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**AGRI  
FAIR**  
2023-24



**SOUVENIR**



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FARMERS' & STUDENTS  
CONCLAVE**

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*Sponsored by:*  
Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare,  
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*Organized by:*  
Central Agricultural University,  
Lamphelpat, Imphal - 795004, Manipur

*Venue:*  
State Agri Expo, 4 Mile,  
Chumoukedima, Dimapur, Nagaland. 797115



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# FARMERS PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS (FPOs): EMPOWERING AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**S.K. Roy, Rajesh T and Tushar Athare**

*ICAR-Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute,  
College of Agriculture Campus, Shivajinagar, Pune-411005*



## Abstract

Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs) have emerged as pivotal institutions in transforming agriculture and rural communities. This research article explores the concept of FPOs, their objectives, impact, and challenges. Drawing insights from relevant literature, it demonstrates how FPOs are empowering farmers, promoting sustainable agricultural practices and contributing to rural development.

## 1. Introduction

Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs) have gained prominence in recent years as catalysts for rural development and sustainable agriculture. These community-based organizations are designed to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, enhance their bargaining power, and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

The primary function of Farmers' Producer Organizations (FPOs) is to serve as a unifying force for member farmers, enabling them to achieve economies of scale and bolstering their collective bargaining power. Against this backdrop,

the Government of India has introduced a comprehensive Central Sector Scheme (CSS) called "Formation and Promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)." This scheme, initiated by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers' Welfare (DAC&FW) under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA & FW), aims to facilitate the establishment and advancement of 10,000 FPOs within a five-year timeframe. This study focuses on assessing the status, operational reach, feedback, and future prospects of selected FPOs in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Notably, these FPOs are receiving technical guidance from Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in their pursuit of sustainable agricultural development. This research article examines the role and significance of FPOs, supported by a review of pertinent literature.

## 2. Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs): An Overview

Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs) are member-based institutions formed by smallholder farmers to collectively engage in agricultural production, marketing, and various other activities. They operate under a cooperative framework and are typically registered under cooperative laws.

### 3. Objectives and Functions of FPOs

The literature review reveals that FPOs pursue various objectives and functions:

**Market Access:** Market Access is a pivotal aspect of FPOs that has a significant impact on smallholder farmers and the agricultural landscape. It encompasses several key components, each contributing to the overarching goal of enhancing farmers' market engagement and improving their economic well-being. FPOs enable smallholder farmers to access larger markets, obtain fair prices for their produce, and reduce exploitation by middlemen (Sengupta, 2017).

**Resource Pooling:** Resource Pooling is a fundamental function of FPOs that plays a vital role in enhancing the efficiency and profitability of smallholder farmers. This concept involves FPOs collectively gathering and managing resources such as agricultural inputs, machinery, and credit, ultimately benefiting individual farmers in several ways. A study by Saha & Jat (2015) delves into the details of how resource pooling through FPOs is executed and its significance for agriculture.

**Capacity Building:** Capacity Building is a critical component of the services provided by FPOs. It involves the development of the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of individual farmers, collectively and individually, to enhance their agricultural practices and overall understanding of farming. A study by Patil (2013) discusses the significance of capacity building in the context of FPOs.

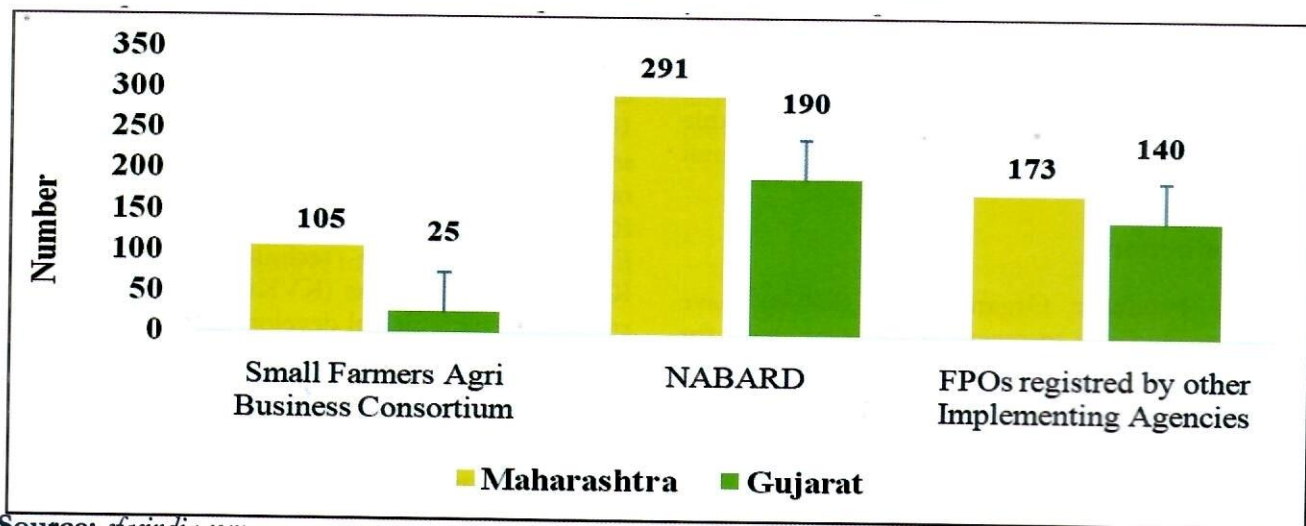
**Diversification:** Diversification is a strategic approach employed by FPOs to improve the economic well-being of smallholder farmers. This strategy encompasses a variety of aspects aimed at enhancing income and ensuring food security. A study by Mehta (2018) discusses the role of FPOs in promoting diversification and its significance in agriculture.

### 4. Status of FPOs in Western India

#### 4.1 FPOs registered by different agencies

In Maharashtra and Gujarat, number of FPOs were registered by different agencies such as Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and other Implementing Agencies (IAs) under CSS for formation & promotion of 10,000 FPOs.

Figure 1: Number of FPOs registered by different agencies in Western India



Source: *sfacindia.com*

In Maharashtra, a total of 569 FPOs were registered, with NABARD registering 51 percent, other Implementing Agencies (IAs) contributing 30 percent and SFAC registering 18 percent of these FPOs.

In Gujarat, out of 355 FPOs, SFAC registered 25 FPOs, representing 7 percent, NABARD was responsible for 54 percent by registering 190 FPOs and other Implementing Agencies (IAs) registered 140 FPOs, accounting for 39 percent of the total.

## 4.2 Promotion and Development of FPOs under CSS for formation & Promotion of 10,000 FPOs in India

The “Promotion and Development of Farmers’ Producer Organizations (FPOs) under CSS for Formation & Promotion of 10,000 FPOs in India” initiative has made substantial progress in fostering the growth of FPOs and empowering smallholder farmers.

Currently, there are 5029 FPOs registered under this scheme, forming a robust network of collective farmer entities. These FPOs collectively represent a staggering 20, 29,000 shareholder members, highlighting the increasing collective strength and bargaining power of smallholder farmers. The credit linkage of 1363 FPOs is facilitating access to financial resources, enabling investments in agricultural improvements. Additionally, 2917 FPOs have been linked to markets, ensuring that the produce of smallholder farmers reaches a wider audience, thus enhancing their income and market access. The existence of 1350 Producers’ Organization Promoting Institutes (POPIs) demonstrates the extensive support system that guides, trains, and provides resources to FPOs. Moreover, 110 Cluster Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) contribute to regional economic development and enhance the collective impact of FPOs in specific areas. The engagement of 22 Resource Support Agencies (RSAs) offers crucial technical support, resources, and expertise, further fostering the growth and sustainability of FPOs. Furthermore, the digitization of 4290 FPOs and 18, 67,252 FPO members reflects the commitment for improving operational efficiency and management through technology, ultimately driving progress and sustainability in India’s agricultural landscape.

**Table 1: Details of FPOs registered in India**

Particulars	Numbers
No. of FPOs registered	5029
No. of total Shareholder Members	2029000
No. of FPOs credit Linked	1363
No. of FPOs market linked	2917
No. of Producers’ Organization Promoting Institute (POPIs)	1350

No. of Cluster Based Business Organisations (CBBOs)	110
No. of Resource Support Agencies (RSA)	22
No. of FPOs digitised	4290
No. of members digitised	1867252

Source: [www.nabard.org](http://www.nabard.org)

## 4.3 FPOs registered under CSS for Formation & Promotion of 10,000 FPOs by SFAC in Western India

The “FPOs registered under CSS for Formation & Promotion of 10,000 FPOs by SFAC in Western India” table provides an overview of the progress in establishing Farmers’ Producer Organizations (FPOs) in Gujarat and Maharashtra. In Gujarat, a total of 123 FPOs were targeted for registration, and there are currently 82 FPOs that have been successfully registered, with 41 more in the process of registration. Similarly, in Maharashtra, out of the targeted 222 FPOs, 159 have already been registered, and 63 are in the process of registration. When we consider both states collectively, the total target was set at 345 FPOs, and 241 FPOs are now registered, with an additional 104 FPOs in the process of registration. This data reflects a

**Table 2: FPOs registered by SFAC in Western India**

State Name	Targeted FPO	Registered FPO	Under Process of Registration
Gujarat	123	82	41
Maharashtra	222	159	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>104</b>

Source: [sfacindia.com](http://sfacindia.com)

significant stride towards the formation and promotion of FPOs in Western India, demonstrating a commitment to empower the farmers, enhancing their collective strength, and fostering sustainable agricultural practices in the region.

## 5. Impact of FPOs

The literature cited highlights the following positive impacts of FPOs:

**Income Enhancement:** Income Enhancement is a pivotal aspect of FPOs and it plays a crucial role in improving the economic well-being of smallholder farmers. This particular aspect is closely related to price realization and the strategies employed by FPOs to ensure that their members receive fair and remunerative prices for their agricultural produce. A study by Raju & Chavan (2014) discussed the role of FPOs in achieving this income enhancement and its significance.

**Empowerment** is a crucial aspect of FPOs, and it goes beyond just economic considerations. FPOs are instrumental in enhancing the overall well-being of smallholder farmers by boosting their capacity to influence their own destinies and participate actively in agricultural and decision-making processes. A study by Saha & Jat (2015) revealed how FPOs empower smallholder farmers.

**Sustainable Agriculture:** Sustainable Agriculture is a core focus of FPOs, and it encompasses a range of practices aimed at ensuring that farming activities are not only economically viable but also environmentally and socially responsible. A study by Mehta (2018) studied how FPOs promote sustainable agriculture.

**Social Development:** Social Development through FPOs is a multifaceted and essential aspect of their work, encompassing various initiatives that contribute to the overall well-being of their members and the broader farming communities. A study by Patil (2013) found that FPOs play a significant role in promoting social development.

## 6. Challenges and Future Directions

The literature review identifies several challenges faced by FPOs, such as limited access to credit, management issues, and regulatory constraints. The article also discusses future directions for strengthening FPOs, including better financial support, capacity building, and policy support.

## 7. Conclusion

Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs) have emerged as vital agents for sustainable agriculture and rural development. Through collective action, resource pooling, and market access, FPOs empower smallholder farmers and promote sustainable agricultural practices. The reviewed literature underscores the positive impacts of FPOs and emphasizes the need for continued support and capacity building to enhance their effectiveness in fostering rural development.

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