines	255,000	657,435
CAF	Uruguay	12,000	228,499
CIOEC-B	Bolivia	103,200	195,967
JNC	Peru	41,000	487,878
CMC	Costa Rica	1,350	93,651

Source: Agriterra 2013

The ESFIM programme has four components. The most important component is called 'ESFIM Collaborative Research'. ESFIM aims to strengthen the capacity of smallholder farmers to generate cash income from markets by strengthening the lobby and advocacy capacity of NFOs in fostering conducive policies. ESFIM stimulates this through a combination of research and evidence collection, policy and case-study analysis, dialogue and cross-learning between participating NFOs and other NFOs in developing and developed countries. With these activities, it contributes to the capacity of national farmer organisations to formulate pro-actively policy propositions in order to adapt the institutional environment of markets to the benefit of smallholder farmers. In the start-up phase, eleven NFOs identified and prioritised specific issues that relate to and hamper access to markets. With the support of ESFIM in analysis and evidence collection on some of these key issues, the NFOs can articulate sound propositions and lobby for changes in specific elements of the institutional environment. This is expected to translate

into increased influence of NFOs on policies and strategies of governments and the private sector. ESFIM worked with NFOs in ten countries: Benin, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Peru, the Philippines, Uganda and Uruguay.

A second component is called 'ESFIM Comparative Research'. This is not restricted to the countries selected for collaborative research, but uses results from the whole world. ESFIM had four themes for which comparative research was undertaken. These are: 1) innovative financial models, 2) market information systems, 3) incentives in collective marketing, and 4) risk insurance. Through desk research, these themes are further elaborated and evidence on best practices is categorised. These insights are also used in the work with NFOs and shared with a wider audience of organisations and institutions working in the area, in order to contribute to the evidence-based advocacy process for policy development.

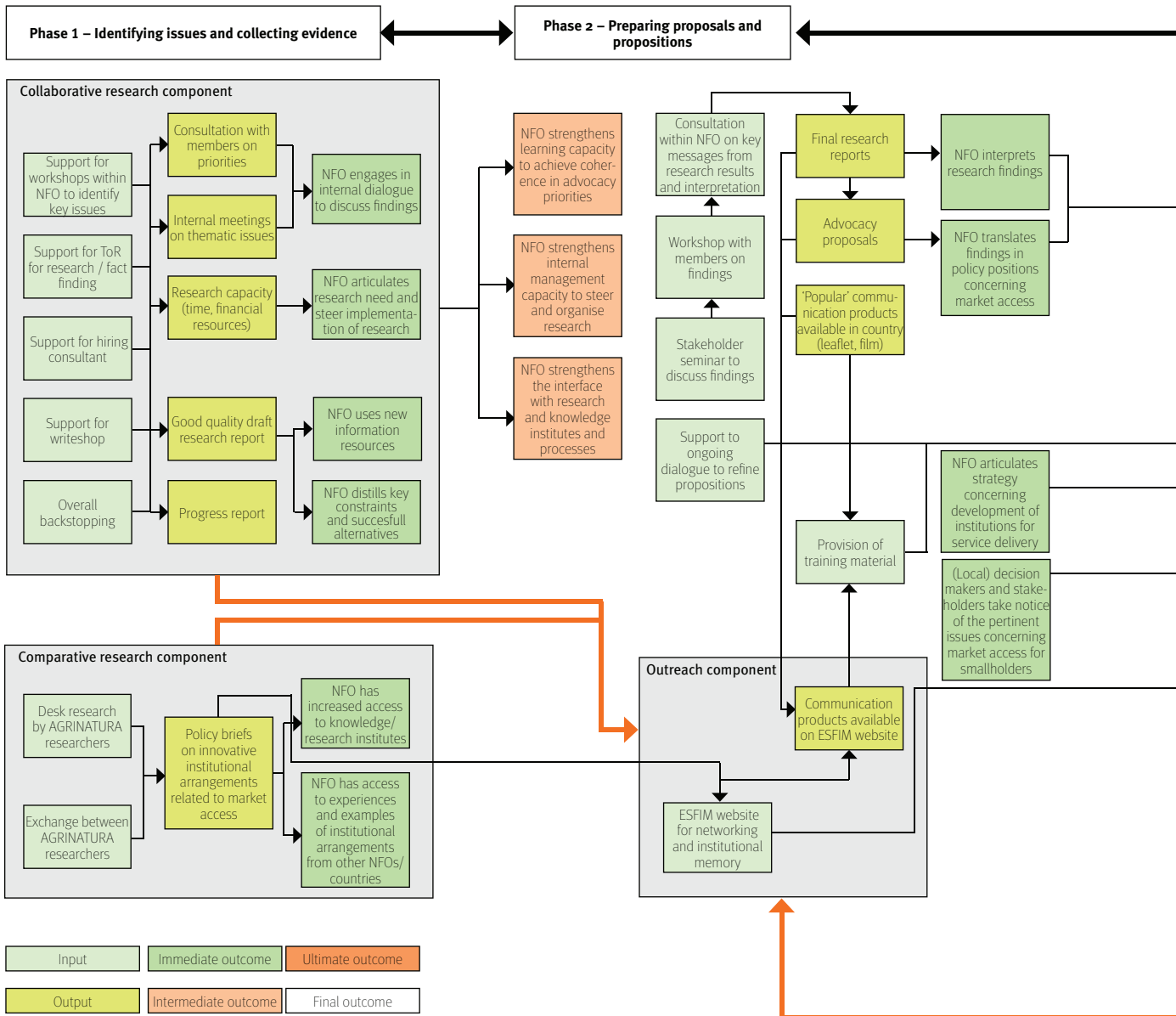
A third area of intervention is 'Outreach', which is mainly the management of the ESFIM-website to exchange information between countries and to inform a wider audience on ESFIM-activities.

The fourth component is 'Learning for Action', in which activities are geared to regional and international exchange and discussion through international conferences and workshops.

We summarised the four intervention areas that influence the five capacities of organisational strength in a result chain (Figure 1). This is a visual representation of outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and ultimate outcomes that are expected to be realised with the ESFIM activities. In order to relate the outputs of ESFIM activities to ultimate outcomes in smallholder empowerment, we used the 'five-capacities framework' (5C-framework) (Figure 2), developed by Baser (2008). The 5C-framework presents five elements of capacity which are logically related and can define the context for the NFOs capacity for influencing policy. The five elements it distinguishes are:

1. Capacity to achieve coherency: this is about building connections, managing diversity (internal and external), and communicating
2. Capacity to commit and act: this is about the organisation's willingness and confidence to act, to engage, and to prioritise issues and actions related to research for advocacy and service delivery to enhance better market access.
3. Capacity to relate and attract: this is about creating relationships and networks, creating credibility and legitimacy internally and externally, mobilising support and resources, and developing political sensitivity and assertive advocacy
4. Capacity to adapt and self-renew: this is about organisational learning capacity, internal dialogue, repositioning vis-à-vis developments, incorporating new ideas and identifying a growth path.
5. Capacity to deliver development objectives (advocacy, service delivery): this is about carrying out the predefined functions and activities, strategically planning and managing activities, logistics, finances and resources.

FIGURE 1 THE ESFIM INTERVENTION LOGIC



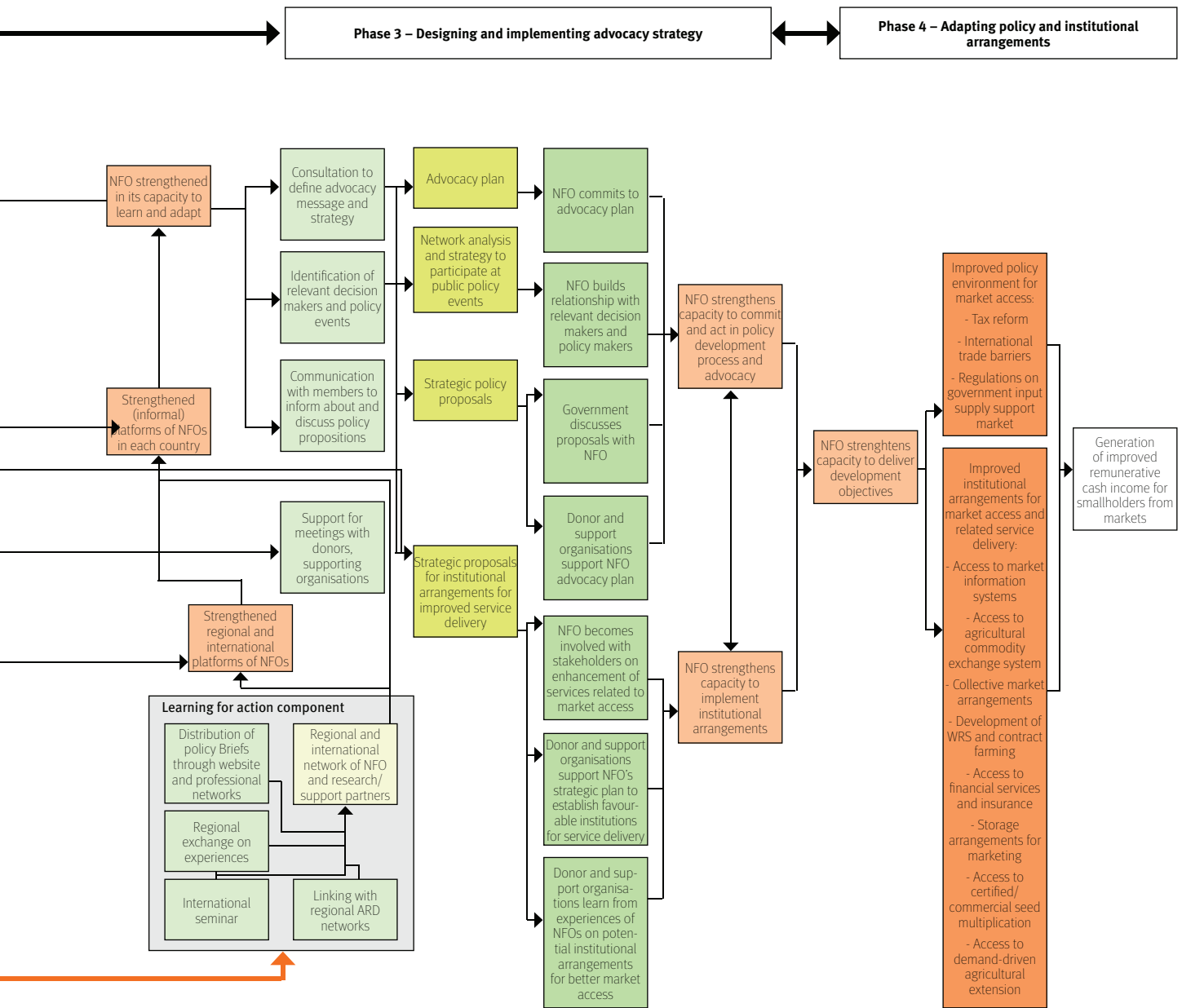
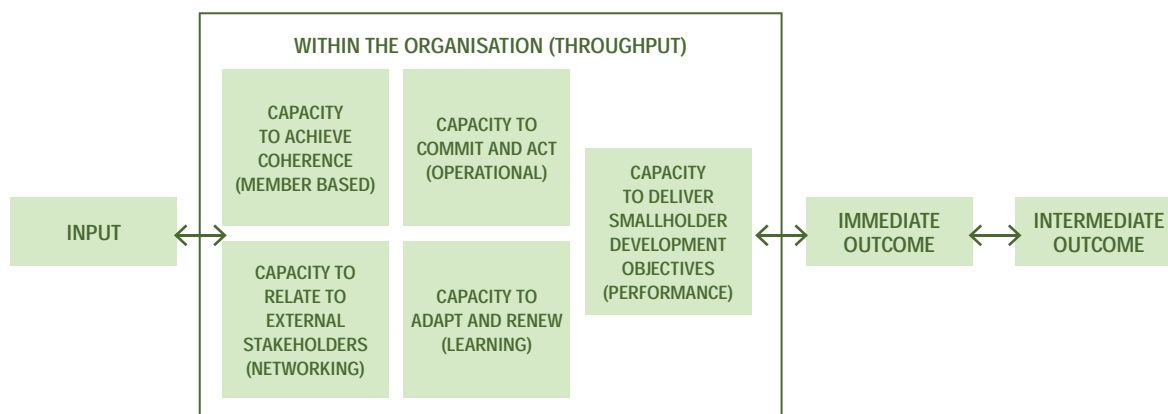




FIGURE 2 FIVE-CAPACITY FRAMEWORK FOR NATIONAL FARMER ORGANISATIONS ENGAGED IN PRO-POOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY



## Data collection

In addition to monitoring data on outputs (workshops held, studies done) and immediate outcomes (strategies in response to these workshops, use of the research) of the ESFIM programme, we collected data on intermediate outcomes (capacities for advocacy). For the latter, we are aware that ESFIM is only one of the contributing factors, but we nevertheless believe that ESFIM makes a real contribution. Summarising the state of affairs regarding outcomes can help us in evaluating the rationale of ESFIM and testing our key assumption that research and evidence really matters for building advocacy capacities.

During data collection, a mix of both quantitative and qualitative methods has been used with various groups of respondents. Proxy-indicators for each of the five capacities are incorporated into a self-assessment tool for NFOs. This tool, an Excel-application, was used by each of the board members of the NFO. The exercise was implemented in nine NFOs in nine different countries. After filling out the self-assessment forms, the board members discussed the findings in a workshop setting. These discussions were moderated and documented by an external consultant and gave valuable insights about both the (changing) capacities of NFOs and the influence of the ESFIM programme on these changes.

In addition to this self-assessment, the consultant interviewed an external panel of at least four different stakeholders in each country, who were knowledgeable about the activities of the NFO. This was based on a standard list of policy issues related to the market access of smallholders, and interviewees were asked to give their appraisal of the NFO's strengths and weaknesses in terms of the five capacities, and how they use research to strengthen their capacities.

## Internal assessment of capacities for evidence-based advocacy

### Overall capacity

The average results of the self-assessments in each of the nine NFOs are presented in Table 14. The self-assessment tool measured two different aspects of the capacities: the perceived status at the moment of the assessment, and the perceived change in the last three years. This two-fold information facilitates the valuation of the advocacy capacity between NFOs. For instance, board members in NASFAM are satisfied with their advocacy capacities though they do not see much improvement in the last three years. In contrast, the board members in UNFFE are neutral, not satisfied/not dissatisfied, but see an improvement in the last three years. CIOEC-Bolivia is another interesting case, where the board is dissatisfied with the status of most of the capacities, but see improvement in two of these whereas the two other capacities are declining. We feel that these results are realistic and point to the different phases in which these NFOs are. NASFAM has a strong presence in policy making in Malawi and has maintained this presence during the last decade, while UNFFE suffered from an internal crisis that led to a change of leadership in 2009. The board members see these changes as an improvement, although they also consider that UNFFE has not yet reached its full potential. CIOEC's advocacy suffered from the change of government in Bolivia. The Morales government had other national farmer organisations as their political base, and this led to CIOEC's political marginalisation from 2008 onwards. CIOEC has increased in membership but had problems in adapting their internal structure to further decentralisation. However, during the last year, CIOEC has started to reposition itself through a process of decentralised workshops to discuss a new strategic plan. With ESFIM support, CIOEC also contracted consultancy support to re-launch the advocacy of their flagship legal initiative, the Ley de OECAs, intended to position their sector of collective marketing organisations as preferential partners for rural development support policies. The self-evaluation exercise took place in the light of this process, before the advocacy activities had resulted in the inclusion of the Ley de OECAs on the parliamentary agenda. This explains the positive evaluation of the board on the capacity for coherence and the capacity to commit and act in advocacy, while at the same time the NFO suffered from decreasing capacities related to effectively delivering advocacy results.

Overall, of the five capacities, the perceived capacity for coherency is rated highest by their NFO boards, while their capacity to network is, on average, rated lowest. This indicates that the NFO boards consider that their organisations have sufficient support and contact with their membership, but still have problems relating to others. In the following paragraphs, we will expand the analysis of these scores for each of the five capacities. We base this analysis on the differences between the NFOs in the average evaluation by board members, which are averages of individual scores made by each board member. In separate documents, one for each of the NFOs, the sometimes considerable differences in scoring between the board members of each NFO are analysed in more detail. We will use insights from these documents to help us shed light on the scoring pattern of the respective NFO.

### Capacity for coherency

With respect to capacity for coherency, the self-assessment tool measured contacts with members, change in size of the membership and support within the organisations for the positions taken by the NFO in advocacy. Most NFOs are satisfied with member consultation, contact and agreement with the positioning of the NFO. Although most NFOs increased their membership over time, CAF is the exception, with a decrease in the last three years. Both CIOEC and CAF are considered to perform dissatisfactorily in this aspect. In CIOEC, membership has grown but the organisation has not yet managed to reach



a large share of the rural population, and this limits their influence in national politics. UNFFE board members explained during the workshop that their contact with members is not adequate. This is mainly due to logistics, and more specifically the distance between regional and national offices and their members, which are largely District Farmers Organisations. CAF in Uruguay also indicates that they are constrained by a low membership. Several members of CAF have merged with COPRAGAN since 2005 and this process of consolidation is expected to continue.

In most countries, board members indicated that the capacity for coherency has improved compared to three years ago. It is plausible that ESFIM has played a role in this, as at the start of the programme many NFOs organised consultations and validation workshops with their members to identify key issues hampering market access. Several NFOs indicated during the workshops that this opportunity to have more consultation and contact with their members has contributed to stronger internal coherency as a NFO. CPM, the coalition of smallholder organisations in Madagascar, highlighted in a presentation made during an ESFIM event held during the UNECA/CTA Conference Making the Connection in October 2012, that improved internal coherence was one of the major achievements of ESFIM.

TABLE 14 AVERAGE SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORES OF BOARD MEMBERS ON NFO ADVOCACY CAPACITIES (2011)

Capacity	FUPRO Benin	CMC Costa Rica	UNFFE Uganda	NASFAM Malawi	KENFAP Kenya	FFF Philippines	CIOEC Bolivia	CAF Uruguay	CPM Madagascar	Average
Perceived status at the moment of the self-assessment										
1. Capacity for coherency	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.4	2.3	2.2	1.6	1.7	2.4	2.1
2. Capacity for networking	1.8	2.0	1.5	2.0	1.9	1.9	0.9	1.7	1.7	1.7
3. Capacity to renew and adapt	2.2	2.0	1.8	2.5	2.3	2.1	1.1	1.9	2.0	2.0
4. Capacity to commit and act	1.7	2.2	1.8	2.5	2.4	1.9	1.0	1.3	2.1	1.9
5. Capacity to deliver development objectives	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.0	1.9	1.4	1.7	2.2	1.9
Improvement of capacity compared to three years ago										
1. Capacity for coherency	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3
2. Capacity for networking	0.1	0.6	0.0	-0.6	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.2	-0.1	0.1
3. Capacity to renew and adapt	-0.2	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.7	-0.4	0.0	-0.2	0.2
4. Capacity to commit and act	-0.3	0.9	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.3
5. Capacity to deliver development objectives	-0.3	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.4	0.3	-0.6	0.2	0.3	0.1
<b>LEGEND:</b>										
Actual capacity	Bad (0.0-1.5)			Regular (1.6-2.0)			Good (2.1-3.0)			
Compared to three years ago	Capacity worsened (-2 - -0.3)			No change (-0.2 – 0.2)			Capacity improved (0.3 – 2.0)			

### Capacity to relate and network

For measuring networking capacity, we asked NFOs to what extent they were satisfied with their external relationships and collaborations. The collaboration with other NFOs was judged satisfactory by all. Most NFOs were less satisfied with the collaboration with local authorities and with research institutes. One of ESFIM's objectives was to foster the NFO and research interface so that evidence would be collected systematically as a basis for policy proposals. The results suggest that this has not been fully achieved, with several NFO boards appearing to be dissatisfied with the current status. Even though collaboration with research institutes was not uniformly satisfactory, it seemed to have improved compared to three years ago. This indicates that ESFIM may well have enabled NFOs to invest in research, as most NFOs seemed to have gained experience in implementing research into their priority topics. Although ESFIM hoped to work more closely with (national) research institutes, this did not happen everywhere. It has, therefore, been taken up as one of the priority activities in a next phase of ESFIM.

Another observation was the dissatisfaction of CIOEC with their current capacity to network with other stakeholders, except fellow farmer organisations, which they estimated to be less than what it was three years ago. Many NFOs also indicated their difficulty in relating to local authorities. CAF is a notable exception there, and this can be explained by the small size of the country and its rural populations. FFF in the Philippines and KENFAP in Kenya were most satisfied with their networking capacities and the strengthening of these capacities in the last three years. For KENFAP, the only negative point was its relationship with donors. NASFAM is an interesting case: although the board was generally satisfied with its networking capacity, it nevertheless indicated that its capacity was even better three years ago. This can be explained by budget restrictions; until a few years ago, resources for their advocacy work were supported by USAID.

### Capacity to renew and adapt

The capacity to renew and adapt means becoming engaged in a learning process around advocacy issues. Most NFOs were satisfied about how they were informed about policy developments; and the majority also indicated that they felt that this has improved over the last three years. The same applied to participation in various platforms on policy debates and discussions; six of the nine NFOs indicated that this had also improved over the last three years. We also noted a small improvement in the interpretation of data, and collaboration with research institutes, and possibly also with other research partners or consultants.

Most outstanding is the dissatisfaction of CIOEC in Bolivia. In the past, between 2000 and 2008, this NFO had produced high-quality research and was very much involved in agricultural policy development, but due to a change in the political context and a loss of donor support, their capacities decreased in the last three years. UNFFE was also not very satisfied with their capacity to renew and adapt. This may have been a result of the turbulence last year, when UNFFE lost its major institutional donor and had to lay off its highly capable advocacy officer (though he was contracted as a consultant for some ESFIM activities). Although having shown some improvement in the last three years, their capacities are still not entirely satisfactory. The self-assessment within NASFAM reflected their situation as a strong organisation, but their capacities for learning through workshops and research has decreased, partly due to the withdrawal of USAID support for this. The FUPRO's results were a bit confusing. Board members rated their capacities for keeping informed on policy developments and their participation in platforms as highly satisfactory but at the same time indicated that it had decreased relative to three years ago. Overall, the boards of CMC, KENFAP and FFF were the most positive about improvement in this capacity area during the last three years. The ESFIM programme stimulated NFOs in learning to select key issues, organising the evidence-collection process around them and becoming informed about the on-going policy developments.

### Capacity to commit and act

The assessment of the capacity to commit and act in the advocacy process showed different patterns between NFOs. Only NASFAM seemed to be fully satisfied with their capacity in this area. FUPRO, UNFFE, CIOEC, CAF and CPM were less satisfied with their activities and capacity in this area. For CAF, one explanation may be the lack of funding. Most of CAF's activities had been based on programmes supported by donors, and their main European donor withdrew its support in the past few years. The board of FUPRO proved to be dissatisfied with its capacity to commit and act, and indicated that this was a decline compared to three years ago. Remarkably, all NFOs except CIOEC showed improved availability of an advocacy strategy. Clearly, the formulation of an advocacy strategy, including policy formulation, was key to the ESFIM programme logic and it is most likely that the programme has contributed to that capacity. CIOEC joined ESFIM later than the others, only in 2011, and has made important steps in a positive direction in 2012. In 2013, the advocacy even resulted in the approval of a specific law to facilitate public support to organised producers. This important advocacy success took place in the months after the moment that this self-assessment exercise was done. A similar exercise at the end of 2012 would have yielded much more positive results.

### Capacity to work on advocacy and service delivery to improve access to markets

The fifth capacity is the capacity to deliver smallholder development objectives, both in terms of the implementation of advocacy activities and smallholder market access. As we can see from the pattern of results of the self-assessment, there are NFOs in which there is some dissatisfaction on elements of this capacity, for example FUPRO, CMC, CIOEC and CAF. Conversely, UNFFE, NASFAM, KENFAP and CPM are quite satisfied about their own capacities in this respect. Discussions amongst board members did not indicate specific reasons for either the satisfaction or the dissatisfaction on these different aspects. Compared to three years ago, we can observe overall improvements in this capacity, especially for CMC, UNFFE and KENFAP, whereas FUPRO and CIOEC suffered a declining capacity over the last three years.

## External stakeholders' perspectives

Part of the methodology for the monitoring and baseline assessment was to collect stakeholders' views on the NFO's performance on advocacy, making possible a comparison of the self-assessment with the opinions of these panels. In most countries, four to six respondents were interviewed from different professional fields, e.g., ministry officials, NGOs/donors, journalists and individuals from the private sector. They were selected for their knowledge of the respective NFO, which at the same time most likely gives a selection bias to their ratings. The external panel was asked different questions than those in the self-assessment, and only covered four of the five capacities.

The opinions of the external panel diverged more between each member than was the case with the board members. Nevertheless, on average, their opinions largely confirmed the findings in the self-assessment. NFOs that were most critical in their self-assessment (CIOEC, CAF and CPM) were also perceived as weaker by these external stakeholders. The two types of assessment diverged most for UNFFE and KENFAP, with the external panel being less positive than the board when analysing their development in the last three years. However, in their evaluation of its current status, the external panel still considered UNFFE a strong organisation. When NASFAM and FUPRO were concerned, the external panel saw progress whereas the board pointed to stagnation or decline in the last three years. The external panels saw across-the-board improvements in CMC, NASFAM and FFF, and stagnation in the cases of UNFFE, KENFAP, CIOEC, CAF and CPM.

TABLE 15 COMPARISON OF THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS OF CHANGE IN ADVOCACY CAPACITIES IN THE LAST 3 YEARS

	FUPRO Benin	CMC Costa Rica	UNFFE Uganda	NASFAM Malawi	KENFAP Kenya	FFF Philippines	CIOEC Bolivia	CAF Uruguay	CPM Madagascar
<b>CAPACITY FOR COHERENCE</b>									
Self –assessment	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Strong
External view	views not collected								
<b>CAPACITY TO RELATE AND NETWORK</b>									
Self –assessment	Neutral	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Strong	missing data	Neutral
External view	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong
<b>CAPACITY TO RENEW AND ADAPT</b>									
Self –assessment	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Neutral
External view	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
<b>CAPACITY TO COMMIT AND ACT</b>									
Self –assessment	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	missing data	Strong
External view	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong
<b>CAPACITY TO DELIVER ON ADVOCACY FOR SMALLHOLDERS MARKET ACCESS</b>									
Self –assessment	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	missing data
External view	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
<b>IMPROVEMENT CAPACITY TO RELATE AND NETWORK COMPARED TO 3 YEARS AGO</b>									
Self –assessment	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	missing data	Neutral
External view	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral
<b>IMPROVEMENT CAPACITY TO RENEW AND ADAPT COMPARED TO 3 YEARS AGO</b>									
Self –assessment	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Neutral
External view	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>IMPROVEMENT CAPACITY TO COMMIT AND ACT COMPARED TO 3 YEARS AGO</b>									
Self –assessment	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	missing data	Neutral
External view	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>IMPROVEMENT CAPACITY TO DELIVER ON ADVOCACY FOR SMALLHOLDERS MARKET ACCESS COMPARED TO 3 YEARS AGO</b>									
Self –assessment	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong
External view	Neutral	Strong	Strong	Strong	Neutral	Strong	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

**LEGEND**

Capacity of NFO	Weak	Neutral	Strong
Compared to three years ago	Weaker	The same	Stronger

Source: ESFIM original data collected in 2012.

## Conclusions

The monitoring and evaluation exercise generated useful information to consider the effectiveness of ESFIM in strengthening the organisational capacities of NFOs for advocacy on market access issues. The assessment is meant to be repeated in the new phase of ESFIM, using the current measurement as the baseline. Direct attribution of these changes to ESFIM activities is difficult. As explained above, ESFIM works in a complex environment with many influencing factors. Changes in capacities are influenced by many more factors than ESFIM alone.

Perhaps the positive development seen in CMC in Costa Rica may be attributable fairly directly to ESFIM support, as the project was CMC's only funding partner for their advocacy activities. However, in other organisations such as KENFAP, JNC and FUPRO, ESFIM was only a partial funding partner and facilitated research for issues on which the NFO had already started their advocacy strategy at the time that the ESFIM support started. Nevertheless, the changes in the NFO can be considered as food for thought.

None of the NFOs was considered to be in decline in the view of both panels. CMC, FFF, UNFFE, KENFAP, FUPRO and NASFAM emerge as being both strong and improving in their capacities, according to at least one of the panels. CAF and CPM can be characterised best as being moderately strong but stagnant in their development.

We explained earlier that the weak shape in which CIOEC is found, is to a large extent a result of their political marginalisation in the Bolivian context of strong competing NFOs having direct links to the government. ESFIM contributed to the process of re-launching a major policy initiative that indeed resulted in political recognition in the second half of 2012.

**TABLE 16** DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL FARMER ORGANISATIONS' ADVOCACY CAPACITY IN THE LAST THREE YEARS: COMPARISON OF THE ASSESSMENT OF AN EXTERNAL PANEL AND SELF-EVALUATION OF THE BOARD

DEVELOPMENT OF ADVOCACY CAPACITY IN LAST THREE YEARS		ASSESSMENT OF EXTERNAL PANEL		
		Strong	Moderate	Weak
ASSESSMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS	Strong	CMC, FFF	UNFFE, KENFAP	
	Moderate	NASFAM	CAF, CPM	
	Weak		CIOEC, FUPRO	

**TABLE 17** STATUS IN MAY 2012 OF THE NATIONAL FARMER ORGANISATIONS' ADVOCACY CAPACITIES: COMPARISON OF THE ASSESSMENT OF AN EXTERNAL PANEL AND SELF-EVALUATION OF THE BOARD

CURRENT STATUS OF ADVOCACY CAPACITY		ASSESSMENT OF EXTERNAL PANEL		
		Strong	Moderate	Weak
ASSESSMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS	Strong	NASFAM		
	Moderate	FUPRO, CMC, UNFFE, FFF	KENFAP, CAF, CPM	
	Weak			CIOEC

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