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Project Brief

ACCELERATING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS THROUGH STRONG PRODUCERS' ORGANIZATIONS (ACCESS)

The ACCESS approach draws on the viewpoint that producers' organizations (POs) themselves should be empowered to take the driving seat in serving the needs of their communities. It combines capacity development activities and investment grants along with step-by-step handholding and monitoring. It enables smallholders, through POs, to strengthen their livelihoods through increased access to finance, markets, information and technology.

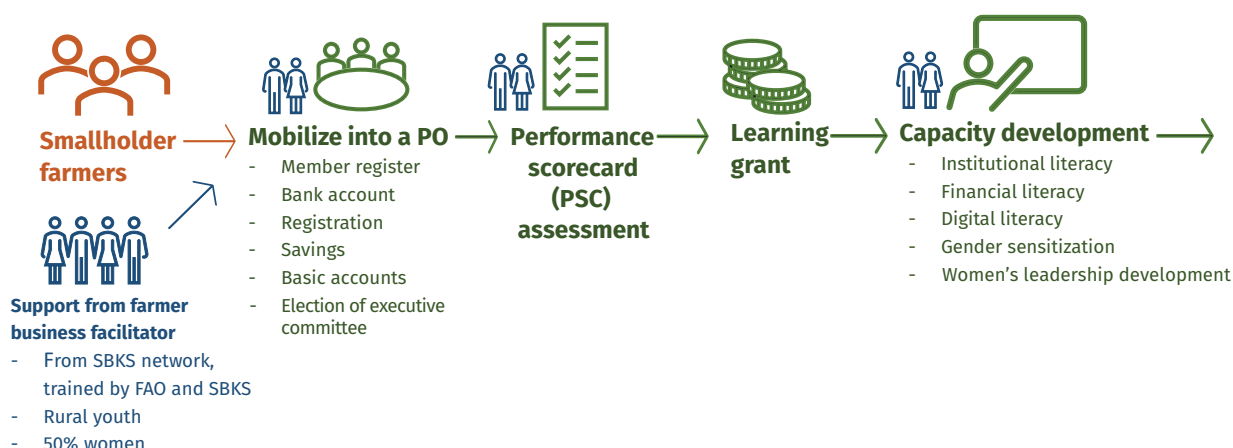
FAO has partnered with the Sara Bangla Krishak Society (SBKS), a national network of POs, to implement this approach, known previously as the Missing Middle Initiative (MMI). It has led to an average increase in annual household income of 35% for over 10 000 smallholder farmers. POs have crowded in over USD 1 million of finance from banks and other financial institutions.

Women and men farmer leaders have gained the skills and confidence to serve their own and other POs in climatic hotspots. The experience clearly demonstrates that when smallholders are empowered to be drivers of change, working hand in hand with government, development partners and the private sector, the whole farming community truly thrives.

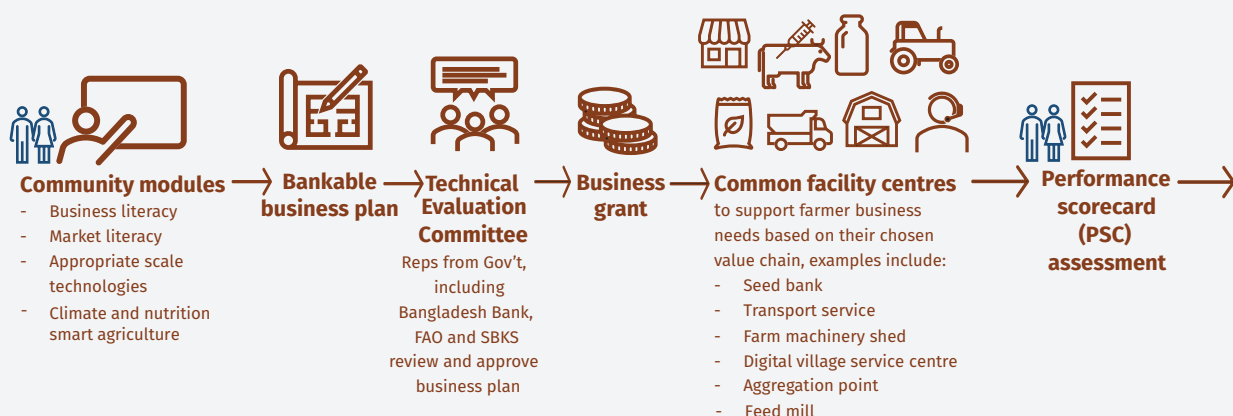
> Project outreach

ACCESS aims to strengthen livelihoods of **8 000 smallholder farmers** through **80 producers' organizations** in **27 agribusiness clusters** in **2 climatic hotspots**—the southern coastal and northern drought regions—through an investment of **USD 4.75 million**.

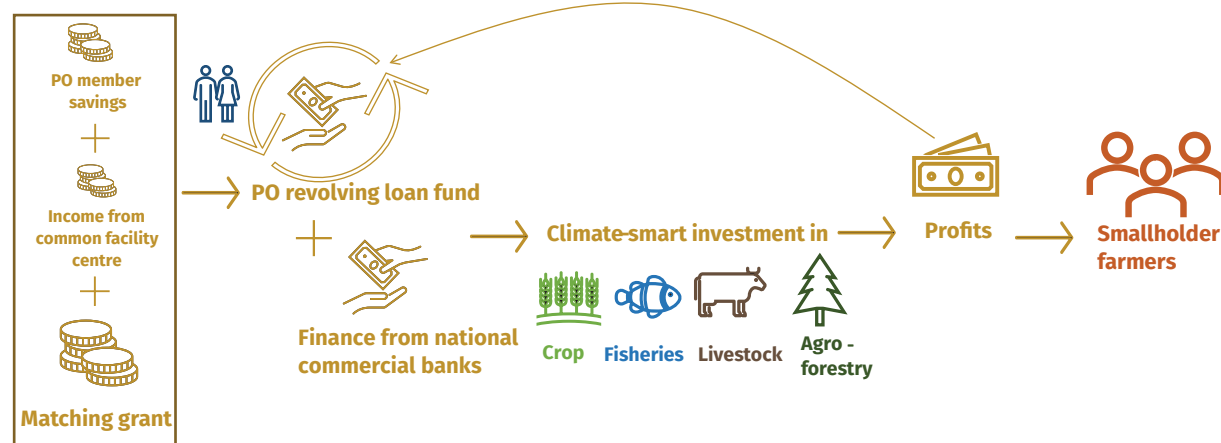
Work with producers' organizations to build their **institutional capacity and governance processes**.



With a solid institutional foundation, develop **business skills and technical knowledge** of POs to better integrate into local value chains.



Then support POs to **access community-based financing** through establishing revolving loan funds and building linkages with external financial providers to crowd in additional finance—allowing smallholders to make climate-smart investments in their preferred value chain.



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