Building Capacity for the Intercontinental Network of Organic Farmers Organizations

Final report

GRIPS Project ID: 2000000126
Period covered by this report
21/12/2015 – 20/01/2017

Co-funded by
International Fund for Agricultural Development – Small Grant

Implemented by
IFOAM – Organics International

In cooperation with 3 local partners
Asociación Nacional de Productores Ecológicos del Peru
National Organic Agriculture Movement Uganda

Organic Farming Association of India
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## Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>ANPE</td>
<td>Asociación Nacional de Productores Ecológicos del Peru</td>
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<td>AOC</td>
<td>African Organic Conference</td>
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<td>CBP</td>
<td>Capacity Building Program</td>
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<td>CSA</td>
<td>Community-Supported Agriculture</td>
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<td>DP</td>
<td>Development Plan</td>
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<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>IFOAM</td>
<td>International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements</td>
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<td>INOFO</td>
<td>Inter-continental Network of Organic Farmers Organisations</td>
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<td>INRA</td>
<td>Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (France)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Face-to-Face-session (residential training session)</td>
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<td>GA</td>
<td>General Assembly</td>
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<td>NOAM</td>
<td>Nigeria Organic Agriculture Movement</td>
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<td>NOGAMU</td>
<td>National Organic Agriculture Movement Uganda</td>
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<td>OFAI</td>
<td>Organic Farming Association of India</td>
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<td>OFO</td>
<td>Organic Farmers Organisation</td>
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<td>OWC</td>
<td>Organic World Congress</td>
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<td>PGS</td>
<td>Participatory Guarantee Systems</td>
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<td>PSC</td>
<td>Project Steering Committee</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
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<td>WFO</td>
<td>World Farmers Organization</td>
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Executive summary

Building Capacity for the Inter-continental Network of Organic Farmers Organisations (INOFO) is a 3-year project launched in January 2014 and completed in January 2017. The project is co-funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and implemented by IFOAM – Organics International, in cooperation with 3 local partners: the Asociación Nacional de Productores Ecológicos del Peru (ANPE), the National Organic Agriculture Movement Uganda (NOGAMU) and the Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI).

The project aimed at empowering smallholder organic farmers in Africa, Latin America and Asia and at strengthening their inter-continental network INOFO. The objective was to provide INOFO with the institutional capacity to support, monitor and represent the Organic Farmers Organizations (OFOs) in a way that intensifies knowledge sharing, market integration, lobbying within national frameworks and participation in international policy setting. In order to archive this goal a capacity building program was carried out involving 40 participants from Organic Farmers Organizations in the target regions. Many of these participants are now actively involved in INOFO which has gained strength and experience as an organization.

The objectives of the actions relate to the following 4 components: Mapping, Capacity building, Knowledge sharing, Market access. For these 4 components good outputs have been achieved. The mapping was a challenging process, but ultimately it was completed for the target regions and a database of organizations is now available for the network to use and update. A large part of the project and budget was focussed on capacity building which resulted in many concrete outputs, in particular the mini-projects that were implemented by selected participants. Many activities and mini-projects were implemented by the local partners, INOFO council and participants, contributing to knowledge sharing and market assess (in particular to local markets and Participatory Guarantee Systems).

This final report is divided into two parts:
- Section 1: activities of the final year of implementation (21/12/2015 – 20/01/2017)
- Section 2: final report for the full project period (10/01/2014-20/01/2016).

Financial closure of the project was carried out on 31.12.2016. The project implementation was completed in January 2017, with the exception of reporting and visibility activities.
Section 1. Activities and results since the last annual report
1. Mini-projects by participants of the Capacity Building Program

The core component of the project was a two-year capacity building program for representatives of Organic Farmers Organizations conducted in two parallel courses, one in English and one in Spanish. Forty participants from Africa, Asia and Latin America were part of this training course.

The course consisted of in-person training sessions (concluded by 2015) and webinars. The final year of the program focused on the implementation of mini-projects (DP projects) by selected participants:

As part of their course assignments, course participants were asked to create personal Development Plans (DPs). DPs are essentially mini project drafts developed by participants who think how they could contribute to the organic agriculture sector in their country. In practice a DP project can take various forms, it can be the development and implementation of a curriculum and training programme, it may be the creation of a book or a documentary, it might also be the establishment of a new organization or company. Development of DPs is a training methodology frequently used by the IFOAM Academy for its training and leadership courses. Depending on funding and the commitment of the participant, some DPs are put into reality, others remain a course assignment.

In the case of the IFAD-INOFOn capacity building programme, the best DPs were selected to receive a small sum (maximum USD 3000 per person) in order to implement it as a small project. An important selection criteria was the contribution of the DP activities to the goals and objectives of the IFAD-INOFOn project. Selected participants were given about one year to implement their projects. Some DP projects were done jointly by a small team because participants were interested in similar topics or submitted DPs that showed many overlaps and possible areas of cooperation.

Altogether 16 persons worked on the implementation of 10 DPs:

Asia: 2 DP projects: India (group of 6), Philippines (1)
Africa: 2 Persons, 1 DP: Uganda (group of 2)
Latin America: 7 Persons, 7 DPs: Peru (1), Brazil (2), Mexico (1), Chile (1), Colombia (1), Puerto Rico (1).

Below you find a description of the DP projects that were implemented.

1.1 Seed conservation and revival in India

Implemented by:
- Krishna Prasad, Karnataka, SAHAJA SAMRUDHA
- Anuradha Sarang, Kerala, SARANG
- Shamika Mone, Kerala, Organic Farmers Association of India (OFAI)
- Rohit Jain, Rajasthan, Vat Vriksh
- Soumik Banerjee, Jharkhand, Organic Farmers Association of India (OFAI)
- Sanjay Patil, Maharashtra, BAIF Development Research Foundation

The activities contribute to the following project components: Sharing of knowledge, market access and capacity building.
The majority of the Indian participants were interested in similar topics related to seed conservation. Therefore the decision was made to join forces and develop a joint DP and work together on its implementation. The project aimed to preserve and re-establish agricultural biodiversity along with traditional wisdom for the seed sovereignty of farming communities.

The main activities include the mapping of traditional seed and development of a catalogue of traditional varieties, the establishment of in-situ seed conservation centres, the purification & participatory selection of seed, the formation and strengthening of organic seed producer groups, capacity building and seed production of high-potential traditional varieties as well as the establishment of organic certification for seed through the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS).

In order to do archive the goals it was important to first map and document the diffusion and loss of traditional varieties and to develop community managed systems for conservation and sustainable use of seed and to develop organic seed production standards. Small projects were organized at community level in 6 different states of India.

In Karnataka, seed mapping was carried out as a participatory exercise together with local communities. The process disclosed information on traditional varieties, which where collected by asking the elder members of the community about the traditional varieties of their times. The exercise considered three different categories of seed: i) traditional seed which is popularly available, ii) traditional seed which is rarely available and iii) easily available seed. With this information seed diversity maps were elaborated for some of the Indian states involved in the project and seed catalogues were created to help in-situ conservation centers. Once the collection was completed, 42 farmers were chosen for conserving different traditional varieties and 5 seed producers were identified for multiplying Tomato, Brinjal, Greens, Beans, Ladies finger and Cucumber for markets. To increasingly empower farmers who are willing to produce seed themselves and sell them, an Internal Certification System was established with 50 farmers joining the group. In addition to that, market linkages to premium price value chains where explored.

In Rajasthan, the project started with visits to 28 villages in four districts in the south of the state in order to find farmers who practice the organic method by default and help them building a farmers’ network. Informal meetings were arranged with farmers to collect their knowledge about seed and farming practices. 7 villages were selected to act as centers for collection of indigenous varieties and a starting point to create a network of seed savers among organic farmers.

In the Attapady area, in the extreme north east of Kerala state, the seed project faced great challenges due to a very severe drought that struck the state in 2016. Nevertheless, the activities were successful. Data collection for the seed catalogue was completed in December 2016 and, as the people involved in the project are from different language communities, the catalogue was published in Malayalam and English. In-situ conservation was carried out in specific plots sowing various traditional crops grown both by the indigenous and the immigrant farmers. Solar powered fences and live fences were built to protect the crops from wild boar. The seed collected from these plots was partly used to create a community seed bank used and managed by farmers. Training and extension activities were also organized to target farmers and young people who are increasingly giving up farming since they do not see it as a viable livelihood.
In another district of Kerala, Thrissur, four women were chosen to map, document and collect traditional varieties from the area. A selection of vegetables considered as important varieties was sown on one upland acre for multiplication. The seed was sold and/or distributed during various occasions like Jaiva Krishi Sangamams (organic farmers meetings), organic food outlets, local harvest festivals including transplanting events. Through these marketing activities the cost of seed production was covered and now this group will start benefiting from seed selling and distribution. Another part of the project was to implement a rice selection program. First an initial training session was carried out in August 2016 with 10 participants from all over Kerala. The training material was translated into the local language Malayalam and 46 traditional paddy varieties indigenous to Kerala were selected. All the documentation gathered has been collected in the form of a seed catalogue.

In Maharashtra the focus of the activities was on pulses. 2016 was declared as the International Year of Pulses by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to increase public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production. Considering the nutritional importance of pulses a survey was conducted in the Jawhar (Palghar) and Akole (Ahmednagar) Tribal Blocks of Maharashtra focusing on mapping, germ-plasm collection and the establishment of community seed banks. Base line data along with germ-plasm collection was done and 47 land-races of 10 pulse crops were collected. 17 different recipes of 7 pulse crops and traditional seed storage systems were documented through recipe competitions, seed fairs and field visits. These activities reached up to 560 participants and 76 school students. The germ-plasm that was collected was deposited in two community seed banks. A list of seed savers was compiled and it was found that an unique diversity of pulses exists and is being conserved for the sake of specific traits like drought tolerance, grain yield, food security, specific end uses, pest and disease resistance, taste, a major protein source etc. The collected germ-plasm will be evaluated for field performance and the short-listed accessions will be promoted among farmers which will help in conservation of a diversity of pulses.

Finally, in West-Bengal the focus was on the implementation of trials for increasing yield using the System of Crop Intensification (SCI) that adopts different techniques to improve yields such as reduced seeding rates, seed treatment with Beejamrit (prepared using cow urine, cow dung, ant hill soil, lime and water) and raised bed nurseries among others. The trials were performed using Mustard-Rapeseed intercropping and testing different varieties such as the widespread Brassica napus but also three traditional cultivars (Lotni, Rai & Pila Sarson). In addition, traditional cultivars of pulses, oilseed and cereals have been sown under SCI principles. It is expected that SCI principles will increase the yield as compared to traditional practices, which will be scored in control plots.

1.2 PGS and marketing support in the Philippines
Implemented by Lucille Ortiz, MASIPAG
The activities contribute to the following project components: Market access and capacity building.

This project aims at strengthening and up-scaling the MASIPAG Farmers Guarantee System (MFGS) that is based on the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) and to provide marketing support to Organic Farmers in the Philippines.
The MFGS adds value to farmers’ products, helps farmers to gain access to markets and reduces many problems typical of the conventional marketing system where traders dominate. NGOs and local authorities in the Philippines increasingly request assistance from MASIPAG for installing PGS. Assisting these stakeholders in terms of capacity building is a challenging task requiring a considerable amount of resources. The objectives of the IFAD-INOFOL Development Plan (DP) include improving collective support given to farmers organizations and its members; strengthening the MFGS program through skills development, retooling and capacity building; strengthening member organizations by fostering cooperation; and broadening the recognition of PGS in the country.

The activities implemented, listed below, focused on capacity building for farmers, advocacy with local authorities as well as training of trainers and strengthening the national PGS network in the Philippines.

Two days of orientation on PGS were organized for organic farmers of Camarines Sur, Albay and Sorsogon provinces. Among the participants were also some representatives of local authorities. Two-days training for inspectors, aiming at improving skills and capacity of farmers in certification was conducted in the Quezon, Davao and Visayas region. A series of training sessions on business planning was organized in the Visayas region for an organization of producers in order to see whether they were actually making a profit and how to improve the situation. One national training session of trainers took place in December 2016; it was attended by representatives of different PGS groups; NGOs, farmers groups, and local government units (LGUs). It aimed at educating PGS practitioners in capacity building, focusing on PGS orientation, installation and inspection. A Break out session about PGS was held at the 13th National Organic Agriculture Congress in November 2016.

Through these activities PGS was substantially strengthened in many regions of the Philippines and the initial objectives were achieved. The management of the activities went smoothly. The biggest threats at National levels are the obstinate promotion and spread of chemical inputs, GM crops and the negative effects of climate change on small-scale farming. For these reasons a stronger network of OFOs locally and within regions must be established.

1.3 Market access for improved livelihoods in Uganda
Implemented jointly by
- Julie Nakalanda Matovu, Fresh Veggies
- Jane Naluga, National Organic Agriculture Movement Uganda (NOGAMU)

The activities of the mini-project contribute to the following project components: Market access and capacity building.

The Market Access for Improved Livelihood (MAIL) Development Project aimed at linking farmers of four national Organic Farmers Organizations (OFOs) in Uganda to sustainable market initiatives, taking advantage of existing but untapped market opportunities within their local communities. Even though producers in Uganda are members of organizations, most of them market their produce individually mainly to traders and middlemen. Therefore, one of the major challenges is the limited and irregular access to markets and their limited bargaining power. Also for this reason, organic production in Uganda has a big unexploited potential, which could in time provide decent earnings and livelihoods for the producers.
Participatory Market Research was carried out using a tool suitable for PGS operations, which was translated into the major local language (Luganda). In addition to this, a market research guide was developed, translated and shared among the four OFOs. All the four OFOs have embarked on this activity. Participating producers in each of the four OFOs were also guided through the identification of existing potential markets. Each organization then actively engaged to find new market spaces in different context such as city farmers’ markets, religious communities or by organizing new distribution centers.

Two one-day training workshops were conducted for each OFO based on a needs assessment. The content mainly focused on enabling the OFO members/producers to understand the basic agronomic principles of organic agriculture such as crop rotations, soil fertility management, nutritional requirements and pest and disease management. Aspects of production planning, group marketing, and PGS implementation for quality assurance were also discussed.

The project reached out to 270 farmers (124 females, 146 males) organized in 14 community groups from about 50 villages, the majority of participants were young generation. The general objective of this activity was to improve skills and technical knowledge of participants by capacity building and to increase the visibility of the regional NOFO.

1.4 Empowerment of Local Markets with organic production in Peru
Implemented by Nadia Quispe, ARPE Cusco, Peru
The activities contribute to the following project components: Market access and capacity building.

This capacity building project focused on improving organic production skills of women farmers in Peru. The idea was to take the marketing strategies implemented by the sustainable business “Frutos de la Tierra” as an example and work with farmers to learn from it and adopt similar strategies. Frutos de la Tierra is a brand that guarantees the organic origin of food and the absence of chemicals. The products sold under this logo come from small family farms in almost all regions of the country. The brand also welcomes processed products of organic origin such as jams, cheeses, oils, breads, etc.

The project was realized in three different locations in Peru, the first two sites are both located in a valley: in the district of Oropesa (12 participants) and in the district of Andahuaylillas (10 participants). The third site is located in the Ccata district at more than 4000 m above sea level and involved 17 women. It was decided to work only with women since they are the ones who live permanently in the rural areas, and they are the ones who transmit their knowledge to the next generation. The womens groups involved in the project were selected with support from the respective municipalities and from local organic producers associations.

In order to promote organic practices among rural producers in the target districts, awareness-raising workshops on organic practices were organized in each district. The training focused on the importance of organic production, marketing strategies and relationship with the consumers and preservation of the environment. Field visits were also organized to show farmers concrete experiences of other organic
production units. At the end of the workshop, in each of the three districts one group of producers willing to implement organic practices was consolidated.

Strengthening the productivity and continuity in vegetable production was also an important objective. In order to achieve this, training in organic techniques was carried on for each producers group. The training was based on a participatory methodology and included practical training in the field. Along with this course, three demonstration orchards were planted and designed according to organic principles.

In general each producers group has received specific technical assistance and everyone one was trained in keeping records about the activities and the observation done on their fields, with the final aim to be able to plan in advance the production season in order to meet the demand of the market.

Finally, in order to create strategic spaces for the marketing of organic products, a dialogue started with the local authorities. Thanks to this dialogue the municipalities made some spaces for commerce available, such as agricultural fairs and agricultural competitions for organic products. The permanent participation of producers in local markets is still limited, nevertheless one of the producers is now permanently joining in the Ccatca market and another producer accesses the Canchón wine market in San Jerónimo.

It is important to continue strengthening the capacity of groups of producers to consolidate the organic proposal in our area, this will be achieved through continuous visits to different groups of producers who have shown great enthusiasm to see the results of their work in their small plots.

1.5 Critical assessment of Participatory Guarantee Systems in Brazil
 Implemented by Marcelo Passos, AOPA Red Ecovida, Brazil
 The activities contribute to the project component: Market access.

This project produced an in-depth analysis of PGS in Brazil. It addresses the questions of how PGS has developed in the country, what are the pros and cons of their inclusion under the government accreditation system and comprises also the development of a set of recommendations on how to move forward.

Firstly, the focus was on analysing the laws that regulate the implementation of PGS in Brazil. This was done through an in-depth review of the Brazilian policy framework concerning organic certification and by interviewing several experts.

Secondly a comparison among 8 different PGS from all over the word has been performed in order to understand how different initiatives address the same type of challenges. This material has been compiled in an essay that is about to be published. The information has also been used to revise the management plan of the organization Ecovida, adapting it to the new Brazilian law (IN 17/2014). Finally an accessory elaboration of the norms applied by Ecovida was produced.

1.6 Concept for Organic Entrepreneurship Schools in Latin America/Brazil
 Implemented by Dercilio Pupin, ANC-APO Brazil
 The activity contributes to the following project components: Capacity building and knowledge sharing.
The project aimed to create the basis for an educational training program on organic farming for young peasants new to the agricultural sector at regional Latin American level. Familia Organica, a member of ANC (Asociación de Agricultura Natural de Campinas y Región) has long experience in implementing educational programs for small scale organic farmers at local level. The intention of the project was to develop a concrete plan to scale up this program and bringing it to neighbouring countries.

The expected outcome was to offer, on the one hand, new learning possibilities for new generations of producers and, on the other hand, to spread innovation in existing small organic properties, introducing them to new sustainability approaches and entrepreneurship attitude. In order to achieve these objectives it was necessary to identify local multipliers and organizations that have already developed organic educational processes in Latin America and to create a network together with the INOFO participants from Latin American countries and leaders who already participate in organic educational processes in their communities. The elaboration of the training program was defined with other INOFO leaders in Latin America using multimedia platforms and webinars.

Concerning the multipliers, the initial idea was to involve local partners from Brazil. However, due to the difficulty in obtaining resources at national level, other possible partners among institutions of Latin America were identified. In July, it was possible to confirm the interest and approval of ANPE (Peru) to get involved in the project and in August 2016 a meeting was held in Peru with some representatives of ANPE. In November ANC-Apo met with the managers and technicians of ANPE for finalizing the design of the project, where needs and strategies were clearly defined. In the meanwhile, also Mexico confirmed its participation in the Program.

By December 2016, the details of the project had been refined and preparations made for presenting the proposal to potential funders. The partners are optimistic about the cooperation continuing and the proposal being put into practice, and about this project having an important role in pursuing continuity of the INOFO-IFAD Program in Latin America.

1.7 Creation of Mexican Network of Organic Farmers Organizations - ECOMEX

Implemented by Homero Blas, SOMEXPRO Mexico

The activities contribute to the following project components: Knowledge sharing, mapping and capacity building.

This project aimed to create a Mexican Network of Organic Farmers Organizations with cooperation at the national and international level in order to strengthen the Mexican organic sector and to obtain a national association that will be able to defend the common interests of its farmer members in the national and international sphere.

As a first step, communication about the project was started by visiting potential member organizations in the main organic producing states of Mexico, such as Chiapas, Oaxaca, Michoacan, Baja California, Jalisco, Mexico, Morelos, Veracruz, Puebla. Internet platforms where used to maintain communication. Another important activity was to map organic associations interested in joining this umbrella organization.
In April 2016, a Constituent Assembly and a National Congress were held during which the constitution of the umbrella organization was formalized and the Board of Directors was appointed.

In order to have more organizations joining, the national umbrella was promoted once more in other Mexican states. After the formal constitution, the organization decided to become member of IFOAM - Organics International - and to formally participate in INOFO. In the summer of 2016 a first big success was achieved: the new organization was invited to join the commission discussing the future National Organic Plan 2020. ECOMEX despite being a very young organization is starting to play its envisioned role, representing the interests of small scale organic farmers at national level.

1.8 Creation of the Chilean Agro-ecology Federation
Implemented by Monica Erpel, Ecoferia La Reina, Chile
The activities contribute to the following project components: Knowledge sharing, market access and capacity building.

This project aimed at creating a representative platform of organic farmers in Chile. In order to strengthen the national organic producer groups it was felt necessary to establish a valid interlocutor that represents the real interests of the producers. Thus, the project focused on building a joint platform for organic and family farmers at the national level, in order to be able to interact with the State through different Ministries.

The initial platform building was done by bringing potential members together to meet and discuss about the creation of such a platform. At the end of 2015, as part of the "Agro-ecology and Responsible Consumption Network meeting" the official decision to generate a formal structure with legal status at national level was taken. It was also discussed how to create a structure for sharing experiences and how to build local centers for local marketing of organic products. In addition to that a calendar of national meetings was set up. During this meeting Tierra Viva assumed the responsibility for coordination and facilitation of the network of participating organizations. During another set of meetings the network started to define coordination tasks and future activities to implement.

Later on in October 2016, during the VI Conference of the Chilean Agro-ecological network, coordinated and financed by Tierra Viva and Ecoferia La Reina, the concrete results of the facilitation process conducted throughout the year 2016 were finally visible and after two days of intense work and discussion between the different participating organizations, the Chilean Agro-ecology Federation was finally launched.

The federation is composed of the following members: Asociación de Productores Orgánicos de Aconcagua, Asociación de productores orgánicos y agroecológicos del Maule, Asociación Ecoferia La Reina, Red orgánica de la X region, Cooperativa Los Lagos Organico, Tierra Viva AG and Asociación e institute de Diseño y Manejo de Agroecosistemas.

In order to maintain the link with like-minded groups in neighbouring countries and to strengthen these transnational ties, some exchange visits in Brazil and Peru were organized as well as welcoming producers groups from Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico and
Argentina coming to Chile. These activities aroused the interest of the national competent authority who enthusiastically welcomed and met the new-born Federation and agreed upon holding an official meeting to discuss the development of the organic sector and innovative tools for supporting it. This meeting stressed the importance of creating a single interlocutor representing the national organizations of organic producers.

1.9 Strengthening of certified organic cacao processing in Colombia
Implemented by Christian Rodriguez, ECOCACAO, Colombia
The activities contribute to the following project components: Market access and capacity building.

This project aimed at creating capacity building opportunities and gaining better market access for certified organic cacao beans, produced by 47 families associated to Cooperativa Ecocacao in San Vicente de Chucuri, Colombia. The project intended to contribute to addressing the lack of entrepreneurial skills that characterize organic producers in Colombia, keeping them on the outskirts of the organic premium value chain.

Organic certification opens up great possibilities for marketing cocoa beans while ensuring a resilient system that preserves the environment. The specific project’s objectives were firstly to standardize the process of cocoa bean production in the cooperative in order to achieve the necessary quality needed for export. This has been done through the design of fermentation units, harvest and post harvest protocols and ensuring product traceability from farm to market.

Another important goal was to assess the diversity and productive capacity of the organic cocoa producers through farm visits. Farm visits were conducted in order to map the productive situation of the cocoa producers, looking also at their agricultural practices in order to give technical guidance. A third objective was to foster the loyalty of Ecocacao members in order to ensure that the associated cocoa farmers could have direct access to markets. Great attention was paid also to the financial sustainability of the organic certification process. To achieve these final objectives four training days were organized focusing on technical recommendations, developing skills for dealing with the certification bodies and collecting the information necessary during the audit.

The strength of the project has been, without any doubt, the existence of a group of farmers committed to organic agriculture as a system for preserving their agro-ecological environment. They are now gaining visibility for their pioneer job and they have drawn the attention of the government's Science and Technology Department through which they received funds to invest in technical assistance, quality improvement and purchase of equipment for the monitoring and standardization of the fermentation conditions.

All objectives of the project where achieved and activities will continue, thanks to the funding received from the government. The project currently involves only a limited number of farms with a small amount of available land, therefore the cooperative still lacks the volume necessary for becoming competitive on the organic cocoa market; in addition to that, more investment is required in technical guidance and processing. In the future attempts will be made to expand the activities and involve more farmers.
1.10 De la finca al batey. Building an organic vision in Puerto Rico
Implemented by Yanna Muriel, Asociacion Boricua, Puerto Rico
The activities contribute to the following project components: Market access and capacity building.

The aim of this project is to build a PGS to address also advocacy and organizational objectives of the organic movement in Puerto Rico. The project focused on setting the bases for building a PGS for the local market in Puerto Rico. This activity is addressing advocacy and organizational objectives of the national organic movement in the country.

The need for an alternative system to third party certification was very well known to the Organización Boricuá which implemented this mini-project. Some attempts in the past where already made to set-up a PGS, but they failed mainly for lack of participatory approaches. Boricuá is collaborating with the coordinators of the five organic markets active in Puerto Rico (Ponce, Hato Rey, Viejo San Juan, Rincón and Aguadilla), and with Efecto Sombrilla (point of sale for farmers), and the organization recently began dialogue with Oficina del Bosque Modelo, that has shown interest in certification for rural communities.

In the past year important steps in the creation of the PGS have been achieved: The certification committee of the Boricua Organization has met to discuss the legal framework within Puerto Rico and the United States for the implementation of PGS. The farm evaluation processes and the roles of the people involved in the certification were also discussed. One concrete output of this discussion was how PGS certification will be adapted locally to the national conditions.

The Boricua PGS guide was developed and is printed and ready to be distributed. During February 2017 a set of management meetings are planned in order to decide administrative issues related to the implementation of the PGS. During February and March the organization will visit different farmers’ markets and communities to raise awareness on the PGS system, launching the program and presenting the guide.

2. Event participation

In order to build alliances and to share knowledge, participation of INOFO representatives in relevant events was also funded by the project.

Montpellier conference on Agri-chains and Sustainable Development

In December 2016, a Conference on Agri–Chains and Sustainable Development (AC&SD), was organized by CIRAD in Montpellier/France to discuss the role of agricultural value chains in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

IFOAM – Organics International, together with INRA, FAO, Urgenci and IIED organized a session about institutional innovations in agri-food chains, with PGS as a core topic. Two representatives from Organic Farmers Organizations involved in INOFO were presenting at the event: Mathew John from Keystone Foundation, India and Julie Matovu from Fresh Veggies, Uganda. This was possible due to the funding available from the project.
The conference was a good opportunity to get attention and highlight the potential of approaches such as PGS to change the food system, making it more sustainable and contributing substantially to achieving the SDGs.

3. INOFO council activities

The core objective of the project was to strengthen INOFO as an organization representing organic farmers globally and facilitating networking and knowledge exchange between them. Below is a summary of main INOFO activities in 2016.

3.1 IFAD Farmers Forum, February 2016

This tenth anniversary of the Forum brought together 200 participants representing millions of small-scale farmers, pastoralists, livestock breeders and fishers in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. The statements finalised in plenary sessions of the Farmers Forum aim at informing policy decisions of the IFAD Governing Council (representing the governments that finance IFAD). This Forum was another occasion for overtly Organic farmers organisations to make their presence felt. In-depth dialogue will be possible when the regional NOFOs participate in the Regional Farmers Forums which are now also planned. Another important milestone of the 2016 Global Farmers Forum was the decision by the FAFO Steering Committee to invite three additional constituencies (WFO and INOFO, plus WAMIP considered as representing pastoralists & livestock breeders) as members of the Committee.

3.2 INOFO council meetings and involvement with existing regional activities

The INOFO Convenors, elected by their regional networks and confirmed at the INOFO GA in Istanbul in October 2014, are involved in the various activities of their own regions, whilst keeping in touch via the Inter-continental Council of Convenors which has been building on the new regional capacity developed with help from the IFAD-INOFO project. There are currently 16 Convenors on the Council, including some substitutes.

The Council has monthly online meetings, currently pre-occupied with preparations for the INOFO GA and the Organic World Congress in India in November 2017. The activities already started or soon to be launched include the development of farmers position papers, management of INOFO’s own website, participation in TIPI (the scientific & technological platform of IFOAM – Organics International), initiation of the Working Group on Seed and the WG on Guarantee Systems & Markets. The regional Networks of Organic Farmers Organisations are responsible for the farmers own distinct participation in existing regional activities, such as Seed festivals, Farmers Forums & technical conferences, independently from any existing national or regional umbrella that usually follows the undifferentiated multi-professional model of IFOAM – Organics International.

4. Local partner activities and cooperation

The local partners were given the opportunity to receive project funds for implementation of local activities in their region upon submission of a concrete plan and provided that the activities contribute to the objectives of the project.
4.1 Activities of and cooperation with OFAI

The Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI) set up a range of activities as part of its commitment under the IFAD-INOFO project for the period 2015-2016. These activities aimed at advancing the overall goals of the project such as improvement of farmers mapping, implementation of training sessions and strengthening of the network of organic farmers associations in India and at international level.

Mapping of Organic Farmers Organizations (OFOs)
Throughout 2016 considerable progress was made in advancing the mapping of OFOs in the focus regions of the project. The revision of data was finalized and transformed into a global map of OFOs, one of the key objectives of the project.

Mobilization of OFO networks
OFAI has worked intensely during 2016 to ensure farmer participation in the Organic World Congress that will be held in India in November 2017. Up to now 66 farmers from Latin America, 39 from Africa and 7 from rest of Asia are already confirmed to attend the conference. The mobilization of organic farmers for the OWC will be the biggest of its kind. This achievement was possible thanks to the new relationships and networks that have been created through the IFAD-INOFO project.

As part of the strategy to build and consolidate the organic farmers movement, OFAI took part in the sixth Farmers Forum in Rome in February 2016. Moreover, Rohit Jain from OFAI, represented traditional farming and food practices of India during the biannual meeting of the network Terra Madre in Italy.

Source Book on India's Organic Seed
As part of its networking activities at national level, OFAI was finally able to publish India's first book on availability of organic seed. Copies are now available for distribution and sale. The catalogue is in two volumes. Vol. II provides 200 pages of detailed information on varieties and seed sourced from the different seed keepers whose work is described in Vol. I. The catalogue is the first attempt to document the work of seed keepers at national level.

Inclusion of women
OFAI was able to submit proposals to the government for training of female organic farmers in different parts of the country. The nodal point was the Ministry for Women and Child Development, New Delhi. The project was accepted, is running successfully and will end by 30th June 2017. Furthermore, OFAI organized an All India Womens Exhibition in November 2015 in Delhi. The ten-day event brought together women organic farmers and producers for the first time in one place to market their organic production. During the festival, the members met organic farming women from other States and learnt from each other's expertise.

OFAI has carried out another variety of activities and training for organic farmers. The training sessions were focused on sustainable agricultural practices, such as traditional cultivation techniques, local marketing strategies, PGS, SRI and general organic farming training.

4.2 Activities and cooperation with ANPE
Mapping Process

ANPE represents more than 30,000 families of smallholders, spread all over Peru. Collecting and managing the information about its members and its 281 Local Organizations has always been a challenge. As a result the mapping process in Peru was delayed in comparison to the other countries and completed only in late 2016.

The SINAPE information system was created in 2012 in order to start to address this issue. During 2016, ANPE has used part of the INOFO project funding to support the renewal and updating of this database. This was considered as a strategic activity for ANPE in order to improve the communication with the local partners and to make timely decisions and identify needs and business opportunities. The objective for the future is to turn this database into a platform to offer a range of services for ANPE’s members.

Together with the updating of the database, ANPE realized a map where all members will be displayed. This was done in cooperation with two researchers from the University of San Marcos. In order to collect as much data as possible, the researchers travelled to several districts: Amazonas, Cajamarca, Ancash, Lima Districts and Cusco.

The implementation of the map required a phase of data collection, where information about the current situation of the 281 local organizations belonging to ANPE and their farmers were collected, and then uploaded in the SINAPE platform. This platform is based on the concept of “crowd-sourcing”, meaning that it needs the participation of ANPE members to be representative and updated. Through SINAPE, ANPE managed to register in the database 220 new members, and now has a total of 2760 farmers in the system from 281 local organizations in 20 Regions of Peru.

Capacity Building

ANPE organized 3 workshops in order to strengthen the capacity of leadership of some regional producers organizations. The first workshop took place in Ancash with more than 120 delegates. The other workshops were organized in Pucallpa together with the Assembly of the Regional Federation of Producers of Ucayali and the Amazon area.

Other workshops were held in order to strengthen the skills of the ANPE regional organizations (ARPEs). One was a National Workshop on Organic Leadership for Regional Leaders, with 25 participants on 2 days. One of the results of the workshop was that ARPEs leaders committed to provide information on their production, marketing, advocacy and institution-strengthening activities for the mapping and online platform.

2 more workshops were held in the Southern and Central part of Peru’s Macro Region focusing on management and knowledge innovation for organic farmers. 68 participants attended in total. These workshops dealt with development of business plans and market analysis.

Market Access: Promotion of a collective brand “Frutos de la Tierra”

To consolidate the collective marketing of organic producers in the 30 farmers’ markets, the leaders of ARPEs and the committee of each market attended a series of workshops to understand and implement the standards of the collective brand “Frutos de la Tierra”. The collective label “Frutos de la Tierra” has been promoted during 2016 at regional and national levels in different context.
Among the activities to promote the brand a sustainable shop has been opened in Lima and at the same time an online commercial platform was created.

National PGS meeting
A National PGS meeting was held in November 2016. 250 delegates from different national PGS initiatives gathered in the city of Ayacucho. During the meeting various topics were discussed and experiences were shared. Progress has been made in the construction of a participative certification model pertinent to the national reality, allowing the small farmers the recognition of their production as ecological, articulating it to the markets in better conditions. Progress has been made in promoting organic agriculture for the national market. There is little support from governments for this PGS initiative and therefore cooperation between organizations to strengthen PGS and gain government support is all the more important.

4.3 Activities and cooperation with NOGAMU
NOGAMU in 2016 was actively involved in building the cooperation and capacity of Organic Farmers Organizations in Uganda by organizing trainings and by building a national platform. The market access component was particularly strong as NOGAMU was involved in various activities related to market research and facilitation of market access. See also the mini project jointly implemented by Jane Nalunga, NOGAMU and Julie Matovu, Fresh Veggies.

Existing platforms at national and regional levels were an important arena for NOGAMU to get active and to introduce and popularize the regional NOFO. These platforms include the on-going Ecological Organic Agriculture project, which is led by NOGAMU and includes other partners such as PELUM Uganda and Uganda Martyrs University. In addition, INOFO has been introduced by NOGAMU during all the National organic sector forums. NOGAMU Regional Coordinators have also played a big role in sensitizing OFOs about INOFO's existence and play a pivotal role in strengthening the capacity of OFOs. These activities will be continued in the future so as to build a strong National platform that can influence policy, among other pertinent issues for smallholder organic producers.
Section 2. Overall assessment of the implementation of the action
1. Activities and achievement of objectives

The projected goal of the IFAD-INOF0 project was to contribute to the empowerment of smallholding family farmers, particularly the organic farmers organisations in Africa, Latin America and Asia and their own inter-continental network (INOFO).

The project aimed to empower organic farmers collectively and their leaders individually to represent their interests in national and international institutions and to help them recognize the genuine positions of the organic smallholders. The proposed action was designed along several lines: I) Mapping, II) Institution- and capacity building, III) Sharing farmers knowledge, IV) Facilitation of market access. Through those activities national lobbying and international representation is supported and also expected as project outcome.

This chapter assesses the activities implementing their contribution to the objectives and expected results.

1.1 Performance and capacity of INOFO

INOFO was formally founded in 2008 as an autonomous self-organised structure within IFOAM - Organics International - to be the voice of organic farmers globally. At inter-continental level the organization held General Assemblies in 2008, 2011 and 2014, but most of the activity during the intervening years was limited to the on-going activities of the regional and national organisations.

As a result of the project, INOFO today is a lively organization built on a team of active convenors in 7 regions (including the project target regions):
- Latin America & Caribbean
- West Africa
- East Africa
- Southern Africa
- South Asia
- South-East Asia
- Europe

The INOFO convenors hold regular online meetings (at least monthly) and are in frequent contact per e-mail and work together at regional level and in the editorial group. Several of them have implemented mini-projects as part of the IFAD-INOF0 capacity building program and most of them have participated in important international events such as IFAD Farmers Forums, COP21, FAO conferences, the Organic World Congress etc.

Through the active work of individual convenors INOFO is becoming better known and is increasingly able to fulfil its envisioned role as platform for representation of organic farmers at regional level. The mapping process carried out in the project was very useful for increasing the outreach of INOFO and to identify more potential stakeholders.

In 2016, INOFO was invited to join the IFAD Farmers Forum Steering Committee and, as a result, the convenors of the regional NOFOs are now starting to participate in the respective Steering Committees of the regional Farmers Forums.
INOFO now also has its own website www.inofo.org which was launched in 2016. The website is managed by the INOFO Editorial Group of five: chairman, general secretary and secretaries for the three main languages (English, French, Spanish). While the basic information is already there, the website is being further developed and the French and Spanish versions are in the pipeline. While INOFO is active and functional, the fact that INOFO still relies on voluntary commitment from participating organizations to carry out administrative tasks is a hindrance for the organization.

INOFO is a young organization that has to further grow and increase its capacity and recognition. The IFAD-INOFO project was surely an important step in this process. A next step in the further consolidation and strengthening of INOFO will be to establish a paid position to take care of administrative processes, contacts and continuity, to relieve the burden on the convenors who are mandated by their own organisations but, contribute their time on a voluntary basis.

1.2 Mapping of Organic Farmers Organizations

One of the expected outputs was the mapping of the institutional and stakeholder landscape of organic farming in the target countries and regions. This mapping was done intensively in 16 countries in the target regions. To date more than 1300 organizations, involving more than 650,000 farmers in 78 countries are now part of the pool of INOFO contacts and stakeholders. The expansion and updating of the mapping data is a continuous process that is carried out constantly by the individual convenors.

Overall the mapping was a challenging process with many delays and difficulties. However it was an important process to go through, to expand the outreach of INOFO and get more clarity about the stakeholder base.

1.3 Capacity building

Another expected output is in improving the competence of INOFO and its participating OFOs when they lobby their governments in the interest of their farmers and when they help influencing international policy setting.

In total 40 participants from Organic Farmers Organizations in 23 countries went through the intensive capacity building program implemented by the project. Many of those participants and their national organizations are now taking increasingly active roles in advocacy for organic farming in their country and are also actively involved in INOFO.

While the impact of the capacity building has to be observed over long-time, some concrete outcomes in terms of strengthening of farmers’ voices and representation have already been achieved. They can best be observed in some of the mini-projects developed and implemented by 16 of the participants.

- National platforms for organic farmers were established in Chile and Mexico and are already in dialogue with the national governments.
- In India farmers were empowered to carry out seed preservation.
- MASIPAG in the Philippines was already cooperating with the government to support farmers to build PGS and local markets. Through the project a expansion of this work could be achieved.
- In Uganda local farmers organizations were capacitated and the building of a strong national platform was brought forward.
- In Peru and Columbia farmers were capacitated to market their products and organize themselves.
- In Brazil the thorough assessment of government policy is an important step to develop appropriate argumentation and recommendation for farmers organizations on how to positively influence policies.
- In Puerto Rico important steps were achieved to consolidate the organic movement and develop.

Another important aspect of the capacity building is the capability of Organic Farmers Organizations to deliver a range of services in support of poor rural people. Again, many of the mini-projects strongly contribute to this aspect, for example through capacity building programmes that were implemented. Good examples here are the mini projects in Peru, the Philippines and Uganda.

All these actions are important steps in the capacitation of farmers to organize themselves on micro peer and macro level and make their voices heard by policy makers.

1.4 Knowledge sharing

Another important objective of the project is the empowerment of OFOs to share their success in improving farmers’ incomes and livelihoods.

Throughout the project various opportunities to share knowledge on various levels were created. Local partners organized knowledge sharing events and compiled and published success stories. OFAI in India for example was able to publish India's first book on availability of organic seed. The catalogue is the first attempt to document the work of seed keepers at national level. ANPE in Peru organised several workshops to facilitate knowledge and innovation sharing for organic farmers.

OFOs participated in many events and activities to share knowledge and expand networks. To a large extend this was organized in the framework of the mini-projects. The seed project in India is a good example for experience sharing across states. Other mini-projects resulted in the creation of knowledge sharing platforms (Chile) or the up-scaling of successful business experiences (Peru).

Important knowledge sharing events with INOFO participation outside the capacity building program and mini-projects were: Organic World Congress, Istanbul/Turkey 2014, the African Organic Conference, Lagos/Nigeria 2015, COP 21 in Paris/France 2015, FAO events in Colombia and Brazil, Conference on Agri–Chains and Sustainable Development in Montpellier/France 2016 and the IFAD Farmers Forum in Rome 2016.

On a global level the knowledge exchange implemented through the project and through INOFO remains in certain limits. Knowledge is exchanged across continents through the training program, through participation in various events, and during regular exchange between the INOFO council members. On the whole however, the focus and priority of intensive knowledge exchange is currently more on the local and national level. In some cases on a regional level (see for example mini-project for creation of a Latin American training programme). The reason is that the convenors
themselves feel that the need and the possibility for knowledge exchange and sharing are greater at regional or local level. Consequently knowledge sharing activities of INOFO Council, outside of the convenors regular communication, currently remain limited. A website was created, but it does not include an open discussion forum and its document sharing page is very selective.

1.5 Market access facilitation

Another output focussed on markets and aimed to equip OFOs with the capability to facilitate farmers in gaining access to markets. This objective was addressed by various activities including some of the DP projects and local partner activities. Some DPs, e.g. the one implemented in Uganda, were specially aimed at improving market access for local farmers. Another example is the cacao mini-project in Colombia.

Additionally the topic of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) constituted a strong market access component that ran through all components of the project.

PGS has proven to be an effective tool in the context of local markets for organic products in developing and emerging markets. While third party certification is often used for exports, including Group Certification, many successful cases worldwide show the potential for PGS to provide an affordable assurance system suitable for poor farmers and local markets. PGS was part of the capacity building program, many mini-projects included PGS components, several PGS events were organized or INOFO participants were involved in them. Many of the participating countries experience a steady grown of PGS groups and PGS farmers, more and more organizations are able to provide support to their farmers in getting involved in a PGS, which helps them to get access to local markets.

2. Effectiveness and Sustainability

2.1 Effectiveness

The bulk of the budget was used to cover travel and training costs for the participants in the capacity building program. This investment in capacity building was the basis for the other actions that required little budget including the activities of the INOFO council, the mapping of organizations, as well as the development of the mini-projects. In the beginning the decision had to be made whether to carry out an expensive joint training session of both the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking participants to allow them to meet and network on an inter-continental level. In retrospect, it was a good decision and worth the additional resources because it helped to build a strong network and strong interpersonal relations.

In our experience, designing a project around a capacity building program is a very efficient method of generating good impact with limited resources, provided that participants are well selected and continue to be involved in the project thereafter. In the case of the IFAD-INOFo capacity building program the number of drop-outs in the capacity building program was moderate. Around two thirds of the participants remained actively involved until the end of the 2-year programme.
The mini-projects brought extraordinary results, considering the limited budget assigned (maximum USD 3,000 per DP). Overall the combination of capacity building and mini-projects proved to be very effective. The capacity building program resulted in a strengthening of actors and organizations in the organic sector in the participating countries and in the building of their network and knowledge sharing. The mini-projects have shown very good outcomes and were well-designed to address the local context and needs.

2.2 Innovation

Organic Agriculture by definition is a system that relies on innovation to address challenges in the food production system. Innovation is only possible if stakeholders have capacity to develop new approaches, if they have access to and can learn from each other. All those aspects were strongly addressed in the project.

The Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) that are being promoted as an alternative assurance system for local markets are one of the best examples of an innovative system that can positively impact the lives of many people, in particular peasants and small-scale farmers (see also the FAO study that features several initiatives that also participate in INOFO/the project: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5907e.pdf). Several of the mini-projects funded through the project dealt with innovations: PGS (Philippines, Puerto Rico, Brazil), value chains and market access (Colombia, Uganda), seed (India), education (Brazil, Mexico, Chile). They included many activities including capacity building, networking and knowledge sharing, advocacy to build and promote these innovations.

2.3 Scaling up

For the capacity building program, many selected participants are members of or work for organizations with a track record in the development and implementation of innovative and promising solutions. Through the capacity building, OFOs can learn from each other’s experience and adapt them for themselves. They were also able through the mini-projects to take successful approaches and scale them up or work on gaining recognition and awareness for their work.

Such scaling-up examples include:
- MASIPAG in the Philippines: Training of trainers on PGS implemented for NGOs, farmers groups, and policy makers in several regions.
- ECOCACAO cooperative in Ecuador is gaining visibility for their pioneer job and they have drawn the attention of the government’s Science and Technology Department through which they received a fund to invest in technical assistance, quality improvement and purchase of equipment for the monitoring and standardization of fermentation conditions.
- Farmers in Peru learn from the successful business “Frutos de la Tierra” and adopt similar approaches for themselves.

2.4 Continuation beyond the project period

A good sign for continuation beyond the project is the fact that for many activities it is difficult to draw the line where project implementation has stopped. This is true in
particular for the implementation of the mini-projects by the participants. In an ideal scenario, the mini-project will be the start-up of an intervention that will continue. Most participants that worked on their mini-project are still continuing their activities to date or the stakeholders and organizations involved are still building on the project achievements. Some participants have even managed to already generate more funds (e.g. from their governments) to ensure continuation.

INOFO is much more active and capacitated compared to before and builds on a strong network of convenors who know each other well and are used to working together.

3. Crosscutting issues

Crosscutting issues: Gender and Youth

For the selection of the participants in the capacity building programme priority was given to women and young participants.

45% of participants in the capacity building programme were women and 40% of them were below 40 years old. The gender balance in the current INOFO council is also about 50:50 between men and women.

Several of the mini-projects implemented in the last year of the project had a strong gender component. The best example of mini-project in Peru which focused on improving organic production skills of women farmers in Peru. It was decided to work only with women since they are the ones who live permanently in the rural areas, and they are the ones who transmit their knowledge to the next generation. The women groups involved in the project were selected thanks to the cooperation of the respective municipality and of the local organic producers association.

Also the local partners implemented some activities that had a strong gender aspect: Activities of the local partner in India: OFAI (Organic Farmers Association of India) was able to submit proposals to the government for training of women organic farmers in different parts of the country. OFAI also organized an All India Women Exhibition in November 2015 in Delhi. The ten-day event brought together women organic farmers and producers for the first time at one place to market their organic production.
Annex

Pictures from the mini projects

DP Project: PGS and marketing support in the Philippines

Participants during workshop and field inspection exercise in Negros Occidental

Business planning training in Patnongon, Antique

MFGS Inspection, Upgrading training in General Nakar, Quezon
DP Project: Market access for improved livelihoods in Uganda
DP Project: Creation of Mexican Network of Organic Farmers Organizations – ECOMEX
DP Project: Creation of the Chilean Agroecology Federation

Tierra Viva participa de Intercambio Latinoamericano
DP Project: De la finca al batey. Building an agro-ecological vision in Puerto Rico
DP Project: Empowerment of Local Markets with agro-ecological production in Peru
DP Project: Seed conservation and revival in India
Putting net for guiding climbers, cleaning weeds, spraying pest repellants every week

Team of 5 women involved in local vegetable seed production at Thrissur, Kerala
Varities multiplied for large scale distribution:

Havu badane       Putta Padavala       Yellow cherry

Kombu Sore       Hot Chilly

Bulb tomato       Purple Tomato       Kashi Tomato

Erendere Badane       Sword Bean       Jumki Hire