

Engaging with farmers' organizations for more effective smallholder development

Module 1: How and when to do mapping and profiling of farmers' organizations

Farmers' organizations



How To Do Notes are prepared by the IFAD's **Policy and Technical Advisory Division** and aim to provide practical suggestions and guidelines for country programme managers, project design teams and implementing partners to help them design and implement programmes and projects.

They present technical and practical aspects of specific approaches, methodologies, models or project components that have been tested and can be recommended for implementation and scaling up, including best practices and case studies that work and can be used as a model in a particular field.

How To Do Notes provide tools for good practice design based on best practices collected at the field level. They guide teams on how to implement specific recommendations of IFAD's operational policies, standard project requirements or financing tools.

The **How To Do Notes** are "living" documents and will be updated periodically based on new experiences and on feedback. If you have any comments and suggestions, please contact the originators.

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Module 1. How and when to do mapping and profiling of farmers' organizations (FOs)

Why is FO mapping and profiling essential?

- To increase knowledge of existing FOs and of how they are being formed, at all geographical levels, in a given country.
- To determine the FO situation in selected areas. Do FOs already exist in specific value chains? Are there any existing “generic” or “farmers’ union organizations”? What are the main commodities grown in the area?
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing FOs, in particular: (i) their comparative advantage in specific activities/economic services; (ii) their institutional capacity to provide services to their members.
- To select FOs the project will partner or collaborate with.

Outcomes of mapping/profiling that are useful for design and implementation

- Geographical structuring of FOs. How are farmers organized at the local, regional and national levels? Are there any apex FOs? Chambers of agriculture?
- SWOT analysis of FOs.
- Review of the main commodities grown by FOs farmers members.
- Classification of FOs in terms of the economic services they provide for members.
- Baseline for monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Profiling tools and indicators can also be used to monitor and evaluate other FO activities – for example capacity-building projects.

Definitions

Mapping helps to build a clearer picture of existing FOs both nationally and within specific project target areas. It can then support the identification and selection of FOs to be included in projects.

Profiling helps to assess FOs selected as partners, for example in terms of strengths that can be built on and weaknesses that need to be addressed so that services provided for members and links to market opportunities can be improved, with an impact on their income. Profiling usually consists of: (i) qualitative description; (ii) SWOT analysis; and (iii) quantitative analysis based on indicators for each assessed category.

When should FO mapping and profiling be done?

The FO mapping and profiling process can be launched from three **starting points**. Figure 1 provides guidance on the best timing in the IFAD project cycle for each of the three options.

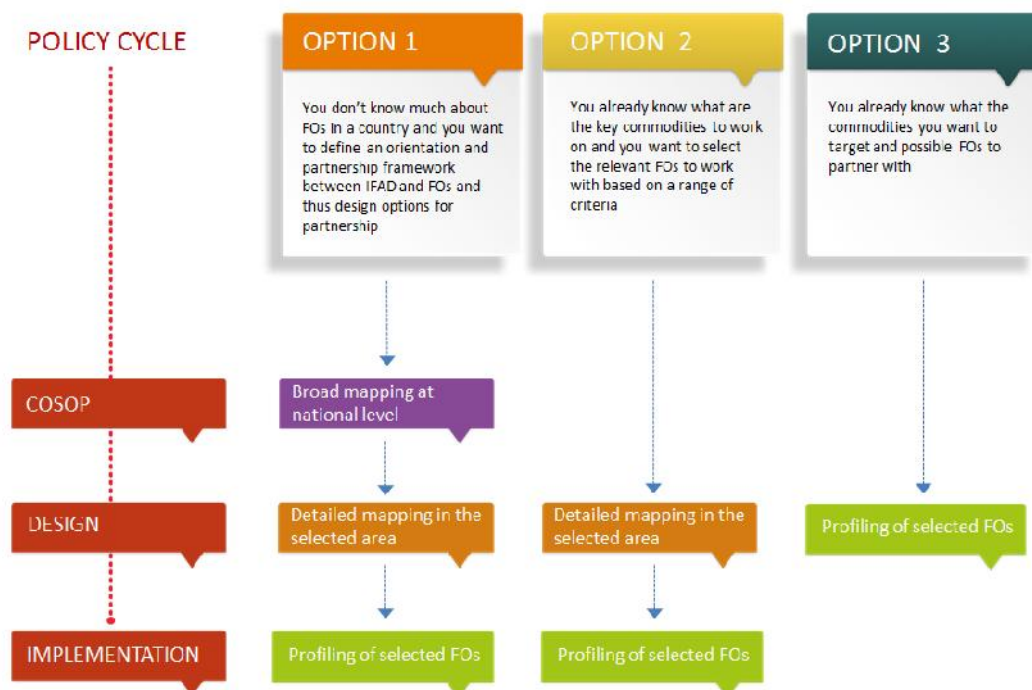


Figure 1. When to conduct mapping and profiling in the IFAD project cycle

How to do broad mapping

The objective of broad mapping is to analyse the existing FO movement in a given country and provide strategic inputs on how to build the capacities of FOs and enhance the way they are structured in order to improve their positioning within the overall dynamics of agricultural development.

Broad mapping collects the following information:

- General characteristics of the country, with a focus on its agricultural sector.
- Overview of FOs in the country: history, trends, typology, level of organization.
- Analysis of the positioning of FOs in the agricultural development arena: how and where do FOs interact with other public and private stakeholders?
- Strategic orientations that illustrate the main issues regarding the organization, structuring, service provision and positioning of FOs in their environment.

Document. Example of broad mapping carried out for strategic purposes: Overview of FOs in Uganda: Uganda Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (Annex 7) – IFAD COSOP Uganda 2013-2018

Detailed mapping/broad profiling of FOs

The objective of detailed mapping is to identify FOs that projects can establish partnerships with. The process has elements in common with profiling because the FOs mapped usually undergo broad assessment.

Detailed mapping can also produce an assessment of the level of maturity of FOs, which can also be used as the basis for an M&E system and a capacity-building plan.

The information to be collected includes:

- Name, contact, history (date created, initiated by whom).
- Type/level of organization, geographical coverage.
- Membership (number, type, ratio women:men), existence of legal status, institutional functioning (structure, internal bodies, decision-making processes).
- Objective/mission and range of services provided (economic, social, trade union/political).
- Partnerships, relationships with other stakeholders (local authorities, public services, service providers and other private sector entities) and support organizations (NGOs, donors, etc.).

Document. Example of detailed mapping: Working Paper on the Kinshasa Food Supply Centre Support Programme (PAPAKIN¹), project design report (PDR).

How to do profiling

The profiling process should be adapted to meet the needs of each situation, but is generally based on the use of a questionnaire. Profiling can be done: (i) during a design mission, to assess an FO broadly; or (ii) during implementation, to assess the maturity level of an FO. It can be also used as an M&E tool for projects.

Steps to conduct profiling

There are two main steps in the profiling process:

Step 1: collect information through interviews with FO staff and leaders. The questionnaire and list of documents to be checked are provided in the appendix.

Step 2: fill in the rating grid to assess the maturity level of the FO (see scale below).

Golden rule! If the grid is to be used as part of the profiling process at the design stage, it can be used as it is. However, if it is to be used for M&E purposes, it is recommended that you share it and discuss it with FO partners in advance.

Assessing FO maturity levels on a scale of 1 to 4

- 1 = The FO has done nothing in this area
- 2 = The FO has started operating in this area
- 3 = The FO has evolved considerably in this area but still needs improvement
- 4 = The FO has evolved well in this area and needs no improvement

Profiling structure

The profiling (see the appendix for the full template) is structured in two parts as follows:

Part 1 focuses on **basic and general information** on the concerned FO (e.g. contact details, context and date of creation, legal status, membership, main activities and sources of funding). **Part 2** focuses on **specific and detailed information** particularly relating to: (i) governance, planning and communication; (ii) administrative and financial management; (iii) membership participation; (iv) economic services; (v) representation and partnerships. Please see a summary table of part 2 below, in which ratings can be aggregated.

¹ PAPAKIN: Programme d'appui aux pôles d'approvisionnement de Kinshasa en produits maraichers et vivriers

Part 2 – Detailed information

Section I - Governance, planning and communication	Rating
a-General assembly	
b-Board (term of office, participation of women)	
c-Good governance (separation of board and management, transparency, accountability, responsiveness)	
d-Communication	
e-Planning	
Section II - Administrative and financial management and human resources management	Rating
a-Availability of official/legal/administrative documents	
b-Availability of management and planning documents	
c-Financial management and annual audit	
d-Efficiency and risk management	
e-Monitoring and evaluation	
f-Human resources management	
Section III - Membership participation	Rating
a-Gender and youth issues	
b-Member satisfaction	
c. Transactions with the FO and investments in the FO	
d-Transactions versus dividends	
e-Decision-making	
Section IV - Economic services provided by the FO/environmental/external factors for FO service provision	Rating
a- Position of the FO in its sector/value chain	
b- Input and equipment supply	
c- Training/Capacity-building	
d- Collecting, bulking, marketing of products (identifying new clients, signing contracts, conducting market studies, promoting products)	
e-Storage facilities	
f- Processing/packaging facilities	
g- Market information system (MIS)	
h- Facilitating access to credit/insurance	
Section V. Representation and partnerships	Rating
a- Leadership	
b- Advocacy	
c- Partnerships with public services	
d- Partnerships with private sector	
e- Partnerships with donors and technical agencies/NGOs	
Maturity level (average of the above ratings)	

Key criteria for selection of FOs

The criteria to be considered for the selection of FOs to partner with (see box below for a non-exhaustive list) can vary depending on different elements and factors such as the context and area a project operates in.

Key criteria for the selection of FOs

- Governance, democratic functioning, transparency (respect for internal democracy, transparent accounting, members aware of FO activities, farmers pay their dues);
- Targeting: equal access for women and youth, specific responsibilities assigned to women;
- Good organizational development (all members aware of medium-term project activities, quality of balance sheet presented to general assembly, including self-evaluation of activities and sources of income, indication of debts, and well-prepared minutes of meetings);
- Effective participation of women in decision-making process;
- Diversification of activities;
- Good use of resources and funds.
- Inclusiveness: FOs open to new membership and/or willing to provide services to non-members
- Efficiency and effectiveness of the economic services provided by FOs (bulking functions, input provision, training)
- Sustainability potential (good use of resources and funds, management of internal funds, diversification of activities, membership, business approach, etc.).

Examples of criteria used in IFAD-supported projects in Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo and Yemen are provided below.

Country	Project	Criteria
Chad	Rural Development Support Programme in Guéra (PADER-G ²)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good organizational development (all members aware of i.e. medium-term project activities known by all members; quality of the balance sheet presented to the general assembly, including the self-evaluation of the activities and the sources of income, indication of debts, and well -prepared minutes of meetings) ▪ Effective participation of women in decision-making process ▪ Diversification of activities ▪ Good use of resources and funds
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Kinshasa Food Supply Centre Support Programme (PAPAKIN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect for internal democracy (general assemblies held, elections transparent, legal status respected) ▪ Good governance: transparent accounting ▪ Quality and efficiency, as well as affordability, of economic services provided ▪ Willingness to make economic services offered to members sustainable ▪ Equal access to activities to women and youth
Yemen	Fisheries Investment Programme (FIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial position and cash balance (20 points) ▪ Profitability and long-term financial sustainability (15 points) ▪ Governance (15 points) ▪ Membership (10 points) ▪ Operational procedures (10 points) ▪ Assets (5 points)³

² PADER-G: Programme d'appui au développement rural dans le Guéra

³ Within FIP scores were associated to each criteria in order to rank / classify existing fishers' cooperatives into four groups: mature cooperatives (scoring 60 and above); cooperatives in development (scoring from 40 to 59); weak cooperatives (scoring below 39); cooperatives for which no assessment was carried out due to lack of activity, financial statements or meetings of governing bodies, or insufficient documentation provided. In addition, the selected audit firm responsible for the assessment of fishers' cooperatives, gathered additional relevant information (e.g. on tax collected, paid and due; internal procedures; products and services offered to members; sustainability). This enabled the production of the following outputs: (i) Summary of the controls carried out; (ii)

Appendix. Questionnaire for use in FO profiling process

Part 1. Basic information

Date of interview			
Venue of interview			
Presentation of the FO			
Name of FO			
Contact/address			
Date created			
Why was the FO created?			
Objectives of the FO			
Vision of the FO			
Membership on date created	Men	Women	Total
Ongoing membership (details in Box 1 below)	Men	Women	Total
Official status			
Level of operation: farmers' group/first-tier organization, second-tier organization, apex organization			
Membership of an apex FO			
National/International membership of other organizations/institutions/networks			
Main activities, products and respective marketed volumes			
External support received	Type of support	Partner	
Sources of funding			

Box 1. Membership data

	2011	2012	2013	Goal 2016
<i>Total number of individual members</i>				
<i>Total number of farmers' groups</i>				
<i>Total percentage of women members</i>				
<i>Percentage of members under the age of 30</i>				
<i>Percentage of paying members</i>				
<i>Total number of member organizations</i>				
<i>Average farm size (ha) of individual members</i>				
<i>Average age of members</i>				

SWOT analysis for each cooperative assessed; (iii) Detailed analysis of the financial resources available for each cooperative assessed; (iv) Detailed position of each cooperative assessed vis-à-vis taxation issues.

Part 2. Detailed information

Section I. Governance, communication and planning

Governance of an FO can be considered "good" if (i) its internal functioning is democratic and dynamic (shared and consensual vision, collective planning, fair election processes, elected board taking into account members' aspirations, active participation of members in the life of the FO); (ii) its management is correct and transparent (effective mobilization of resources, accounting system); (iii) the FO is legitimate and representative in the eyes of the administration and its private partners (ability to take industrial action, sign contracts, establish partnerships with other FOs).

General assembly and board

a. General assembly			
How often are general assemblies (GAs) held?			
Is the frequency respected?			
Does the GA implement recommendations from members?			
If not, why not?			
What are the functions of the GA?			
1	2	3	4

b. Board			
Membership composition	Women	Men	
How often do board meetings take place?	How long is the board's term of office?		
Is the frequency of meetings respected?			
How were the board members put in place?			
What are the functions of the board?			
How are decisions taken at board meetings?			
1	2	3	4

Other bodies (if relevant)⁴

Surveillance committee			
Membership composition	Women	Men	
How often does it meet?	How long is its term of office?		
Is the frequency of meetings respected?			
How were the committee's members put in place?			
What is the mandate of the committee?			
How are decisions taken by the committee?			
1	2	3	4

Management committee			
Membership composition	Women	Men	
How often does it meet?	How long is its term of office?		
Is the frequency of meetings respected?			
How were the committee members put in place?			
What is the mandate of the committee			
How are decisions taken by the committee?			
1	2	3	4

Monitoring committee			
Membership composition	Women	Men	
How often does it meet?	How long is its term of office?		
Is the frequency of meetings respected?			
How were the committee members put in place?			
What is the mandate of this committee			
How are decisions taken by this Committee?			
1	2	3	4

⁴ Depending on the different FOs organizational structures, an additional set of questions might be added.

Good governance

c. Good governance				Yes	No
Are the by-laws and changes in by-laws reviewed at the annual meeting? How can by-laws be changed?					
Are key decisions of the FO/cooperative discussed at GAs?					
Is the board elected by FO/cooperative members?					
Is the manager selected by the board?					
Is the manager a government official?					
Is there a clear division of responsibilities between board and manager?					
Two or more people ran for at least half of the board positions open in the past two years					
Board members cannot serve for more than two terms					
Chairperson cannot serve for more than two terms					
When was the current chairperson appointed to his/her position?					
Number of women on the board					
Capacity (strengths) of board					
Challenges (weaknesses) of board					
1	2	3	4		

Communication and planning

d. Communication from board and staff to members and ownership of the FO by its members				Yes	No
Are the objectives of the FO clearly understood and shared among members?					
Members know how the FO functions					
Members receive systematic feedback from meetings on decisions taken					
Information is circulated internally from apex to bottom and vice versa					
1	2	3	4		

e. Planning			
Do you have an action plan/business plan		Yes	No
How was this plan designed and how long has it been in existence?			
What are its objective and indicators ?			
How is it shared with your members?			
How is it implemented?			
Do you face any problems with its implementation? If yes, what kind of problems?			
Do you have any concerns about the institutional sustainability of your organization?			
Does your action plan consider gender issues?			
1	2	3	4

Section II. Administrative and financial management and human resources management

Definition of management: the difference between satisfactory performance and superior performance lies in the ability to get people involved and feel responsible for their work. To meet this challenge, rather than acting as a "centralized controller", the manager must support the team and its members in carrying out their work through participatory management.

There are four basic functions of management: Plan – Organize – Conduct – Control

a. Availability of official/legal/administrative documents				Yes	No
Articles of association (Statutes)					
Internal rules					
Constitution deed (contract establishing the formation of the organization)					
Proof of legal status (official listing in the register of companies or associations)					
Approval from Food and Drugs Authority or similar body enabling the FO to sell processed foods to the public					
1	2	3	4		

b. Availability of management and planning documents				Yes	No
Manual of procedures					
List of members of the Board of Directors (name, gender and position, including positions of chairperson, secretary and treasurer)					
List of staff (name, gender and position)					
General annual budget for the entire organization					
Annual activity/business plan for the entire organization					
Most recent financial audit report with financial statements for the entire organization					
1	2	3	4		

c. Financial management and annual audit				Yes	No
Do you have a minutes book/register?					
Do you have a bank book/register?					
Do you have a cash book/register?					
Is the bank account in the FO's name?					
Is an annual audit provided by an outside agency?					
Is the audit done by a registered auditor?					
Do the members vote on the choice of auditor?					
Does the board choose the auditors?					
Is an annual budget developed and integrated into the annual work plan?					
Is the financial management computerized?					
Which software is used for financial management and accounting?					
1	2	3	4		

d. Efficiency and risk management	2011	2012	2013	Ambition 2016
Total administrative/operating costs				
Administrative costs as percentage of sales				
Total assets				
Total debts				
Equity (assets – debts)				
Equity as percentage of sales				
Equity as percentage of debts				
Total reserves				
Reserves as percentage of sales				
Reserves as percentage of debts				
1	2	3	4	

e. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)			
Do you have an M&E system?			
Who is in charge of monitoring and how is it done?			
Who is in charge of evaluation and how is your action plan assessed?			
If not, why?			
What are the problems linked to the implementation of this M&E system?			
1	2	3	4

f. Human resources management			
Do you have technical staff? If yes, what kind of support scheme do you have at the local level?			
What are the roles of staff and board members and how they interact?			
What kind of equipment, computer device, furniture and other material means do you have to undertake your activities?			
Do you have staff position descriptions and an organizational chart for your organization? Is everyone familiar with them? How is staff paid?			
How are your members involved in the implementation of your activities?			
Do you have a training planning for your staff?			
Do you assess your staff and board members?			
1	2	3	4

Section III. Membership participation

a. Gender and youth issues				Yes	No
Current existence of specific services/activities for women					
Current existence of specific services/activities for youth					
Equal gender representation in consultation and training, related to membership figures (If the percentage of women/youth participants is as high as or higher than the percentage of women/youth members, then a score of 100 per cent is allocated)					
Number of women/youth members (as percentage of individual members)					
Women/youth board members (as percentage of total) Are there quotas for women or youth board members?					
Women/youth staff (as percentage of total)					
1	2	3	4		

b. Member satisfaction				Yes	No
Are your members satisfied with your input supply service?					
Are your members satisfied with your marketing efforts ?					
Are your members satisfied with the training and capacity-building provided?					
1	2	3	4		

c. Transactions with the FO and investments in the FO		2013	2012	2011
Average production/member				
Percentage of members who buy (e.g. inputs) from the FO				
Percentage of members who sell to/through the FO				
Percentage of production sold to/through FO				
Percentage of production sold outside FO				
Percentage of members who borrow from FO (+ average volume of loans)				
Members' average investment in FO/year				
Percentage of members' investment in FO as a proportion of total investment by FO				
Percentage of members participating in GA				
Percentage of members voting in GA				
Percentage of women members participating in GA				
Percentage of women members voting in GA				
1	2	3	4	

d. Transactions versus dividends				Yes	No
Is the distribution of returns proportionate to the number/value of shares held?					
Is the distribution of dividends proportionate to member investment?					
1	2	3	4		

e. Decision-making				Yes	No
Can members buy shares?					
Can non-members buy shares? At different prices per share?					
Are decision rights based on one member-one vote principle?					
Are decision rights based on share volume?					
1	2	3	4		

Section IV. Economic services provided by the FO / environmental/external factors for FO service provision

Definition of "economic control of value chains". An FO can be said to have good economic control of its sector/value chain when it has sufficient knowledge (of costs/margins along the value chain; of direct/indirect stakeholders; of national or international issues) to able to position itself to:

- establish supply services
- develop support production services (operating account forecasts, farm management advisory services, implementation of experiments with agricultural research service, provision of agricultural technicians for members, etc.)
- implement marketing services (exploration of new markets, contracts, promotion of products to the general public).

a. Position of the FO in its sector/value chain			
Do you know how the value chain is organized and who are the main stakeholders?			
If yes, who are the stakeholders and what are their margins?			
If no, why?			
What are your production costs?			
What are the main constraints you face within this value chain?			
1	2	3	4

b. Input and equipment supply			
How do you assess your members' needs for inputs and equipment?			
How do you centralize your needs for inputs and equipment?			
How do you distribute funds for input supply and the purchase of equipment to your members?			
How do you identify possible suppliers?			
On what basis do you negotiate with those suppliers?			
Do you ensure that your suppliers are reliable?			
Do you check the quality of the inputs you purchase?			
Is the distribution of inputs to members efficient?			
How do you order and deliver inputs?			
How do you organize the distribution of inputs and the payback mechanism?			
Does your FO own farming equipment?			
If yes, which?			
How is that equipment managed and used by members?			
1	2	3	4

c. Training/Capacity-building			
Do you conduct training needs assessments? How?			
Did your members benefit from training?			
If yes, in what area? Literacy, technical skills, quality issues, farm management, post-harvest management, etc.			
If yes, how many people were trained and who were they?		Number:	Women: Men:
Do you have on-farm training (farmer field schools, etc.) or training of trainers mechanisms?			
How are training needs identified?			
Do you produce training reports?			
1	2	3	4

d. Collecting, bulking, marketing of products (identifying new clients, signing contracts, conducting market studies, promoting products)			
Do you undertake marketing activities?			
How do you estimate your members' production level?			
How is your organization linked to markets? How do you assess these results?			
What kind of financial tools do you use to pre-finance the marketing of your members' products?			
How are you organized to collect products from your members?			
Do you have an M&E system for your marketing activities?			
Are your FO/farmers' group members involved in your marketing activities?			
How do you intend to manage and sustain your marketing activities?			
1	2	3	4

e. Storage facilities			
Do you have storage facilities?			
If yes how many and what are their dimensions (size, capacity)			
1	2	3	4

f. Processing/packaging facilities			
Do you have processing equipment or facilities?			
If yes, how many and what are their dimensions (size, capacity)			
Do you provide quality packaging for members? How/Where do you obtain it?			
1	2	3	4

g. Market information system (MIS)			
Do you have an internal MIS?			
If yes, how does it work?			
If no, do you partner with another MIS centre/provider (public or private)? If yes, with whom and on what conditions?			

h. Facilitating access to credit/insurance			
Do you have access to credit?			
If yes, with which bank/financial institution			
What type of credit (seasonal, medium- or long-term)?			
How much do you receive?			
What are the terms of the credit arrangement?			
What do you use the credit for?			
Do you have access to insurance? If yes, on what terms, with whom, etc.?			
1	2	3	4

Section V. Representation and partnerships

a. Leadership			
Which are the leadership capacities enabling them to achieve vision?			
Is the organization accountable and transparent with regards to members?			
Which is the internal and external image of the leadership?			
1	2	3	4

b. Advocacy			
Is your organization involved in advocacy activities?			
How are those advocacy activities undertaken?			
Do you dedicate specific resources for those advocacy activities?			
Does your FO use its contacts and networks to consolidate its advocacy activities?			
1	2	3	4

c. Partnerships with public services			
Do you partner with public services? If yes, in which area and under what conditions?			
Advisory services			
Research institutes			
National security stocks for public procurement			
National agricultural programmes			
Other			
1	2	3	4

d. Partnerships with the private sector			
Do you partner with the private sector? If yes, in which area and under what conditions (contracting, etc.)?			
Service provider (inputs, equipment)			
Processing/post-harvest enterprise			
Private exporter			
Certification company			
Traders, transporters			
Advisory services			
Other			
1	2	3	4

e. Partnerships with donors and technical agencies/NGOs			
Do you partner with donors and technical agencies/NGOs? If yes, in which area and under what conditions?			
Donors			
NGOs			
Other			
1	2	3	4



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