



FARMERS FIGHTING POVERTY

Farmers building democracy, growth, and food security

Farmers' organisations are well placed to tackle the systemic causes of poverty. Representing the legitimate voice of farmers in shaping pro-poor rural policies, they articulate farmers' interests to governments, processors and retailers. And as entrepreneurs, farmers can drive balanced social and economic development. Farmers Fighting Poverty reflects the conviction that stronger farmers' organisations contribute to:

- the spread of democracy (through better institutions)
- economic growth (by offering better services to farmers)
- a fairer distribution of income (as more smallholder farmers become involved in business).

Who is involved?

Farmers Fighting Poverty has been operating since 2007 with the backing of farmers' organisations (or agri-agencies) in nine OECD countries: Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. AgriCord was registered as a non-profit organisation in Belgium in 2003 and has ODA-status with the OECD. Between 2007 and 2010, the agri-agencies supported more than 180 farmers' organisations in 61 developing countries. Farmers Fighting Poverty is managed by AgriCord, a network of seven agri-agencies. These agri-agencies have a mandate from the farmers' and rural people's organisations in their own countries to carry out this work.

Peer-to-peer policies and practices

Farmers speak the same language. Farmer-to-farmer exchanges, backed up by their organisations, can generate inspiring new ideas. Advisors, who are themselves part of the farmers' world, provide advice based upon the specific needs of each organisation.

Capacity Building

Work area 1 - Organisational strength and inclusiveness
Strong farmers' organisations have professional staff, adequate facilities and their own financing that allows them to operate sustainably and independently. Inclusive farmers' organisations have active members who are informed, motivated and keen to participate. They represent a substantial proportion of the farmers, both women and men, in their area of operation. A large membership base gives them political and economic leverage.

Work area 2 - Institutional development
Well-connected farmers' organisations have created sound working relationships with public and private institutions: line ministries, research institutes, international development organisations, NGOs and private businesses. They cooperate with different institutions to improve the position of their members.

Collective Action

Work area 3 - Policy elaboration and advocacy
Informed and pro-active farmers' organisations develop opinions - together with their members - on policies that affect members' livelihoods. On local, national and international platforms they articulate these views, bringing farmers' voices to the fore and advocating for groups that might otherwise go unheard.

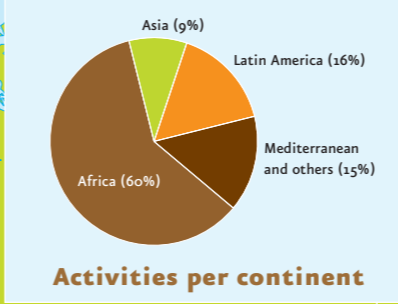
Work area 4 - Farmer-Led Economic Activities
Enterprising farmers' organisations break the physical, economic and institutional isolation of their individual members by bringing them together and developing collective services for inputs, markets and new techniques. This increases productivity, improves incomes and creates rural employment.

Farmers Fighting Poverty 2010

Countries / Volumes / Supporting agri-agencies and farmers' organisations



Piet Vanthemsche, President AgriCord:
 "One of the best ways of increasing agricultural output, and thus raising the living standards of farmers and their families, is to improve farming and marketing practices by strengthening farmers' organisations. The point is to make that connection. Services from farmers' organisations are the missing link."

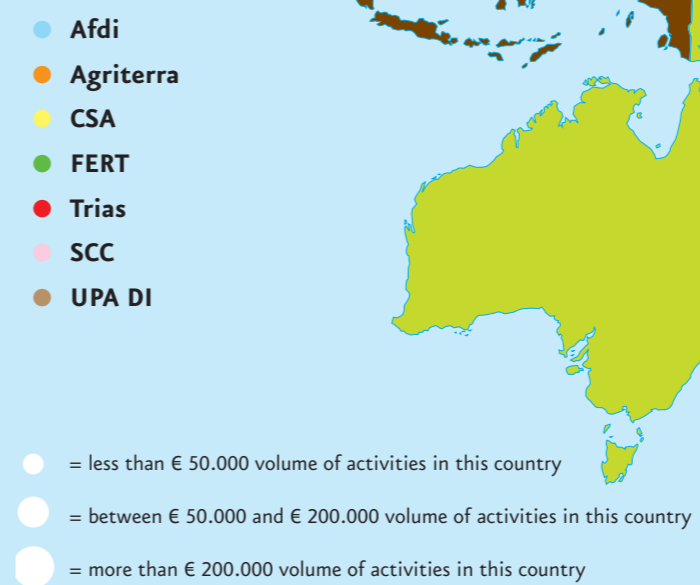


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Information on activities and organisations

Online information on farmers' organisations and projects is available at www.agricord.org. Select "projects" or "farmers' organisations" in the top section. Then search by country, by work area, by the name of the farmers' organisation...

Farmers Fighting Poverty was set up with financial support from the Government of the Netherlands, and is now supported by the governments of several OECD countries (Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Sweden), by IFAD, and by the European Commission. Agri-agencies and associated farmers' organisations in their own countries also raise funds and mobilise resources for Farmers Fighting Poverty. Funds come from membership subscriptions, from other private sources, and from their governments. Farmers Fighting Poverty operates as a multi-donor trust fund. It is steered by farmers' organisations and managed by AgriCord.



The key competences of farmers' organisations

Farmers Fighting Poverty is comprehensive: it covers the whole range of capacity-building needs and operations of farmers' organisations. These are clustered into four work areas, each of which includes a set of specific competences (deliverables):

- Competences for work area I**
Organisational strength and inclusiveness
 1. Policies and strategies prepared with members' participation
 2. Well-managed human resources and adequate facilities
 3. Sound and transparent financial management
 4. Democratic governance
 5. Representativity and local membership base
 6. Empowerment of young people, women and specific vulnerable groups
- Competences for work area II**
Institutional development
 7. External networks and partnerships
 8. Formal alliances and agreements
- Competences for work area III**
Policy elaboration and advocacy
 9. Participatory policy formulation
 10. Joint advocacy of family farmers on food security
 11. External communication
 12. Policy positions in national strategies
- Competences for work area IV**
Farmer-led economic development
 13. Fair access to land, water, credit and other resources
 14. Improved access to inputs for agricultural production
 15. Improved processing and handling services
 16. Improved product marketing
 17. Development of farmer-led enterprises

Cross-cutting concerns

Farmers' income and food security / Gender equality and the empowerment of women / Financial management / Environmental sustainability





Agri-agencies, members

	Afdi Agriculteurs Français et Développement International, France		Agri-agence de la FNSEA , l' APCA , les JA Jeunes Agriculteurs et la CNMCCA		K. Serres FNSEA board member France
	Agriterra the Netherlands		Agri-agency of LTO , the rural women's organisations SSVO , NCR and rural youth NAJK		A. J. Maat LTO president The Netherlands
	CSA Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires, Belgique		Agri-agence de la FWA , Fédération Wallonne de l'Agriculture		R. Ladouce FWA president Belgium
	FERT France		Agri-agence partenaire du Groupe " Céréalières de France ", (AGPB , AGPM , ARVALIS , UNIGRAINS)		H. de Benoist AGPB and UNIGRAINS past president France
	SCC Swedish Cooperative Centre, Sweden		Agri-agency of LRF (Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund) , Federation of Swedish Farmers		A. Nygård LRF vice-president Sweden
	Trias Belgium		Agri-agency of Boerenbond , Landelijke Gilden , rural women KVLV and rural youth KLJ		P. Vanthemsche Boerenbond president Belgium
	UPA DI UPA Développement international, Canada		Agri-agence de l' UPA , Union des Producteurs Agricoles (Québec)		C. Lacasse UPA president Canada



Farmers' organisations, associated members

	CAP Confederação dos Agricultores de Portugal, Portugal		J. C. Machado CAP president Portugal
	CIA Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori, Italy		G. Politi CIA president Italy
	MTK Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners, Finland		J. Marttila MTK president Finland
	UPA Unión de Pequeños Agricultores y Ganaderos, Spain		L. Ramos Silva UPA Secretary General Spain

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