



European Consortium
for Agricultural Research
in the Tropics



International Federation of
Agricultural Producers

Partnership



Overall Objective

“The IFAP-ECART Partnership offers IFAP and its members access to ECART’s extensive network of social, economic and technical resources and skills in agriculture. The Partnership aims to help family farmers and their representative organisations to be better able to adapt and respond to dynamic global and local change today and in the future.”



International Federation of
Agricultural Producers

IFAP is the world farmers’ organisation representing over 600 million farm families grouped in 110 national organisations in 75 countries. It is a global network in which farmers from industrialised and developing countries exchange concerns and set common priorities. IFAP advocates farmers’ interests at the international level since 1946.

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“ECART is a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) established in November 2004. It seeks to make European research better coordinated and to facilitate access to European skills and expertise in the field of Agricultural Research for Development (ARD). The EEIG represents a pool of over 1,600 research scientists and technical officers.”
Its members are : CIRAD, IAO, IICT, IRD, NRI, Wageningen UR.



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ECONOMIC ORGANISATION OF PRODUCERS

- The economic and political context of agricultural activity has undergone profound changes over the last few years. Government policies are moving gradually away from the management of agricultural markets, making farmers increasingly vulnerable to price fluctuations. Agricultural prices have experienced continuous erosion for several decades, and, while the general agricultural supply situation remains by its nature fragmented, the processing and distribution activities are becoming increasingly concentrated. Supermarkets are increasing their share of food retailing. As market conditions for agrifood products are determined by requirements further down the production and distribution channel, being successful in the market requires farmers to be efficient participants in the supply chain. Thus, farmers face the increasing challenge of how to participate constructively in dynamic agrifood supply chains. In the face of these changes, one pre-requisite is for farmers to set up and strengthen their economic organisation.

- The potential of Producer Organisations to provide economic benefits to their members is partly determined by the institutional environment. Legal frameworks and government policies (economic, fiscal, agricultural, rural, etc.) must be adapted to the particularities of Producer Organisations e.g. competition policy, taxation policy. There is a need to ensure that government policies facilitate the development of farmers and their organisations. In order to secure a balance in market power, it is necessary

to have in place a pro-active strategy for the development and strengthening of farmers’ economic organisations so that farmers can be equal partners with the other stakeholders in the agri-food system.

- ECART will assist IFAP and its constituents in developing constructive proposals to improve the enabling environment for economic organisation of producers. The aim of the IFAP-ECART partnership is to undertake action research supportive of the national representative Producer Organisations within the IFAP network in proposing change in the institutional and legislative context that influences their economic organisation i.e. the enabling policy context.

OBJECTIVE

- **Strengthen the capacities of IFAP and its members to improve the enabling environment for the empowerment of farmers in markets via effective and strong economic organisations and institutions.**



Photo WUR



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International Federation of
Agricultural Producers

Empowering Producers in Markets



Photos NRI

RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

- The research methodology will facilitate participation and informed decision making of national representatives of Producer Organisations members of IFAP.
- The research will provide outputs for IFAP and its members that will strengthen their national, regional and international lobby activities.
- The programme will link with other IFAP related activities and programmes.
- The research will build on the existing institutional knowledge and networks, in particular that of ECART members, to generate low-cost high-quality output.
- Together with IFAP the focus countries will be selected taking into consideration the potential of the Producer Organisations in the country to actively interact with the study and to use the research outputs.

COUNTRY STUDIES

The research will be undertaken in 10-15 countries. For each country a rapid assessment will be made of the existing enabling environment for economic organisation of producers. Based on that, in close consultation with the national farmers' representatives in the country, the major bottlenecks will be identified and pro-active proposals for change will be developed. Detailed collaborative research will be undertaken by local research institutes and Producer Organisations, guided by ECART researchers. The research will help to refine and strengthen the lobby agenda of Producer Organisations.



Photo NRI

Successful farmers' empowerment initiatives and effective policies will be documented and key components suitable for replication in other countries shared.

At the same time the research will examine the extent to which national governments and international organisations including donor agencies involve Producer Organisations in their programmes; examine whether Producer Organisations have the capacity to participate and if not what is needed to correct this; and examine the means by which donor agencies can support capacity building of farmers and their representative organisations.

PARTICIPATIVE RESEARCH

Preliminary research output will be discussed with IFAP, governments and international organisations including donor agencies. In each country a series of national seminars is envisaged to discuss findings and to adapt the research to the interests of the Producer Organisations.

IFAP will organise International Seminars to distil elements from the research in each country, refine their international lobby agenda, and improve the legitimate representation of farmers' interest in international organisations. •

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