

Our Strategy for the decade 2020-30

The Planning Process:

In 2019, AFARM has completed its Golden Jubilee journey of advancement in Rural Development in the State of Maharashtra. During this journey, AFARM has adopted the policy of taking decadal review of strategies & associated organizational growth & planning strategies for the next decade. During the year 2020-21, AFARM has prepared strategic plan for the next decade i.e. 2020-30. The said plan is prepared by a special subcommittee of its Executive committee chaired by Mr. Pramod Deshmukh - Chairperson AFARM. The other members of the subcommittee were Dr. Sudha Kothari-Treasurer, Dr. Venkat Mayande -Member, Smt Vasudha Sardar- Member, Dr. Kishore Moghe- Member, Mr. Pramod Zinjade – Member and Mr. Subhash Tamboli, Executive Director. Mr. Shirish Joshi, Pune, an Organizational development Consultant has facilitated the entire planning process.

The planning process took place in three phases as follows.

Phase I included i) Review of Golden Jubilee journey, ii) Review of last decadal progress (2010-2020), iii) Review of implementation of recommendations of the previous organization development report.

Phase II included personal interviews & focus group discussions with key stakeholders such as AFARM Institutional Members, Honorary Members, Associate Organizations, senior staff members etc.

Phase III included series of Brainstorming meetings of Subcommittee Members & followed by drafting of the Strategy plan document.

The Executive Committee & the General Body of AFARM has approved this Strategy document in its meeting held on 14th November 2020 & 28th December 2020 respectively.

Structure of Strategy plan:

The strategy plan is presented in following eight sections.

1. Core Programmes
2. Training and Capacity Building Services
3. Technical Services
4. Networking Activities
5. Advocacy Function
6. Membership Policy
7. Decentralization of AFARM
8. Governance & Management

The plan is presented in following two color schemes for its clarity & brevity.

1	Core Program Areas
1 A	<p>Goal – To ensure Livelihoods enhancement of rural households by adopting cluster development strategy with focus on Small & Marginal farmers, Tribal & Women farmers.</p> <p>It will be achieved through integrated implementation of following interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed Development and Management – Ridge to Valley approach for soil & water conservation along with biodiversity preservation. Strategic shift from water supply augmentation to water demand management for achieving water security for all. Focus will be given on water literacy and water governance for effective demand management. • Climate Resilient Agriculture – Capacity building of rain-fed marginal famers through integrated training and extension program, include guidance on i) Causes and Effects of Climate change, ii) Short term and long term climate adaptability & mitigation measures to reduce the vulnerability to erratic rainfall, unseasonal rains, hailstorms, droughts, high intensity rains etc. • Sustainable Agriculture - Capacity building of small & marginal famers in field of sustainable agriculture through integrated training and extension program, with focus on i) increasing scientific rigor in Low External Inputs Sustainable Agriculture Practices, ii) conservation & usage of indigenous seeds, iii) Soil Health improvement, iv) Integrated pest management, v) proliferation of locally produced low cost pest controllers, vi) on farm water management etc. • Strengthening of Integrated Agriculture System – Promotion & integration of small scale agri & livestock based micro enterprises like, poultry, goatry, dairy, fisheries, horticulture, floriculture, vegetable production. • Post-Harvest Management - Capacity Building of Small Farmers in Primary Processing (Sorting, Grading, Storage, Packaging). • Agri-entrepreneurship Development through farmer co-operative societies / farmer producer companies – Group Farming, Food & Fruits processing, collective marketing / market linkages - disaggregation of agri. Inputs & aggregation of farm produce, provision of various services to small farmers, partnerships & networking with government departments, private institutions, KVKs etc. • Strengthening of Gram Panchayat and Gramsabha for ecosystem restoration, biodiversity conservation & its management. • Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran: Women empowerment through skill development, knowledge building, leadership development so as to increase the their participation in agricultural decision making process both at households & institution / community level .

1B	Core Programs – Implementation Strategies
1B - I	Implementation through Member Organizations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The core programs in which AFARM has gained proficiency will be implemented through Member Organizations in order to develop capacity of member organizations in the relevant fields. • AFARM will take initiative to design & develop model programs in line with core program areas relevant to various agro-climatic & socio –economic zones of the state in consultation with concern member organizations. AFARM will submit such projects to funding agencies as Network Project. • Additionally, AFARM will submit project proposal in response to call for proposals invited by Central or State Government, CSR or international funding agencies. • Selection of Partner NGO: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon receipt of approval from respective funding agency, eligible member organizations will be selected as a project implementation partner NGO from among the member organizations. AFARM will adopt laid down criteria & procedure for selection of partner NGOs. 2. Priority will be given to Member organizations working in block of planed projects. If eligible member organization is not available within the block, then priority will be given to member organization from within the district. 3. In the absence of eligible member organisation, Chief functionary or core staff of small and new organisations will be enrolled as AFARM staff for the project period which will enable the small and new organisations to gain experience in implementation of core area programmes. • Sub-committee to oversee Program Implementation – The program Implementation subcommittee will be constituted with proper representation of Expert Honorary members & other subject matter experts. The said subcommittee will select project partners according to laid down criteria & procedures. Subcommittee will review the progress of the project through review meetings & monitoring visits and will take the decision objectively regarding the performance of partner NGOs.
1B - II	Direct Implementation by AFARM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFARM will directly implement pilot programmes having innovative concepts related to Water, Agriculture and Livelihoods. This will enhance AFARM’s internal capacities and based on experience & learnings, AFARM will design & organise training programmes for the capacity development its member organisations in the areas of such innovative concepts. • At the backdrop of recent amendments to the FCRA Act, AFARM will not able to implement foreign-funded program through partner organizations. Also some of CSRs prefer AFARM for direct implementation of the programme, in such exceptional circumstances; the Executive committee will take suitable decision whether or not to implement such projects directly.

2	Training and Capacity Development Services
2A	<p>AFARM will design, develop & conduct Training programmes for the capacity development of its members & other stakeholders in the following areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Water Resources Management • Climate Resilient Agriculture • Organic and Low External Inputs Sustainable Agriculture • Formation and Nurturing of water centric CBOs • Livestock Based Livelihoods – Poultry, Goatry & Dairy Management • Project Proposal Writing • Fund Raising • Project Management Systems • Integrated Farming System • Post-Harvest Management • Agri Entrepreneurship Development • Establishment and management of farmer producer Organisations • Empowerment Gram Panchayat & Gram Sabha for Natural Resource Management • Empowerment of Women Farmers <p>Apart from the above, if there is a demand from NGOs for any other subject, AFARM will organise such trainings in association with other resource organisations.</p>
2B – I	Implementation of Capacity Building Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts will be made to emerge as a Resource Organization in field of Natural Resource Management, Promotion of Farmer Producer Company, Climate resilient agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainability of community based organisations, Agri and Livestock based entrepreneurship, development, value additions and market linkages. In view of this, expression of interest (EoI), technical and financial proposals will be submitted to Government & other organisations for securing funding for the same. • Training programmes on the above said subjects will be organized for the NGOs and other stakeholders on topics related to water, agriculture and livelihoods on chargeable basis. Member organisations will be given concession in training fee. The extent of concession will be decided by executive committee from time to time. • AFARM will offer virtual/ online trainings wherever possible in order to minimise training cost and save time of the participants. • In AFARM headquarters, experienced Training Manager will be appointed to plan & execute trainings. • AFARM will empanel external subject matter experts / organisations to deliver training sessions.

2B -2	Development & Dissemination of Resource Materials – Publications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the phase I, AFARM will review, update & revise its existing editions of AFARM Resource Materials. • In the phase II, resource materials will be produced on the newly identified training modules. • The contribution of the internal as well external experts will be compensated with appropriate honorarium. • In order to increase distribution and sale of resource material either 1) AFARM will be registered as a publisher or 2) resource material will be made public through registered publishers. • Resource material to Member organisations will be made available with appropriate concession to be decided by Executive Committee. • Resource material including AFARM Newsletter will be published in both print and e-versions. • This material will be uploaded to open source platforms, such as Wikipedia, to reach as many individuals and organizations as possible. Also, short video clips & success stories related to the core area will be uploaded on YouTube.
3	Consultancy Services – for Project proposal development, Monitoring and Evaluation
3 A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical services for Project planning & implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of projects in the core program areas will be provided to members and non-member organizations on service charge mode.
3 B	Implementation of Technical Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tasks of Technical services will be anchored by a manager having experience of similar work. • AFARM will deliver these services through empaneled external subject matter experts/ expert member organizations. • If required, Additional manpower may be deployed in the Regional Offices to provide technical services related to the core area. • A detailed marketing strategy for these services will be developed. • These services to Member organisations will be made available at appropriate concession rate to be decided by Executive Committee.
4	Networking Activities / Services
4 A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFARM Newsletter – Articles written by Experts on topics related to the core program areas will be included in the quarterly edition of Newsletter. Additionally, information related to the voluntary sector, government schemes, AFARM programs, events will also be disseminated. • Provide platform for NGOs for Dialogue on core program areas – Whenever, required AFARM will organize meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences on the topics relevant to core program areas for the benefits of Member organisations.

4B	Networking Activities – Implementation Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An NGO Help Desk will be set up at the AFARM Headquarter to provide up-to-date information about the core program areas & the voluntary sector to the member organizations. Such Information will be disseminated through offline as well as online means of communication. Web based portal may be created for the dissemination of relevant information. • AFARM will create a roster / panel of subject matter experts / institutions for providing services to its member organisation related NGO Management including legal compliances (under Income Tax, Charity Commissioner, FCRA Act etc.) AFARM will just play a coordinating role between the organizations and the panel members. AFARM will not directly provide any such service. • A separate Task manager will be appointed for anchoring the NGO help desk services.
5	Advocacy Initiatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive Advocacy will be done on the issues relevant to core program areas with the help of expert institutes / individuals based on the difficulties encountered during the implementation of the core programs. • Advocacy initiatives will be spearheaded by Executive Committee Members, Honorary Members and Expert Member Organisations. The AFARM Secretariat will play a coordinating role as & when required. • To make the work of advocacy more effective, AFARM office bearers as well as other members of the Executive Committee will take lead to network & communicate with concerned Ministers, People's Representatives, Govt. Officials etc. • Adequate funding is needed for advocacy work, which will be raised with the help of Executive Committee members and fundraising experts. If required, AFARM will invest its own funds for advocacy work for the initial period. • Digital media will be used to gain public support for advocacy initiatives.
6	AFARM Membership Policy
6A	Honorary Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A maximum of 5 experts related to the core program areas will be selected at the Annual General Meeting as per the Constitution of AFARM. • Joint Meetings Honorary members & the Executive Committee will be organised at regular interval to take full advantage of the knowledge and expertise of the Honorary Members for seeking their programmatic strategic inputs. • At the time of Annual Program Planning, the involvement & the engagement of the Honorary Members will be mutually decided by the Executive Committee and the Honorary Members.
6B	Operational Guidelines for Institutional Membership
	<p>The membership of all the 97 organisations who are currently an institutional members will be retained. The following criteria will now be applied while granting institutional membership to new organizations.</p>

- The applicant organization shall be active at least 3 years in either one of the areas of water, agriculture and livelihoods.
- The applicant organisation shall submit its letter indicating its agreement to AFARMs core program area policy & shall convey its willingness to develop its capacities in core programmes if they do not have.
- Membership will not be granted to organizations whose major programs are in subjects other than the AFARM core program area.
- The letter of recommendation of any one of the existing institutional members should be attached with the application for membership of the organization.
- The organization making such recommendation letter should be a 1) member of AFARM for at least three consecutive years, 2) The letter of recommendation should be in the form of a resolution approved by the executive committee of the recommending organization,
- The applicant organization should be functional according to its objectives, Memorandum of Association
- All member organizations will be required to submit their annual program report, audit report along with annual membership fee. This information will become basis for shortlisting potential project partners from amongst member organizations

Process for Membership

- The proposal of membership will be scrutinized by the AFARM officers in line with above stated criteria. The applicant organization which fulfil the criteria, will be visited jointly by the Executive Committee members of respective regions and the AFARM officer.
- The membership application will be considered for approval on the basis of the organization visit report. The Executive Committee reserves the right to approve or reject any application without giving a reason.
- Annual membership fee should be increased from Rs.500 / - to Rs.1000 / -.

6C

About Associate Organisation

- From 2007-08 to 2019-20, 1134 organizations enrolled on the list of Associate organizations. More than 80 per cent of these organizations are found to be working in areas other than water, agriculture and livelihoods. Most of these organizations do not have any external funding projects, lack institutional structure and developmental approach.
- These institutes attend the AFARM trainings in the initial stage, but after that the expectation of getting financial assistance from AFARM is not met and due to non-payment of fees in two-three years, get delisted. In a way, AFARM do not have control on retaining the organizations on the list Associate.
- Associate Organisation category is not included in the AFARM Constitution but exists, should be abolished.
- Of the existing associate organizations, those organizations which follow the guidelines of Institutional membership will be given priority while granting Institutional membership.

7

AFARM Decentralization/ Regionalisation

Considering the previous experience of decentralization of AFARM the following strategy with respect to regionalisation of AFARM will be adopted.

- Experienced and competent Regional Director will be appointed in each region to expand the work of AFARM in various parts of Maharashtra and to provide necessary services and guidance to the organizations in that region. The work of the Regional Director will be controlled by the AFARM Headquarter.
- At the beginning of this process, Regional Directors can be appointed in Marathwada, Vidarbha and the rest of Maharashtra. Based on this experience, it can be replicated in other regions.
- AFARM head office may withdraw its engagement in project implementation & assign this function to regional office / Regional Director. The Regional Director will perform this function through the project manager and project staff of the concerned project. The Project Manager & project staff will be stationed at respective field offices.
- Regional Advisory Committees will be constituted to formulate a strategy to address the needs and issues of the respective regions, to take collective action accordingly and to guide the Regional Director as per the need regarding the programs of AFARM. One of the members of the Executive Committee of AFARM from that region shall be the Chairman of the Regional Advisory Committee. Rest of the Four members will be selected from the Institutional members of that region.
- Separate guidelines will be prepared on the composition, role, responsibilities and functions of the Regional Advisory Committee

AFARM Operational Structure



In view of the core program areas of AFARM, the following 4 State Directors and 3 Regional Directors will be functioning under the leadership of Executive Director.

A) State Director

1. Natural Resource Management
2. Agriculture Training and extension
3. Entrepreneurship Development
4. Admin & Accounts

Directors 1 to 3 will carry out all the responsibilities of project design & development, technical assistance for project implementation, capacity building and technical services for member organizations, preparation of resource materials, advocacy assistance, and knowledge and information management.

The AFARM headquarters will have Task Managers for 1) Public Relations and Communication, 2) Information Technology, 3) Information Management, 4) Training and Capacity Development, 5) Technical Services, 6) NGO Help Desk. The services of external experts will be sought as required for some of these tasks.

B) Regional Director (3)

The Regional Director will be primarily responsible for project implementation, networking and member services. The Regional Director will also give priority to the learn new experiments being carried out by the member organizations in that region & try to integrate such experience in AFARMs projects and disseminating them to other regions. The project manager and other project staff will be responsible to Regional Director.