



Twinning support

for development
of forestry producers'
associations

Forest producers in developing countries

Forest protection in most developing countries has been traditionally the mandate of the government. Due to limited resources, governments have not been able to cope, but the depletion of forest cover has continued due to pressure for agricultural land, illegal logging etc. Governments gradually recognize that smallholder forest producers, forest user groups and indigenous peoples living at the agriculture-forest frontier provide the best hope for sustainable forest management.

Smallholders in developing countries have established member-based organizations in the agricultural sector, but such organizations are rarely developed in the forestry sector. Smallholders' active participation can only be achieved by organised groups with opportunities for dialogue and appropriate business development (including financial services) in support of sustainable smallholder agro-forestry business activities.

Forest producers in Finland

Forest producers in Finland have organized their collective action through local Forest Management Associations (FMA) for over 100 years. At the moment, there are more than 100 associations in Finland covering the whole country and employing around 1,000 experts in sustainable forest management services. Forest management associations can meet all the service requirements of forest owners from planting to timber sales and marketing.

What is twinning?

Forest producer organization support by twinning is a complementary implementation model to the traditional government-led implementation of forestry development projects. Twinning is peer-to-peer cooperation between private sector forest producers. Twinning partnership strengthens trust in the implementation capacity of the forest producers' organization in a developing country. The Finnish twinning organization is an equal partner, who will be available not for daily supervision, but for strategic and managerial support.



VIETNAM – Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue provinces

The key issues in Vietnam are improvement of raw material quality and certification that is required by the importing countries. Vietnam is one of the 10 world's largest producers of wood products and exports 90 per cent of its total furniture production mainly to Europe and USA. The timber processing industry is estimated to import about 80 % of its raw materials. Replacing imported timber increasingly by domestic supply would be beneficial for the country and the tree growers. The producer price of certified acacia wood is double that of non-certified acacia which is normally sold for pulp production.

In the projects, forestry coordinators have been employed; partner organizations have visited Finland to study the Finnish twinning partners' forest management and processes from production of seedlings to quality logs. Forestry training material has been selected and household forestry management plans are being prepared at the moment.

The expected achievements for the initial pilot projects are that a replicable model of smallholder forest producers' cooperation has been created, at least 60% of forests owners rate their access to forestry services to have improved and that forest producers' organizations are feasible and financially sustainable with profitable business activities.

Successful twinning requires

- Shared interest and objectives (demand driven - recipient organization in driver's seat)
- Voluntary participation (Finnish forest producers' association applies to become a partner)
- Mutual appreciation and respect through personal contacts and events (visits by twinning partners)
- Agreed and clearly understood working procedures (project designed together and implemented according to clear rules)
- Organized network (support by AgriCord-MTK-forest producer's association)
- Clear division of labour (local partner has implementation responsibility, Finnish partner has advisory role, AgriCord-MTK have supervisory role)
- Financial support for twinning activities
- Support by leaders and the membership of the forest producers' association to allocate working time for twinning partnership

Twinning in action

AgriCord together with the Finnish Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK) have initiated twinning projects in Ethiopia and Vietnam. By supporting the creation of forest producers' own organisations, the projects aim at enhancing sustainable forest management practices which in turn improve the livelihood of rural people and contribute to poverty eradication.

The Finnish twinning partners are Forest Management Association Kyyjärvi (for Ethiopia) and Forest Management Association Ylä-Savo (for Vietnam). The Finnish twinning partners' role is to make advisory services available and to support local twinning organisations in the implementation of the project. The practical work is done by the local twinning partners in Ethiopia and Vietnam. In the absence of existing forest producers' own organisations, agricultural cooperatives have been selected as partners to develop services for forest producers. They are supported to employ professional local forest coordinators to implement the day-to-day activities.

Detailed activities differ between different projects but in general they cover practical forest management (seedling production, planting, harvesting etc.); forestry business development (cooperative forest business plan, market survey of different forest products etc.) and institutional development (enhancement of forest producers' cooperation and building-up of producers' organisations).

The current pilot projects in Ethiopia and Vietnam run until end of August 2011. After an evaluation of the projects, the aim is to continue successful twinning processes and possibly expand activities and their geographical cover. Work is currently going on to explore additional countries and regions for similar twinning projects.

ETHIOPIA – improving livelihood through carbon services of forests

As part of the primary objective to increase forestry income through sustainable management of forest resources and improved market information, the project investigates new and innovative means for livelihood improvement. One interesting and promising example is carbon services of forests. The project team has developed a simple model on how to monitor carbon sequestration of forests and use the information to get compensation from international carbon markets.

In the model forest producer or producers' organisation measures the diameter of trees annually. Producer sends the information as a simple text message to the Carbon Offset project office where Carbon Account Programme is used to compute the amount of carbon in trees and difference between two years. The sequestered carbon is valued based on the increment in woody biomass, its carbon content, and the price of carbon dioxide at international market. The sequestered carbon is converted to Ethiopian Birr and the amount is transferred to producer's bank account. The model is just a draft but negotiations are underway with different actors to start testing of the system.





AGRICORD



FARMERS
FIGHTING
POVERTY

AgriCord is an alliance of agri-agencies supported by the national farmers' organizations of Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. These farmers' organizations join in the conviction that self-sustained, democratic, genuinely representative and autonomous farmers', forest producers' and rural members' organizations are necessary for development. Farmers' organizations have a direct and positive impact on members' productivity, incomes and food security. AgriCord's development programme "Farmers Fighting Poverty" supported 309 projects implemented by 189 farmers' organizations in 61 countries (situation in May, 2010). This programme supports development of sound institutions that are able to tackle the causes of poverty. Twinning for development of forestry producers' organizations and farmer-to-farmer cooperation are important working methods in this programme.

www.agricord.org



The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK) is the trade association of rural producers representing the interest of Finnish farmers, forest owners, rural entrepreneurs and rural people. MTK has 156,000 members. MTK works for the economic and social status of its members, development of rural businesses, environment management and protection of private property. MTK is also active in international forest policy fora together with forest owners' international organizations CEPF (Confederation of European Forest Owners) and IFFA (International Family Forestry Alliance). Currently MTK has forest-related developing projects in Ethiopia, Mexico and Vietnam.

www.mtk.fi



The International Family Forestry Alliance, IFFA, is the global voice of family forestry. The organisation was founded as an informal network between national forest owners' organisations. In addition to IFFA's founder organisations in the Nordic countries, Europe and North America, IFFA covers nowadays members from all over the world i.e. Central America, Africa and Australia. IFFA's objective is to promote the development of family forestry and advocate supportive policies. Since 2009 IFFA has been part of the Three Rights Holders Group, G3, together with Global Alliance of Community Forestry (GACF) and International Alliance of Alliance of Tribal and Indigenous Peoples of the Tropical Forest (IAITPTF) in order to promote locally controlled forestry and sustainable forest management worldwide.

www.familyforestry.net



FAO's Forestry Department hosts and facilitates several programmes that support networks at local, national and international levels to improve the challenges faced by forest-dependent people. National Forest Programme (NFP) Facility (active in 80 countries) stimulates broad stakeholder participation by the civil society to implement sustainable forest management. Forest Connect Alliance (with 13 national hubs) aims to address the isolation of small and medium forest enterprises by better linking them to each other (through forest producer organizations), to markets, service providers and decision-makers.

www.fao.org



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