



National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi

Experiences working with Smallholder Farmers

The Future of Smallholder Farming in Malawi

Policy Research Seminar

11th February, 2020

_____ The future belongs to the organised



The 24 years journey of NASFAM

NASFAM Formed 1997

At Formation

- 12 Associations
- 15,000 members
- Operating in 5 Districts
- Tobacco primary crop

NASFAM Today

- Largest independent SHF owned agri-business org. in Malawi
- **Membership 130,000 SHFs – 56% women**
- Promotes “farming as a business”
- Provides production and marketing support to SHF
- Policy engagement for SHFs

1997

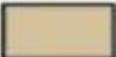
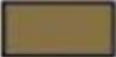
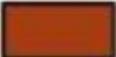
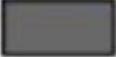
1994

2021

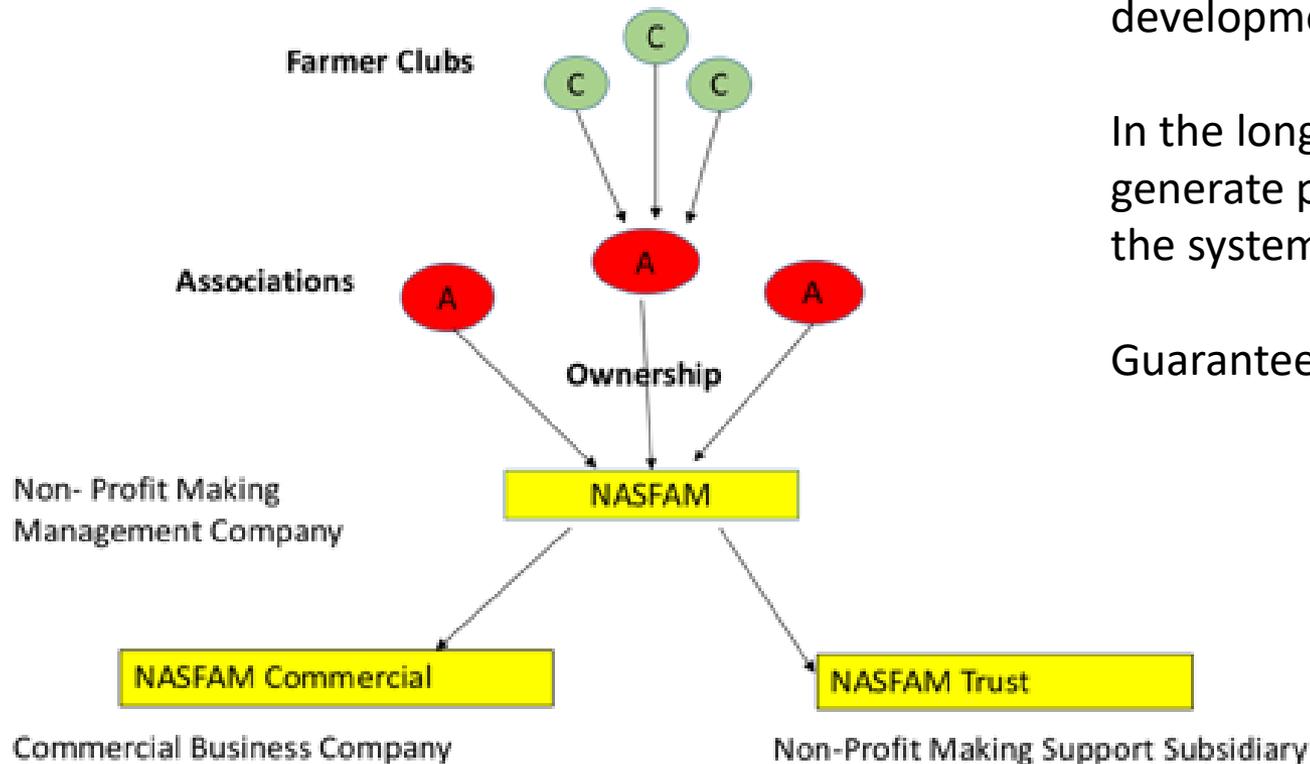


Outreach



-  Rice
-  Soya
-  Soya & G/Nut
-  Mixed Crops
-  Pigeon Pea
-  Chillie
-  Sunflower
-  Expansion Area

NASFAM Ownership Structure



NASFAM Commercial is in its developmental stage

In the long, needs to generate profits to support the system

Guarantees market access



The Driving Forces for Collective action

- **Landholding sizes (<1 ha avg)**
- **Limited access to factors of production**
 - Capital, Labour (low mechanization); farm inputs; extension advisories
 - Low productivity
- **Market challenges**
 - Inter and intra season price volatility
 - SHF are price takers
 - Limited formal structured markets esp for legumes



What has been achieved ?

Diversification into other value chains

From Tobacco



NASFAM Value Chains (2021)

Rice
Soya
Groundnuts
Maize
Chilies
Sunflower
Beans
Pigeon peas
Cotton



Critical Success Factors

- Strengthening institutional governance at all levels
 - Women representation paramount
- Cultivating meaningful partnerships aligned to strategic goals
- Embracing a value chain approach : From Seed development to Value addition
- Infrastructural Development
- Market-led (moving from subsistence to commercial orientation)
- Promoting volunteerism at farmer level (challenging due to the handout culture)

Challenges and Lessons Learnt

- Inherent vulnerabilities of the agricultural sector
 - Climatic shocks
 - SHF very susceptible to weather shocks
- Limited capitalization (SHF are shareholders of NASFAM but with very limited capital
 - Leading to borrowed finance for commercial operations
- Reducing volunteerism (Hand out culture effects)
- Lack of harmonization of approaches affects technology transfer



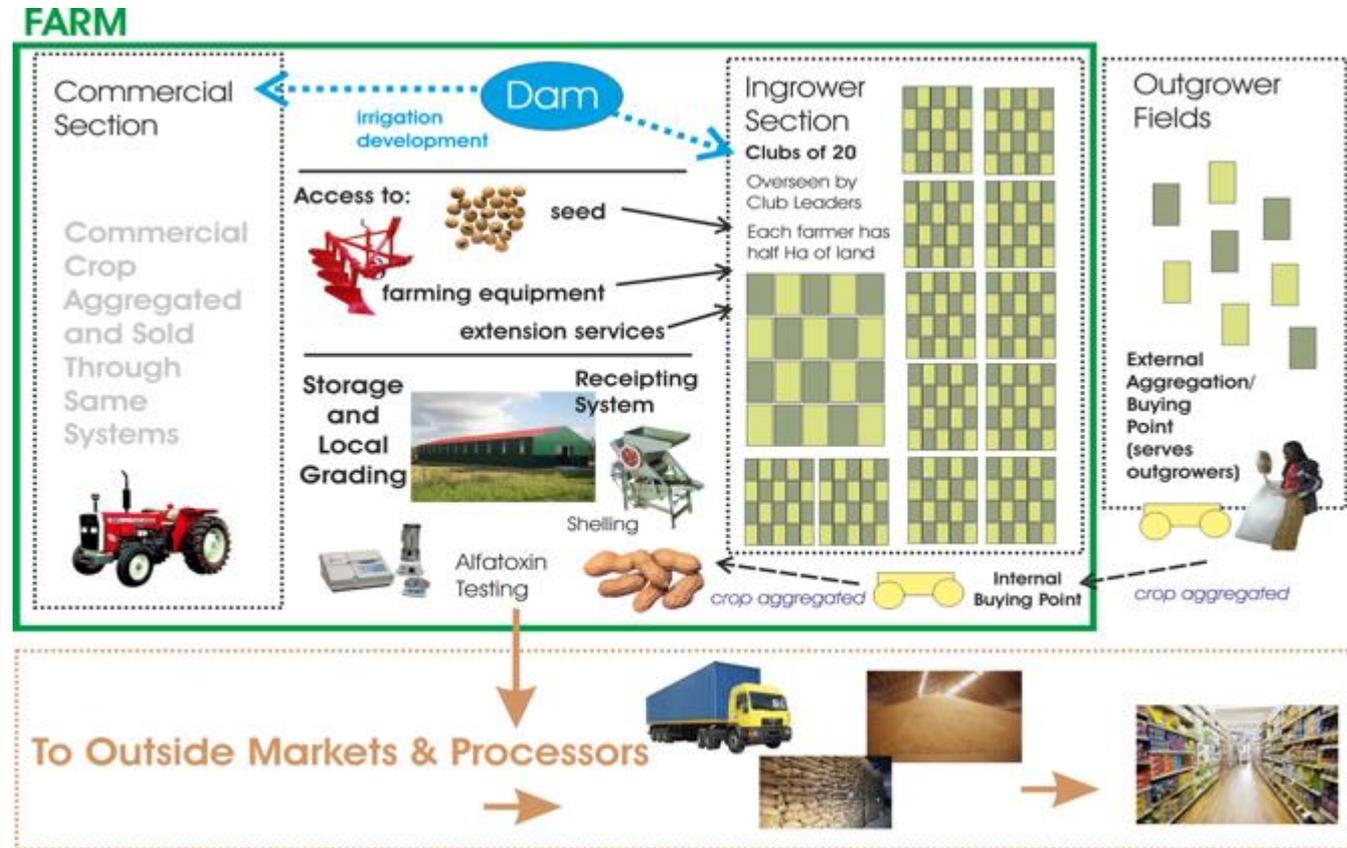


Is there a Future for Smallholder Farming?

YES

If

- Inclusive business models are adopted and scaled up e.g **Anchor farms**



Is the a Future for Smallholder Farming?



YES

If

- Market access is guaranteed through developing agro-based industries
 - Domestic
 - Exports



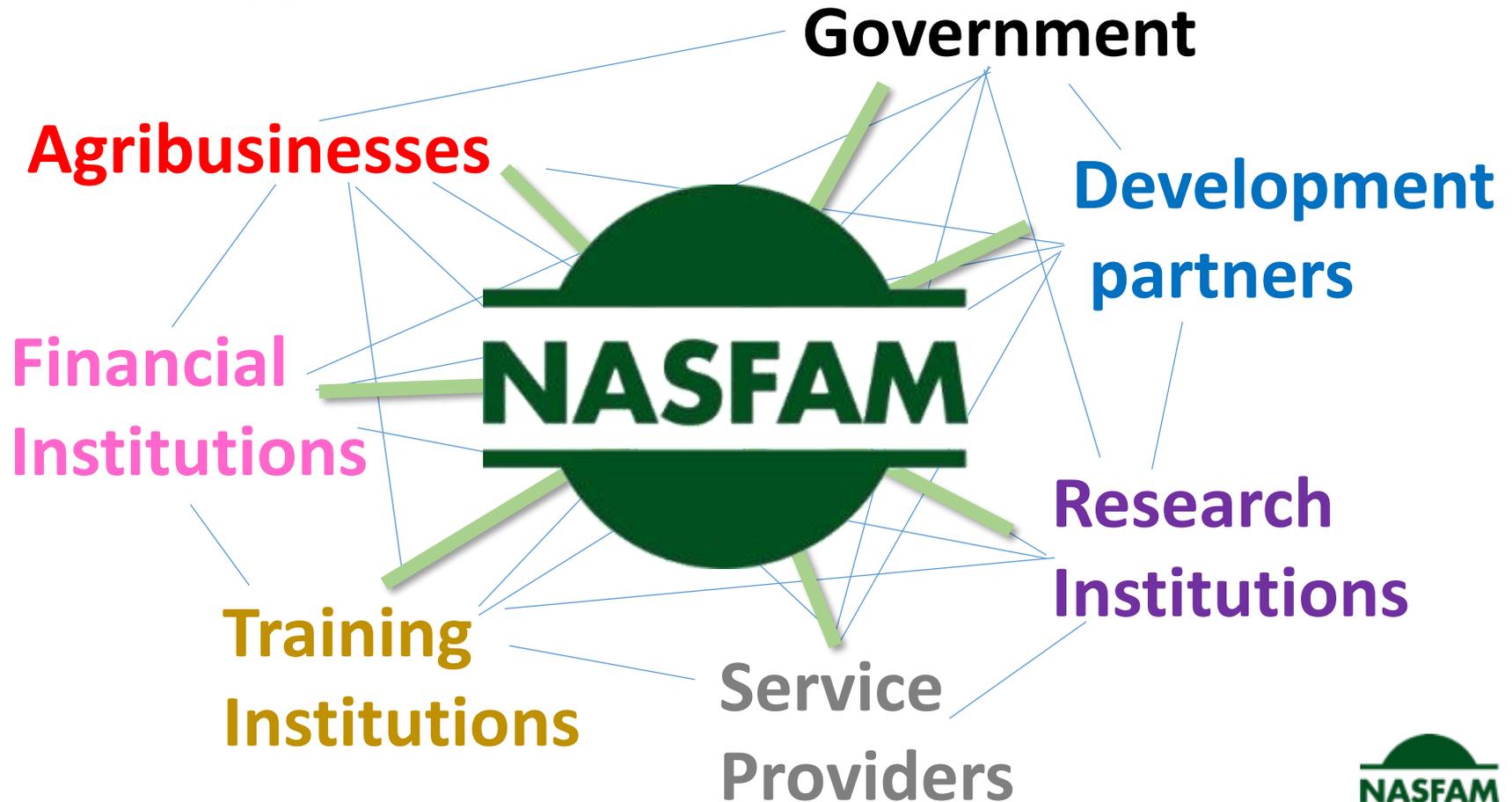


Is the a Future for Smallholder Farming?

YES

If

- Smallholder farmers and their institutions are in strong partnerships





The Smallholder farmers who are organized have a future

***THE FUTURE BELONGS TO
THE ORGANIZED***

