

“Transitional Agriculture”  
Promoting exchange between Farmers’ Organizations under the  
umbrella of WFO

Technical report

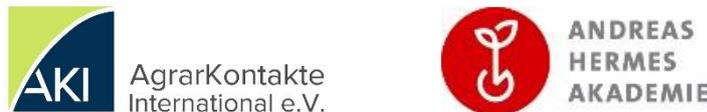
Drivers of Change, Innovations & Role of Farmers’ Organizations in Marketing and  
Logistics for better functioning Value Chains

August 2020

**PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**



**IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATIONS**



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## Abbreviations

AKI	AgrarKontakte International
AKKOR	Association of Peasant Farms and Agricultural Cooperatives of Russia
FO	Farmers' Organization
ICT	Information and communication technology
COFAG	African partner-organizations are the Coalition of Farmers-Ghana
AHA	Andreas Hermes Academy
DBV	German Farmers' Association
NASFAM	The National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi
INGABO	The Rwandan Farmers 'Organization
WFO	World Farmers' Organisation
ZFU	Zimbabwe Farmers' Union

## Background

The collaborations between African and European countries have been in the centre of interest for the past decades. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, signed in 2015, have emphasised the need for exchanging experiences, improving coordination and focusing support for a global partnership.<sup>1</sup> Specifically in the agricultural context, the European Commission has established the “task force rural Africa ”<sup>2</sup> to further strengthen the EU-Africa partnership in food and farming. Among the many essential recommendations published in an executive report in March 2019, the merging of European and African expertise for agriculture and rural development is one of the most important field of actions. This can be done through establishing exchange between farmers and peers from society, business, and governments (under action 6-2)<sup>2</sup> as well as Farmers’ Organizations and associations.

The project “Transitional Agriculture” is an example of how these goals can be achieved through equal partnership. Launched by the Association of Peasant Farms and Agricultural Cooperatives of Russia (AKKOR) and the German Farmers’ Association (DBV), under the

umbrella of the World Farmers’ Organisation (WFO), this three year exchange project aims to collaborate closely with African Farmer Organizations on challenges and solutions of farming in a fast changing agriculture. The African partner-organizations are the Coalition of Farmers-Ghana (COFAG), the National Smallholder Farmers’ Association of Malawi (NASFAM), the Rwandan Farmers’ Organization (INGABO), and Zimbabwe Farmers’ Union (ZFU). The cooperation is accompanied and supported by the Andreas Hermes Academy (AHA) and AgrarKontakte International (AKI) e.V..

The overall goal of the project “Transitional agriculture” is to strengthen Farmers’ Organizations (FOs) through development and discussion of topics that concern farmers worldwide, facilitated through multidisciplinary seminars.

The first round of seminars took place between May 2020 and June 2020. Prior to the execution of the seminars, the different FOs gave an overview of their challenges. Table 1 summarizes the different aspects considered. The topics of marketing and logistics were identified as common challenges to each FO.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations.2015. The Sustainable Development Agenda, Website: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

<sup>2</sup> Task force rural Africa. 2019.Executive report An Africa-Europe agenda for rural transformation

Table 1 Identified challenges - Prior to the seminars

FO Indicator	DBV	AKKOR	COFAG	INGABO	ZFU	NASFAM
Availability of sufficient resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Production of own agricultural product	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marketing	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Logistics	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Price and demand of agricultural products	✗	★	✗	★	✗	✗
Access to an online seminar	✓	★	✗	✗	✓	★

Legend			
✓	No problem	✗	Challenge
		★	Unknown

Consequently, the first seminar was specifically focussed on marketing, the second seminar was dedicated for logistics and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last seminar looked deeper at different roles and responsibilities of FOs and served as a platform

allowing the group of FOs to jointly define the way forward based on the results from the former exchanges. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the seminars were held online. Each seminar lasted 3 hours.



Figure 1 Topic and schedule of the seminars



Figure 2 Online seminars via Zoom

## Marketing and logistics in the agricultural value chains - Main challenges

### Marketing:

Marketing covers all the activities to ensure the availability of products for consumption. It includes all business activities intended to plan, price, promote and distribute goods based on the preferences of the final customer.<sup>3</sup>

### Logistics:

The logistic system in agriculture aims to guarantee an efficient process of production of agricultural products by optimizing the cost of production, ensuring proper and safe storage, transport, and distribution and well as value addition to the product.<sup>4</sup>

The different FOs noted challenges and constraints in the marketing and logistics. The main issues were presented as follow:

### **Bigger and more complex markets:**

During the past five years (2015-2020) different changes have been noticed in local, national, regional markets and beyond. Next to rising demands in quantities, many FOs have observed demands for high-quality agricultural products.

Furthermore, criteria like animal welfare, environmental-friendly production or health consideration seem to play an increasingly important role. This differentiation in agricultural products has been becoming a challenge for farmers with low capacity in value addition, which create obstacles to sell their products with higher prices. In this context, the FAO has stated that the range of standards related to quality, traceability and certification make participation in value chains difficult.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ghafoor et al.2017. Marketing of Agricultural Products.

<sup>4</sup> Kramar et al. How to define logistics in agriculture?

<sup>5</sup> FAO. 2017. The future of food and agriculture – Trends and challenges. Rome.

**Lack of market access to market information:**

As market dynamics are changing over time, there is a need for farmers and the different stakeholders to be informed about fluctuations regarding offers, demands and prices.

The knowledge about specific market characteristics and feature give a higher negotiation power to the processors and retailers. Unfortunately, smallholder farmers often lack these market information<sup>6</sup>.

**Lack of access to online marketing:**

Information and communication technology (ICT) solution in agriculture have proved to be a highly efficient tool to plan, evaluate and reduce transaction costs. While it has been used in large scale in developed countries for the past 20 years<sup>7</sup>, it has been growing steadily

in Africa in the last years. Examples can be found in Kenya (DrumNet) or Uganda (E-soko)<sup>8</sup>. The FOs have emphasized the need for ICT for them to overcome the above-mentioned challenges such as the lack of market information and direct access to the customers.

**Lack of appropriate post-harvest handling:**

In the logistics section, lack of transportation facilities and appropriate storage spaces were presented as a limiting factor. Participants reported this problem in different occasions during the seminars. It is important to highlight that this is a global issue: Each year in Africa, around 13 million tonnes of cereals, or more than 15 percent of total cereal production, are lost during post-harvest operations<sup>7</sup>.

**The COVID-19 pandemic is an example of drivers to change, it underlined the need for strong logistics and marketing infrastructure.**

The travel and movement restrictions are affecting farmers access to markets and engendering the lack of seasonal workers during harvesting season.

Moreover, the demand on online retailing system has increased due to the closed local markets. The lack of storage facilities has caused post-harvest losses.

## Marketing and logistics in the agricultural value chains – Possible field of actions

After commonly examining the challenges, the FOs discussed about useful innovations and their strategies to improve their services provided to their members. The results are presented in the summary Table 2:

<sup>6</sup> Gulati.2007. Growth in high-value agriculture in Asia and the emergence of vertical links with farmers.

<sup>7</sup> FAO. 2017. Information and communication Technology (ICT) in Agriculture. Rome.

<sup>8</sup> Yonazi et al.2010. “eTransform Africa: The Transformational Use of ICTs in Africa. Chapter 3: ICT for climate change adaptation in Africa. World Bank (2012).World Bank.

Table 2 Summary of innovations and interventions

Innovative retailing systems: Online platforms	Storage facilities	Lobbying and advocacy	Information of market prices	Support farmers in quality requirements, value addition and certification	Capacity building and training
<p>Implementation of an online platform for common and individual selling <b>to connect customers to farmers</b> by a pick-up service at farm, storage, and distribution to customers</p> <p>Remote organization and <b>logistics planning</b></p> <p><b>Cooperation with training organizations regarding online-system skills</b></p> <p>Use of <b>electronic documentation</b> for marketing</p> <p><b>Market intelligence</b> to help to understand the market and to provide forecasts and tendencies</p>	<p>Access to <b>warehouse</b> and other storage facilities</p> <p>Use of larger <b>distribution centres</b> to make it easier for farmers to find marketing opportunities all over the year</p>	<p>Access to <b>financial services</b> for farmers</p> <p><b>Lobbying and advocacy for grants</b> from Government such as procurement of special vehicles to transport farmers' products to markets</p> <p><b>Negotiations</b> on behalf of farmers favour</p>	<p>Serve as <b>bridge between retailers and farmers</b></p> <p>Assist with aggregation /marketing to overcome difficulties to sale. Providing places for markets and online shops</p> <p>Communication between market demand (including prices development) and farmers</p> <p>Need of direct contact to customers or supermarkets</p>	<p>Setting up agri-food chains that are differentiated according to production processes (e.g. organic food, products with higher standards of animal welfare, sustainable milk)</p> <p>Support in achieving certification and setting up <b>traceability systems</b></p> <p>Support to establish <b>quality standards, labels, certification, and traceability</b></p>	<p>For the FOs members as well as the farmers in various fields</p>

## Different FOs, different roles

To cope with these challenges, the FOs needed to reflect upon their own roles and the spectrum of their interventions so far.

The participating FOs differ in their forms and essential services. They operate at many different levels which widen the opportunities and the range of constraints faced by these organizations. The functions of the FOs can be divided into three categories: advocacy or policy, economic and technical as well as local development<sup>9</sup>. In general, national level

organizations play a crucial role in policy advocacy whereas local or regional organizations are involved in service providing such as input or output marketing.<sup>10</sup>

While DBV and AKKOR are mainly focused on advocacy and policy on behalf of the farmers to the government, ZFU, NASFAM, INGABO and COFAG functions fall more into technical and local development.

The services provided by FOs are listed as follow in Table 3<sup>11</sup>:

Table 3 Services provided by FOs

Services	AKKOR	COFAG	DBV	INGABO	NASFAM	ZFU
<b>Marketing services (input supply, output marketing and processing, market information)</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Facilitation of collective production activities</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Financial services (savings, loans, and other forms of credit)</b>		✓				
<b>Technology services (education, extension, research)</b>	✓	✓		✓		
<b>Education services (business skills, health, general)</b>			✓		✓	✓
<b>Welfare services (health, safety nets)</b>			✓			
<b>Policy advocacy</b>	✓		✓			

From the strategies in Table 2 and the services provided in Table 3, the FOs need to either expand their services or reinforce their structures to attain their own objectives. The individual objectives are different from FO to another; however, it is possible to regroup their current priorities as shows in Figure 3:

<sup>9</sup> Rondot, Pierre, and Marie-Helene Collion. 2001. Agricultural Producer Organizations: Their Contribution to Rural Capacity Building and Poverty Reduction-Report of a Workshop, Washington, D.C., June 28-30, 1999. RDV, World Bank, Washington.

<sup>10</sup> Collion, M. and Rondot, P. (2001). "Investing in Rural producer Organisations for Sustainable Agriculture". Washington, World Bank SASKI.

<sup>11</sup> Stockbridge. 2003. Farmer organisations for market access. Briefing paper.

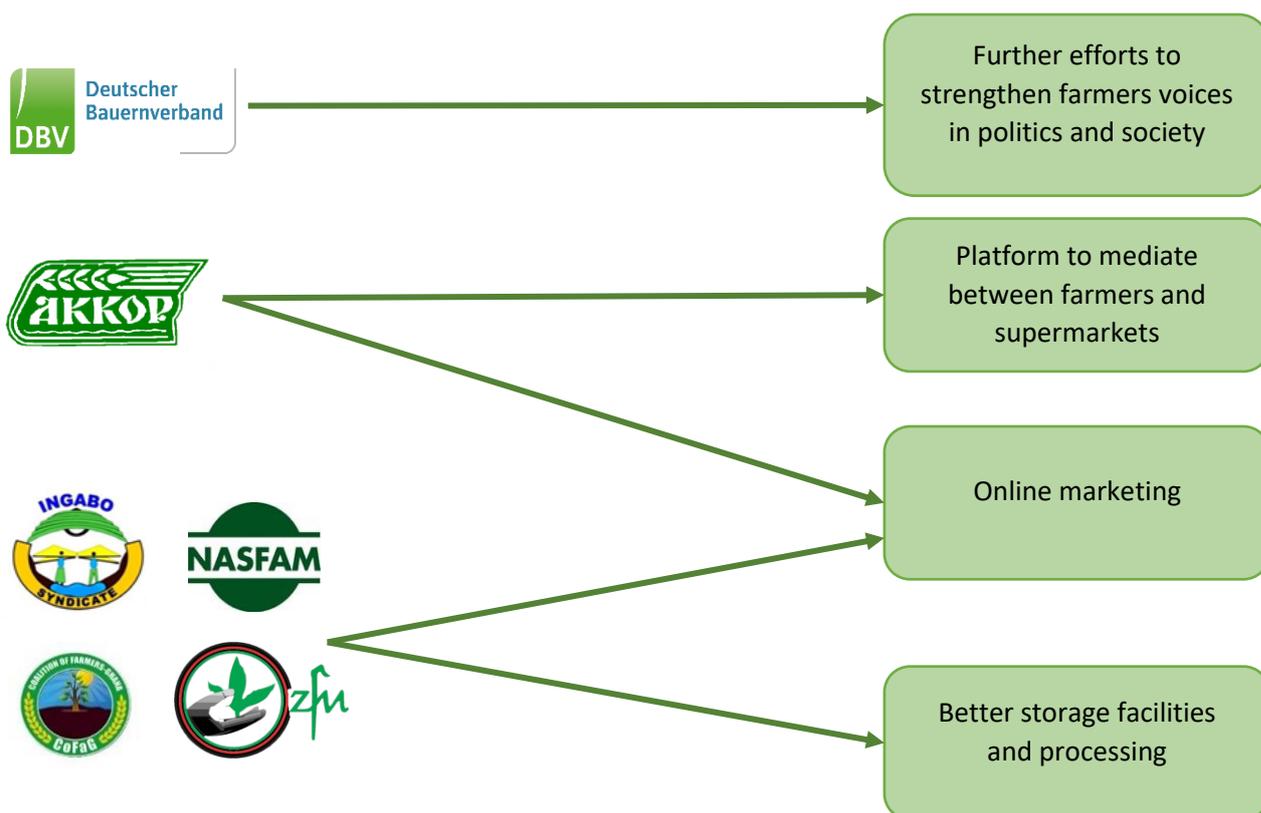


Figure 3 Prioritised actions of the FOs

The adjustment of the FOs over time is common (either to specialise in a sector or to broaden their scope of action). We can cite the example from the Malawian FOs which organised their activities around specific crops, by undertaking this strategy, they succeeded to respond to the market and build closely ties to international markets.<sup>12</sup>

The same model was presented by FOs in Benin, focusing on Cotton production, and are involved in decision making process including cotton research and extension<sup>13</sup>.

In Uganda, the FOs transformed from being instruments of government policy to business-oriented organizations that are capable for analysing their problems based on their needs.<sup>14</sup>

In Honduras, a FO 'COHORSIL' focused at first on coffee, needed to diversify into new products and marketing of fresh vegetables to face the declining prices of coffee. Many of the members are now able to produce vegetables meeting the quality demanded by local supermarkets.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Thompson et al.2009.Policy brief 031. Challenges and Opportunities for Strengthening Farmers Organisations in Africa: Lessons from Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi

<sup>13</sup> Bertus Wennink and Willem Heemskerk. Farmers' organizations and agricultural innovation.

2006. Case studies from Benin, Rwanda, and Tanzania.

<sup>14</sup> Millie Biruma Abaru et al. 2006. Strengthening farmer's organizations : RELMA's experience in eastern and southern Africa. ICRAF Working Paper no 23

<sup>15</sup> Hellin, J et al.2007. Farmer organization and market access. LEISA Magazine 23 (1):26-27.

## Way forward - General need to collaborate

The differences between these FOs are to be highlighted as an enriching element to the overall dialogue. By opening the conversation about their common challenges, the FOs realized that there is a need to network and learn from each other's experience and gather the efforts to reach their common goal which is reinforcing farmers and their role as a FO.

Whether it is for capacity building, processing and value addition or market intelligence and infrastructure, the FOs need to create an alliance within each other and with stakeholders from the private sector, politics, and civil society.

By exchanging and networking together, there is the chance to receive concrete models and experiences by sharing success stories and explore the possibilities to customize it within the local context.

Every FO must deal with challenges that appear more and more often on a global scale. Only through exchange and alignment FOs can cope these challenges, support their members in the best way and provide a strong voice for their needs.

It is important to determine tools to exchange and promote networking such as the WFO existing network or Farmers and Rural Producers' Organizations Mapping (FO-MAPP)<sup>16</sup>, ICTs, social media, emails, and farmers exchange visits. That is the reason why the project "Transitional Agriculture" will continue. The six FOs will come together again in September 2020 to go the full distance.

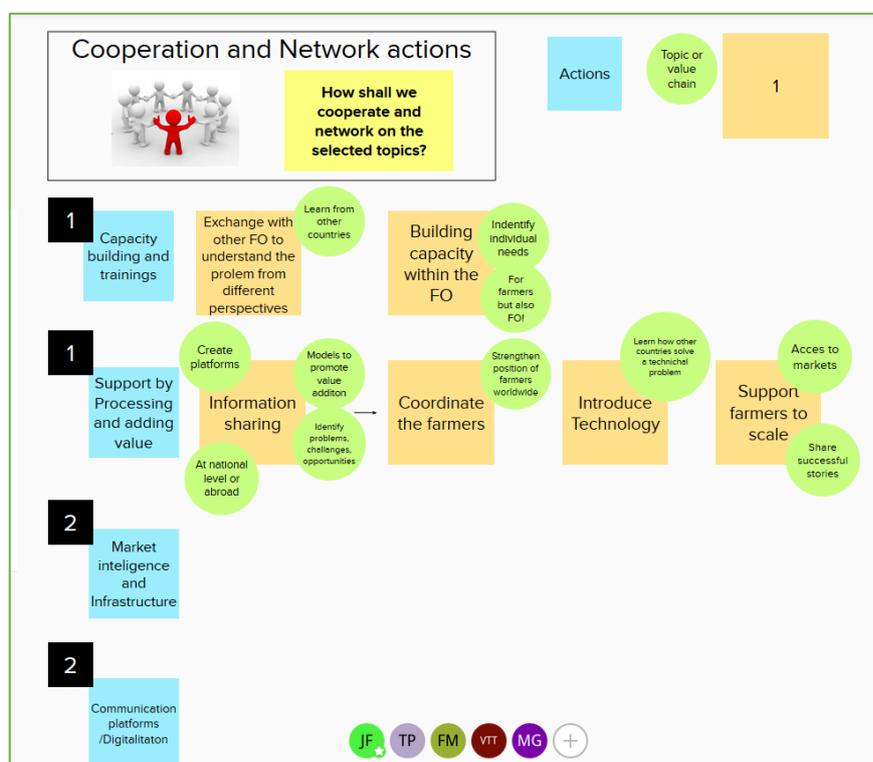


Figure 4 Brainstorming over future cooperation

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.fo-mapp.com/about/>

## Annex

### ,Transitional Agriculture ‘

Promoting exchange between Farmers’ Organizations under the umbrella of WFO

*1st Pre-Seminar – Topic Marketing*

**Venue:** Zoom Meeting

**Time:** 27.05.2020

**Time in Germany, Malawi,**

**Rwanda and Zimbabwe\*:** 02:00-05:00 pm

Time in Ghana: 12:00-03.00 pm

Time in Russia: 03:00-06:00 pm

**Moderation:** Maria Gerster-Bentaya, University of Hohenheim

**Record:** AKI, AHA

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#### Agenda:

<i>TIME*</i>	<i>CONTENTS</i>
02.00 pm	Welcome <i>Falk Kullen</i>  Introduction of participants <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i>
02:40 pm	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ origin &amp; objectives of the overall program and its components (including preparatory activities) <i>Falk Kullen, AKI</i></li><li>▪ objectives, program and working modalities of today <i>Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i></li></ul>
02:50 pm	Changes in marketing over the past 5 years (group work) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What have been the most important innovations?</li><li>▪ Where did they come from? What were their causes?</li><li>▪ What kind of role had the FO? How did they react?</li></ul>
03:25 pm	BREAK Do not leave the zoom room, mute, turn off camera

03:50 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation of group work results (by a speaker of the working group) <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i></li> </ul>
04:05 pm	<p>Changes in marketing in the rest of the world <i>Mark Fynn</i></p> <p>Discussion / exchange <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i></p>
04:25 pm	<p>Main learnings and insights of today's work (per country)</p> <p>Presentation <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i></p>
04:50 pm	<p>Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outlook <i>Falk Kullen / Julia Fendel</i></li> <li>▪ Evaluation/feedback <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i></li> </ul>
05:00 pm	End of the seminar

## ,Transitional Agriculture ‘

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2nd Pre-Seminar – Topic Logistics

**Venue:** Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/99600690761>  
Meeting ID: 996 0069 0761

**Time:** **03.06.2020**  
**Time in Germany, Malawi,  
Rwanda and Zimbabwe\*:** **02:00-05:00 pm**  
Time in Ghana: 12:00-03.00 pm  
Time in Russia: 03:00-06:00 pm

**Moderation:** Maria Gerster-Bentaya, University of Hohenheim  
**Record:** AKI, AHA

### Agenda:

TIME*	CONTENTS
02.00 pm	Welcome <i>Falk Kullen</i> Results of the last seminar <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i>
02:30 pm	Presentation: Do changes in marketing influence changes in logistics, or is it perhaps the other way around? <i>Dr. Victor Torres Toledo</i> Discussion / exchange <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i>
03:00 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> working group <i>Changes in Logistics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Which initiatives came from the association?</li></ul>
03:20 pm	BREAK, 30 minutes
03:50 pm	Continuing: 1 <sup>st</sup> working group <i>Changes in Logistics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Effects of COVID-19</li></ul>
04:10 pm	Presentation of group work results (by a speaker of the working group)
04:30 pm	2 <sup>nd</sup> working group <i>Main Learnings and Insights of Today’s Work</i> (per country)
04:55 pm	Closing/ Outlook <i>Falk Kullen</i>
05:00 pm	End of the seminar

## ,Transitional Agriculture ‘

Promoting exchange between Farmers’ Organizations under the umbrella of WFO

*3rd Pre-Seminar – Topic Discussion on the Results*

**Venue:** Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/93629047388>, Meeting ID: 936 2904 7388

**Time:** **10.06.2020**  
**Time in Germany, Malawi,  
Rwanda and Zimbabwe\*:** **02:00-05:00 pm**  
Time in Ghana: 12:00-03.00 pm  
Time in Russia: 03:00-06:00 pm

**Moderation:** Maria Gerster-Bentaya, University of Hohenheim

**Record:** AKI

### Agenda:

<i>TIME*</i>	<i>CONTENTS</i>
02:00 pm	Welcome <i>Falk Kullen</i> Results of the last seminar: Changes in Logistics <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i>
02:30 pm	Working Group: Topic Value Chains
03:30 pm	BREAK, 30 minutes
04:00 pm	Continuing with the topic Value Chains <i>facilitated by Maria Gerster-Bentaya</i>
04:20 pm	Presentation: The importance of aligned actions between Farmers’ Organizations <i>Dr. Andreas Quiring (Andreas Hermes Akademie)</i>
04:55 pm	Closing/ Outlook <i>Falk Kullen</i>
05:00 pm	End of the seminar

List of participants during the 1st-3rd seminar:

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Function</b>
World Farmer's Organisation (WFO)	Arianna Giuliiodori	Secretary General
	Ambra Raggi	Policy Officer
	Valeria Di Marzo	Communications Officer
German Farmers' Association (DBV)	Werner Schwarz	Vice President
	Dr. Simon Schlüter	Head   International Affairs (Brussels Office)
	Hannes Bumann	Youth Representative
	Stephan Schoch	Referent   International Affairs
Russian Association of rural and farm enterprises and agricultural cooperatives (AKKOR)	Vladimir Plotnikov (tbc.)	President
	Olga Bashmachnikova	Vice-President
	Oxana Avtonomova	Deputy Executive Director
	Angelina Cherenkova	Youth Representative
	Andrey Nefedov	Lawyer
Coalition of Farmers Ghana (COFAG)	Edward Kwasi Akuoko Jnr	President
	Nsiah Ebenezer Kwaku	Youth representative
The Rwandan Farmers' Organization (INGABO)	Oswald Tuyisenge	Executive Secretary
	Victor Manariyo	Agronomist
	Jean Claude Niyonsaba	Institutional Development and Communication Officer (IDCO), Youth representative
Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFA)	Abdul Credit Nyathi	President
	Dr. Prince Kuipa	ZFU Chief Economist
	Paul Zakariya	Executive Director
	Ruramiso Mashumba	National Youth Chairperson

The National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM)	Clara Malikula	Board Chairperson
	Betty Chinyamunyamu	CEO
	Beatrice Makwenda	Head of Policy and Communication
Andreas Hermes Akademie (AHA)	Dr. Andreas Quiring	Managing Director AHA
	Nicole Bolomey	Director AHA International
	Thorben Persch	Project Manager
	Maren Ziebarth	Project and Marketing Coordinator
AgrarKontakte International (AKI) e.V.	Falk Kullen	Managing Director AKI
	Julia Fendel	Project Manager
University of Hohenheim	Maria Gerster-Bentaya	Moderator
	Dr. Victor Torres Toledo	Technical Expert
	Farah Mrabet	Technical Expert
	Mark Kofi Fynn	Global Agrar-Economic Expert
Freelancer interpreters	Svetlana Shcherbakova	Interpreter
Freelancer interpreters	Vladimir Schirokow	Interpreter