

Outline for baseline and monitoring approach for results of ESFIM programme

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1. Introduction

The ESFIM programme aims to strengthen smallholder farmers capacity to generate remunerative cash income from markets by strengthening the lobby and advocacy capacity of national farmers organisations (NFOs). ESFIM stimulates this through a combination of action 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 pro-actively formulate evidence-based policy propositions to adapt the institutional environment of markets in the benefit of smallholder farmers.

Eleven participating NFOs identified and prioritized specific issues that relate to and hamper access to markets. Based on ESFIM-support in analysis and evidence collection on key constraints and best practices, these NFOs are supposed to articulate and lobby with sound propositions for changes in specific key elements in the institutional environment. This is expected to translate in more influence of NFOs on policies and strategies of the governments and the private sector.

In addition, ESFIM has four key themes as a basis for comparative research, not limited to the eleven countries. These are: 1) innovative financial models, 2) market information systems, 3) incentives in collective marketing, 4) risk insurance. Through desk research, these themes will be further elaborated and evidence on best practices will be systematized. These insight will also be used in the trajectories with the NFOs and shared to wider audience of organisations and institutions working in the area.

The ESFIM programme aims to create a research interface between NFOs and researchers and topic experts. Fact-finding and evidence on specific themes will be collected as a base for the articulation of sound policy proposals as a input for the active advocacy strategy. This requires specific capacities of the NFO to steer the research and advocacy process to contribute to favourable policies and institutional arrangements enhancing market access for small holders.

2. Some theoretical insights in capacity development for advocacy and pro-poor policy processes

Various strains of literature and approaches recognise the need for civil society organisations to use evidence as a basis for advocacy and policy development processes (Blagescu 2006). Based on, amongst others, the INTRAC Praxis Programme, the Participatory Generation of Policy proposals (Gouet 2011), and advocacy for pro-poor policy literature (Ringsing and Leeuwis 2007), (Reisman 2007), (Interreseaux Developpement Rural 2011).

This evidence-based policy development process generally starts with an initial phase of includes reflection, consultation and articulation of the key problems, hot issues and concerns related to the topic. This results in the gathering of basic information and the write-up of an initial 'State of Art' or 'Thought Paper', giving a rather subjective overview on the topic. This is often an internal exercise, based on practical knowledge and experiences. It requires capacities to support need articulation, consultation, prioritising.

In a second phase, it is discussed what information need to be further verified and elaborated and whether best practices to deal with similar issues can be identified; what are the formal policies and laws mentioning about this subject, and so on. In this stage, the notion on research support, participatory research, expert knowledge and elaborated learning networks come in. Specific research questions are articulated, in order to obtain more detailed and validated information. Different pieces of juridical, legal, expert information are compared, sense making is going on in interaction and through mutual learning. Often this is supported by desk research, field research, case study analysis. It allows the lead organisation to know adequately what it is talking about. The insights can be disseminated to members, or communicated to a wider audience. This process requires capacity to articulate specific knowledge questions, organising fact-finding, sense-making and synthesis, dissemination and communication strategy.

The third phase includes the translation of facts and knowledge into a concrete proposals and positions which contribute to overcome institutional barriers. It is about defining the message to influence decision makers and informing the larger public. This will become the actual content for the advocacy plan and strategy. It requires reflection and analysis capacities to translate evidence into concrete messages which should address the institutional barriers and issues which need to change. It also requires communication skills, to identify the right language and tone related to the target audience.. Advocacy includes campaigns, lobbying and capacity building and can be understood as pleading a cause, or helping others to plead a cause. Advocacy is a way to influence decision-making about problems that concern people, especially those who have been marginalized and left out of the policy process. Advocacy should not be understood as isolated events but as processes of change interwoven into societal contexts. It requires to identify the major stakeholders in decision making, their interest and power to the issue at stake; identifying opportunities to access the right persons, building strategic alliances for dialogue; while supporting with sufficient public attention to get more support.

The framework in table 1, summarizes the evidence-based pro-poor policy development process and the necessary capacities to be strengthened. This gives indications for the type of activities NFOs are stimulated to undertake in evidence collection and the advocacy process.

Phase	1. Identification of institutional barriers / issues	2. Evidence collection	3. Preparing proposals and positions	4. Design and implementation of advocacy and lobby strategy
	↔		↔	
Specificities	Situational analysis Consultation Prioritising	Define what to know Search strategy Interact with experts/ knowledge networks Sense making Synthesising evidence Validation Disseminate facts	Translate evidence to message and position Validate Generating (public) support	Identify relevant decision makers, their position and power. Build up strategic networks
Required capacity	Context analysis Communication	Research agenda setting Defining search strategies Learning (in networks) Sense making Dissemination and communication capacity	Stakeholder analysis Networking Strategic alliance building Working with the media Executing advocacy activities and service delivery activities	

Table 1 Evidence-based pro-poor policy development process (see earlier references and own compilation)

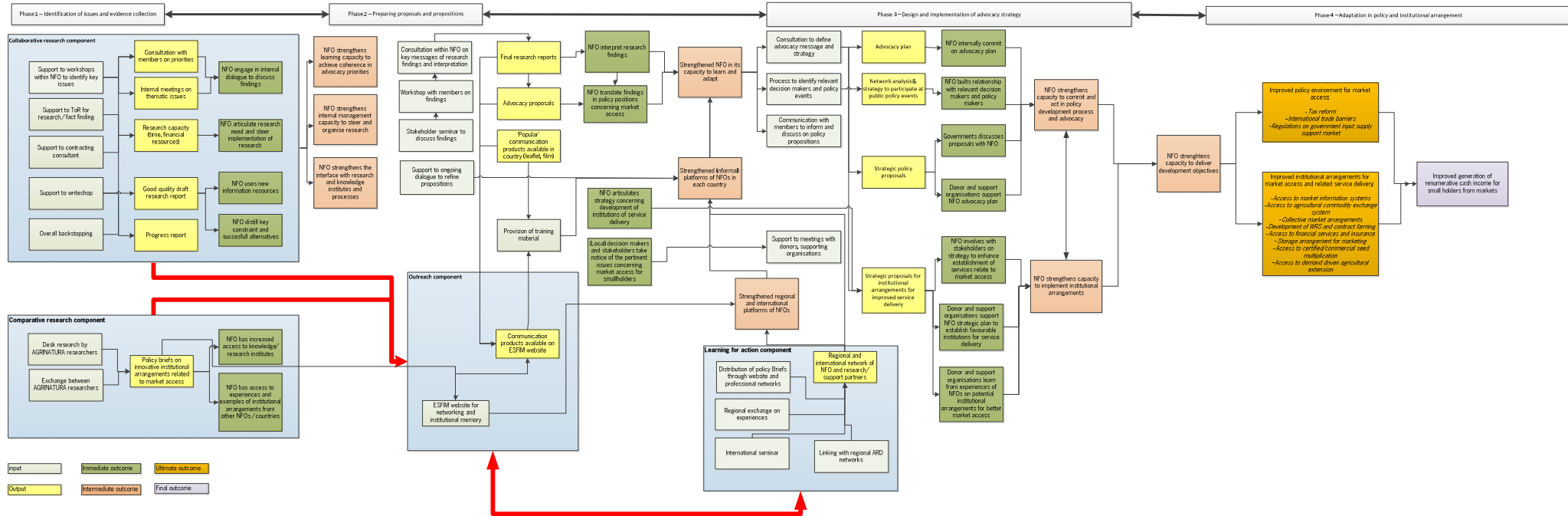
In order for NFOs to make substantial contributions and engage actively smallholders in the pro-poor policy development process, it is essential that their organisation have the capacity to do so. The ESFIM programme is focussing on strengthening these capacities and empowering NFOs in order to engage in advocacy and strengthening of institutional arrangements for better market access, specifically for small holder farmers.

3. The ESFIM result chain logic

A baseline study and monitoring activity has been set-up to better understand the dynamics of the programme and its initial results. It was therefore necessary to define some relevant indicators of outcomes to be expected from the ESFIM programme. The pro-poor policy development and advocacy process is not linear process, many factors influence outcomes. Therefore, we need to focus on the outcomes to which the ESFIM activities are likely to contribute directly, but that, notwithstanding, are real markers of change instead of just outputs. To distil these outcomes and related indicators, we make a differentiation between immediate outcomes of activities, intermediate outcomes that are supposed to result from these immediate outcomes and the ultimate outcomes that are embodied in effectiveness of the advocacy strategy of the NFOs.

We illustrate this approach in the following result chain, that presents the above 'logic' and rationale behind ESFIM in figure 2 using the difference between immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes..

ESFIM – Empowering smallholder farmers in markets – Result Chain



4. Defining outcomes and indicators to monitor capacity strengthening of NFO in evidence based advocacy processes in the ESFIM programme

For the definition of relevant outcomes and indicators, we use the five Cs (capacity) framework, which will be shortly described here. The 5C framework as presented in figure 3, presents five elements of capacity (Baser 2008). The five core capacities are briefly described as follows, and specifically interpreted for the context of the NFOs engagement and capacity in policy and institutional development for market access and development of market related services for small-holders :

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

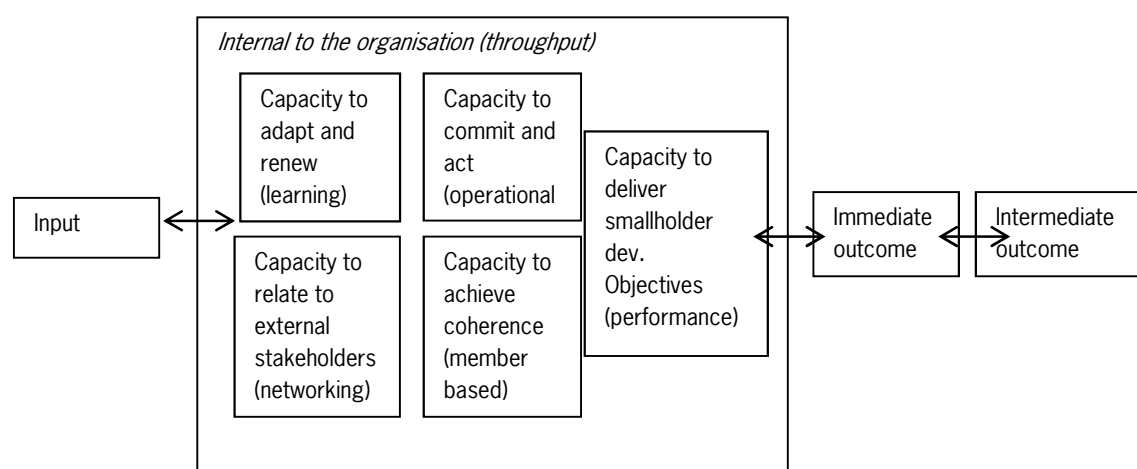


Figure 1 Five capacities framework for NFO engaged in pro-poor policy development and advocacy. Adapted from (Baser 2008; Snelder 2010).

The result chain logic and the 5Cs model, results in the selection of the following intermediate outcomes for monitoring the endeavours of ESFIM. The indicators and sources of verification are included and further elaborated in the next chapter and annex 1 and 2.

Intermediate and immediate outcomes	Indicators	Means
<u>Improved capacity to commit and act in evidence based policy process (operational):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved capacity of formulation of advocacy strategy - Improved capacity of staff to articulate research questions and steer research - Improved capacity to mobilize external support - Improved capacity to interpret and translate findings into propositions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set-up of research trajectory (ToR, consultant selection etc) - New contacts with external researchers / knowledge institutes - Internal meetings / workshops to interpret research findings and design advocacy strategy - Organisation of validation workshop - Availability of advocacy plan - Allocated staff time and resource allocation for evidence collection / advocacy 	Self-assessment and semi-structured interviews
<u>Improved capacity for coherency :</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased dialogue with members - Increased internal and external credibility - Structured internal processes of discussion and resolution of policy differences between members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultations with members - Consultation with other FOs - Indication of internal support to the position taken by NFO 	Self-assessment and semi-structured interviews
<u>Improved capacity to relate and attract to external stakeholders (networking):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved dialogue with decision makers / strategic partners - Improved collaboration with other NFOs and relevant CSO - Improved capacity to build strategic partnerships - Improved visibility of NFO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interaction with policy makers - Participation at public debate events - Participate in platforms - Partnerships with other MFOs, CSO - Contact with other donors and support organisations - Contact with private sector players - Appearance in media - Resource mobilisation for advocacy activities 	Self-assessment and semi-structured interviews, including
<u>Improved capacity to renew/adapt (learning)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved external orientation towards monitoring on-going developments - Improved reflection about developments - Systematic process of refining and adapting advocacy strategies - Improved capacity to react timely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal and external reflexion meetings to discuss developments related to market access and positioning - Field visits to identify issues - Contacts with research, knowledge institutes, experts - Contacts with other NFOs 	Self-assessment and semi-structured interviews
<u>Improved capacity to work on advocacy for smallholder empowerment in markets (delivery of development objective):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in policy process and advocacy - Increased presence in decision making circles on the allocation of resources to support smallholder market access - Improved capacity to manage activities related to research, advocacy and service delivery - Increased involvement in the design and implementation of market related services - Increased public visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established strategic partnerships - Support from donors and supporting organisations for advocacy and service delivery activities - Participation at dialogue / events with decision makers 	Self-assessment and semi-structured interviews

Table 2 Intermediate and immediate outcomes and related indicators for monitoring the capacity of NFOs in advocacy and evidence-based policy development process

5. Unit of analysis and method for monitoring

For the data collection for monitoring, we propose a mix of methods from both qualitative and quantitative methods amongst various groups of respondents. The details are described in table 3 and the annexes 1 till 3 give the proposed semi-structured interview guides for the diverse respondents.

Source of verification	Method	Advantage	Disadvantage
1. Board and staff of NFO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-assessment tool, complemented with quantitative fact finding questionnaire - Discussion and learning history of ESFIM programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly engaged in ESFIM activities • Comparable • Results of the self-assessment tool can be directly fed back in to the board members for learning and action 	Differences in interpretation of questions
2. Closely related stakeholders to NFO: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repr. Ministry - Repr. Donor community - Repr. NGO platform - Agricultural journalist 	Semi-structured interviews	Complementary view	Might be different respondents per country

Table 3 Unit of analysis and data collection method

6. Planning and implementation of baseline measurement

The baseline measurement and monitoring will be implemented in different phases in the last quarter of 2011 and first quarter of 2012.

1. During the ESFIM workshop (10-12 October 2011), Mugmedia has record the story telling about the ESFIM process from the ESFIM researchers (see results on www.esfim.org).
2. The self-assessment and discussion on the learning history will be organised in the different countries with the at least 6 board members in a kind of reflexion session (half day). This will included individual self-assessment as is presented in annex 1. The results will be documented and made available, so that it can form the a basis of discussion with the board members. Accordingly, the facilitator will facilitate a discussion along the learning history of the ESFIM programme.
3. Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders closely related to the NFO (annex 2).

Phase 2 and 3 from the data collection phase will take place between October 2011 and March 2012, and can coincide with a visit to or workshop of the NFO. Note that the data collection process can be subcontracted to a local consultant, who can facilitate the discussion and is able to work with the excel files to facilitate the self-assessment. Budget available is: € 3.000 per country.

The data should be available latest **by the end of March 2012**, but preferably earlier. The results will be used in the next progress report and proposal of ESFIM Phase III.

Annex 1 – Semi-structured focus group discussion with NFO Board members and/or engaged staff, started with individual self-assessment by board members (n=6)

For this part of the data collection, it is recommended to organise a meeting / small workshop with at least 6 members of the board, including representatives from the regional departments and the federation.

First the respondents fill in the self-assessment part. The results will be presented and discussion will be elaborated on the findings. This discussion will be documented as well.

Respondent:

Positions in NFO:

Self-assessment (adapted from Schrader)

Statements		Scores				Compared to what we did three years ago, this is:				
		0	1	2	3	-2	-1	0	1	2
		<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Much less</i>	<i>Less</i>	<i>The same</i>	<i>More</i>	<i>Much more</i>
		☹☹	☹	☺	☺☺	-/-	-	-/+	+	++
1. Capacity for coherency (coh)										
1.1	We organise regular consultation with our members to discuss their preoccupations (coh)									
1.2	Our members contact us directly and pro-actively when they need us (coh)									
1.3	Our membership base is increasing steadily (coh)									
1.4	The members generally agree on the position taken by the NFO towards specific policy developments (coh)									
2. Capacity to network (net)										
2.1	We collaborate sufficiently with agricultural research institutes (net)									
2.2	We have sufficient donor support for our projects and activities (net)									
2.3	We have sufficient support for our activities from regional authorities (district authorities) (net)									

2.4	We have sufficient support for our activities from the Ministry of Agriculture (net)									
2.5	In our activities, we collaborate sufficiently with the (public) agricultural advisory services (net)									
2.6	We have sufficient access to a pool of experts in the agricultural sector with whom we can work (net)									
2.7	We have sufficient collaboration with private sector players (net)									
2.8	We have strategic partnerships with other NFOs in the countries (net)									
3. Capacity to learn and adapt										
3.1	Our NFO have sufficient capacity to interpret the results of research findings (learn)									
3.2	Our NFO collaborates with agricultural research institutes (learn)									
3.3	Our NFO organises workshops to makes research findings available for the members (learn and adapt)									
3.4	Our NFO reflects sufficiently on the right advocacy strategy to be followed (adapt)									
3.5	Our NFO explores statistical data (learn)									
3.6	Our NFO is well informed about the current policy developments in the agricultural sector (learn)									
3.7	Our NFO participates in platforms with other NFOs to align their position on policy issues (learn)									
4. Capacity to commit and act										
4.1	Our NFO has at least one full-time staff dedicated to policy analysis and advocacy (commit and act)									
4.2	Our NFO contracts regularly external researchers and experts (commit and act)									

4.3	Our NFO co-organises seminars and field days with research organisations (commit and act)				
4.4	Our NFO annually allocates budget for policy research (commit and act)				
4.5	Our NFO organises discussions with researchers about their research findings (commit and act)				
4.6	Our NFO annually allocates budget specifically for lobby activities (commit and act)				
4.7	Our NFO has an advocacy strategy available (commit and act)				

5 Capacity to deliver development objectives (dev)											
5.1	Our NFO provides written information to members on agricultural policies (dev ser)										
5.2	Our NFO manages to get our priority research topics on the agenda of research institutes (dev)										
5.3	Our NFO is always present in important round table meetings with decision makers (dev)										
5.4	Our NFO is organising events to initiate discussion with individual policy makers (dev)										
5.5	Our NFO manages to get sufficient attention in the media related to policy issues (net)										
5.6	Our NFO is actively engaged in arranging access to high quality inputs for members (dev ser)										
5.7	Our NFO is actively engaged in arranging storing facilities of agricultural produce (dev ser)										
5.8	Our NFO is actively engaged in lobby for access to financial services for marketing, specifically for smallholders (dev ser)										
5.9	Our NFO is actively engaged in arranging in the development of market information systems (dev ser)										
5.10	Our NFO is actively engaged in the establishment of relations with byers/traders for members (dev ser)										
5.11	Our NFO is actively engaged in arranging the organisation of collective marketing for members (dev ser)										
5.12	Our NFO is actively lobbying for better trade policies (dev adv)										
5.13	Our NFO is actively lobbying for better tax regulations related to trade (dev adv)										

Discussion on learning history with board members on ESFIM programme

Roughly, the time line of the ESFIM project includes:

Setting scene of project, prioritising research themes	Fact finding, research, evidence collection	Sharing results, developing policy proposals	Active advocacy
<p>Along these time line, discuss the following aspects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Roughly, what happened during these different phases and activities of ESFIM so far? Elaborate on how the NFO got activated in the projects activities.2. What are your experiences in what is going well in the project activities and what not?3. How would you describe the changes you see within the NFO in the research activities, reflection, engagement with networks and policy dialogue?4. What are the main learning points (positive and negative) according to you of the ESFIM programme so far?5. Illustrate this with two events: one to illustrate a positive significant change and one to illustrate the a negative or weakness of the ESFIM approach and how it strengthens the capacity of the NFO.			

NB. This discussion is preferably recorded and the narratives will be edited in a written report.

Annex 2 Semi-structured interview with key stakeholders related to the NFO (4 respondents: for example representatives of Ministry of Agriculture, donor community, NGO platform, agricultural journalist)

Respondent:.....

Know the NFO since:

I Specific issues related market access for small holders

1. The frequency of contact between me and the NFO is:
Weekly/monthly/quarterly/a few times a year
2. How would you describe your relation with the NFO?
3. In your view, what are the most important concerns for small holders market access at the moment is:

	Not important at all	Not very important	Important	Very important
Tax reform				
International trade barriers				
Regulations on government input supply support / input supply market				
Access to market information systems				
Access to agricultural commodity exchange system				
Collective market arrangement				
Development of WRS and contract farming				
Access to financial services and insurance				
Storage arrangement for marketing				
Certified/commercial seed multiplication				
Access to agricultural extension				
other:.....				

4. In your experiences, on what issues and themes is the NFO currently actively working, specifically related to market access?

	Doing a bad job	Doing a meagre job	Doing a good job	Doing an excellent job
Tax reform				
International trade barriers				
Regulations on government input supply support / input supply market				
Access to market information systems				
Access to agricultural commodity exchange system				
Collective market arrangement				
Development of WRS and contract farming				
Access to financial services and insurance				
Storage arrangement for marketing				
Certified/commercial seed multiplication				
Access to agricultural extension				

other:.....				
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5. What type of activities the NFO currently developing are you aware of:
 - o Development of projects for their members
 - o Establishing own services
 - o Lobby and advocacy
 - o

6. The NFO is always represented in national workshop and dialogue events if they are invited.
Yes/No/Sometimes

7. In the last year (2011), where have you seen the NFO in the public arena:
 - o Not at all
 - o On television
 - o National newspaper
 - o Radio broadcasting
 - o In workshops and seminars
 - o

8. From your experience, how would you appreciate the visibility of the NFO in the country?
Rather weak/weak/neutral/strong/very strong

9. From your experience, is this visibility weaker/neutral/stronger than three years ago?

10. From your experience, how would you appreciate the capacity of the NFO to position itself regarding policy developments?
Rather weak/weak/neutral/strong/very strong

11. From your experience, is this capacity weaker/neutral/stronger than three years ago?

12. From your experience, how would you appreciate the capacity of the NFO to organise fact finding and evidence collection
Rather weak/weak/neutral/strong/very strong

13. From your experience, is this capacity weaker/neutral/stronger than three years ago?

14. From your experience, how would you appreciate the capacity of the NFO to develop contacts with research institutes?
Rather weak/weak/neutral/strong/very strong

15. From your view, is this capacity weaker/neutral/stronger than three years ago?

16. From your experience, how would you appreciate the capacity of the NFO to develop contacts with decision and policy makers?
Rather weak/weak/neutral/strong/very strong

17. From your experience, is this capacity weaker/neutral/stronger than three years ago?

18. Can you mention one example where the NFO established a successful activity related to market access, specifically for smallholders?

19. How would you appreciate the overall performance of the NFO in the activities related to the issues on market access?
Very poor/poor/regular/strong/very strong

Kindly illustrate.

20. In your experiences, how is this performance compared to three years ago?
Much weaker/weaker/the same/stronger/much stronger

Kindly illustrate

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