

Module 9: Farmer organisational development

Pre-assessment

Answer the following questions without going through the learning content. This is to determine how much you already know about the subject. You will also be asked to complete a post-assessment after you have worked through the learning content. Rate your knowledge on the topics on a scale of 1 to 5 by circling the corresponding number.

	Question	Self-assessment				
		Low		High		
1	I am familiar with the term farmer organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I understand how farmer organisations are categorised and the different services they provide.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I can identify factors from within farmer organisations that will affect the operation of these organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I can identify factors from the outside environments that will affect the success of farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am able to provide possible solutions to address challenges faced by farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I can explain how farmer representation will influence organisational sustainability.	1	2	3	4	5

	Question	Self-assessment				
		Low		High		
7	I am aware of the importance of good corporate governance in farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I can discuss the importance of financial stability for farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I can describe the major functions that farmer organisations offer their members and the agricultural sector.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am aware of the role farmer organisations play in facilitating access to agricultural research and technology.	1	2	3	4	5

Answer: Learner's own answer.

Study unit 1: Definition and differentiated mandate of farmer organisations

Session 1.1: What is a farmer organisation?

Activity 1.1 Individual activity: Characteristics of a typical farmer organisation

In your society, can you identify organisations that display traits of a typical farmer organisation? Discuss the characteristics you used to identify these organisations.

Answer: The answer may be relatively general as long as the main characteristics given below are mentioned:

- *Autonomy from external influence;*
- *Membership based;*
- *Unrestricted freedom of the members to democratically participate and enjoy their rights; and*
- *Recognition by authorities through appropriate legislative processes.*

Session 1.2: Different categories of farmer organisations

Activity 1.2 Individual activity: Different categories of farmer organisations

List all the farmer organisations in your community or region. Categorise them into the three categories above. Give reasons for your choice of category for each organisation.

Answer: Learners must categorise at least one organisation. Answers may be relatively general as long as they use the characteristics and services discussed above to categorise the organisations they identified.

Activity 1.3 Individual activity: Specialised services provided by different categories of farmer organisation

Study the following examples of services provided by farmer organisations and choose which category of FO performs the service by circling the correct answer. (5)

1. Representing farmers in lobbying and advocacy activities. (1)
 - a. General interest group
 - b. Cooperative
 - c. Commodity based organisation
 - d. All of the above
2. Aggregating farmer produce and purchases to take advantage of reduced prices. (1)
 - a. General interest group
 - b. Cooperative
 - c. Commodity based organisation
 - d. All of the above
3. Negotiating contracts or better market prices for members. (1)
 - a. General interest group
 - b. Cooperative
 - c. Commodity based organisation
 - d. All of the above

4. Facilitates networking and participation in national and international trade fairs. (1)
- a. General interest group
 - b. Cooperative
 - c. Commodity based organisation
 - d. All of the above
5. Facilitates market research on commodities. (1)
- a. General interest group
 - b. Cooperative
 - c. Commodity based organisation
 - d. All of the above

Answer: 1d, 2b, 3d, 4a, 5c

Total: 5 marks

Summative assessment

Answer the following questions in your own words. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. State whether the following statements are true or false. If a statement is false, give a reason for your answer. Write your answer in the space provided. (6)

1.1. All farmers in a community are required to join an FO. (2)

Answer: False, farmers are free to join and leave an FO at their own discretion.

1.2 One of the main goals of general agricultural interest groups is to represent farmers during the development and implementation of agricultural policies. (2)

Answer: True.

1.3 Members belonging to agricultural cooperatives receive profits based on their initial investment. (2)

Answer: False, profits are shared according to the level at which the cooperatives' services are used.

2. All farmer organisations exhibit basic characteristics that distinguish them from other civil society organisations. Name and briefly discuss three of these basic characteristics. (6)

Answer: Any of the following three characteristics for 2 marks each.

Autonomy from external influence. Farmer organisations are independent from governments and other civil societies. They are private organisations and must have full operational autonomy. (2)

Membership based. An important difference between FOs and other civil society organisations and NGOs is that they are membership organisations. They have formally defined membership criteria, such as payment of membership fees or participation in certain activities. (2)

Unrestricted freedom of the members to democratically participate and enjoy their rights. Farmers are free to join and leave the organisation at their own discretion. (2)

Recognition by authorities through appropriate legislative processes. The recognition by authorities is important because it allows organisations, especially formal organisations, to legally represent farmers and offer certain services that require legal status. (2)

3. Briefly discuss two reasons why farmer organisations are important for small-scale farmers in today's agricultural environment. (4)

Answer:

By joining FOs, small scale farmers are able to participate in larger markets and compete for the same resources. (2)

By joining farmer organisations, individual farmers are better represented at local, regional and national levels; allowing them to contribute to the agricultural development programmes and policies in their community. (2)

4. Farmer organisations can generally be classified into three categories, namely general interest farmer groups, farmer cooperatives and commodity based organisations. (5)

- 4.1 Give two examples of services that can be provided by all three categories. (2)

Answer: Any of the following two examples for 1 mark each:

- *Representing farmers in advocacy activities;*
- *linking members with service providers; or*
- *negotiating contracts for members.*

4.2 Give one example of a service specific to each of the three categories. You must give one example from each category. (3)

Answer: Any of the following examples, one per category for 1 mark each:

Specific services provided by general interest farmer groups:

- *Represents members in policy and programme development and review.*
- *Integrates mutual interests of farmers from different backgrounds and coordinates actions to address the interests of all.*
- *Mobilises financial and human resources for other farmer organizations.*
- *Provides technical capacities in organizational and institutional development.*
- *Facilitates knowledge sharing among members.*
- *Provides information to members and authorities on aspects of agricultural development.*
- *Provides information to members on national or international events that may influence farmers.*
- *Assists in the participation of farmers in national and international agricultural trade fairs.*
- *Promotes networking of farmers from different backgrounds.*
- *Supports commodity based organizations to carry out market research, data collection, analysing, consulting as well as training.*

Specific services provided by farmer cooperatives:

- *Assists in the distribution of production supplies (for example, seeds, chemical, fuel and so on) to farmers.*

- *Facilitates processing of membership produce for value addition.*
- *Aggregates farmer produce in order to deliver large quantities to markets.*
- *Assists in the bulk purchases of agricultural inputs to take advantage of reduced prices.*
- *Facilitates the storage of agricultural inputs and farm produce.*
- *Provides specialised services such as credit, insurance and transport.*

Specific services provided by commodity based organisations:

- *Provides advocacy and negotiations on trade issues.*
- *Organises and coordinates fair deals for their members in their transactions.*
- *Provides specialised training to members.*
- *Facilitates market research on various commodities.*
- *Provides market and other relevant technical information to farmers, policy makers and buyers.*
 - *Creates awareness of new technologies available to farmers.*
 - *Produces and distributes publications on various subjects of interest to farmers.*
 - *Promotes the production of adequate quantities of good quality products that meet market specific requirements.*
- *Organises transport and storage logistics for members.*
- *Facilitates combined production activities in order to meet specific market demands.*

5. Briefly discuss the difference between a cooperative and a commodity based organisation. (6)

Answer:

Commodity organisations specialise in a single commodity or closely related products (1). Their main goal is to bring together different players in the value chain related to a particular commodity. (1) Farmers belonging to these organisations operate as individuals and they gain profit as individuals. (1)

Farmer cooperatives are independent business organisations jointly owned and democratically controlled by farmers, produces and other players in the value chain (1). Their main goal is to help meet the need for agricultural services by their members and to create demand for their produce. (1) Profits are shared between members according to the level at which they use the cooperatives' services. (1)

Total: 27 marks

Study unit 2: Prerequisites for successful farmer organisations

Session 2.1: Internal factors influencing the operations of farmer organisations

Activity 2.1 Individual activity: Internal factors affecting FOs

In Session 2.1, several internal factors that affect FOs along with possible solutions to address these challenges were discussed. Draw a line connecting the solution listed in column B to the internal factors listed in column A. (7)

Column A	Column B
1. Inadequate capacity to represent	a. Diversify sources of funding in order to avoid overdependence on a single sponsor.
2. Limited understanding of the role of FOs by society	b. Provide accessible and relevant education and training programmes.
3. Overdependence on external assistance	c. Facilitates communication among the members and subsystems of the organisation.
4. High levels of illiteracy	d. Encourage team building between leadership, management and members of the organisation.
5. Ineffective leadership and management	e. Ensure that FOs are involved during the planning phases of policy initiatives.
6. Poor farmers' institutional structures	f. Develop structures that are supported strictly by the available resources within the organization.
7. Inadequate understanding of policy issues	g. Involve the community members in establishing organisations and their goals.

Answer: 1c, 2g, 3a, 4b, 5d, 6f, 7e.

Total: 7 marks

Session 2.2: External factors that affect farmer organisations

Activity 2.2 Individual activity: External factors affecting FOs

Fill in the missing words. Write your answers in the spaces provided. (12)

Farmer organisations face several external challenges. Many farmer organisations struggle with governmental (a) _____ or political (b) _____ that (c) _____ affects their operation. Farmer organisations cannot necessarily change or avoid these policies and have to develop structures and mechanisms to (d) _____ such policies. Farmers also frequently face complicated and unclear (e) _____ and (f) _____ stipulations to establish and register FOs.

FOs are frequently composed of resource poor farmers and require external (g) _____ and (h) _____ in order to operate effectively. However FOs have to remember that they need clearly defined and (i) _____ rules that will specify the role of the external support systems in the running of the FO.

Furthermore FOs should develop partnerships with the (j) _____ (k) _____ in order to benefit from their investment and (l) _____.

Answer: (a) policies, (b) interference, (c) negatively, (d) address, (e) administrative, (f) regulatory, (g) assistance, (h) donor funding or funding, (i) enforced, (j) private, (k) sector, (l) skills.

Total: 12 marks

Activity 2.3 Individual activity: Factors affecting the successful operation of FOs

Do you know of any farmer organisations that operate in your community? Maybe you already belong to a farmer organisation. Can you think of possible internal and external challenges that FOs in your community will face?

Answer: Answer may be relatively general as long as at least one of the internal and external factors are mentioned.

Summative assessment

Answer the following questions in your own words. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. Explain the following terms in relation to the study material. (2)

1.1 Private sector (1)

Answer: The part of an economy that is not under direct control of the state.

1.2 Public sector (1)

Answer: The part of an economy that is directly controlled by the state.

2. Various internal factors affect the successful operations of farmer organisation. List four possible internal factors that could affect the operation of farmer organisations. (4)

Answer: Any four of the following factors for 1 mark each

- *Inadequate capacity to represent.*
- *Limited understanding of the role of farmer organisations by society.*
- *Overdependence on external assistance.*
- *High levels of illiteracy.*
- *Ineffective leadership and management.*

3. Choose three of the internal factors you mentioned in question 2 and discuss possible solutions for each factor. (6)

Answer: Any two of the solutions listed for each factor for 1 mark each.

Inadequate capacity to represent:

- *Develop of clear organisation and membership structures.*
- *Develop clear and simple strategies to facilitates*

communication among the and subsystems of the organisation.

- *Consolidate activities of national and local level structures.*
- *Institute structures that promote transparent interaction among farmers at all levels.*
- *Regularly review organisational structures and ensure that all levels of operation are responding to the needs of the members as well as meeting the objectives of the organisation.*

Limited understanding of the role of farmer organisations by society:

- *Involve the community members in establishing organisations and their goals.*
- *Address members' real needs, do not impose needs and solutions from outside their perceived needs.*
- *Ensure that members receive clear and measurable benefits from joining the organisation.*
- *Collaborate with members and potential members to catalogue a list of achievable services that could be offered by the organisation.*

Overdependence on external assistance:

- *Plan and develop a long term strategic framework for the organisation and raise resources according to the planned strategic framework.*
- *Assess availability of resources and plan how to utilise those optimally.*
- *Diversify sources of funding in order to avoid overdependence on a single sponsor.*
- *Facilitate activities that will enable members of organisations to raise their own funding (membership fees, charges on the services provided, research grants).*

High levels of illiteracy:

- *Facilitate exposure of farmers to modern methods of organised agriculture using study tours and field trips.*
- *Provide accessible and relevant education and training programmes.*
- *Promote sharing of experiences and lessons between farmers from different social, cultural and economic backgrounds.*
- *Avoid introducing too many new aspects of organised agriculture.*

Ineffective leadership and management:

- *Develop simple structures that clearly spell out the different roles of leaders and management.*
- *Develop long-term training programmes for management and leadership of organisations.*
- *Strengthen the capacity of secretariats to advise leadership and management on how to translate the organisational vision and policies into actual day to day activities and services.*
- *Encourage team building between leadership, management and members of the organisation.*
 - *Develop and implement self-assessment procedures to assess leadership and management performance.*

4. Discuss two possible ways farmer organisations can guard against unnecessary and negative governmental and political interference. (4)

Answer: Any two of the following answers for 2 marks each.

- *FOs need clear and concise rules separating FO leadership and management from politics.*
- *FOs need clearly defined structures and procedures when dealing with governmental institutions to ensure transparency and accountability.*

- *FOs must develop their capacity to effectively and accurately articulate the needs of their members during policy development.*
 - *FOs must work together with governments to create mechanism to enable the active participation of FOs in policy development.*
5. Explain how effective leadership and management affect the ability of farmer organisations to secure external support systems. (4)

Answer: Strong and capable leadership will be able to mobilise resources to appropriate levels before seeking external support, ensuring the chance of obtaining external assistance. (2)

Managers that have the appropriate financial management skills and business know-how will run their organisations as successful businesses, ensuring a better chance to secure external support. (2)

6. State whether the following statements are true or false. If the statement is false, give a reason for your answer. (4)

- 6.1 Farmer organisations don't really benefit from partnership with the private sector. (2)

Answer: False. (1) Farmer organisations can benefit greatly from partnership with the private sector as they can assist with financial investment and specialised skills that can improve the skill set and productivity of small scale farmers. (1)

- 6.2 The lack of partnerships between FOs and the private sector often stems from mistrust of private sector service providers. (2)

Answer: True (2)

Total: 24 marks

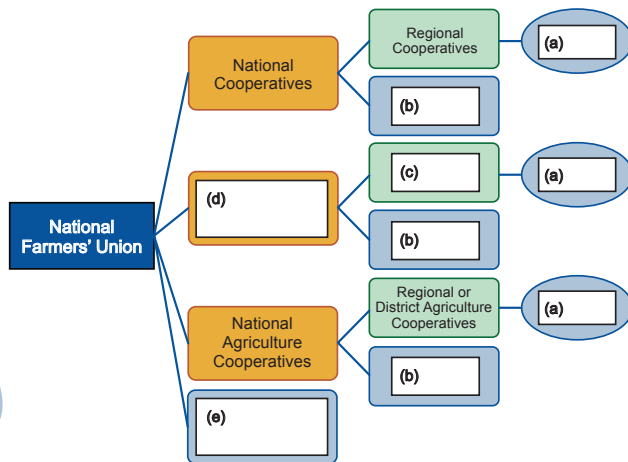
Study unit 3: Sustainability of farmer organisations

Session 3.1 Farmer representation as a factor for sustainability

Activity 3.1 Individual activity: Factors influencing farmer representation

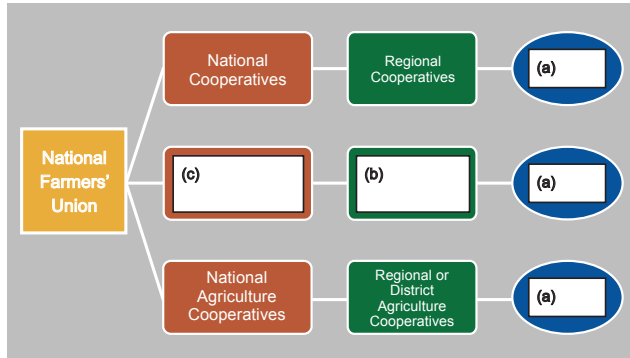
Study the figures below and fill in the missing labels in the spaces provided.

1. An example of a national farmer organisation with a multiple line membership structure. (5)



Answer: (1a) individual farmers, (1b) individual farmers, (1c) local associations / local organisations, (1d) Regional or district farmer unions / regional organisations / district organisations, (1e) individual farmers. (5)

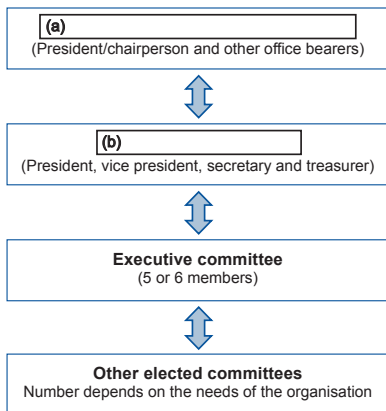
2. An example of a national farmer organisation with a single line membership structure. (3)



Answer:

(2a) individual farmers, (2b) local association / local organisation, (2c) Regional or district farmer union / regional organisation / district organisation. (3)

3. An example of a hierarchal decision making structure. (2)



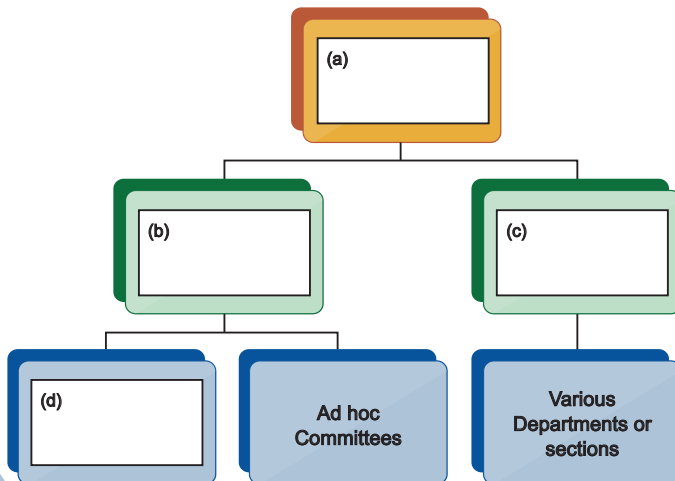
Answer: (3a) general assembly / general council, (3b) board of executive. (2)

Total: 10 marks

Session 3.2 Importance of good cooperative governance in farmer organisations

Activity 3.2 Individual activity: A basic governance structure

Study the figure of the basic governance structure below and fill in the missing labels in the spaces provided. (4)



Answer: (a) general assembly / general council, (b) executive board / executive committee / board of director, (c) secretariat / management, (d) other committees / standing committees. (4)

Total: 4 marks

Session 3.3 Importance of financial sustainability in farmer organisations

Activity 3.3 Individual activity: Financial sustainability

Are there any FOs that operate in your community or perhaps you already belong to an FO? Think of possible financial factors that could affect the sustainability of FOs and answer the following questions.

1. What are some of the factors within your community that you think could affect the financial stability of FOs?
2. What are some of the ways that you will help an FO to expand its financial base?

Answer: Answers may be relatively general as long as learners mention at least one of the factors above.

Summative assessment

Answer the following questions in your own words. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. State whether the following statements are true or false. If the statement is false, give a reason for your answer.

- 1.1 The leadership of a farmer organisation does not play a very big role when it comes to farmer representation. (2)

Answer: False (1) Strong leadership ensure that all levels of membership within an organisation are adequately represented. / Strong leadership is able to provide alternatives to agricultural policies and programmes that negatively affect farmers and farmer organisations. (1)

2. Explain the difference between multiple line and single line membership structures. (4)

Answer: Organisations with multiple line membership structures allow a combination of individual and affiliated membership. (2) Organisations with single line membership structures only allow affiliated membership and no individual farmers are accepted as members to the higher levels of the organisation. (2)

3. Briefly discuss one advantage and one disadvantage of a multiple line membership structure. (4)

Answer: Any one of the following disadvantages for 2 marks each:

- *This form of membership structure is more administratively complex; and*
- *There is a bigger chance of dual membership.*

Any one of the following advantages for 2 marks each:

- *This form of membership structure allows for a large diversity of membership categories; and*
- *This form of membership allows for more chance of participation by different members of the farming community.*

4. Briefly explain a basic model of a hierarchical decision making structure. (4)

Answer: Hierarchical decision making structures consist of a higher level such as a general council or general assembly (1). The upper level structure elects the lower level structures of decision making such as the board of executive and other lower level executive committees (1). Once a lower level structure reaches a decision they report to the level above them (1). This decision along with the decisions of this higher level are then reported to the next level in the decision making hierarchy. Feedback on decisions follow the same procedure down the hierarchy (1).

5. What is meant by the term networking, and how does it benefit farmer representation? (4)

Answer: Networking is the process of interacting with other institutions to exchange information (1) and develop professional links and contacts (1). These networks can be an invaluable source of resources, experience and information (1) that can help the FO during lobbying and representation (1).

6. Briefly explain why good governance structures are important for the sustainability of farmer organisations. (4)

Answer: Any two of the following reasons for 2 marks each:

- *Good governance structures empower all members to participate in a meaningful manner in the decision making processes of the organisation.*
- *It allows members and other stakeholder access to information regarding the running of the organisation and the opportunity to freely air their views regarding the operation of the organisation.*
- *Organisations with good governance structures can easily demonstrate that their financial resources and external funds are being managed responsibly. This in turn gives external stakeholders and businesses confidence in the organisation, ensuring continued support.*

- *Good governance structures ensures accountability of leaders and management and that they do not abuse their position or misuse organisational resources for personal gain.*
- *Well governed organisations have transparent and effective decision making structures.*

7. The secretariat is a very important part of a good governance structure. Discuss three responsibilities of the secretariat. (6)

Answer: Any three of the following responsibilities for 2 marks each:

- *Regular communication with members and external stakeholders;*
- *Development and implementation of projects and programmes for members based on objectives of the organization and resolutions decided on at council or annual general meetings;*
- *Facilitating partnerships with other parties and institutions outside the organisation;*
- *Ensuring that organisational records and documentation is updated and backed up regularly;*
 - *Accounting, financial administration and budgeting;*
 - *Resource mobilisation;*
 - *Maintaining and managing movable property and material stock of the organisation;*
 - *Ensuring that organisational asset inventories are compiled and updated regularly;*
- *Supplying members with current information in agriculture development nationally, regionally and internationally;*
- *Organising of conferences, workshops and meetings; and*
- *Representing the organization in agricultural technical meetings within and outside the country among other things.*

8. Successful farmer organisations need to be financially sustainable. What is meant by financial sustainability? (2)

Answer: The ability of an organisation to raise and maintain the funds necessary (1) to meet its short, medium and long term functional requirements (1).

9. List three factors that can potentially influence the financial sustainability of a farmer organisation. (3)

Answer: Any three of the following factors for 1 mark each.

- *Inadequate financial monitoring;*
- *Poor financial planning and budgeting;*
- *Poor financial management systems;*
- *Under-qualified financial managers;*
- *Very small financial base.*

Total: 33 marks

Study unit 4: Functions of farmer organisations

Session 4.1 Economic functions of farmer organisations

Activity 4.1 Individual activity: Economic benefits of farmer organisations

Using the clues provided below solve the crossword puzzle. (5)

Across

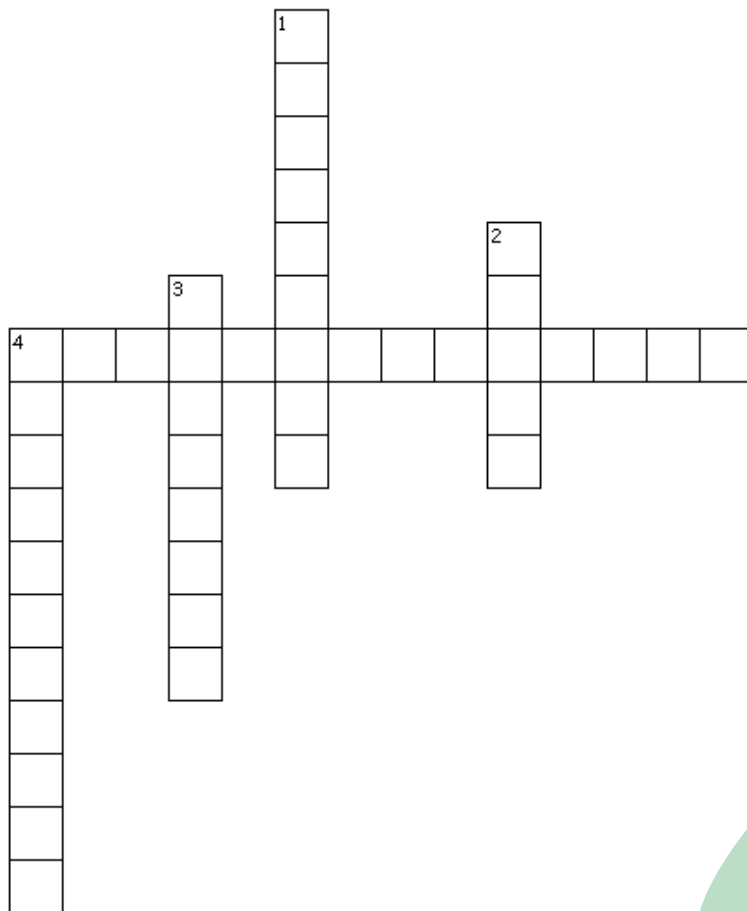
4. Service providers that that work with farmer organisations are able to reduce _____ costs (14 letters).

Down

Economic benefits of joining farmer organisations arise from the principle of 1. _____ (9 letters) of 2. _____ (5 letters).

3. Groups of farmer can negotiate better for _____ on goods and services. (8 letters)

4. This allows farmers in farmer organisations to come up with the necessary quantities of produce demanded by markets. (11 letters)



Answer: (4 across) administration, (1 down) economies, (2 down) scale, (3 down) discount, (4 down) aggregation.

Total: 5 marks

Session 4.2 Political functions of farmer organisations

Activity 4.2 Individual activity: Political benefits of farmer organisations

Using the clues provided, look for the words hidden in the block. Circle them when you find them. (5)

1. An important political function provided by farmer organisations.
2. The act of publicly pleading for or supporting a cause or proposal.
3. The process of attempting to influence the actions, policies, or decisions of officials in a government.
4. Farmer organisations can help farmers to get _____ involved in influencing the formulation of agricultural programmes and policies.
5. Well managed farmer organisations can improve the _____ of governmental policymakers.

Answer:

1. Representation (1)
2. Advocacy (1)
3. Lobbying (1)
4. Proactively (1)
5. Accountability (1)

K O F H R S V Z I C P R T B R
K F N G C Z W X T J K W P O C
V G I O T P K I S D F E W B E
P L P E J N G V E G J U D Q O
K V L G A T W R C Q N O E N B
I Q O R H I J N R S T O J P Q
B **A C C O U N T A B I L I T Y**
A J J L F P K W V P M S H F L
E J N U H B K W X Z M G Z O W
R **P R O A C T I V E L Y** X W D
Q P I D Y X J R Q J P E Q P Z
N Y X Y O A Y I X C C M K E T
C E D H V V **L O B B Y I N G** Y
H **R E P R E S E N T A T I O N**
Z **A D V O C A C Y** K X N Z I F

Total: 5 marks

Session 4.3 Social functions of farmer organisations

Activity 4.3 Individual activity: Social benefits of farmer organisations

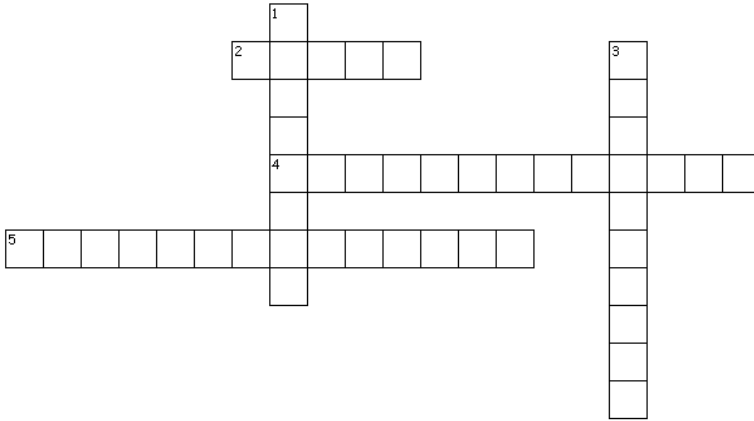
Using the clues provided below solve the crossword puzzle. (5)

Down

1. In societies with wide socioeconomic gaps, FOs can promote social _____ (8 letters)
3. The networks and relationships among people who live and work in a society that allows that society to function effectively. (10 letters)

Across

2. Marginalised members of the society. (5 letters)
4. The unity of a group of people based on common interests, objectives, and standards. (13 letters)
5. The ability to rise from a lower to a higher socioeconomic class or status. (14 letters)



Answer: (1 down) cohesion, (3 down) solidarity, (2 across) women, (4 across) social capital, (5 across) upward mobility.

Total: 5 marks

Session 4.4 Facilitating access to technology

Activity 4.4 Individual activity: Technological benefits of farmer organisations

Using the clues provided look for the words hidden in the block below. (5)

1. Farmer organisations are a reliable source of information on new technologies and _____ .
2. Farmer organisations to create partnerships between farmers and _____ .
3. Farmer organisations can provide farmers with the latest information and _____ technologies.
4. Technology can help small scale farmers to improve their _____ .
5. Farmer organisations are able to influence research _____ .

Answer:

1. Innovations

2. Researchers

3. Communication

4. Productivity

5. Agendas

L	J	K	M	K	R	J	D	W	Y	T	A	G	Z	G
G	J	X	R	G	T	E	W	Z	G	P	H	C	I	C
M	E	B	K	I	S	V	Y	U	V	Q	I	M	B	W
U	D	X	O	K	M	W	E	F	Y	V	V	T	T	G
I	L	K	I	Z	W	Z	V	V	Z	R	B	I	R	X
T	K	R	E	S	E	A	R	C	H	E	R	S	A	N
W	F	P	R	O	D	U	C	T	I	V	I	T	Y	A
R	B	P	K	D	C	E	T	A	G	E	N	D	A	S
K	Y	U	W	I	J	L	L	S	K	N	X	T	M	J
W	U	H	H	Z	J	L	N	W	U	L	U	N	L	Q
A	L	I	N	N	O	V	A	T	I	O	N	S	G	B
R	I	F	K	E	H	E	O	A	A	U	V	K	I	H
A	I	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	C	A	T	I	O	N
X	X	P	F	H	T	D	U	L	G	N	M	Y	W	R
W	E	M	M	I	N	E	Q	N	R	K	M	B	H	V

Total: 5 marks

Activity 4.5 Individual activity: Functions of farmer organisations

Are there any FOs that operate within your area or do you feel there is a need for an FO in your community? If you did belong to an FO, think about what functions that organisation would need to fill within your community and answer the following questions.

1. What are some of the most important economic functions you feel that a farmer based organisation should provide its members?
2. Discuss some of the ways you feel that farmer based organisations should participate in policy formation.
3. Which social functions do you think farmer based organisation should provide their members and do you think that FOs are better positioned to perform these functions as opposed to other organisations or institutions (for example, NGOs)?
4. How do you think farmer based organisations can help farmers to access agricultural innovations?

Answer: Answers may be relatively general as long as the following are mentioned at each question:

- 1. At least one economic benefit for farmers joining an FO.*
- 2. At least one political benefit of FOs.*
- 3. At least one social function provided by FOs.*
- 4. At least one way FOs help farmers access technology.*

Summative assessment

Answer the following questions in your own words. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. Define the following terms in relation to the study material. (4)
 - 1.1 Social capital (2)

Answer: The networks and relationships among people who live and work in a society that allows that society to function effectively.

- 1.2 Upward mobility (2)

Answer: The ability to rise from a lower to a higher socioeconomic class or status.

2. State whether the following statements are true or false. If the statement is false, give a reason for your answer. (4)
 - 2.1 FOs gather and consolidate the opinions and concerns of scattered individual farmers and present them to agricultural policy makers (2)

Answer: True (2)

- 2.2 Farmer organisations do not have any influence in the direction of research agendas. (2)

Answer: False (1). Farmer organisations can communicate the needs of individual farmers to researchers and they can then use this information to plan their research agendas (1).

3. Explain what is meant by the term economies of scale. (2)

*Answer: This is when the per unit cost of any product is reduced when the total production cost is spread over a larger quantity. (2)
/ The proportionate saving in costs gained by an increased level of production. (2)*

*May also be explained by means of an example, for instance:
There is a larger cost involved for a single farmer to negotiate*

and buy a single bag of animal feed or fertiliser than it is for 100 farmers to pool their resources and negotiate and buy 100 bags together. (2)

4. Farmer organisations provide economic benefits to both farmers and service providers. Briefly discuss one economic benefit for farmers joining farmer organisations. (2)

Answer: Any one of the following benefits for 2 marks each.

- *Farmers can work in groups to pool their limited resources and negotiate for discounts and reduced unit prices.*
- *Working in groups with FOs can reduce the per unit transaction costs of doing enabling farmers to maximise their profits.*
- *Aggregation of farm produce will help farmers to come up with the necessary quantities and qualities demanded by some markets.*
- *Farmers are also able to bulk their produce and negotiate as a unit for a better price at the market.*

5. Briefly discuss one economic benefit for service providers working with farmer organisations. (2)

Answer: Any one of the following benefits for 2 marks each.

- *Working with farmers in FOs is more cost effective than dealing with individual farmers.*
- *The cost of providing any service is reduced when farmers are contacted as a group because the services provided reach a large number of clients with the same expenses expenditure the service provider would have earned incurred in reaching out to a single farmer*
- *The unit cost of administration for service provision is reduced when dealing with groups rather than individuals.*
- *Service providers are able to reach farmers that would otherwise have been overlooked.*

6. Explain how FOs can potentially influence agricultural policy development. (4)

Answer: FOs provide a platform where individual farmers can air their concerns, opinions and ideas. (1) FOs gather and consolidate the views of all the individual farmers and present them in a way that is useful to policy makers (1) This way farmers are indirectly able to lobby for agricultural policy reforms aimed at benefiting them and their farming activities. (2)

7. In your own words, explain why it is better for FOs to be proactively involved in agricultural policy development initiatives. (3)

Answer: Reacting to existing and recently implemented government initiatives is very ineffective. (1) At this point it is very difficult to change policies and programmes. (1) It is more effective to become involved during the development and formulation stage as this is when policy makers are more open to suggestions.(1)

8. Briefly discuss how FOs can empower women in the agricultural sector. (4)

Answer: In many societies women do not have the access to the same level of education, training, information or technology than men. (1) This leads to female farmers lacking the appropriate skills to run their farms successfully. (1) By joining FOs these women can gain access to skills, services and markets they would not have access to otherwise. (1) FOs can work together with extensionists, to train and educate women to bridge the illiteracy and skill gap. (1)

9. Briefly explain how FOs can help facilitate access to new agricultural technologies. (3)

Answer: FOs can easily form partnerships between farmers, researchers, extensionists and other relevant stakeholders the agricultural research and development sector. (1)

Extension programmes are frequently responsible for the communication of agricultural innovation to farmers and it is much

easier for extensionists to reach out and communicate with groups of farmers than with each individual farmer in an area, especially in resource poor communities where the extension agent to farmer ratio is very low. (2)

Total: 28 marks

Post-assessment

The Post-assessment is to be done once you have read through the module and completed all the activities. Compare your answers to those in the pre-assessment to identify where knowledge has been gained and where improvements can be made. Rate your knowledge on the topics on a scale of 1 to 5 by circling the corresponding number.

	Question	Self-assessment				
		Low		High		
1	I am familiar with the term farmer organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I understand how farmer organisations are categorised and the different services they provide.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I can identify factors from within farmer organisations that will affect the operation of these organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I can identify factors from the outside environments that will affect the success of farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am able to provide possible solutions to address challenges faced by farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I can explain how farmer representation will influence organisational sustainability.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am aware of the importance of good corporate governance in farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5

Question		Self-assessment				
		Low		High		
8	I can discuss the importance of financial stability for farmer organisations.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I can describe the major functions that farmer organisations offer their members and the agricultural sector.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am aware of the role farmer organisations play in facilitating access to agricultural research and technology.	1	2	3	4	5

Answer: Learner's own answer.