

# Farmers' Organizations for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (FO4ACP): Highlights of successes achieved and lessons learned along the way

2019–2025



# Introduction

The [Farmers' Organizations for Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific \(FO4ACP\) programme](#) (2019–2025) aimed to increase incomes and to improve the livelihoods, food and nutrition security and the safety, of organized smallholders and family farmers in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries by strengthening regional, national and local farmers' organizations.

The programme was implemented by six regional farmers' organizations – along with the Pan-African Farmers' Organization (PAFO), Agricorn, Procasur and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean – that worked closely with national and local farmers' organizations, agri-agencies and sub-implementing partners across all ACP regions supported. The programme was structured around five components, three of which were technical components focusing on:

- supporting farmers' organizations to deliver economic services along value chains;
- policy influence/enabling the business environment; and
- building the institutional capacity of farmers' organizations.

This summary document provides a compilation of the cases studies that will be presented at the virtual FO4ACP closing event, highlighting the importance of investing in the capacity of farmers' organizations to achieve sustainable rural development. The document is structured around the three technical components of the programme, each of which contains case studies that demonstrate the central role of farmers' organizations in strengthening local food systems and integrating smallholder farmers into value chains.





# CASE STUDIES

Component I: Supporting farmers' organizations to deliver economic services along value chains

*The following examples illustrate how the FO4ACP investments in farmers' organizations' technical and institutional capacity to deliver better services to their members have directly translated into greater resilience, higher incomes and improved livelihoods for smallholder farmers. At the same time, by enabling small-scale producers to participate more competitively and fairly in markets, these investments contribute to building more inclusive, pro-poor value chains.*



# #1 Service provision led by farmer's organizations upgrades value chains, and allows greater resilience, and inclusion for farmer members

FO4ACP - Africa

## Resilience through innovation: Revitalizing Malawi's dairy sector amid climate and economic crises

<b>Date</b>	2019-2025
<b>Agri-agency</b>	We Effect
<b>NFO</b>	CREMPA
<b>Themes</b>	Dairy Farming, Livelihood Resilience, Women Empowerment

In the rolling hills of the central region of Malawi, dairy farmers are facing a complex set of challenges. Droughts intensified by climate change, coupled with an economic crisis that shuttered key milk buyers, threatened both their incomes and food security. But through innovation and solidarity, these farmers are withstanding the current double crisis in Malawi of slowing economic growth and reduced agricultural production.

Supported by the FO4ACP programme and We Effect, the Mpsa Cooperative and the Central Region Milk Producers Association (CREMPA) are revitalizing the dairy value chain, empowering farmers to take control of their livelihoods. From making their own livestock feed and small-scale processing facilities to leading savings groups, local producers are actively addressing pressing needs.

Practical training has been central to this transformation. Youth and women have stepped up as artificial insemination technicians, study circle leaders, and cooperative board members. Farmers are growing crops for feed, ensuring that even households that do not produce milk can benefit from the sector. Upgraded milk cooling and storage facilities help secure better prices and product quality.

The turning point for Dainess Hanele, a dairy farmer at Mpsa Cooperative, came when the cooperative introduced artificial insemination services to its members. Dainess and her family eagerly accessed the services, enabling them to grow a herd without keeping a bull, which can be both costly and challenging. Dainess' cow successfully conceived and gave birth to a healthy calf. Dainess now has a steady amount of milk each day that she can sell at the market, earning 120,000 Malawi Kwacha (about EUR 60) per month.

Dainess's story is an example how much of an impact specialized service provisions by a farmers' organization can have on the life of its members. By providing access to artificial insemination services and training technicians, the project has enabled farmers to overcome critical challenges, enhance livestock genetics, and support income generation at the farm level.





## #2 Investments in infrastructure and training to improve production quality enable farmers to secure price premiums and increase their incomes

FO4ACP - Africa

### Enhancing dairy quality and market access in Sidi Bennour, Morocco

<b>Date</b>	2021-2024
<b>RFO</b>	UMNAGRI
<b>NFO</b>	ASSALAME Cooperative
<b>Themes</b>	Economic development; access to markets; enhancing quality of production

The Assalam Cooperative, founded in 2012 in Sidi Bennour, Morocco, is a member of the Union Maghrébine et de l'Afrique du Nord des Agriculteurs (UMNAGRI) and was created to overcome the dairy sector's barriers to growth, in particular inefficient market integration. The cooperative focuses on collecting and commercializing raw milk from its members and has a contractual agreement with the Jibal Company, a private company buying milk from its members. Assalam has become a vital player in the region's dairy sector, operating in the irrigated Doukkala plain and working closely with farmers to enhance milk production.

The Moroccan dairy sector plays a vital role in the national economy, accounting for 96 per cent of the country's milk and dairy needs, employing around 474,000 people and generating approximately EUR 1.2 billion in annual revenue, with almost EUR 700 million benefiting rural dairy farmers. In particular, the Sidi Bennour province, home to 452,448 people (81 per cent of whom live in rural areas), is a key contributor to dairy production.

Supported by the FO4ACP programme, the Assalam cooperative achieved significant progress in meeting food safety regulations and improving the quality of milk produced by its members. Through FO4ACP funding, the milk collection centre was equipped with essential infrastructure, including a reliable water supply, a backup generator to maintain the cold chain during power outages, as well as milk-testing devices to ensure milk quality. In addition, the programme financed trainings on improved livestock practices for Assalam's youth and women members to foster inclusion. These investments enabled the cooperative to implement a robust self-monitoring system and traceability measures, ensuring compliance with the safety standards of the Office National de Sécurité Sanitaire des Produits Alimentaires (ONSA), the agency responsible for oversight of food safety in Morocco.

Through its efforts to meet ONSA standards and enhance milk quality, the Assalam cooperative is able to sell at the highest milk prices in the region among the cooperatives contracted by the Jibal Company. FO4ACP investments in infrastructure and training programmes have enabled Assalam's members to increase in milk production by 25 per cent, which led to an increase in farmers' revenues by 30 per cent.





## #3 Farmers' organizations offer services to connect members to markets, enabling their integration into value chains

FO4ACP - Africa

### Marketing of products from the artisanal fishing sector in Moanda, in Kongo Central province, Democratic Republic of Congo

<b>Date</b>	2021-2025
<b>RFO</b>	PROPAC
<b>NFO</b>	COPACO-PRP
<b>LFO</b>	CAPM
<b>Themes</b>	Fisheries; machinery; economic development

Fishers from the Coordination des Associations des Pêcheurs de Moanda (CAPM) – comprising over 4,000 fishers organized into 11 unions in the Territory of Moanda – regularly supplied fresh, smoked and salted fish to the urban markets of Kinshasa and Angola. However, the supply did not meet growing demand. These fishers faced difficulties linked to the lack of sales points to quickly sell their products, limited transport to facilitate home delivery, insufficient working capital to rent vehicles from Moanda that had appropriate cooling facilities to preserve the fish during transport, and inadequate fishing equipment (for collection and capture).

To address these concerns, the FO4ACP programme supported CAPM in 2019 to invest in:

- Developing and equipping a fish sales outlet in Kinshasa to organize collective fish sales
- Purchasing a motorized canoe for collecting fish, refrigerators for preserving the fish, and a tricycle motorcycle for home delivery.

The investments resulted in an increase in fish sales from 2020 to 2025, which generated approximately EUR 338,400, increasing to translating into a substantial increase in the incomes of the members and the organization, thanks to which fishers were able to meet their basic needs (clothing, children's schooling, medical care and household appliances). CAPM's committee manages the transactions and distributes the dividends from operations in proportion to the volumes placed in the collective marketing system. Fresh fish are smoked and salted in a processing centre supported by FAO. Women and young people are involved in gutting, packaging and marketing the fish.

Even though these solutions still come with constraints – the motorized canoe is not sufficiently equipped with preservation equipment, there is no self-contained refrigerated vehicle, power cuts are frequent, fuel costs are high and client payments are sometimes delayed – this initiative has benefited fisher members affiliated with CAPM, and has also led to the creation of seven direct jobs and many indirect jobs.

Mr. George Mwanda, fisher: "I am very satisfied with this experience, which has changed the way we work and sell together. It has reduced some of the costs that were due to transport and has helped increase my income. It is now easier for me to send my children to school and support their education."





## #4 Farmers' organizations are adaptable and can offer a variety of services tailored to farmers' needs in response to shocks, strengthening resilience along value chains

FO4ACP - Africa

### Digital service provision for farmers: Disaster preparedness in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Eswatini

Date	2019-2025
RFO	SACAU
NFO	ESNAU
Themes	Resilience, disaster preparedness, COVID-19, digital service provision, financial access, insurance, savings and loans

COVID-19 exposed how vulnerable Eswatini's agriculture sector was to shocks. Farmers faced movement restrictions, market disruptions, input shortages and limited access to financial services. The Eswatini National Agricultural Union (ESNAU), established in 2009 as an apex body for regional and national commodity associations, national cooperative unions and farmers' organizations, also saw its traditional service model challenged. Reliant on on-site farm visits and in-person meetings, ESNAU's ability to support its members was severely constrained, highlighting the need to adopt more resilient, digitally enabled service delivery.

With support from the FO4ACP programme, ESNAU developed a disaster preparedness plan, introducing digital service provision and building resilience to future shocks. Most digital services offered by ESNAU are delivered through an Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) platform provided by an information technology company and integrated with the Mobile Telephone Networks Groups' mobile money platform, which supports the movement of funds and links farmers to service providers such as insurance companies, input suppliers and banks. In addition, a WhatsApp members' group and SMS alerts are used to share information with farmers. Services include the following:

- **An input savings platform** was created to enable farmers to redeem savings to buy farming inputs, allowing them to return to production in response to shocks.
- **A funeral policy** was introduced in response to members' demands, as funeral costs had emerged as a major financial burden in rural communities during COVID-19.
- **Weather-indexed crop insurance** was offered at a discounted premium, negotiated by ESNAU through a partner insurance provider, compensating farmers during hailstorm or flood events and reducing income loss.
- **Seasonal loans** were available that farmers could apply for through USSD, where they could also pay loan commitment fees and make loan repayments.

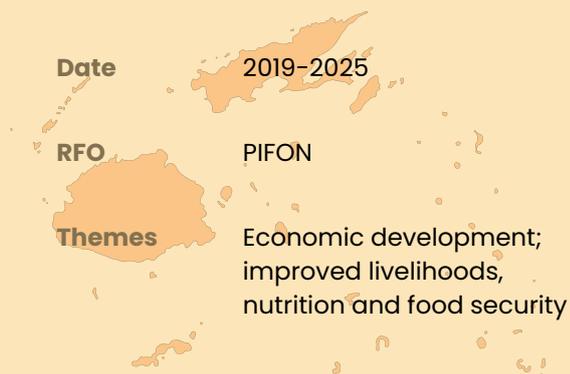
Mobile-based services reduced transaction and transport costs, ensuring service continuity during COVID-19, and accelerating recovery through faster claims-processing and loan disbursement. By facilitating access to bank accounts, mobile services have not only deepened financial inclusion but also guaranteed more predictable production cycles and stronger financial linkages. Overall, the shift to digital service provision has significantly strengthened farmers' financial resilience and ESNAU's capacity to support its members in the face of shocks.



## #5 Services of farmers' organizations improve farmers' incomes, leading to better nutrition and food security outcomes

FO4ACP - Pacific

### Improvements in income, nutrition and food security in the Pacific



The FO4ACP programme improved food and nutritional security, and income among family farming households across the Pacific in the face of climate change, non-communicable diseases and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The records of the activity of farmers' organizations show that 56,336 people (50.8% male/49.2% female; 30% of those youth) directly participated in activities carried out with FO4ACP funds to support their income, livelihoods and food security as farmers or value chain actors.

Surveys conducted by farmer's organizations and the Pacific Farmer Organisations (PFO) secretariat showed that on average 86 per cent of farmers participating in FO4ACP- supported activities experienced an increase in income, representing around 48,448 smallholder farmers.

The average income increase was EUR 859 per farmer (income change ranged from EUR 30 to EUR 2,500), based on impact assessments carried out by farmers' organizations and the PFO secretariat in 7 out of 16 participating farmers' organization in 7 out of 13 countries: Cook Islands; Fiji; Papua New Guinea; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Timor Leste; and Vanuatu.

This average income change was then projected across all beneficiaries and countries that likely adopted and benefited from activities. The analysis concluded that among directly participating smallholder farmers, there was a total income increase of EUR 41.6 million over the project period.

An FO4ACP [impact video](#) has been produced to illustrate and document this impact.



# CASE STUDIES

## Component 2 – Policy influence/Enabling the business environment

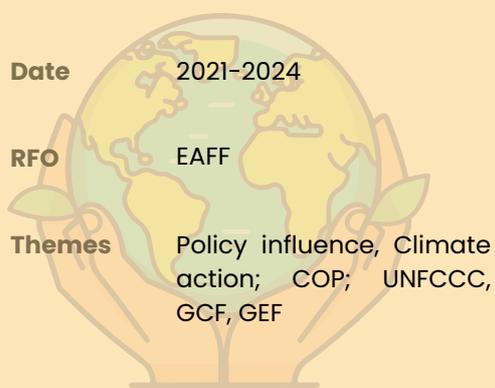
*Farmers' organizations can effectively influence policies and raise the voices of small-scale producers in the policy arena at local, national, regional and continental levels. Farmers' organizations play a critical role in advocating for the promotion of policies for increased sector investments, growth and sustainability, all of which are essential for creating an enabling environment that supports increasing the productivity and competitiveness of their members.*



## #6 Farmers' organizations play a significant role in supporting smallholder farmers to transition to agroecological practices

FO4ACP - Africa

### Climate action and the role of FOs to support the agroecological transition of smallholder farmers, Eastern Africa



The Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) is a regional farmers' organization, created in 2001, with 23 apex farmers' organizations across 10 Eastern African countries (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and United Republic of Tanzania). In the past four years, EAFF has placed climate change at the centre of its strategy, demonstrating that farmers' organizations can significantly contribute to climate action, biodiversity protection, inclusivity, and the sustainable development agenda.

The FO4ACP programme helped EAFF become a more credible and effective leader in driving farmer-led climate action by providing direct financing and capacity-building, which enabled EAFF to enhance its support for members in adapting to climate change and accessing green finance. These FO4ACP interventions served EAFF to generate evidence to support farmer-led research for policy advocacy and to strengthen its efforts to raise awareness of climate financing mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility to unlock climate finance for farmers' organizations.

As a result, EAFF has influenced the climate political agenda for smallholder farmers by articulating clear advocacy positions in climate policy spaces, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conferences of the Parties, and the Africa Climate Summit. It has facilitated member participation in climate negotiations and regional dialogues, highlighting farmers' critical role in agricultural adaptation and identifying barriers and innovative solutions to enhance regional resilience.

Today, EAFF is recognized as a credible voice in continental and global debates, regularly invited to contribute to major platforms and processes. For instance, in June 2025, EAFF President Elizabeth Nsimadala was invited to speak at the UNFCCC Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Agriculture and Food Security Workshop in Bonn. EAFF's professionalism and dedication have attracted funding and strategic partnerships, while its members actively engage in meetings, dialogues, and negotiations regionally and beyond. This combination of evidence-based advocacy, strong partnerships, and active membership has positioned EAFF as a key actor in driving farmer-centred climate action.





# #7 Farmers’ organizations can have political influence at the continental level in Africa

FO4ACP - Africa

## Institutionalization of farmers’ influence in continental agricultural and climate policy processes, Africa

<b>Date</b>	2024
<b>FO</b>	PAFO
<b>RFOs</b>	EAFF, PROPAC, ROPPA, SACAU, UMNAGRI
<b>Themes</b>	Policy influence, Kampala Declaration

PAFO was created in 2010 as the fruit of the discussions of the five regional farmers’ organizations in Africa to create a platform that would unite their efforts and harmonize their advocacy. A major achievement of the FO4ACP programme was the systematic strengthening of PAFO as a credible, organized and influential continental platform for African farmers capable of shaping agricultural, climate and food systems policies at the highest levels. Prior to FO4ACP, farmer engagement in continental policy spaces was fragmented, largely consultative and often symbolic. Through sustained technical, financial and institutional support, FO4ACP enabled PAFO to transition into a policy actor with convening power, evidence-based positions papers and structured advocacy mechanisms.

One of the most notable milestones under this achievement was PAFO’s leadership in the Post-Malabo consultation process. Between May and July 2024, PAFO coordinated regional consultations in all five African regions through EAFF (East Africa), Plateforme Sous-Régionale des Organisations Paysannes d’Afrique Centrale (PROPAC) (Central Africa), Network of Farmers’ and Agricultural Producers’ Organizations of West Africa (ROPPA) (West Africa), Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) (Southern Africa) and UMNAGRI (North Africa). These consultations brought together national and regional farmers’ organizations, including women and youth leaders, to deliberate on priorities related to agricultural transformation, climate resilience, financing, trade and governance of food systems for the development of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme, which led to the Kampala Declaration.

The consultations were not isolated events; they were strengthened by policy studies, political analysis and position papers developed during the programme, ensuring that discussions were evidence-driven. The outcome was the preparation and submission of a PAFO Independent Memorandum to the African Union Commission in August 2024, consolidating farmers’ perspectives into a single continental voice at a critical policy transition moment. This process was complemented by PAFO’s high-level side event alongside the Extraordinary Heads of State Summit in Kampala in January 2025, further amplifying farmers’ priorities ahead of the Kampala Declaration and side events that PAFO organized, such as the Farmers Forum at the Africa food system forum and other events where PAFO was invited.

This achievement firmly positioned PAFO as the legitimate continental voice of African farmers recognized by the African Union, European Union, IFAD, FAO, African Development Bank Group, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa and other global partners.





# CASE STUDIES

## Component 3 – Building the institutional capacity of farmers' organizations

*The presence of strong and effective farmers' organizations has a direct and significant impact on the economic well-being of smallholder farmers. To achieve sustainable development, it is essential to build the capacity of these organizations by improving their leadership, vision, governance, accountability and inclusivity. As part of this effort, the FO4ACP programme worked to enhance the skills and entrepreneurial spirit of young farmers and women within these organizations, using tailored approaches that met their specific needs and interests. This focus on empowering women and youth is critical, as they face significant barriers to participation in rural economies, including gender inequality and limited job opportunities, which hinder rural development.*



## #8 Inclusive farmers' organizations play a vital role in addressing the challenges of rural youth migration by providing local opportunities for youth and women, enabling them to actively contribute to and benefit from rural economies

FO4ACP - Caribbean

### Empowering women and youth in rural economies through FO4ACP, Caribbean

Date	2021-2024
Implementing agencies	FAO, Procasur
Themes	Youth rural employment, women empowerment

The FO4ACP programme in the Caribbean prioritized the inclusion of women and youth in rural economies, aiming to empower them by facilitating their active involvement in the economic activities of farmers' organizations and supporting their regional networks.

At national level, the programme's inclusion strategy involved using grant funding to establish agreements with participating farmers' organizations. These agreements enabled women and youth to take on leading roles in managing income-generating activities that aligned with their skills and interests and provided them with an income.

Women were encouraged to take on significant roles in activities that included managing transformation units, seed and seedling nurseries, and hydroponics – a method of growing plants without soil using nutrient-rich water. As a result, 14 organizations across Belize (7), Grenada (5), Jamaica (1), and Saint Lucia (1) successfully implemented hydroponic systems with FO4ACP seed financing, with women actively managing these initiatives and adding value to farmers' organizations.

The programme also invested in youth inclusion. One example is capacity-building in precision agriculture, where 22 young people received training in the use of drones and soil water sensors to monitor and manage on-farm agricultural production. Following the training, 18 of them began offering these services to farmers' organizations, using their new skills to generate income and position themselves as service providers within rural economies. This is particularly critical in the Caribbean, where rural-urban migration is high and retaining young people in agriculture is challenging due to the lack of clear, profitable career paths.

At regional level, the FO4ACP programme helped strengthen the enabling environment for women's leadership by supporting the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) in developing a new advocacy policy and a new strategic plan. The strategy was redefined through a participatory process, drawing on lessons learned from a series of exchange activities with women's networks and agricultural businesses in Kenya. This exchange provided practical insights on how to identify and support rural champions and improve access to finance, which, together with a series of dialogues, enabled the network to establish its common foundations.

Through consultations with all of its national chapters, CANROP revised its bylaws and set new advocacy priorities that better reflect the current needs and ambitions of rural women producers. By the end of the programme, the new strategy documents had been validated by 38 representatives from national chapters and the board, positioning CANROP to more effectively champion rural women's interests across the Caribbean.



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# #9 FOs can support the development of young agripreneurs to promote their integration within agricultural value chains, generating rural youth employment

FO4ACP - Africa

## Support for young rural entrepreneurs: a dynamic led by ROPPA member platforms with support from FO4ACP, West Africa

<b>Date</b>	2019–2025
<b>RFO</b>	ROPPA
<b>NFO</b>	CPF, CTOP, PNOPPA
<b>Themes</b>	Rural youth employment, value chain integration

Farmers’ organizations that are members of ROPPA have developed and strengthened structured mechanisms for mentoring and entrepreneurial support to youth, with backing from the FO4ACP programme.

The mechanisms are based on an integrated approach that combines:

- peer mentoring
- practical on-farm learning
- support for business creation
- strengthening of entrepreneurial skills
- support for accessing markets, finance and technologies.

The FO4ACP programme enabled the establishment of National Advisors for Farmers’ Economic Initiatives (CNIEP), which played a key role in designing, coordinating and supervising these mechanisms at national level. They were responsible for selecting beneficiaries, preparing support plans, providing technical follow-up and mobilizing technical and financial partners. They also helped strengthen the technical capacities of national platforms to structure such mechanisms and youth support initiatives, and to promote economic services for young people.

In Benin, the National Platform of Farmers’ and Agricultural Producers’ Organizations of Benin, and its Youth College, enabled 12 young people to set up their own businesses and to be recruited by companies through a mentoring scheme based on practical on-farm learning, coordinated by the CNIEP. In Burkina Faso, the Confédération Paysanne du Faso developed a structured mentoring programme to strengthen rural youth leadership and entrepreneurship, supporting 210 young people to engage in advocacy with local authorities, take up positions within farmers’ organizations and build capacity to create their own agricultural enterprises, with CNIEP support. In Togo, the Coordination Togolaise des Organisations Paysannes et de Producteurs Agricoles established a national development centre for agricultural and forestry cooperative enterprises, technically supervised by the CNIEP, which trained 25 technicians in agricultural business development.

Thanks to FO4ACP support, strong institutional anchoring within farmers’ organizations and a mentoring approach based on experience-sharing, these initiatives have strengthened the position of rural youth within agricultural value chains.



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