

# *Madurai Symposium - 2017*

## **National Conference on Advancing Farmers Producer Organisations Issues and Challenges**



**21<sup>st</sup> September, 2017**

**@ Madurai**

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## National Conference on Advancing Farmers Producer Organisations Issues and Challenges

### 1. Rationale

Agriculture sector in India is of paramount importance to the national inclusive developmental agenda as more than 60% of the population is dependent on agricultural livelihoods, not to speak of the food and nutrition security. Faced with multiple risks and challenges, the sector, being vastly diverse, calls for multi pronged strategies and programmes to make it a sustainable livelihood for millions of farmers. From this perspective, doubling the farmers' income has been a policy priority of the nation. Small holder agriculture poses quite a challenge to this national priority what with 80% of operational land holding being marginal and small and share of marginal holdings (below 1 hectare) has increased to 92.4 million out of the total holdings of 137.8 million and there has been further decrease in the average size of the holdings itself due to fragmentation. The state of the poverty / deprivation of small farmers in Rainfed areas which form the bulk of small and marginal holdings has been well documented. Small farming suffers from several disadvantages – scale, lack of access to credit, technology and market. They remain deprived, disorganised and diffident.

Making the small farming viable and sustainable is a foremost challenge to the national policy priority of doubling farmers' income. Organising small farmers and corporatizing for efficient management of the small farms as collectives has been recognised and adopted as a key strategy and in the past five years there has been a intensive focus in organising farmers particularly small farmers as Farmers' Producer Organisations (FPOs) largely as Farmers Producer Companies (FPCs) under the company law. Small Farmers Agriculture Consortium (SFAC) of Agricultural Ministry, Govt. of India and NABARD have been investing in the promotion of FPOs / FPCs with the involvement of NGOs, Civil society groups and farming professionals.

Given the diverse context and culture, many challenges cropped up from the initial experience of FPCs / FPOs particularly ownership and governance, technologies, finance and markets include supply / value chains. Besides lack of entrepreneurial capabilities, the small farmers betray lack of understanding of business plans and the growth trajectory for the FPOs / FPCs towards enterprise models and the different stakeholders particularly Banks, enabling NGOs do not



have enough appreciation of different dimensions of nurturing and strengthening FPOs / FPCs. In this backdrop, INAFI India proposes to organise a national conference on Advancing Farmers Producer Organisations: Issues and Challenges as a part of Madurai Symposium 2017 with the support of DHAN Foundation. The conference would attract different stakeholders including FPOs / FPCs and NGOs from INAFI India network and other NGOs, Governments, Banks, Farmer Leaders, Academia, NABARD, RBI etc.

## **2. Objectives of the conference:**

1. To share and learn from the experience of success and failures of FPOs / FPCs from different contexts.
2. To study the key issues in ownership and effective governance and challenges of self management.
3. To identify and evolve appropriate credit packages including risk financing based on the experience gained and make suitable suggestions to the RBI / NABARD / Banking system.
4. To share the experience of building and or linking FPOs / FPCs with supply / value chain.
5. To identify the policy gaps and constraints in providing critical support to FPCs / FPOs.
6. To look at the challenges of the integrated farming of FPOs / FPCs.
7. To identify the capacity building requirements of the FPOs / FPCs and the enabling entities

The conference will have resource presentations by gleaning the experience of practising NGOs – SKDRDP, DHAN Foundation, IDF, MYRADA / Sanghamithra, PEDO, BAIF. There will be resource presentations by NABARD / Nationalised Banks from development and financing perspectives.

## **When & where:**

21<sup>st</sup> September 2017

Tamukkam Grounds, Madurai as part of Madurai Symposium

## **For whom:**

Small Farmers and their leaders, Farmers Producer Organisations/ Farmers Producer Companies, Governments ,Commercial Banks, Insurance companies, Donors and Philanthropies, NGOs / Civil Societies. About 80 participants are expected.





## About INAFI India

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Inafi India (International Network of Alternative Financial Institutions - India) is a network of Development NGOs involved in enabling and supporting development programmes/livelihood interventions of the member organizations in India. Inafi India is affiliated to global network of Inafi and being country chapter in India, the network is working on the vision of Inafi for development with dignity for poor and enabling access to basic services including financial services. The collective outreach of members is more than 10 millions across the states. Inafi spearheads the SHG bank linkage and financial inclusion, advancing the microfinance sector, capacity building programmes for members and policy advocacy for pro-poor microfinance services are the twin mandate of the Inafi India.

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