

### **Small farmers, their organizations, and the enabling environment**

WFO and FAO are organizing a joint session in the context of the upcoming WFO General Assembly June 6-9, 2012 in order to better understand the main constraints faced by farmers, in particular those relative to the *enabling environment* or the set of conditions and policies that must be in place in order to enable for the establishment and sustainable development of producer organizations.

In order to inform and orient the discussion to be held during the session, WFO and FAO have jointly designed a questionnaire which aims to identify the main needs of farmers in terms of overcoming constraints and difficulties and also, enabling factors that can be identified as instance of success in supporting producer organizations. Through the insights collected in the answers to the following questions and the subsequent discussion during the WFO- FAO session on “What is the enabling environment for the development of thriving producer organizations? ”, the objective is to develop a document containing concrete requests for action on behalf of the farmers to decision makers. The findings of this survey will serve as a base for farmers to develop a declaration to address national governments in the context of the ongoing International Year of Cooperatives (IYC 2012).

#### *What is the enabling environment: The Main Pillars*

1. Business environment: Economic and other types of incentives in place to benefit producer organizations, including incentives to invest in agriculture and environmentally sustainable production processes, access to local, national and international markets, etc.
2. Legal framework: Provision with legal, judicial, and administrative practice of legislation that facilitates and/or encourages the formation of Pos as autonomous organizations.
3. Policy: Policies that recognize producer organizations as being desirable and beneficial to society and as such foresee specific policies in their support (ex. Tax and credit incentives for small scale processing investments by Pos, funding for training or capacity building, incentives to facilitate access to credit for Pos).
4. Consultative and participatory processes: Consultative mechanisms or arenas for dialogue between the government and producer organizations in place ensuring an active role and voice in the formulation of policies affecting small farmers and their organizations.
5. Capacity development and information programs: include a set of public programs for farmers and their organizations (training, information, communication, extension).
6. Cultural norms and customary rules: Socio-cultural characteristics can facilitate or impede the development of producer organizations and cooperatives (ex. Difficulty of women to associate and be involved in Pos, norms prohibiting the right to association).

### **Questionnaire**

Organization:  
Country:  
Age:

Gender:

1. Did the establishment of your organization benefit from specific legal provisions for the creation/development of farmers' organizations?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ if yes, please describe these provisions
  - ☐ if no, do you think it would be necessary to have such a law in your country?
2. Does the government actively seek the development of Pos as economic entities?
  - ☐ Yes  
If yes, please explain
  - ☐ No  
If no, please explain
3. Has your organization ever benefitted from any economic or other types of incentives (grants, fiscal benefits, facilitations for the adoption of technological innovations, incentives for the inclusion of women and youth in producer organizations)?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ if yes, please describe these benefits
  - ☐ if no, what economic incentives do you think would be beneficial to your organization?
4. Are there any policies in place that your organization benefits from?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No

☐ If yes, please describe these policies

☐ If no, what type(s) of policy (ies) would enable your organization to better serve the needs of your community? (ex. Policies reducing bureaucracy, policies facilitating access to information or creation of an information network, access to credit, reduction of production costs, policies for increased autonomy, etc)

5. Does your organization meet on a regular basis with policy makers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ if yes, is the organization able to express needs and raise concerns? Please also provide examples of impacts/main achievements that have been attained thanks to these dialogues and participatory processes.

☐ If not, what issues related to your work could be addressed by such a dialogue or participatory process?

☐ in your view, what kind of mechanism should be in place in this regard?

6. Do you think the actual national laws/regulations regarding Pos in your country are conducive to doing business?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, what should be adopted and why?

7. Is your organization providing business services to your members such as inputs supply, marketing services, credit or others? Please detail

8. What role do you think FAO should play in regards to the creation or improvement of the enabling environment for producer organizations in your country? For example, play the role of facilitator, disseminate successful practices and experiences elsewhere, create forums and convene dialogue and exchange between representatives of government, the private sector and POs, etc.