Farmer Field and Business School

TOOLKIT

SECOND EDITION






Contents

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

The Farmer Field and Business School Approach

The Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS), an approach originally developed under CARE's Pathways to Empowerment program, focuses on improving rural, small-scale women farmers' productivity and profitability by empowering women to more fully engage in equitable agriculture systems, using an integrated, gender-transformative, market-based and nutrition sensitive extension approach. The Scaling Up FFBS Globally program, funded by the Sall Family Foundation, now influences over twenty global programs spanning over 30 countries, and aims to reach 25 million producers by 2027.

Building on FAO's traditional Farmer Field School (FFS) approach, FFBS is a hands-on, learning-by-doing approach through which groups of farmers meet regularly during the course of the cropping or livestock production cycle to learn about new agricultural techniques and technologies and to experiment these treatments on group-managed demonstration plots. FFBS participants are typically groups made up of 25–30 farmers drawn from diverse collectives including VSLAs, producer groups, marketing groups and other common interest groups that coalesce around the production and marketing of a particular enterprise. FFBS sessions are led by a trained facilitator who works with a group of community-based trainers, or CBTs (variously called farmer-to-farmer trainers, facilitators, paraprofessionals, junior experts, and community volunteers as well as frontline private or public agriculture extension workers).

FFBS is distinct due to its gender-transformative approach and integrated curriculum. The FFBS curriculum not only showcases sustainable, regenerative, and climate-resilient agriculture practices but also fosters skills in market engagement, entrepreneurship, certification, gender equality, nutrition, and participatory performance monitoring. Moreover, the curriculum builds small-scale producers' capacity to hold agricultural extension advisory service providers accountable through a participatory Community Score Card process followed by advocacy for improved access and quality of services. The introductory chapter on facilitation skills illustrates the importance of the participatory process and is designed to build the skills of field officers and CBTs to lead adult learning sessions.

The integrated FFBS approach is based on the evidence from previous projects' theories of change including Pathways to Empowerment[1], a women in agriculture program implemented in 6 countries, and A Win-Win for Gender, Agriculture and Nutrition: Testing a Gender-Transformative Approach from Asia in Africa[2], and supporting program data from 27 projects in 17 countries, which illustrate that the integration of these key technical components is essential to transform the lives and livelihoods of the women small-scale producers.

Equally important, the FFBS training cycle follows the agriculture seasonal production cycle, ensuring that learning activities are timed to be applicable to farmers in real-time – whether it be a germination test pre-season, or a gender dialogue around workload sharing during the labor-intensive weeding period. Timing sessions according to the seasonal calendar is crucial for maximizing learning, and it also respects the time and schedules of women whose primary occupation is farming.

1 Tango (2016). *CARE Pathways Final Evaluation: Global Report.* Retrieved from https://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/evaluations/pathways_endline_global_report.pdf On August 24, 2023.

2 AGC (2021). *Impact Evaluation Report: A Win-Win for Gender, Agriculture and Nutrition Testing a Gender-Transformative Approach from Asia in Africa.* Retrieved from https://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/Win-Win-Impact-Evaluation.pdf On August 24, 2023.

How Pathways participants visualized the importance of integration of the FFBS components
(updated based on feedback after implementation in 28 projects).

Scaling Up FFBS Globally

With proven success of the approach, CARE is scaling FFBS through a six-year Scaling Up FFBS Globally program funded by the Sall Family Foundation. The program, still in its first year of implementation, influences over twenty global programs spanning over 30 countries, and will upscale FFBS to improve the lives of 25 million rural poor people (women small-scale producers and their families) over six years (2022–2027). Upscaling FFBS presents a unique and exciting opportunity to achieve catalytic impact for women small-scale producers around the globe. These impacts will be compounded to reach nearly 100 million additional people, including consumers being able to buy better food from the farmers and communities at large benefiting from a stronger local economy.

CARE is scaling FFBS through four pathways that adapt to the country and context:

- **Expanding the FFBS approach** to 18 new countries selected based on a combination of factors, including levels of food insecurity, climate hotspots, team readiness and possibilities to leverage funding.
- **Deepening all FFBS**, new and old, to ensure the approach is more climate-responsive and better linked with local markets. We will target new users, such as pastoralist and coastal communities, youth, refugees, and internally displaced people. Additionally, one-time matching grants will be provided as start-up capital for farmers' groups that have completed training.
- **Engaging farmers with global markets** through a certification model with accreditation bodies to help women farmers be more productive, support FFBS growth and create a self-sufficient system.
- **Promoting the adoption of FFBS by governments** by working at national and global levels to influence governments, multi-lateral agencies, academic institutions, and private sector companies to provide equitable livelihoods and improve nutrition for small-scale farmers, especially women, through the FFBS approach.

This 2nd edition of the FFBS Toolkit was refreshed to its current state to further support the scale of the approach. The previous six core modules (Facilitation, Agriculture, Marketing, Nutrition, Monitoring & Evaluation) have been refined and expanded upon, and two new modules (Collectives and Service Systems Strengthening and Social Accountability) and five sub-modules (Certification, Food Loss & Waste, Food Safety, Community Score Card, and Advocacy) have been added to strengthen the integrated approach.

A participatory approach to teaching and learning

The tools in this guide were developed primarily for those who work directly with farmers engaged through the FFBS and their collectives in rural communities (government extension workers, CBTs, farmer-to-farmer trainers, facilitators, paraprofessionals, junior experts, community volunteers) and should be utilized as an adaptable curriculum for the FFBS approach. Other extension service providers, and private and public institutions including research and academic institutions can also use this toolkit. The tools require literacy but can be used for master training to CBTs or groups whose literacy is limited. The curriculum is based on adult learning principles that offer practical lessons through participatory approaches. Farmers can then translate this learning and adopt it into their own fields and lives. Academic institutions can adapt it into their curriculum to educate the next generation of the agriculture sector workforce, as well.

All of the tools in this guide are designed to be participatory, with the facilitator and participants teaching and learning from each other through dialogue and knowledge-sharing. Some participants may not be literate or confident in their reading and writing skills, and people also get the most out of learning when they are having fun. As such, some activities in this guide rely on processes such as dialogue, storytelling, role playing, drawing, and games. Sessions are not meant to be lectures or tests – laughter and games create energy and can help maximize learning.

Facilitators should have experience and build up practice in facilitating participatory learning and teaching processes. The facilitation chapter at the beginning is an essential starting point for facilitators working with this curriculum. However, refresher training, mentorship and feedback to new facilitators is essential, especially in the first season.

How to use this toolkit

The FFBS toolkit is not intended to be applied sequentially, cover-to-cover. It is organized by the key technical components (facilitation, collectives, gender, sustainable agriculture, marketing, nutrition, monitoring, evaluation and learning, and System Strengthening and Social Accountability through Community Score Card and Advocacy), all of which should be addressed in a given agriculture cycle. However, these tools represent a menu of options. Facilitators should choose tools for each part of the season that best complement each other and are most relevant for each community's needs.

Developing the FFBS calendar together with community groups is the first step in using the toolkit and helping farmers plan ahead for the agriculture season. Since farmers' primary occupation is farming, the sequence of the FFBS tools should be synchronized with the agricultural year, to maximize yields and incomes and also to ensure that farmers' schedules and workloads are respected throughout the year.

In the initial orientation with field officers (and ideally community groups), facilitators should map out the timeline of the agriculture season, from pre-planting to post-harvest. Facilitators should use the Seasonal Calendar tool in the agriculture tools to map out the timeline of the agriculture season, from pre-planting to post-harvest. Following the seasonal calendar, the participants should map out when each training topic needs to take place. To help guide the process, each tool in this toolkit includes information on the time of year when it will likely be most effective. However, teams may alter the order as needed. If the crop/livestock isn't identified at the planning stage, a generic FFBS calendar should be developed and updated once the crop/livestock seasonal calendar is developed.

The agriculture and marketing tools are designed to be used during a specific session of the agricultural season and in a particular sequence. While sequence may be less critical for the gender and nutrition tools, it is important to consider when each session might be most relevant. For instance, a dialogue on workload-sharing might be applicable in the labor-intensive weeding period, while a cooking demonstration might be possible only in the post-harvest period, when the food crops are available. Community dialogues and activities can also be clustered into periods when there is less agricultural activity or timed to coincide with other festivals and events in the community.

Planning the FFBS calendar together with the facilitators and participants is an important part of the process. It helps teams space out activities so that groups are not overloaded, and it enables farmers to plan to ensure timely agriculture and marketing practices. A sample FFBS calendar is included page 11.

Facilitation sessions

The initial FFBS orientation to the field facilitators should also include facilitation training. The first chapter in this book includes guidelines for a five-session training and practice session on facilitation, which explains how the participatory tools are designed, builds skills in asking critical reflection questions, provides guidance on the need to lead community-owned change process after facilitating each FFBS tool, and gives guidelines. The short warm-up exercises in this chapter are useful for practicing facilitation skills but can also be used as short reflections throughout the season.

Learning and adaptation

Participatory monitoring and evaluation are key parts of the FFBS cycle. The Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) chapter describes participatory tools that are used at designated times of the year. These tools are important for farmers themselves to assess and build their good practices, and they are designed to help field agents recognize and respond in a timely manner to the needs identified in the field. These tools are best suggestions for a holistic agriculture intervention, based on experience in previous projects. They are not tailored to a specific context. As teams become familiar with the approach and tools, we encourage them to adapt, revise, or add tools relevant to their program – and to share their lessons widely.

Sample FFBS Calendar

Facilitation	Collectives	Gender	Sustainable Agriculture	Marketing	Nutrition	Monitoring Evaluation & Learning	Service System Strengthening and Social Accountability: Community Score Card	Service System Strengthening and Social Accountability: Advocacy
PRE-SOWING								
1.1 Facilitating Adult Learning **1.2** Qualities and Tools of a Good Facilitator **1.3** Unpacking the Exercises **1.4** Giving and Receiving Feedback **1.5** Support a Community-Owned Change Process	**2.1** Understanding Farmer Collectives in FFBS	**3.1** Introducing Partner to the Program **3.2** Case Study: Land & Inputs **3.7** Daily Clock **3.8** Harmony in the Home **3.15** Envisioning Empowerment: Vision Drawings **3.16** Gender-Based Violence: What Is It and How to Prevent It **3.17** Women's Economic Empowerment vs. GBV	**4.1** Activities During the Agricultural Season **4.2** Selecting the FFBS Plots **4.4** Setting Up FFBS Demonstration Plots **4.5** Ergonomic Safety for Women **4.6** Crop Diversification **4.11** Compost Preparation **4.14** Using Climate Information **4.16** Water Smart Agriculture **4.25** Reducing Food Loss and Waste through FFBS	**5.1** Introducing Marketing Concepts **5.2** Selecting a Market Research Committee **5.3** Conducting a Market Survey **5.6** Concepts of Entrepreneurship **5.7** Working with Group to Generate Business Ideas **5.20** Roadmap to Certify Farms, Producer Groups, and Processing Units	**6.1** & **6.2** Understanding Undernutrition **6.3** Food Groups & Nutrition	**7.1** Developing the PPT	**8.1.1** Planning Matrix **8.1.2** Mapping of Agriculture Extension Services **8.1.3** Introductory and Buy in Meetings and actors **8.1.4** Resource Tracking Matrix **8.1.11** Creating a Master Plan for Community Roll Out on CSC Tools	**8.2.1** What is Advocacy? **8.2.2** Defining and Engaging in Advocacy **8.2.3** Identify Problems, Root Causes, and Find Solutions **8.2.4** Define Your Goal
SOWING / WEEDING								
		3.4 Workload-Sharing **3.10** Act Like a Man, Behave Like a Lady **3.11** Learning to Listen **3.12** Persons and Things	**4.15** Soil Health and Nutrient Management **4.23** Evaluation of FFBS Plots	**5.4** Gendered Value-Chain Analysis **5.13** Introducing Food Safety Concepts	**6.5** Planning a Home Garden		**8.1.5** Issue and Indicator Validation and Prioritization of indicators **8.1.6** Scoring	**8.2.5** Identify Who Can Make the Change **8.2.6** Identify the Advocacy Asks and Core Messages
VEGETATIVE STAGE								
		3.3 Case Study: Nutrition Decisions **3.9** Household Decision-Making **3.21** Safe Space for Women's Productive Engagement	**4.17** Weed Management **4.24** Farmer Field Days	**5.8** Designing a Business Plan **5.9** Market Planning **5.11** Selecting Products & Outlets **5.17** Food Safety Practices **5.21** Designing a business model that would lead to a certification	**6.6** Nutritious Meal Cooking Demonstration	**7.1** Developing the PPT **7.2** Gender Dialogue Monitoring	**8.1.7**: Consolidating Community Score Card **8.1.8** Interface Meeting **8.1.9** Joint Action Planning	**8.2.7** Advocacy Tactics to Consider **8.2.8** Lobbying as an Advocacy Tactic **8.2.9** Mobilization as an Advocacy Tactic **8.2.10** Media Engagement as an Advocacy Tactic
HARVEST								
		3.13 Cash-flow Tree **3.18** A Conversation About Conflict	**4.20** Harvest Methods and Handling Practices **4.23** Evaluation of the FFBS Plots	**5.12** Marketing as a Group **5.14** Establishing a Farm Food Safety Plan and Identification of Food Safety Hazards **5.19** Establishing a Food Traceability System	**6.7** Breastfeeding & Workload Challenge			
POST-HARVEST								
		3.5 Income Control **3.6** Role-model Men **3.14** Fishbowl Session **3.19** Conflict Resolution **3.20** Cross the Line	**2.21** Post-Harvest Practices and Sanitation **2.22** Adding and Creating Value in Agricultural and Livestock Products	**5.15** Farmers' and Workers' Training on Health and Hygiene as Related to Food Safety **5.16** Storage and Maintenance of Food Products		**7.1** Developing the PPT **7.3** Lifeline **7.4** Focus Group **7.5** Outcome Mapping **7.6** Personal Transformation Tracker Tool		


GALAXY

1. Facilitation Tools

1.1 Facilitating Adult Learning

SEASON	All; to be used in each session to refresh facilitation skills
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel informed and confident about their role and ability to facilitate a participatory learning session
MATERIALS NEEDED	Petrol Pump Education Handout

Background

This session allows participants to identify the key skills of a facilitator and to distinguish between a top-down teacher/trainer and a facilitator of a participatory adult-learning process.

Handouts: Picture 1 – Petrol pump education

Steps to follow for the activity

STEP 1. What we learn informally – buzz groups (5 minutes)

In this session we are going to do various activities to look at the ways adults learn. Some of things we learn as adults, we learn without going school, college, or a training course. Some of you probably learnt as child, some as an adult.

(Give some examples, such as sewing/building/riding a bike, raising children and chickens/ making, mending and repairing/organizing weddings and parties/ any income-generating activities).

BUZZ: Ask each person to turn to a partner, and come up with 5–10 things they learned outside of school, as an adult.

They only need a few minutes. In plenary, ask participants to call out some of the skills they have learned.

STEP 2. What helps and hinders adult learning?

- Write the following task on the flip chart:
- How did you learn as an adult?
- What helped you to learn?
- What hindered your learning?

Ask 3–5 people to share the stories of some of the things they learned as adults (from **Step 1**). Use the three questions to guide the discussion.

On flip-chart, collect a list of the factors that *helped you learn* (such as watching someone else) or *factors that hindered* (fearing that people would laugh at you).

▶ STEP 3. **Provide input on how adults learn best**

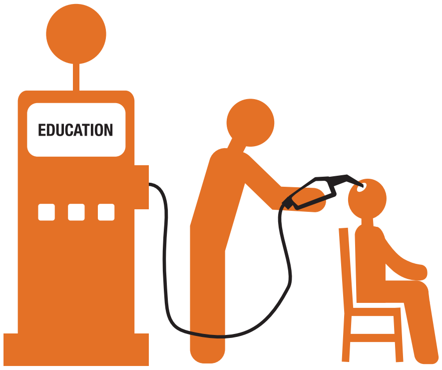
ADULTS LEARN BEST WHEN…	
When they have chosen to learn something voluntarily	People have a right to know what is being taught, and how, and to have their motivation appreciated and increased.
From their peers, in sharing experience	Adults have a wide experience and have learnt a lot from life. We should encourage the sharing of experience. Let them sit in a circle so they can see each other's faces.
When they are involved and actively participating	Minimize the use of lecturing and presentations by the facilitator and, wherever possible, get learners to do things that will lead them to the learning goals.
When the training is relevant to their real lives/jobs	It's vital for people to know *why* they're learning something. The context of the training must be close to people's lives and jobs, and must be clear how it can be applied practically.
When their dignity is respected	Adults have a strong sense of personal dignity, and must never be humiliated or laughed at in front of others.

- Lead a discussion: What do these ideas teach us about our work in the community – what we should do and not do as facilitators?

▶ STEP 4. **The petrol pump model**

Distribute or project the picture of the "petrol pump" model of education.

- What is happening in the picture? What type of learning is it?
- How does the teacher view the pupil?
- Is it an effective learning method? Why or why not?
- Have you experienced this type of learning before?



Tip-sheet: Differences between a facilitator and a top-down trainer

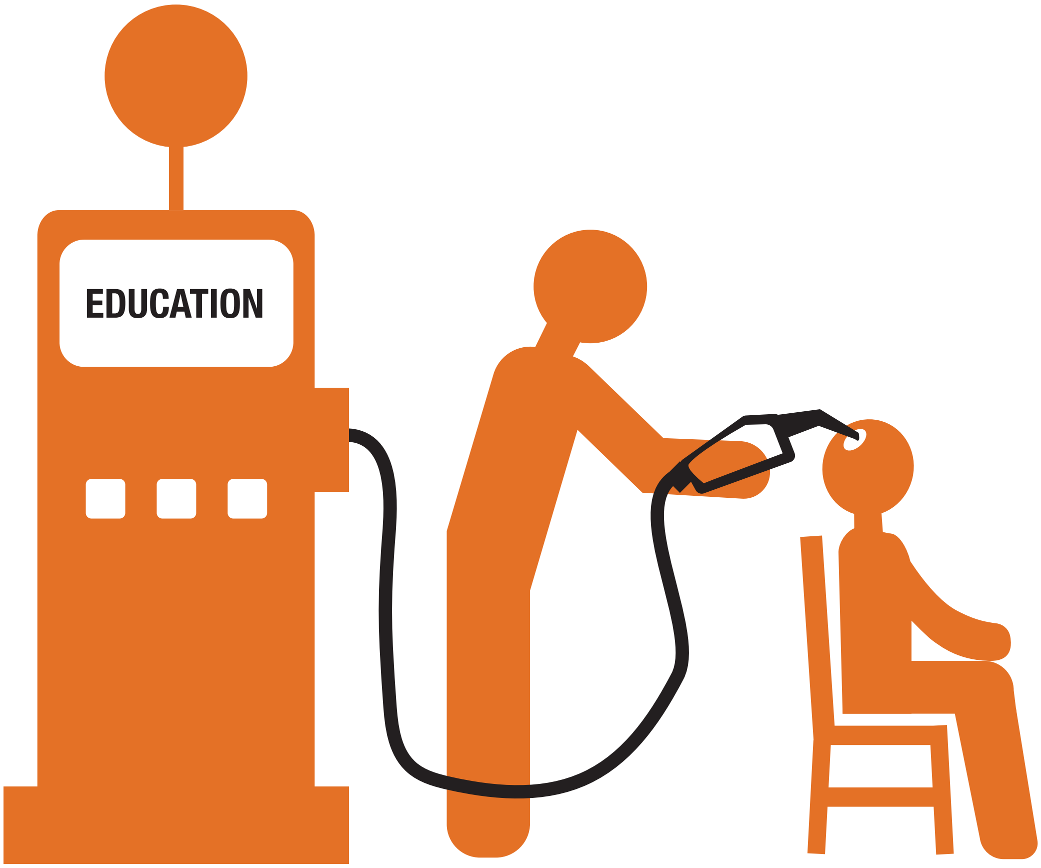
Point out: In the "petrol pump" model, the student is viewed as an empty head, and the trainer's job is to fill it up with knowledge. An educator or trainer is seen as an expert who brings extensive knowledge of the subject to participants, and gives information in a top-down manner.

Facilitators, in contrast, engage in participatory learning approaches, in which the facilitator and participants are learning from each other and sharing ideas together. Facilitators recognize that participants come to the room with their own valuable knowledge and experience, and help manage group discussions around the session's learning objectives.

Refer to the tip-sheet below, as a reminder of some of the key differences between a trainer and a facilitator. Have participants read in pairs or small groups. Participants can add to the list.

TOP-DOWN TRAINER	FACILITATOR
Has the answers, gives knowledge to the students or trainees	Values the experience and knowledge of the participants; Poses problems and sets up a process in which the participants search for answers
Is the expert, knows best	Helps people to become responsible for their own learning; demonstrates ideas
Presents new information from the front of the group	Uses practical, participatory methods, e.g. group discussion and activities in which all members of the group participate
Information flows in just one direction, from teacher to students	Information flows in many different directions between the facilitator and individual group members – a genuine exchange of ideas
Brings extensive knowledge of the subject	Draws out and builds on the knowledge of the group, and knows where to find further information on the subject
Is concerned with students understanding the right answer	Is concerned with the discussion; encourages and values different views
Has a formal relationship with the students, based on their status as a teacher	Is considered as an equal, and has relationships based on trust, respect and a desire to serve
Directs the learning	Allows learning to be self-directed

Handout: Petrol Pump Education



1.2 Qualities and Tools of a Good Facilitator

SEASON	Pre-season; to be used in each session to refresh facilitation skills
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel informed and confident about their role and ability to facilitate a participatory learning session
MATERIALS NEEDED	Handouts: Moderator-led discussion; Managing Group dynamics; Common concerns for new facilitators A balloon, volleyball, or inflatable beach-ball. If you don't have a ball, you can construct one with crumpled-up paper and masking tape.

Background

In this session, participants will be able to clarify the roles, skills, and techniques of a good participatory facilitator. They discuss some of the challenges of facilitating group discussions and how to manage difficult scenarios. They also discuss some of the various participatory tools that can be used to guide an effective learning session.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Role-play: Good/Experienced and bad/unexperienced facilitator qualities**

Show participants the Petrol Pump picture from last session. Ask if people have experienced a training session similar to that in the picture.

1. Ask for volunteers to do a quick **role-play** of a **bad** facilitator
   Discuss: What qualities did you notice in the facilitator? What did he/she do poorly?
2. Ask for volunteers to do a **role-play** of a **good** facilitator
   Discuss: What qualities did you observe in the facilitator? What did she/he do well?

Capture the qualities of a good and bad facilitator on a flip-chart. Discuss the qualities, referring to the box below, as needed.

A good facilitator....

Encourages everyone to participate. It is one of your main jobs to get all participants to both speak and listen throughout the session. Learn to identify when people want to speak, but may be too shy to say something unless called upon, and encourage everyone to share their experiences.

Promotes active listening for all participants. Both you and the group of participants should practice active listening at all times. A good listener:

- Shows sincere interest
- Gives their full attention
- Maintains eye contact (where appropriate)

- Avoids interruptions
- Repeats back what they think has been said (paraphrase)
- Respects moments of silence
- Is honest if they don't have the answer or don't know what to say
- Indicates that they are paying attention through words and body language

Sticks to the objectives of the session. Groups have a tendency to wander from the original objectives, sometimes without knowing it. When you hear the discussion wandering off, bring it to the group's attention. You can say, "That's an interesting issue, but perhaps we should get back to the original discussion."

Is flexible with the group. Sometimes important issues will arise and take much more time than you planned. You may run over time or have to alter your agenda to discuss them; check with your group to see what would be appropriate. Be prepared to recommend an alternate activity and drop some agenda items, if necessary.

Hands over the "stick". When your group participants look to you as an expert, it can be more comfortable to lecture about your ideas than encourage dialogue, which is less effective than helping them to learn for themselves. When you can "hand over the stick" – do less talking than the participants – participants learn from each other and by themselves. They are more likely to remember and apply the lessons in their own lives.

STEP 2. Moderating an interactive group discussion

Hand out the picture below (Handout 1A.2) and have a quick discussion:

Moderator dominated Discussion

Interactive Group Discussion

1. Describe what is happening in the pictures: What is the role of the facilitator in each?
2. Which is the best situation for a learning session? Why?
3. What are some of the advantages and challenges in each scenario?
4. What do you observe about the participants?
5. As a facilitator, how might you encourage equal participation of all?

Quick action: Have the group form a close circle. Blow up a balloon or a ball and explain to the participants that the objective of the game is to keep the balloon in the air for as long as possible without dropping or breaking it. Start the action and set the timer, until the balloon is dropped. (Repeat 2–3 times if need be.)

Discuss: How is the game related to facilitating a participatory discussion?

Key points: A well-facilitated group discussion is like a game of playing with a balloon or beach-ball, in which everyone is trying to keep the ball or balloon up in the air. The facilitator's job is not to hand the balloon to each person, but to start the game, explain the objectives, and help make sure that the ball/balloon stays in the air and that no one is hurt or aggressive.

The facilitator launches questions or activities, and then the participants themselves take the conversation from there. For this game to work, no single participant should dominate the balloon/conversation; all have to be participating actively – exchanging ideas among themselves.

▶ STEP 3. Dealing with difficult participants

Ask: Who has facilitated a focus group discussion before? What are some of the challenges and difficult scenarios you've encountered with facilitating?

Collect a list of some of the challenging situations and personalities, such as:

- Participants start to leave
- One person dominates
- Participants argue
- People are going off topic
- Language barriers, group doesn't understand

Discuss: How might you handle some of these situations? What can a good facilitator do to manage a group well?

ROLE-PLAY: SABOTAGE!

Ask one volunteer *to facilitate* a discussion on any topic; ask for others to play the group members.

Secretly (without the volunteer's knowledge) ask for several participants to play these "saboteur" roles:

- The quiet participant
- The dominant participant
- The self-appointed expert
- The rambling participant
- The deferent participants (who agree with whatever the dominator says)

Discuss:

- What was the role of each participant? Have you encountered such types before?
- How did it feel to manage this group? (to the facilitator)
- What did the facilitator do well to handle the participants?
- What other strategies could a facilitator try?

(Refer to the handout "Managing Group Dynamics" for further guidance on how to handle difficult situations)

STEP 4. Beyond brainstorming: Tools for facilitating adult learning sessions

Explain: Adults can learn even when you are not lecturing or giving information. Facilitated group discussions are one common tool for participatory workshops – but it's not the only one. There are many ways to keep a workshop lively and to facilitate discussion and learning. Here are some common tools that you can use in designing a workshop.

Ask: What are some of the different exercises you've used in participatory training sessions? Collect a list, suggesting some of these below, if need be.

Participatory tools:

- Demonstrating a technique
- Plenary discussion
- Creating a group statue
- Drawing a picture
- Reading a case study
- Doing a role-play
- Playing a game
- Brainstorm – Quickly surfacing ideas from the group
- "Buzz" group – Turning to your neighbor for a quick discussion

Discuss each tool:

- What are each of these tools good for?
- When are they most useful?
- When might they be less appropriate?
- Which are most challenging to you – why?

Key points: Using a combination of methods keeps the session interesting helps you manage time and make sure that all participants have a forum in which they feel comfortable participating. It's best to alternate plenary, full-group exercises with more intimate small-group or buzz-group activities, so that participants can dig deeper into concepts and learn effectively from each other.

Handout: Moderator-led vs. interactive group discussions

(Discussion 1.)

(Discussion 2.)

Handout: Managing Group Dynamics – Common Participant Personalities[1]

One of the most challenging tasks of the facilitator is to manage different personalities of participants in the group, to ensure that everyone is given a chance to contribute to the discussion. Most group discussions will have at least one quiet participant, one dominant participant, a rambling participant, and a self-appointed expert. Some strategies for managing these common personalities are below.

1. Quiet Participants: Some participants will remain silent during the discussion or provide only short responses to the discussion issues. Quiet participants can be easily overlooked by a moderator; however, their opinions are equally important. It may take some effort for a moderator to draw out the views of quiet participants.

> **Strategy:** Use gentle probing, open body language and eye contact to welcome their contributions. A moderator may also encourage a quiet participant by reinforcing the value of their views by saying, for example, 'Miriam, we also value your views: do you have an opinion about this issue?'

2. Dominant Participants: Dominant group members monopolize the discussion by being the first to respond to issues or by taking more time than others to contribute their views. The challenge for a moderator is to allow the dominant person to make their point, but not to allow them dominate the discussion and restrain the contribution of others.

> **Strategy:** An effective strategy to manage a dominant participant is for the moderator to use body language to signal reduced interest once they have made their point, by reducing eye contact or turning a shoulder towards them. If these strategies fail then a moderator can give verbal cues to redirect the discussion to allow others to contribute to the discussion. For example, 'Thank you for your opinion, John.' (Then turn to the rest of the group). 'Does anyone else have a different opinion?'

3. Self-Appointed Expert Participants: Some participants may state that they are *experts* on the discussion topic, proclaim more knowledge than others on the issues and offer their opinions as facts. Although these participants are seldom true experts, they can quickly create a hierarchy within the group and intimate other members making them feel that their contributions are less valued.

> **Strategy:** The moderator should disempower the self-appointed expert by stressing that everyone in the group is an expert and that this is why they have been invited to participate.

4. Rambling Participants: Often feel comfortable in the group environment and will monopolize the discussion time by giving overly long accounts of their experiences, which are often of marginal relevancy.

> **Strategy:** The Moderator should manage a rambling participant by avoiding eye contact, redirecting the discussion, or by interrupting them to enable others to also contribute to allow everyone in the discussion to contribute.

The 'Deference' Effect: This occurs when participants say what they think a moderator wants to hear rather than voicing their own opinion about an issue. If participants all tend to agree on an issue or the discussion lacks diversity of opinions, or only expresses positive views, it is possible that participants are being influenced by the deference effect.

> **Strategy:** Some strategies for avoiding this are for the moderator to stress that individual opinions are valued, to encourage both positive and negative views, and for the moderator to refrain from sharing their own viewpoint so that participants are not aware of the moderator's stance on the issues.

1 Reproduced from OMNI's Toolkit for Conducting Focus Group Discussions, available at http://www2.omni.org/docs/FocusGroupToolkit.pdf.

Handout: Common Concerns for New Facilitators

Here are some common frustrations that facilitators may face, and some suggested responses. Use these as a starting point for discussing your own challenges and solutions.

CHALLENGES	SUGGESTIONS
I am giving people very good information but they are not doing what I tell them to do! Why is that?	• Remember, your role is not to give people orders but to help them make good decisions • Ask people what is preventing them from taking action and help them identify ways to address those issues • Use more participatory methods instead of lecturing • Get community leaders involved
How will people know what to do if I do not tell them?	• People are much more likely to change their behavior if it is their own choice. A facilitator's job is NOT to tell people what to do • You do have an important role to play in helping guide people in the right direction, giving them accurate information, and helping them to see an issue from a different angle • Very often, members in the group will already have solutions. Encourage participants to support and encourage each other
Sometimes I am the one doing all the talking. How can I get other people to talk as well?	• Try participatory activities, where you don't do all the talking (brainstorm, role-play, values-clarification) • Ask open-ended questions • Break a large group into smaller groups, and let discussion happen among the smaller groups
How do I know if people are practicing what they say they are? What if they are only saying what I want to hear?	• Probe for specific examples, challenges, and successes • Share your own experiences to create an atmosphere of honesty and trust; talk about a behavior change that you are trying to make, including your struggles with it • Reassure people that behavior change takes time and encourage small actions • Ask other group members to share their successes and concerns
What if I hear about something negative or harmful?	• Do not put individuals on the spot; if participants are not comfortable discussing an issue in group, try to pull aside a smaller group to understand the situation • Inform your team members and manager
What if I don't know the answer to a question?	• Be honest; tell people you don't know but you will find out • Refer people to another source of information
Sometimes, people disrupt the meetings because they don't agree with what I'm saying. What can I do?	• Invite the person(s) to speak with you after the meeting • Offer to organize a separate meeting to discuss individual concerns • If one person or small group dominates, think about sub-dividing your group (men/women, small groups, or even pairs) • Use a "talking stick," so that only the person holding the stick can speak their mind; pass the stick around the group

1.3 Unpacking the Exercises

SEASON	Pre-season; to be used in each session to refresh facilitation skills
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel informed and confident about their role and ability to facilitate a participatory learning session
MATERIALS NEEDED	Warm-Up Tools

Background

How to Facilitate the Tools in this Guide – Unpacking an Exercise

Each of the dialogues and tools in this toolkit are designed around a participatory process, based on an understanding of adult learning principles. In this session, the participants will learn the different stages of “unpacking” a game or exercise to learn from it. We talk about how to prepare for a smooth learning session.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Preparing to facilitate**

A big part of facilitating a session is being prepared for it. Ask participants to brainstorm some of the key preparations they need to make in order to ensure an effective learning session. Cover some of these key points.

Preparations:

- **Prepare sessions plan**: Before you start the facilitation sessions ensure you have a plan across the entire season based on your FFBS calendar.
- **Prepare the space:** Make sure the sitting/standing arrangement is comfortable for all to participate, especially if you will be dividing participants into groups. Also ensure that you have all materials that you will need during the session.
- **Understand the session:** Read the guidelines all the way through. Be sure you can answer, in your own words, “What is the objective of the session?”, “What are the key messages or skills that participants should take away from the session?”
- **Prepare your questions:** You should also think of some key questions that you will use to start off the dialogue. Consider probing questions that you can use to start, and for the reflection, generalization, and application stages.
- **Do introductions:** At each meeting with a group, introduce yourself and allow all participants to introduce themselves. If you’ve met with the group before, ask them to briefly summarize the lessons that they learned last time, and how they’ve tried to apply it in their daily life.
- **Explain the objectives and timeframe:** Before each session, always give the participants an idea of what the topic of the session is, and be clear about how long it will take.

▶ STEP 2. **The stages of unpacking an exercise**

Read through the information in this chapter. Present the “Action ▶ Reflect ▶ Generalize ▶ Apply” diagram (see following page) on a flip-chart. Explain what each step of the process means to the participants.

In the last session, we discussed some tools (brainstorms, games, discussions) that can be used as learning tools. Even simple activities can lead to rich and important discussions. The key role of the facilitator is to help participants “unpack” the activity –or find the meaning and relevance of the activity to their own lives.

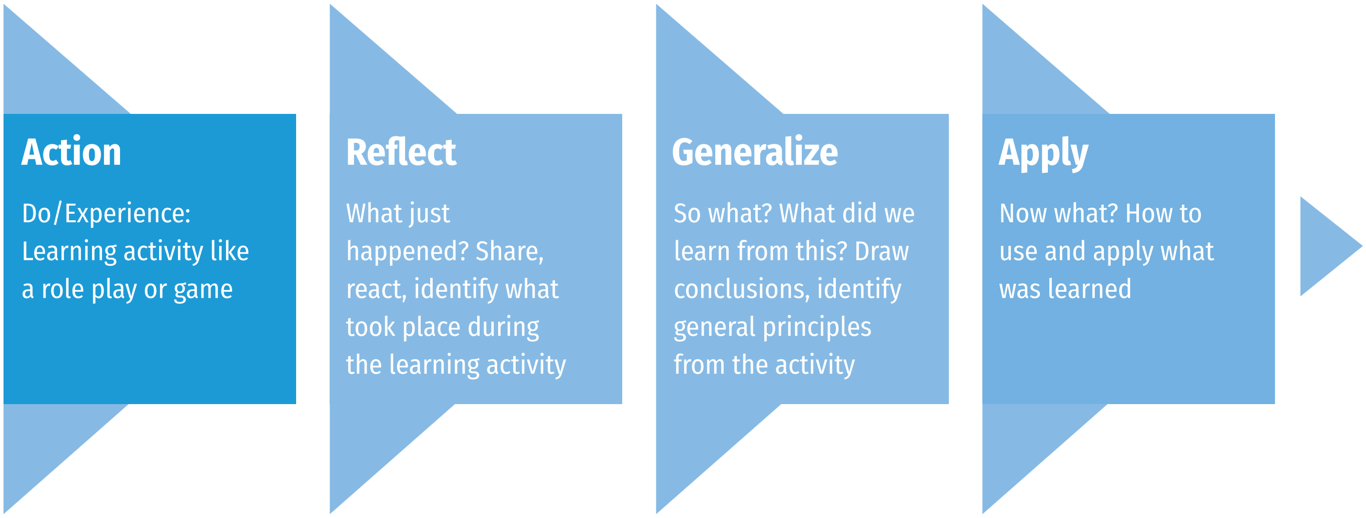
Each of the tools in this toolkit start with an action or activity, and the facilitator's role is to help participants "unpack" the lessons through dialogue and discussion. The process of unpacking usually follows three basic questions:

- **What just happened? (What?) = action and experience**
- **What does it mean? (So what?) = reflection and generalization**
- **What will we do about it? (Now what?) = planning and application**

This process always applies – whether you are leading a hands-on planting session, a cooking demonstration, a market visit, or facilitating a gender dialogue. The process of facilitating successful adult learning has been broken down into several key steps. Following these steps will help you prepare for and successfully facilitate a session.

The steps for unpacking an exercise are:

1. *Start the action:* In this step, you will put the learning process in motion for the group participants. This action could be a role-play, a planting demonstration, a visit to a market, or a group drawing; the action will be whatever activity is listed in the session's tool(s). You should give clear instructions (including the timeframe), then step back and let participants do the action.



2. *Reflect on the action (What happened?):* Many of the key learning lessons will come from what happened in the activity. After the initial action, bring the group back together. Using language specific to your actions, ask participants to recollect the activity using the questions:

- What did we just do?
- What did you see?
- What did others see?
- What did you feel when we _______ ?

Remember that there are as many perspectives as there are people in the group – it's important to hear as many perspectives as possible. Continue to draw observations from different people in the group, even if it means asking the same question many times. Be sure to take note of the feelings and observations, so that you can you can refer back to them later in the discussion.

3. ***Generalize the lessons (What does it mean?):*** After reflection, help participants draw conclusions and identify general principles of the activity. They should apply what they have seen or done in the action to their own life and the life in their community. Ask:

   - Does this happen in real life?
   - How does this activity relate to your own life?
   - What scenario is more common in this community?
   - How do you usually respond when this situation is happening?
   - Does everyone respond the same way?
   - Why do you think people respond/act/do things this way?

4. ***Apply the lessons (What will we do about it?):*** In this final stage, you should help participants problem-solve to find realistic and simple starting points to change the behaviors, address problems, and try new practices that were discussed in the generalization stage.

   Probe the group to develop very specific, small actions rather than vague, sweeping promises. For example, rather than "From now on, my husband and I will share all work equally," probe for, "This week, I will ask my spouse to fetch water in the morning, so that I have more time and energy for weeding." This can be done with the following questions:

   - What should be done about ______?
   - What will *you* do about _______?
   - What support would you need to ______?

   If a problem seems beyond the group's control, identify what support they would need or what key players would need to be involved to start making a change or addressing a problem. Identify areas where the project could provide support.

Summarize and Conclude: Before the group leaves, summarize the main messages and themes from the day's session. Refer back to the learning tool's table to see if you've met the learning objectives. Also summarize any specific actions participants have committed to, and give information about the next follow-up meeting, if applicable.

▶ STEP 3. Identifying the stages of the unpacking process

Divide group into pairs or small groups. Have each select and read through one of the warm-up exercises in this chapter for example, River Code, Trust Walk, Telephone Game, Race for the Resources. (Beginning on page 26)

In pairs/groups, discuss the objectives, materials needed, and how the exercise works.

In pairs/groups, identify the different steps of the learning process, as they are described in the tool guide:

1. **Action** – What happened?
2. **Reflection** – What does it mean? (So what?)
3. **Generalization** – How does this activity relate to real life?
4. **Application** – What will we do about it? (Now what?)

Discuss. Coming back into plenary, discuss the way each pair identified the stages of unpacking the exercise. Are they similar? Different? Make sure everyone understands what the four steps of the exercise are.

STEP 4. Facilitation practice. Using the chosen warm-up exercise, have each small group/pair play the facilitator, leading the rest of the group through one of the warm-up exercises.

As a group, discuss how the exercise went. Ask the facilitator:

- How did it feel to facilitate the exercise?
- What felt easy? Challenging?
- Did anything about the facilitation process surprise you?
- Is there anything you feel you would like more practice with?

Ask the participants:

- How did it feel to be a participant in this exercise?
- What did the facilitator do well?
- What could be improved?

Discuss the "unpacking" stages:

What was the **action**? How did it go? Was the facilitator well prepared?
What questions did the facilitator ask to get participants to **reflect (what?)**
What questions did the facilitator ask to get participants to **generalize (how this applies to their lives)?**
What questions did the facilitator ask to get participants to **apply the lessons (now what?)**

Repeat with a new facilitator and different roles, ensuring all participants have a chance to practice.

1.4 Giving and Receiving Feedback

SEASON	All; to be used for each session
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel confident about their role and ability to facilitate.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Agriculture Case Study (4.1–4.6 from Gender module); Facilitator Feedback form

Background

Facilitation is a skill that requires practice and constructive feedback from mentors and peers. In this session, participants practice facilitating a session, self-evaluating their progress, and giving and receiving useful feedback.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. Discussion on feedback and self-evaluation

Ask: What does "giving feedback" mean to you? What does "self-evaluation" mean?
Why are each important?
Is it easier to give feedback or to receive feedback from others?
What are the challenges and advantages with self-evaluation?
What are the skills needed for giving honest, helpful feedback to your peers?

▶ STEP 2. Explaining the facilitator feedback form

Explain: Evaluation and reflection are critical in building your skills and for improving the tools and learning experience. As you gain experience in facilitation, you should take time to evaluate yourself as well as have others evaluate you periodically.

Self-evaluation: As soon as possible after the session, use the FFBS feedback form to self-evaluate and reflect on what just happened. The self-evaluation form helps you reflect on the *process* of the dialogue (how you followed the steps outlined above), as well as the *skills* you displayed in facilitating (the good facilitation tips).

Peer and mentoring feedback: The feedback form can also be used for your colleagues or supervisors to provide you constructive feedback on what went well and what areas might be improved.

Group feedback: You may also want to give participants a chance to evaluate you. This will enable you to understand how your perceptions of your facilitation match participants' experiences. Give participants time at the end of the session to fill out their own evaluation form and reflect on things you did well and things they feel could be improved upon.

Go through the feedback form and clarify any questions. Notice that the checklist includes the stages of "unpacking" the exercise. It also covers good preparation steps and the skills of a good facilitator.

▶ STEP 3. Facilitation Practice: Agriculture Case Study

Divide into several groups. Assign each group one of the scenarios from the "Agriculture Case Study" group in the Gender Chapter of this tool-guide. (Other exercises may be used, as well.) Explain that each group will facilitate one of the exercises to the rest of the group.

If you have a large enough group, assign **3–4 designated evaluators**, who will use the Facilitator Feedback Form to give constructive feedback to the facilitators.

Allow all teams 20-minutes to read and prepare their exercise. Then start the facilitation practice.

▶ STEP 4. Feedback and discussion

After the exercise, allow "evaluators" 5 minutes to fill out their feedback forms, then have the evaluators verbally give feedback to the facilitating group. Ask the evaluators to explain everyone to explain any "partly cloudy" or "stormy" ratings they give.

Give feedback on the stages of the exercise:

What was the **action**? How did it go? Was the group well prepared?
What questions did the facilitator/s ask to get participants to **reflect (what?)**
What questions did the facilitator/s ask to get participants to **generalize (how this applies to their life)?**
What questions did the facilitator/s ask to get participants to **apply the lessons (now what?)**

As a group, discuss how it felt to reflect and give feedback. Ask:

- How does it feel to give and receive feedback?
- What are the best ways to constructively give feedback?

Continue the practice until each group has had a chance to facilitate and practice giving feedback. As a final reflection, discuss how the team will continue creating opportunities for practice and evaluation:

- What is your team's strategy for observing and giving feedback?
- How will you include mentoring and supportive supervision in your FFBS approach?

Note that basic data on each gender dialogue should be collected each session, to track information about what topics have been addressed and to which groups. This is a good opportunity for facilitators to reflect on how sessions went and what concerns participants have.

A suggested Gender Dialogue Monitoring tool is included in Chapter 7.

1.5 Support a Community-Owned Change Process

SEASON	All; to be used for each session
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills of FFBS facilitators to support communities develop and implement action. To help facilitators promote community-led change process
MATERIALS NEEDED	Action planning template

Background

Facilitation of FFBS should be driven by a goal of helping communities integrate sustainable agricultural practices within their farms (agricultural modules), improve household and community nutrition (nutrition modules), start engaging with input and output market actors (marketing modules), transform discriminatory gender and social norms (gender modules), and take lesson and improve on their status (M&E modules). This will be possible if facilitators are intentional in helping community members go beyond mere reflection on a topic/an FFBS module to plan for action following the reflection process and implement the action plan with support from community stakeholders and the project. This is a key step in facilitation of all FFBS modules. We will provide an example of leading an action planning and implementation process for the gender modules adapting the Social Analysis and Action process.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. Facilitation skills required for Critical Reflection Dialogue and Action Process

Ask facilitators the key skills needed to facilitate the gender modules through the SAA process and facilitate discussion.

Explain: Strong facilitation skills are critical for the success of SAA. Effective SAA facilitators have the confidence, skills & tools to effectively lead reflection & dialogue about sensitive subjects like gender & power.

Skilled SAA facilitators:

- Build trust.
- Create welcoming spaces.
- Use tools to explore sensitive issues and enable communities to question harmful norms.

Roles of SAA Facilitators:

- Create welcoming and respectful spaces for critical reflection and dialogue.
- Respectfully question and challenge norms & social rules
- Encourage envisioning of new alternatives to harmful norms & practices
- Enable practical learning instead of transmitting or teaching information.

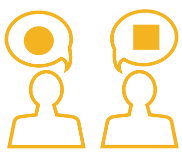
Core Facilitation skills:

- Use **open ended questions** to generate dialogue.
- **Invite everyone** to speak up – Encourage quieter people to contribute. Everyone has experience and knowledge to contribute to discussions and problem solving. “You know something, I know something.”
- **Do not criticize** or discourage an opinion – no one is wrong.
- **Do not interrupt.**
- Encourage **interaction and exchange** amongst participants – hold back from providing answers

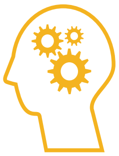
Creating welcoming, inclusive, and respectful spaces

Building trust with colleagues and the community

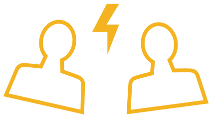
Encourage interaction and exchange amongst participants



Respectfully managing different points of view



Avoid using messages but instead use probing skills to prompt critical thinking



Managing conflict and tension over sensitive issues and deeply held beliefs

Active listening, inviting everyone to speak up, not interrupting

Withholding judgment and not discouraging opinions

Summarizing dialogue and emphasizing key points

▶ STEP 2. Exercise: probing as a key facilitation technique

- Ask partisipants to sit in pair groups
- Ask each participant to take turn and ask any question that they would like to ask; as they get the first response, ask them to continue probing uising the below questions
  - o *Can you tell me more about that?*
  - o *Can you tell me what happened next?*
  - o *Why do you think that happened?*
  - o *Who is affected when that happens?*

- Once they are done with the probing exercise ask volunteers to share their experience; ask them the following questions:

  - o What was the added value of probing?
  - o How would probing help facilitating sensitive issues?

Explain: it is important that facilitators:

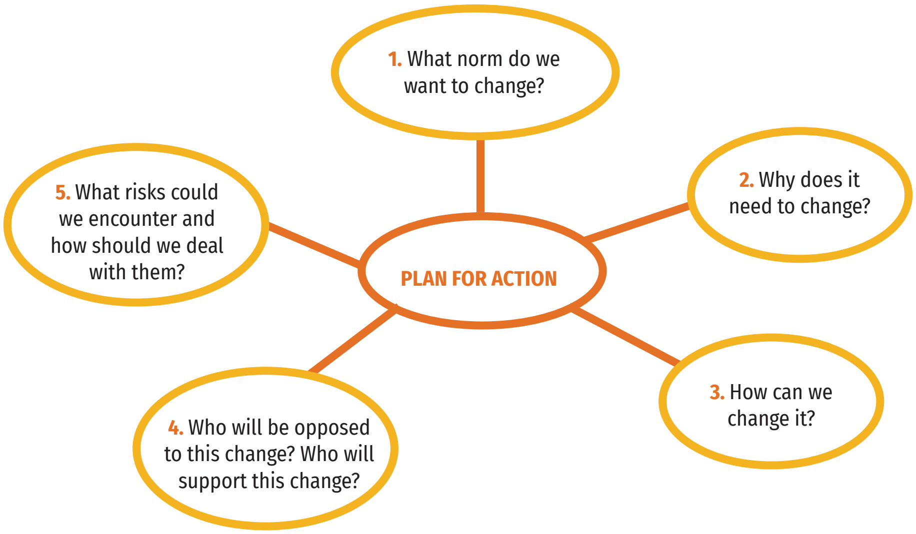
- Create trust and respectful spaces, applies core facilitation skills a*nd…*
- Knows techniques to **manage challenging situations** and **keep the conversation moving** when…
  - o Participants disagree with each other, divergent opinions.
  - o Tension or conflict arises over entrenched beliefs.
- **Respectfully keeps asking *why*** – probing questions.

▶ STEP 3. Support Action planning Process

After facilitators lead a critical reflection and dialogue session using for example a gender or nutrition module, or any other, participants should be asked to sit down and reflect on the way forward through an action planning process.

- Planning for action is a vital step in turning motivation for change into individual and collective action for sustainable transformation,
- Community owned identification and prioritization of practical actions to challenge gender, social, and power norms.
- Multiple issues may have been addressed during SAA dialogue; after these dialogues occur, participants can choose how they want to take action.

Facilitators should facilitate discussion by following the below steps to help communities start the action planning process:



1. Priorities:
Keep the dialogue focused on the key issues participants want to tackle with SAA.

2. Entry points

- Which stakeholders should be approached? Who from the community will lead the process?
- Where will the planned activities occur? This includes the geographic location as well as the physical location within communities (i.e. in a household, at a health center, during a community-level meeting, etc.)

3. Actions

- What will be the guiding strategy – advocacy and campaign or livelihood generation etc., or mix of several actions?

4. Logistics:
Who will implement and when?

- Will the intervention be immediate, short-term, or long-term?
- Is capacity building and support needed?
- Who will mobilize resources and how?
- What risks are involved as it challenges social norms and values?

Facilitators can help capture key actions using the below template:

Gender norm to be tackled	Actions to take	By whom?	Timeline	Support Required

Explain: the facilitator should take note of the support required by communities and help them get connected to the support providers. It is highly recommended that projects consider supporting community-led change process by allocating budget as part of their plan to fund innovations.

STEP 4. Experience Action Planning Process

- After a gender session is facilitated, sit down with the team and lead an action planning process following Step #3.

STEP 5. Adapt action planning to other modules beyond the gender modules.

Explain: after you lead a session on each FFBS module, sit down with the team and reflect using action-oriented questions. While it is recommended that you engage with the team in an action planning process discussed above, the process is intensive and requires time hence we would focus it on the gender modules as it is mandator for a transformative change around gender norms. Accordingly, the minimum requirement to other modules is reflection using action-oriented questions to help community members take assignments back home and to their communities.

- After a session on one particular FFBS module, sit down with community members and remind them that the closing activity for this module will be reflection on your commitments to take individual and collective actions.
- Ask the below action-oriented question:
    - What is the one new thing that you learned today about the topic under discussion?
    - What if the behavior or practice that you will consider changing as an individual as a result of this learning?
    - What are some of the collective actions that you will take as groups?
    - What support do you need and from whom?

Handout: FFBS Facilitation Feedback Form

Facilitator Name:______________________________ **Date:** ____________________ **Name of tool used:** ____

1. Assess your performance as a facilitator for this session in the following areas using the following scale (circle one picture for each question):

Sunny: "I did this without any challenges or problems"
Partly Cloudy: "I did this, or I am improving, but there are still some challenges that I am able to improve next time"
Stormy: "I did not do this/I need additional help or support on this facilitation practice."

STEPS	SUNNY	PARTLY CLOUDY	STORMY	COMMENTS (IF "PARTLY CLOUDY" OR "STORMY," EXPLAIN):
Preparation: I read the instructions carefully and prepared questions for reflection and generalization before the session				
Preparation: I prepared an appropriate space for this session and had all necessary materials available for use				
Introduction: I started with a review of the previous session and actions the group members have taken (if applicable)				
Action: I explained the purpose of the exercise and gave clear instructions to participants				
Reflection: I asked multiple participants to recollect the activity (What did we just do? What did you see? How did you feel?)				
Generalization: I asked questions that helped participants draw conclusions and identify general principles of the activity (How does this apply to daily life? What do you think about it?)				
Application: I asked participants to develop specific follow-up actions for their households/ communities (What next? What now?)				
Summarization: I effectively paraphrased the participants' discussion and summarized key action points for the group				
Participation: I did more listening and asking than teaching (ideas came from participants)				
Participation: I effectively encouraged all participants to actively engage and participate in discussion				
Management: I reached the objectives of the session (the participants identified and discussed the key messages)				
Management: I effectively managed conflict and debate that arose during this session				

2. What will you do differently next time to improve your session facilitation?

Warm-up Tools

1W.1 River Code

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To inform the community that the role of the "facilitator" is to empower the community and assist in guiding them to where they would like to go
TIMEFRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Two pieces of rope or sticks 3 stones, pieces of paper or circles drawn in the ground
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for forming circles, both standing and sitting

Background

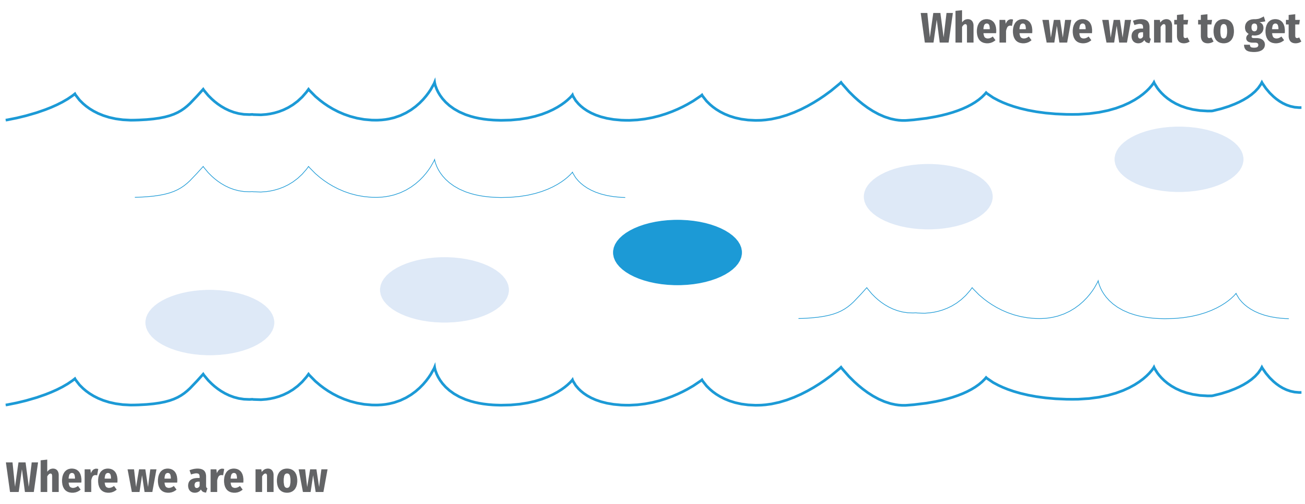
The role of a good facilitator in a program is to serve as an initial guide that will help empower a group in order for the group to transition into guiding themselves in the future. Understanding the concept of this role is key for successful project participation.

The purpose of this exercise is to highlight the idea of community empowerment and to clarify that the facilitator will help the community develop new options, rather than act as a supplier of goods and services. This approach also helps show the value of participatory approaches and to start a process of considering where we are today, where we would like to be, and how we might get to our goal. This idea of comparing where we are today to where we want to go is a theme that will be revisited in many of the exercises, and will be used by the group to develop more systematic plans.

Steps to follow for the activity

▸ **STEP 1.** Before the session, take 3 participants aside and give them instructions for a three-act "role play". One will play the facilitator, one will be the assisted person to cross the river, and one will be the guided person. Their roles are listed in steps 2–7.

▸ **STEP 2.** Lay 2 pieces of rope or branches to represent the banks of a river, put some paper, stones or draw large circles on the ground to represent stepping stones, by which to cross the river (see figure below).



▶ **STEP 3.** Ask the actors to do the play in mime for the rest of the group. Tell the audience that the rope or sticks are the riverbanks and that the 2 people are trying to cross the river. Tell them that the actors want to find something better on the other side of the river.

▶ **STEP 4.** In the first act, 2 people attempt to cross the river. One person, representing a service provider, tries to carry the other person across the river on his / her back. They really struggle. The one carrying the person gets too tired to continue and leaves the person being carried stranded in the middle of the river and returns back to the original side of the river. The person being carried receives no more help.

▶ **STEP 5.** In the second act, the river crossing task is repeated with the same person, representing the service provider, leading another person. In this second act, the leading person does not carry the other but holds their hand and shows him/her, very clearly, where the next stone is positioned. The 2 people take some time to cross the river but by showing the second person where the next stone is located the 2 people manage to cross. Upon reaching the other side of the river they celebrate.

▶ **STEP 6.** The person who showed the way then waves goodbye and leaves the play. The person who was shown the way returns back to the original side of the river.

▶ **STEP 7.** In the third act, the person who was successfully shown how to cross the river takes one of the members of the audience and shows them again how to cross the river. Not holding their hand but by leading them to the edge and then showing them where to step. The role play ends when the 2 people have crossed for the last time.

▶ **STEP 8.** Reassemble the entire group

Possible points for the discussion:

The key element to the story is that the river is the challenge.

- In the project context, this is the work that has to be done to improve the social, health, nutritional and gender statuses.
- The first side of the riverbank is where we are now, today.
- The other side of the river is where we would like to be.
- The members must cross the river in order to achieve their goal.

The play involves 3 characters, 2 are farmers and one person is the facilitator.

In the first case the facilitator brings everything to the farmer.

- In reality, this represents a service provider supplying the community with free seeds, tools, fertilizer, credit, transport and traders.
- However, after a time the service provider gets too tired to continue.
- When this happens the farmer is left stranded because s/he did not know how to get to other side, s/he was being carried and when support was withdrawn s/he was unable to continue the same pathway.

In the second instance the service provider empowers the farmer by guiding them through the river and very clearly shows the stepping stones that the farmer needs to use, to get to the other side.

- This time the farmer is slower to cross but gets there by working with the service provider.
- At this point the service provider leaves. However, the farmer has learnt how to cross the river s/he can now return to where s/he was and most importantly, help others to cross the river.

After the play, lead a discussion about:

- What the play represented
- Who did what
- How this relates to our ideas on enterprise skills, learning and community empowerment

Emphasize the merits of learning by doing compared with other types of solutions that can lead to dependency.

1W.2 Race for the Resources

SEASON	All
OBJECTIVE	To illustrate the meanings of equity and equality; to practice identifying gender discrimination and identifying core issues being addressed through the project
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Blindfold/scarf, rope or material for tying hands & feet, 1 bag of candy; Flipchart
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to move

Background

In most communities, not everyone has the same or equal access to different resources. This can make it more difficult for those with limited access to do things like farm or have a business. Women in particular are often the ones that have limited or no access to many of the resources needed in agriculture and business. This exercise will help demonstrate how limited access can make tasks more difficult.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **"Impair" most of the participants** by blindfolding them, tying their hands or feet, or giving them a heavy bag to carry. At least one participant should remain unimpaired.

▶ STEP 2. **Establish a starting line and have participants stand behind it.** Lay out the "resources" (for example, candy) a moderate distance away from the starting line. Tell participants that when you tell them to start, they may race to the resources and may collect as many as they can. There are no other rules.

▶ STEP 3. **Tell the participants to "go" or "start."** Allow them to race and collect all of the "resource" until it is gone.

▶ STEP 4. **Reassemble the entire group.** Lead a discussion, asking participants:

- What did we do? Were the rules the same for everyone?
- Was the game fair? Was the outcome equal for everyone?
- How would we change the rules to make it more fair?

Ask the participants how this activity reflects gender equality in their communities.

- What are some of the impediments that women carry in agriculture and business? (Collect ideas – discrimination in land access, money, tools, advisory services, telephones)
- Some of the impediments are invisible. Think of some of the gender ideas that we referred to this morning. How can these ideas/beliefs be impediments to women's success?

Output: List some of the discriminations that women face throughout the production cycle. How do these negatively affect food security? Other outcomes?

Input: Draw a women's empowerment framework on the flipchart.

- List under each point of the triangle the **changes** that we want to see in each domain
- Identify the core themes of the project's dialogues
- Point out that through dialogues on these different topics, we'll try to change the rules of the game

Ask: How have we been addressing these issues to date? What has worked well? What has been hard?

Summarize. In the project, we are working at empowerment from these three dimensions and trying to create opportunities to encourage behavior change, help people see clearly what the impediments are and how they hamper both women and men.

1W.3 Trust Walk

SEASON	All
OBJECTIVE	To demonstrate and experience the value of working together and taking responsibility for each other; to discuss how men and women can best work together in group sessions
TIMEFRAME	20 Minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	Blindfold
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space – if possible, take it outside! Mixed sex groups may not be comfortable stepping up and guiding a member of their opposite sex

Background

While the concepts that are used to define and build trust may be acknowledged, trust needs to be demonstrated and experienced by all members of the group in order to realize the positive impact trust has on group dynamics and progress towards shared goals. By trusting other group members with the straightforward task of walking in a line, group members will learn to trust each other with simple tasks before sharing more sensitive information and responsibilities.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Ask all participants to stand up in two lines, facing each other.** Invite a volunteer to come forward and walk slowly in a straight line across the meeting space. Put the blindfold on him/her and spin him/her around several times. Ask her/him to walk across the space again, in a straight line. Request that the rest of the group keep completely silent, giving no encouragement or guidance at all. They should also not touch him/her.

▶ STEP 2. **When the blindfolded person reaches the other side, take off the blindfold and ask her/him to compare how close s/he is to where s/he intended to be.** Ask:

- How did it feel to walk blindly?

▶ STEP 3. **Replace the blindfold and repeat the exercise.** This time, encourage the other participants to give her/him verbal encouragement and guidance. They still should not touch the volunteer. At the end, ask the volunteer again to compare where s/he wanted to go with where s/he reached.

▶ STEP 4. **Replace the blindfold and repeat the process.** Ask participants to use both their voices and their hands to guide the blindfolded person. Repeat the process with other volunteers.

▶ STEP 5. **Discuss what happened**, using the following questions:

- How did it feel to walk the floor blindfolded, without assistance?
- How did it feel to be supported and guided by others?
- In what way did the blindfold help with listening?
- How does this exercise show the importance of trust and mutual support in life? Can you give an example from your own life or community?
- What are some ways you can better trust and support your family and community members?

▶ STEP 6. **Conclude by pointing out the importance of trust, mutual support and cooperation in everyday life, within groups and within the household.**

1W.4 Pass the Message

SEASON	All
OBJECTIVE	To illustrate the importance of active listening and how information can get distorted This is a quick warm-up to emphasize active listening and communication skills.
USED TO	It can be used to talk about gossip and misinformation, or the importance of accurate record-keeping within a group. It can be used as a warm-up before an exercise with a lot of listening.
TIMEFRAME	15 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	None
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for a group to form a complete circle

Objectives

This warm-up can be used to discuss gossip and misinformation, the importance of record-keeping, or it can be used as a warm-up before an exercise with a lot of listening.

Note: If the message is too long, the exercise will be too difficult. Choose a phrase that contains several ideas, but shorten if the example given is too long.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Have participants sit or stand in a circle.**

▶ STEP 2. **Explain that you will whisper a message to the person next to you; that person will pass it to the following person – and all around the circle.** Each person must pass on what he or she heard, even if it makes no sense. You can only hear the message once!

▶ STEP 3. **Lean over and whisper a long message that gives three or four pieces of information**, such as:

> *"This project helps women farmers to produce for the market. Groups are learning sustainable agriculture techniques, nutrition lessons, and market information. In this way, people can eat more nutritious foods, generate more income, and improve the health of the soil for future generations."*

▶ STEP 4. **Let the message go around the circle.** Expect confusion as participants fail to make sense of what they hear.

Ask the last person to say aloud what he or she heard.

- What was the last message?
- What was the original message? What happened to the message along the way?
- Why did it get shorter/change along the way?

- Was the final message accurate?
- What were the challenges to passing the message accurately?

▶ STEP 5. **Review the activity.** Point out that messages and information become distorted as they are passed on. It takes active listening to pass information accurately.

▶ STEP 6. **Key points:**

- Sometimes we are distracted or in a rush or if the information seems too complicated, we don't listen carefully
- Communication is a two-way process; it's important to be able to ask questions as well as listen to others
- When we give information to others, we never know how they are going to interpret it. If we want to communicate well, we have to check back with our listeners and see that we are understanding the same way.
- Word-of-mouth can create misinformation or lead to disagreement within a group. Keeping accurate written records helps a group make better decisions and minimize misunderstanding.

1W.5 How Many Eyes? Valuing other Viewpoints

OBJECTIVE	To practice viewing from another person's standpoint before making a judgment. This warm-up can be used at the beginning of a dialogue or debate, to remind participants of the importance of respecting others' views and seeing from others' perspectives.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	None

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Form a circle.** Have one participant stand in the middle, facing the same way through all the questions and answers that are going to follow.

▶ STEP 2. **Explain to the participants that you are going to ask some questions.** Ask everyone at all times to answer according to what they can *actually see (and NOT what they know is there).*

▶ STEP 3. **Describe what you see.**

- Ask someone standing *in front of* the person in the middle, "How many eyes has s/he got?"
- Ask someone standing *behind* the person, "How many eyes has s/he got?"
- Ask the people standing *directly to either side* of the person "How many eyes has s/he got?"

Continue asking different people about the arms, nose, eyebrows, bracelets, feet, etc.

▶ STEP 4. **Briefly discuss the different answers: Who was right?**

All the answers are 'right'! Point out that depending on where we stand, we see different things.

- Ask the participants: How can we get a full picture?

Answers may be: comparing our information, asking everyone, asking the person to turn around.

- Ask one participant to walk all the way around the person in the middle describing him or her.

▶ STEP 5. **Discuss:**

- How does our point of view (perspective) on a situation affect our understanding of it?
- How does this exercise relate to our everyday experiences?
- What can we learn from this exercise?

▶ STEP 6. **Summarize the key points:**

- In any situation, different people view things differently.
- Our point of view is shaped by our upbringing, life experiences, our previous knowledge.
- We often make assumptions about what we think we see and about how things are, but these are not a complete picture.
- When we put ourselves in others' places (and see their point of view), we can have a better understanding of a situation or problem, which helps us make better decisions.

2. Collective Tools

2.1 Understanding Farmer Collectives in FFBS

SEASON	Pre-production/planning phase
OBJECTIVE	To provide an overview of the farmer collectives connected to FFBS. Understand the importance of mapping and profiling of collectives; the steps for mapping and profiling, and criteria for selecting the collectives for engagement into the FFBS curriculum and visioning process with collectives
TIME REQUIRED	4 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip charts, marker pens, pens, facilitation cards

Lesson 1: Overview of Farmer Collectives in FFBS

Background

Agricultural collectives are an important platform for small-scale producers and farmers, their households, and communities to democratically organize around common goals for prosperity and well-being. Collectives play a significant role in building social cohesion and strengthening individual and collective agency; advancing access to and control over resources; changing harmful and discriminatory gender and social norms; engaging governance structures to change laws; advocating for policy and practices that uphold women's and youth economic, social and political rights; and driving socio-economic development by providing structures for actors to collectively advance their common interests.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** Ask participants the following question and facilitate discussion.

- What are farmer collectives/farmer organisations?

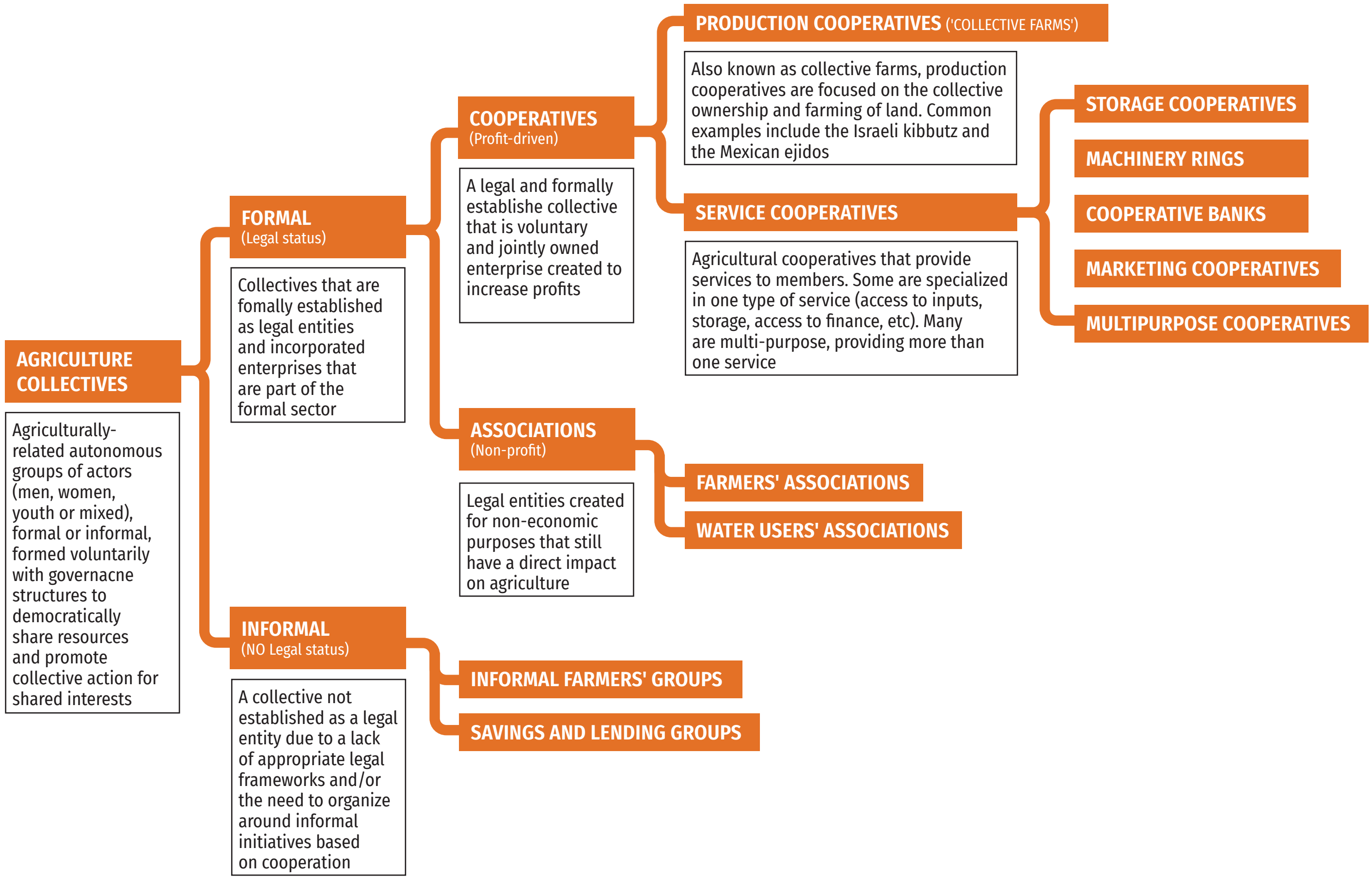
▶ STEP 2. **Read out the below definition.**

Farmer Collectives/Organisations are formal and/or informal entities formed by primary producers, viz. farmers, livestock producers, beekeepers, milk producers, fishermen, weavers, rural artisans, craftsmen to ensure better income for the member-producers through an organization of their own. Small-scale producers do not have the volume individually (both inputs and produce) to get the benefit of economies of scale. Besides, *in agricultural marketing, there is a long chain of intermediaries who very often work non-transparently leading to the situation where the producer receives only a small part of the value that the ultimate consumer pays. These collectives are formed by a group of producers for either farm or non-farm activities. Some may be registered and legal entity, but many are informal.*

▶ STEP 3. **Types of farmer collectives in FFBS.** Ask participants to share the types of collectives that they know including respective characteristics.

▶ STEP 4. **Describe types of collectives using the description and diagram below.**

There are many forms of collectives/cooperatives (formal and informal) that with the aim of reducing inequality through resource sharing and economic inclusion, creating social capital, sustaining Indigenous socio-cultural values and practices, promoting natural resources management, creating sustainable and agro-ecological food systems, and enabling participation of women and youth in decision-making spaces. As an approach, FFBS builds on such existing groups/ collectives, both formal or informal, that already have established social capital and governance mechanisms. These include VSLAs, Producer groups, self-help groups, producer/market association, and farmer cooperatives, as shown in the diagram below:



Village Savings and Loans Associations	Savings groups are self-managed groups of 15 to 25 people who meet regularly to save their money in a safe space, access small loans, and obtain emergency insurance. These routinely support each other to set up small businesses, negotiate fair prices in the marketplace, advocate for gender equality in their communities. https://www.care.org/our-work/education-and-work/microsavings/
Producer Groups	a group of 20–25 small scale producers focusing on particular investment choices/value chain(s). https://agrilinks.org/post/producer-organization-roles-agricultural-extension-and-advisory-services
Self Help Groups	Self Help Groups are groups of 10 to 20 women or men who want to improve their living conditions by setting up their own savings and loan fund. Beyond their function as savings and credit groups, SHGs offer poor women a platform for building solidarity. They allow women to come together and act on issues related to their own lives including health, nutrition, governance and gender justice. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310972/ https://www.undp.org/syria/stories/self-help-groups-model-promoting-self-reliance https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/self-help-group/#:~:text=Self%20Help%20Groups%20%2DWhat%20are,%2Dgoverned%20and%20peer%2Dcontrolled.
Producer Marketing Groups	These are clusters of 4–5 producer groups, with the aim of collective engagement with the market through aggregation, negotiation and collective transaction. https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620761/cs-producer-groups-commodity-clusters-tajikistan-170519-en.pdf;jsessionid=E797C0D3F3C12423C50744C536501F8A?sequence=1
Farmer/Producer Associations	These are legal (registered) farmer organizations for collective action to boost farmer productivity and bargaining power, farm management skills, household welfare and livelihoods, and rural development. These can have hundreds to thousands of members. http://www.ciesin.org/decentralization/English/Issues/farmerorg.html https://www.ifad.org/en/farmer-organizations
Farmer Cooperatives	An agricultural cooperative, also known as a farmers' co-op, is a cooperative in which farmers pool their resources in certain areas of activity. Agricultural cooperatives play a key role in linking farmers to markets, providing a collective platform for negotiating with buyers, offering aggregating, marketing and processing services, providing distribution channels for primary products, and delivering training, business planning and capacity building services. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agricultural_cooperative https://eos.com/blog/agricultural-cooperatives/
Community Water Committees	These local committees are volunteers who ensure the continued functionality of water services in a community. They usually have some level of training on fund / fee management, minor repairs, and contracting a technician for major repairs. The water committee often is a liaison between the community and the local government regarding water. Some committees may also work on environmental protection or conservation for integrated water resources management.

Key requirements in Farmer Collectives

The members or producers hold a stake or are shareholders in the organization, which fundamentally deals with business activities related to the primary produce/product, working for the benefit of the member/producers. The "profit" or part of the profit is shared amongst the members/producers or sometimes reinvested into the growth and expansion plans for the groups. The collectives should fundamentally meet the following key principles:

- Formed, owned and governed by the members
- It is critical to situate the collective activities right in the community where producers come from
- Must be participatory in character, with leadership spread widely across members to ensure equity in decision-making (women, men, youth etc)
- Must have Profit-oriented or social enterprise goals.
- Gender equality must be central to collectives' success, and steps should be taken to promote women's and youth leadership and participation.
- Aim for aggregation for economy of scale!

▶ STEP 5. **Discussions.** During this session, participants should work in small groups to discuss their understanding of the farmer collectives, the common types that exist in their areas, any unique characteristics/differences and how they could be engaged and targeted for the FFBS curriculum. This should lead to discussion and recommendations on the potential of FFBS farmer collectives in the area.

Questions to ask:

- What are the common collectives this area?
- What types of collectives are there and how different are they from each other?
- Do we know how they are composed in terms of membership, and how they are organized?
- Do we know what their priorities are in terms of economic activities or value chains?
- What is/are the collectives you would recommend for FFBS implementation and why?

Learning sessions: Each session should begin with a 5–10-minute recap of the previous lesson and actions the participants have based on that they learnt.

Lesson 2: Informal Farmer Collectives/ Organisations

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Ask participants to define informal farmer collectives with their respective characteristics.**

▶ STEP 2. **Provide the following definition:**

These are farmer collectives that are not yet established as a legal entity, due to lack of appropriate legal frameworks and/or the need to organize around informal initiatives based on cooperation and collective interest.

Many VSLAs, SHG and informal producer groups are informal collectives. As an approach, FFBS builds on such existing groups/collectives, both formal or informal, that already have established social capital and governance mechanisms. Foundationally, these VSLAs, SHG and producer groups are the primary entry points for FFBS foundational modules which include gender, nutrition, food loss and waste, CSA/climate adaptation, financial literacy.

▶ STEP 3. **Mapping existing Informal farmer collectives.** Describe the purpose of mapping to participants:

To build a clearer picture of existing farmer collectives in the target areas, which in turn helps the identification and selection of collectives to engage with the FFBS curriculum activities, a mapping exercise is critical. This would help understand how many existing potential collectives are in the targeted project site, their formation and operational history, specializations, potential to integrate FFBS modules and tools including gender, nutrition, and potential for form/transition to specialized groups such as producer groups or producer market groups and potential to introduce other FFBS tools and modules. Some of the information can be collected from agencies that work with collectives, information directly from collectives (to understand the current situation and capacity needs); and information from agencies/projects involved in the enabling environment of collectives/farmer organisations.

▶ STEP 4. **Ask participants to sit in a group of 5–7 individuals** (if possible, let those supporting the same project sit in one group) **and draw a mapping matrix on a flip chart to start the mapping exercise.**

This mapping exercise is important for projects working with different collectives. A single project could be working with a VSLA and a care group for example. It is important to identify the potential informal collective platform for FFBS implementation. In an event that several collectives are part of a single project, it is important to integrate relevant FFBS modules and set the foundation to help farmers join specialized groups formed/to be formed based on the value chains that we will support through the initiative/project

		VSLA	SHG	PG	PMG	Other
Simple Mapping Matrix for informal FC	Indicate the collectives in your respective project					
	Membership (women/men/youth/mixed group)					
	Main activities					
	Sources of capital/funding/finances					
	Potential to integrate FFBS modules/tools					
	Potential to transition/evolve into specialized groups					
	Affiliation/ network or sources of support					
	Any group formed around group members' investment choice or Value Chain					

▶ STEP 5. **Ask group representatives to share findings from the mapping exercise.** Help participants make the decision on the collective/collectives that they will use as an entry point for FFBS implementation. Facilitate discussions based on the following questions:

- Which collective/collectives will serve as entry point/s for FFBS implementation and why?
- Is your plan to form a new informal collective for FFBS Implementation? If yes, do you plan to start working with collectives formed around group members' investment choice or value chain? Or do you plan to start with collectives formed based on self-selection including for saving and loans?

▶ STEP 6. **Inform participants that FFBS implementation is possible with already established collectives, or newly formed ones or both at the same time.** In an event that we start implementation with collectives that are not formed around group members' investment choice or value chain, it is important to remember the need to forming new informal specialized collectives to enable implementation of the FFBS modules on sustainable agricultural and marketing practices tailored to specific value chains

▶ STEP 7. **Establishing new informal farmer collectives.** Indicate to participants that this next session is about forming new informal farmer collectives in the absence of existing collectives formed around group members' investment choice of value chain.

Once specific investment /value chains/economic activity choices are made by the members, it sometimes necessitates formation of alternative groups (e.g., producer groups) around particular investment choices/value chains. These collectives are trained in more FFBS technical modules including sustainable agriculture, agro ecology, entrepreneurship and business management, collective marketing etc., and are supported to develop their business plans seeking to generate net profit for the members. Access to finance is still fundamental, as such, these groups are formed from existing VSLA group members who would still continue their saving and loan activities in VSLA groups, or if they are not coming from VSLAs and depending on the need, the PG could integrate the saving and loan approach or they should be introduced to other potential agricultural financing options. Perhaps, farmers will require links to financial service providers and grant mechanisms to grow their business.

▶ STEP 8. **Ask participants the following question and summarize their answers** using the information in the table below.

- What are some of the factors that facilitate the formation of new collectives, or transition/expand mandate of existing collectives (PG, PMGs)?

Factors to consider when forming new informal collectives	• Types of small-scale producers in the target area, volume of production, socioeconomic status, marketing arrangement • Sufficient demand in the existing market to absorb the additional production without significantly affecting the prices. • Willingness of producers to invest and adopt new technologies, if identified, to increase productivity or quality of produce • Support from Government Departments, NGOs, specialist support agencies and private companies for enterprise development • Incentives for members (also disincentives) for joining the collective, or join existing formal collectives or form new formal collectives post FFBS graduation

Supporting Informal Farmer Collectives for formalization or Linkages

Once informal collectives go through the FFBS curriculum, and apply the practices for at least two seasons, most are ready for graduation, including possibility of formalization/registration, formation into associations or linkages to formal collectives. The FFBS Curriculum is meant to strengthen not only technical capabilities of the members of the collectives, but also their governance, systems, visioning, and preparation for sustainability, which includes linkages to selected well-established and strategic formal entities, such as collectives, associations towards certification for linkages to global markets (see marketing section tools).

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Assess the readiness of the collective. Inform participants that they will do a mock group maturity exercise using the tool below.**

It is importance to assess the groups level of maturity in terms of governance, economic activity/marketing progress, and financial status etc., to ensure their readiness for the next level for either formalization, legal registration, or appropriate connections with the formal collectives and support services. The tool below can be adapted and used for simple assessment of the group's readiness.

Divide Participants into groups of 5–7 people. Ask them to think about a farmers' collective that they worked with in the past. Participants can agree to focus on one collective that one of the group members indicates. The group member should describe the selected collective to the group members so that they have some information that they can use to do the group maturity exercise.

STEP 2. Ask each group to use the tool below and rate the collective:

1–3 RATING GRID	Assessing the collective's maturity levels on a scale of 1 to 3 1 = The Collective has done nothing in this area 2 = The Collective has evolved considerably in this area but still needs improvement 3 = The Collective has evolved well in this area and needs no improvement

Group's Contact Details:

Name:

Location:

membership:

main activity:

AREAS OF ASSESSMENT	RATING		
	1	2	3
Section I – Governance 1. Group has a constitution which has been valid for 2 years and more and more than half of the members participated in its development. 2. Group members know the constitution and adhere to the constitution and can cite situations where the constitution was put to use. 3. Group has active leadership with positions of chair secretary and treasurer elected in the last two years. 4. Leadership demonstrates their effectiveness through holding regular meetings as scheduled, resolving conflicts and running group activities. 5. Group is transparent in all its dealings and members can cite examples where transparency was observed. 6. Members know group finances and contribute to financial decisions. 7. The constitution allows women to participate in all group activities. 8. Women actively participate in decision making			
Section II – Marketing/Economic Activities 1. Group has engaged in collective actions to access agriculture inputs at least a minimum of two agriculture cycles. 2. Group has leadership that facilitates access to better markets and services and can cite markets and other deals that they have benefited from. 3. Group has established channels to access market information 4. Group has consistently been bulking produce (at least two years) and has established temporary warehousing arrangements 5. Group level committee (PMG) has acquired negotiation skills and have used them to have successful trade deals. 6. Collective produce selling 7. Group leadership has effectively been providing feedback on marketing activities to its members and implements group recommendations. 8. Group has been able to network with other likeminded groups and trading organization and companies			

AREAS OF ASSESSMENT	RATING		
	1	2	3
Section III – Finance 1. Group has clear mechanisms of generating funds for running of group activities. 2. Keep records. 3. Group has consistently been contributing money towards the FFBS fund. 4. Group has over 75% of its members contributing money towards the FFBS fund as per agreed amount and intervals. 5. Group has demonstrated the capability to grow the FFBS funds and has records to show the changes being made over the last two years. 6. Group has taken steps to ensure the safety of the funds and has no record of fraud or theft in the last two years. 7. Group has used funds in profitable ventures (buying off produce, investing in other businesses/ IGAs) and relevant logistical costs (communication, hiring, land etc) to enhance agriculture and marketing activities 8. Women equally lead in financial decision making			
Total: **Good Governance** **Marketing** **Finance**			
Recommendation:			

STEP 3. **Let participants know that the aim of the exercise was to let them experiment with the group maturity assessment tool** and there is no need for presentation of findings. Facilitate discussion using the below questions:

- Why do we need to help informal collectives transition to formal collectives or help interested members join formal collectives?
- What do we need to do to help ensure a smooth transition?

Summarize the discussion using the points below.

To prepare the collectives for formalization or linkages to formal collectives, some key activities should as much as possible be considered:

- Training and capacity building of members on running the collectives (visioning, good governance, sustainability, networking, social capital, finance management, registration requirements etc.)
- Formalizing management structure and registration arrangements for the collective
- Support the preparation of business plan.
- Facilitate linkages to existing cooperatives, Associations and Certification opportunities (if needed)

Lesson 3: Formal Farmer Collectives/ Organisations

Steps to follow for the activity

STEP 1. Describe formal collectives to participants.

These are collectives that are formally established as legal entities and incorporated enterprises that are part of the formal sector, such as **Cooperatives and Associations** etc. (see table in Lesson 1).

Agricultural cooperatives seamlessly combine economic, commercial, social and environmental functions that are key to building increasingly sustainable food systems and responding to the current consumer demand for more and better food, together with good production practices. Cooperatives enhance “the market power of small producers”, by focusing on collective ownership and farming of land, and providing services to members including access to inputs, storage, access to finance etc. Most are multifunctional, providing more than one service.

Farmer Associations, (usually non-profit), to service an economic function through promotion of collective action for farmers, including collective aggregation, governance, bargaining both for market and policy related issues affecting small-scale producers. These may include farmers associations, water user’s associations etc.

In FFBS, for greater aggregation, consolidation and economies of scale, informal collectives when mature are clustered into producer market groups/associations or linked to farmer cooperatives. These present stronger platforms for negotiation with market actors, better access to agri-financing, marketing and processing services, as well as providing distribution channels for primary agricultural products and services. To understand these opportunities, mapping and profiling of these formal collectives becomes vital.

STEP 2. Mapping and Profiling of Formal Farmer Collectives/ Organisations.

Ask participants: What is mapping and why it is needed?

Mapping exercise helps to build a clearer picture of existing formal farmer collectives in the target areas, which in turn helps the identification and selection of collectives to engage with the FFBS curriculum activities.

Ask participants: what is profiling and why it is needed?

Profiling helps to assess the selected collectives, to understand deeper their strengths to build on, weaknesses that need to be addressed to effectively link to services and market opportunities. This may consist of qualitative description; SWOT analysis; and sometimes quantitative analysis based on need or farmer collective’s category.

STEP 3. Ask participants; Why is mapping of formal collectives Important? And summarize session using the points below:

- To understand history, capacity, opportunity, and services required
- Number of FO/collectives in the areas
- To increase knowledge of existing collectives, how they are being formed.
- To determine the collective’s situation in selected areas. Do they already exist in specific value chains? Are there any existing “generic” or “farmers’ union organizations”? What are the main commodities grown in the area?
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing Collectives/FOs, in particular: (i) their comparative advantage in specific activities/economic services; (ii) their institutional capacity to provide services to their members.
- To select collectives/FOs for the FFBS or economic activity engagement.

The key information collected during the mapping/profiling of collectives include:

- Geographical structuring. How are farmers organized at the local, regional and national levels? Are there any apex collectives/FOs? Chambers of agriculture?
- SWOT analysis of Collectives/FOs.

- Review of the main commodities grown by Collectives/FOs farmers members.
- Classification of Collectives/FOs in terms of the economic services they provide for members.
- Profiling tools and indicators can also be used to monitor and evaluate other Collectives FO activities – for example capacity-building activities.

Detailed mapping may also generate information such as:

- level of maturity of Collectives/FOs, which can also be used as the basis for an M&E system and a capacity-building plan.
- Name, contact, history (date created, initiated by whom).
- Type/level of organization, geographical coverage.
- Membership (number, type, ratio women: men), existence of legal status, institutional functioning (structure, internal bodies, decision-making processes).
- Objective/mission and range of services provided (economic, social, trade union/political).
- Partnerships, relationships with other stakeholders (local authorities, public services, service

Part 1: Mapping Tool/Matrix: A participatory Identification and Mapping of Farmer Collectives

▶ STEP 1. **Group Exercise.** put participants in a group of 5–7 individuals for a mock mapping and profiling exercise on formal collectives. This is a mock exercise aimed at introducing the mapping and profiling tool as such exercise would require going beyond a classroom session.

▶ STEP 2. **Ask the participants (in groups) to use the table below and list different types of formal farmers collectives they know in their area.**

▶ STEP 3. **Conduct mapping of the different collectives that exist in the target area.** List the unique characteristics of the farmer collectives as in the table below.

▶ STEP 4. **Discuss with the participants what they observe and think on the collectives.**

▶ STEP 5. **From this discussion the facilitator should ask about the key questions to generate the profile of the Collectives**

Example of Mapping Matrix

		PMG	Association	Cooperative	WUA	etc
PART 1	Contact Details					
	Legal status					
	Membership					
	Main activities					
	Sources of funding					
PART 2	Governance					
	Planning/communication					
	Admin and Finance Mgt					
	Membership participation					
	Economic Services					
	Partnerships					

Part 1 focuses on basic and general information (e.g., contact details, context and date of creation, legal status, membership, main activities, and sources of funding).

Part 2 focuses on specific and detailed information particularly relating to: (i) governance, planning and communication; (ii) administrative and financial management; (iii) membership participation; (iv) economic services; (v) representation and partnerships. **See example below.**

Part 2: Mapping/Profiling Tool: Detailed Information for the Collectives

▶ STEP 1. **Using the rating Grid, complete the questions below and average the ratings to establish the maturity of the farmer Collective.**

1–4 **RATING GRID**	Assessing the collective's maturity levels on a scale of 1 to 4 1 = The Collective has done nothing in this area 2 = The Collective has started operating in this area 3 = The Collective has evolved considerably in this area but still needs improvement 4 = The Collective has evolved well in this area and needs no improvement

AREA OF DETAILED MAPPING	RATING			
	1	2	3	4
Section I. Governance, planning and communication. a. General assembly b. Board (term of office, participation of women) c. Good governance (separation of board and management, transparency, accountability, responsiveness) d. Communication e. Planning				
Section II. Administrative and financial management and human resources management a. Availability of official/legal/administrative documents b. Availability of management and planning documents c. Financial management and annual audit d. Efficiency and risk management e. Monitoring and evaluation f. Human resources management				

AREA OF DETAILED MAPPING	RATING			
	1	2	3	4
Section III. Membership participation a. Gender and youth issues b. Member satisfaction c. Transactions with the Collective and investments in the Collective d. Transactions versus dividends e. Decision-making				
Section IV. Economic services provided by the Collective/environmental/external factors for Collective's service provision. a. Position of the Collective in its sector/value chain b. Input and equipment supply c. Training/Capacity-building d. Collecting, bulking, marketing of products (identifying new clients, signing contracts, conducting market studies, promoting products) e-Storage facilities f. Processing/packaging facilities g. Market information system (MIS) h. Facilitating access to credit/insurance				
Section V. Representation and partnerships a. Leadership b. Advocacy c. Partnerships with public services d. Partnerships with private sector e. Partnerships with donors and technical agencies/NGOs				
Maturity level (average of the above ratings)				

Part 3: Criteria for selecting formal Collectives for Linkages

▶ STEP 1. **Summarize the session by discussing the selection criteria below for formal collectives.**

The criteria to be considered for the selection of formal farmer collectives to work with in FFBS activities (see box below for a non-exhaustive list) can vary depending on different elements and factors such as the context, purpose and the area a project operates in.

Key Criteria	Description
Governance, democratic functioning, transparency	• Respect for internal democracy, transparent accounting, members aware of the collectives' activities, farmers paying their contributions and dues etc.
Targeting/Membership/Gender equality	• Equal access for women and youth, specific responsibilities assigned to women. Provides opportunities for disadvantaged producers/members
Good organizational development	• All members are aware of medium-term project activities, quality of balance sheet presented to general assembly, including self-evaluation of activities and sources of income, indication of debts, and well-prepared minutes of meetings. • Effective participation of women in decision-making process • Diversification of activities • Good use of resources and funds.
Inclusiveness	• Collectives open to new membership and/or willing to provide services to non-members, including other vulnerable groups/members
Efficiency and effectiveness of the economic services	• Efficiency and effectiveness of the economic services provided by Collectives (bulking functions, input provision, training)
Sustainability potential	• Good use of resources and funds, management of internal funds, • diversification of activities, membership, business approach, etc. • Financial position and cash balance • Profitability and long-term financial sustainability

▶ STEP 2. **Discussions.** During this session, participants should discuss in plenary the most important criteria for forming and/or selecting formal collectives for linking FFBS graduates.

Lesson 4: Visioning Journey of Collectives[1]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To introduce the Vision Journey tool as a basic planning process for changing gender inequalities and improving livelihoods framework in which people develop a vision for change with SMART 'milestones', analyze opportunities and constraints, commit to actions and track progress over time
TIMEFRAME	2hrs
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart and marker, Notebook diaries with colored pens
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for men and women members of the collective to work separately on their vision journeys before they are brought together for a discussion and development a shared vision journey for the collectives (if this is facilitated with a mixed-sex collective)

Background

The "Visioning" method provides a good opportunity for the participants to envision and draw their dreams. It is always important to start from having faith in the possibilities of progress and change and to start to develop the habit of visioning, planning, and assessing our progress. But it is important for this first journey to start with something concrete and realistic so you can learn how to plan and progress. And start to have confidence that things can change and feel good about your journey. These should be beautiful dreams that inspire you.

As an integrated, gender-transformative, market-based, and nutrition-sensitive extension approach, the Farmer Field and Business School will expose you and your collective to learning and sharing on key issues in agriculture and food systems. These issues include sustainable agricultural and livestock practices, inclusive markets, gender equality, and good nutrition. The Visioning Journey tool will help the collective envision the dream for the FFBS engagement that should be concrete and inspires the group so that they learn how to plan and progress. The visioning tool sets realistic targets with tracked actions and milestones.

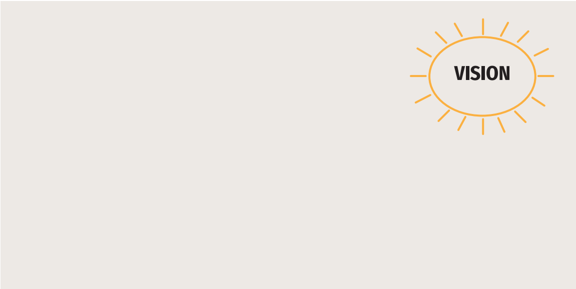
Note: If done with mixed-sex collectives, the facilitator should allow women and men of the collective to work on their respective vision journeys and bring them together for a discussion to agree on a shared vision journey for the collective.

1 Adapted from: Oxfam Novib Et al. (2014). GENDER ACTION LEARNING SYSTEM PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR TRANSFORMING GENDER AND UNEQUAL POWER RELATIONS IN VALUE CHAINS. Retrieved from https://www.oxfamnovib.nl/Redactie/Downloads/English/publications/150115_Practical%20guide%20GALS%20summary%20Phase%201-2%20lr.pdf and Mayoux Linda (2014). GALS CATALYST PHASE 1. Retrieved from https://www.galsatscale.net/_documents/GALSCatalyst2VisionJourney.pdf

Steps to follow for the activity

▸ STEP 1. First circle – future

Draw a large circle at the top right-hand corner of your page. This represents the future of their collective. It is a large circle at the top because it is like a sun with rays to show brighter future and you are reaching for the sky. It is the vision which will inspire you to pick your collective up and continue to move forward if the collective falls and stumbles on the rocks along the road.

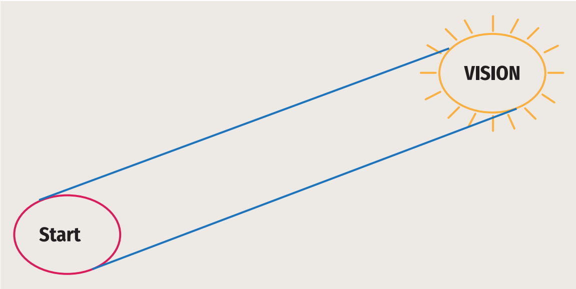


Inside the sun, the farmers should write their vision and dreams. The vision that the collective will set should take the key FFBS components into account:

- Sustainable Agricultural and Livestock practices
- Inclusive Markets
- Gender Equality and
- Good nutrition

▸ STEP 2. Second circle – present and drafting the road.

Draw a second large circle at the bottom left-hand corner of the flipchart. This represents the present situation. Draw two straight lines to link both circles. This represents the collective's road from the present (bottom) to the future (top). The road is straight and upwards, because this is how one hope the collective will reach up to the vision.

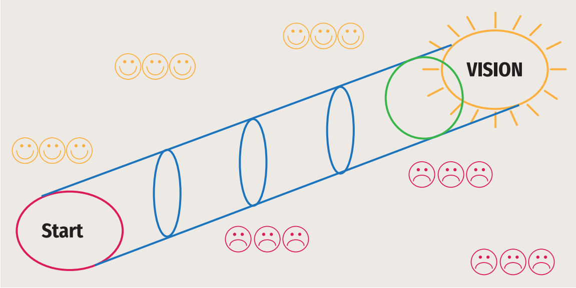


In the bottom circle draw how the collective's current starting situation is for the different things in your vision. What do you have as a collective? Resources? Capacities etc

▸ STEP 3. Opportunities and constraints

On either side outside the road, you will draw:

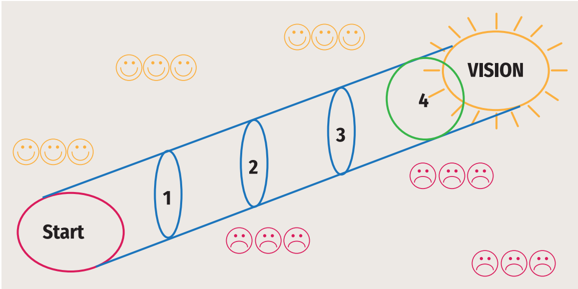
- at least 10 opportunities along the top part of the road – the things which will help the collective up if it fall down. The more opportunities you can think of, the easier it will be to advance.
- at least constraints go under the road because these are the things which can drag the collective down. It is important to foresee and avoid them if possible.



The opportunities and constraints that are most under the collective's control should be near to the road. Theopportunities/ constraints which the collective cannot control go furthest from the road.

STEP 4. Target and milestones

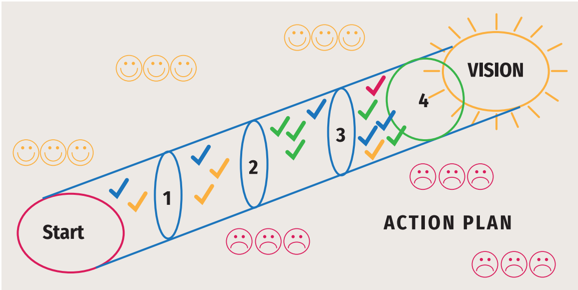
Every journey starts with small steps. The collective's vision is a long-term dream. Now they need to plan how realistically, move towards their future vision, given the opportunities and challenges/constraints, Draw a circle next to the vision where you will fill in how far you think the collective can get in 1 year for the different elements in the vision. Then put 3 circles at equal distance along the road as milestones for each 3 months. Leave enough space in between – that is where you will put the actions.



STEP 5. SMART milestones and action plan

Now you are ready to fill in the collective's milestones – in each circle you put in how far the collective need to get each time.

Then between each milestone you put in the actions needed to move from one to the next – revising the milestones and target if necessary. You will then track the collective's progress over time, and adjust the drawing as needed to get as far as the collective can towards the vision.



Action: The vision journey is a living document that should be reflected upon and updated. The facilitator should organize a quarterly vision journey review session and sit down with collectives and lead discussions based on the following questions:

- How are you progressing with your collective's vision journey?
- Which issues have you managed to resolve, and which challenges are remaining, and what are you planning to address them in the next three months?
- Which gender issues are emerging? Which things could you further emphasize based on what people are already saying? Which gender issues are being omitted? eg women's ownership of assets in the vision. How do you think you could introduce that discussion in the coming months based on what people are saying?

3. Gender Tools

A. Introduction to Social Analysis & Action[1]

Social Analysis and Action is the implementation approach for the FFBS gender dialogues. The gender dialogues should follow the SAA process. Participants should be oriented on SAA and understand its processes before they engage in the critical reflection, dialogue and action process using the gender tools. Facilitator can use the following content and present the approach to participants.

i. What is SAA?

SAA is a facilitated process through which individuals and communities explore and challenge the social and gender norms, beliefs and practices that shape their lives and are at the root of the development problems that CARE seeks to address. Initiated in 2004, SAA has been applied in more than 20 countries to CARE projects addressing diverse development and social justice issues, supporting CARE's global commitment to gender equality and women's voice.

As a constantly evolving change process, the core elements driving SAA are:

1. **Reflect** to create understanding of how norms related to gender and sexuality influence health, women's economic empowerment, food security, nutrition, and GBV.

2. **Challenge** norms by taking concrete steps to address health, food and nutrition security, economic empowerment and other social issues through a reflection-action cycle, supporting changes in individual attitudes and social norms, leading to greater gender equality in households, communities, and society.

3. **Explore** by envisioning alternatives based on a realization of the negative effects norms have on well-being and development outcomes, and moving towards alternative ways of thinking and behaving.

4. **Learn** how gender, social, and power norms shape perceptions/expectations of others and ourselves and influence decisions and behaviors.

1 CARE. (2018). *Social Analysis and Action Global Implementation Manual*. Pp. 2–14.

ii. Why SAA?

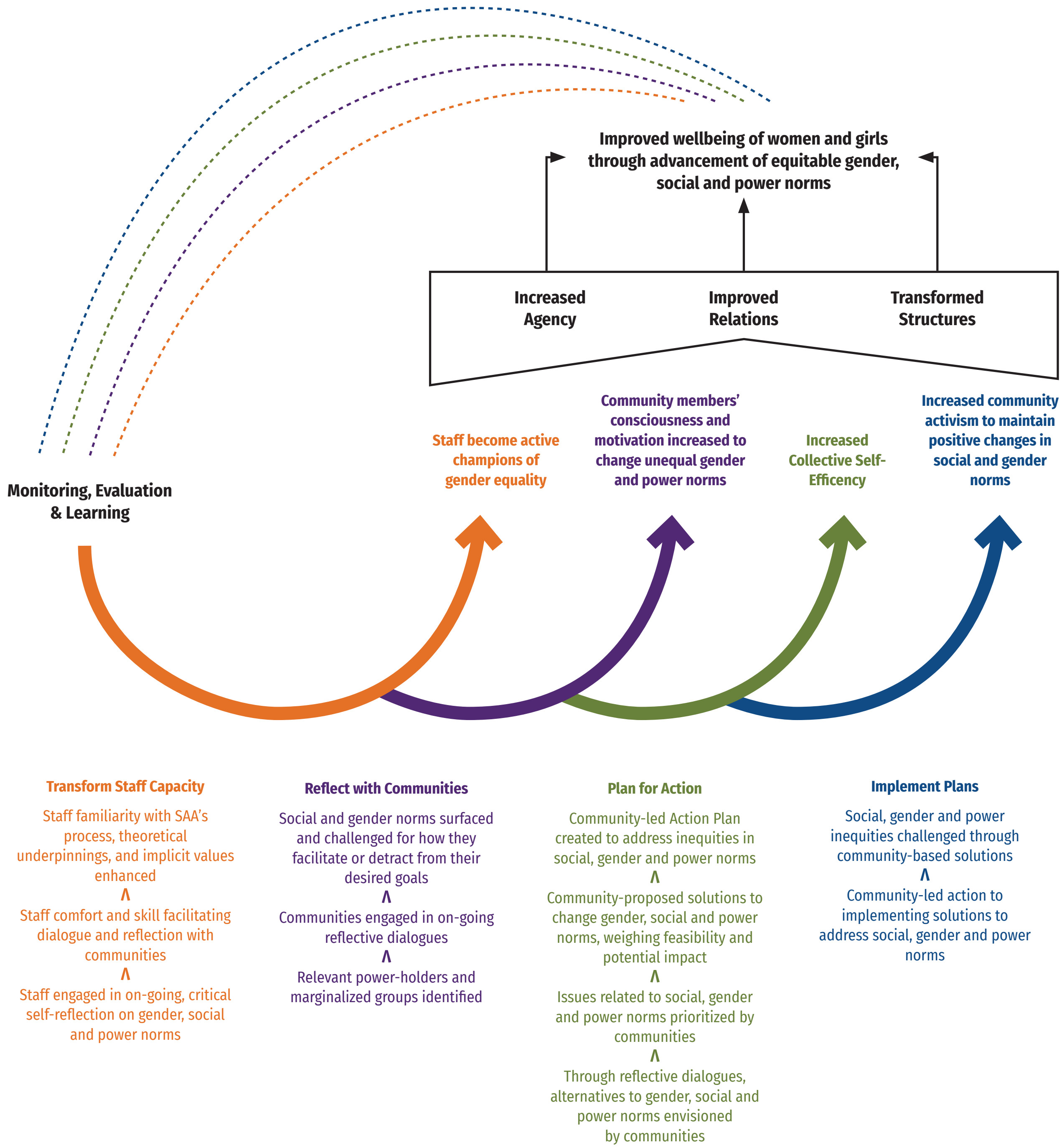
The key principles of SAA that differentiate the model from other community-based reflection and change methodologies are as follows:

Gender transformation	Sexual Reproductive Health as a cross-cutting issue	Personal transformation among implementers	Community-led action
SAA challenges harmful gender roles and relationships that negatively impact development outcomes and wellbeing. It can enable women, men, girls, and boys to collectively envision alternatives and take action for a gender equitable household and society, transforming the underlying, broadly-held norms that perpetuate gender inequality.	Freedom to exercise our sexual and reproductive rights is an important part of gender equality. Sexual and reproductive rights enable a person to choose if, when, and with whom to have sex; if, when, and who to marry; and if, when, and how many children to have. While these issues are usually addressed within SRHR programming, SAA recognizes that Sexual Reproductive Health heavily influences crosscutting gender, social, and power norms and is thus relevant to all sectors.	Through staff transformation, SAA implementers also participate in critical self-reflection and dialogue to examine their own behavior and values to understand how these influence their work and lives. Staff members' own reflective practice also supports capacity building for facilitating dialogue on sensitive issues to ensure that they do not reinforce gender stereotypes and power inequities.	In SAA, community members lead their own actions to challenge and change inequitable norms. While other approaches also identify development issues, not all approaches address underlying causes. By enabling communities' own identification and action to challenge root causes, SAA facilitates sustainable change in individuals and communities, creating an enabling environment for gender equity and women's empowerment.

iii. Theory of Change for SAA

The SAA theory of change (TOC) demonstrates the process, relationships, and components necessary to achieve the long-term goal of SAA: *empowerment of vulnerable communities through the advancement of equitable gender, social, and power norms*. The gender-transformative change that SAA aims to facilitate can be examined across three key domains that are the basis of the SAA TOC as well as CARE's Gender Equality Framework, represented in the below figure as the model's intermediate outcomes.

1. **Agency**: individual or collective capacities (knowledge and skills), attitudes, critical reflection, assets, actions, and access to services;
2. **Relations**: the expectations, cooperative, or negotiation dynamics between people in the home, market, community, groups and organizations;
3. **Structures**: informal and formal institutional rules and practices (norms, recognition and status).



Using the Gender Equality Framework as a basis for the TOC, we must understand that all steps in the SAA process contribute towards increasing agency, strengthening relations, and transforming structures to achieve improved wellbeing across sectors. Similarly, agency, relations, and structures are not enhanced unless all four immediate outcomes are achieved, thus stressing the interdependency of the steps in the SAA process as detailed below.

Staff transformation is the foundational step of SAA that should be initiated before the other SAA steps; however, it is also a continuous process that occurs throughout implementation. Through ongoing, critical self-reflection on gender, social, and power norms, staff members increase their own understanding, comfort with the topics, and their skills for facilitating dialogue on gender and social norms. This regular reflective practice results in staff members increased familiarity with SAA's process, theoretical underpinnings, and the model's implicit values of gender equality and women's empowerment. Increased individual capacity of staff opens spaces to act within programs and their personal lives, enabling **them to become active champions of gender equality**.

While **reflecting with communities** must commence after staff transformation has begun, it is similarly a continuous process throughout program implementation. This can be understood through the immediate outcome associated with this step: **individuals' and communities' consciousness and motivation increased to change unequal gender, social, and power norms**. Increasing understanding and critical reflection is not possible in one session or day, instead it should be a continuous process of growing capacity, awareness, and motivation for individuals and groups. Before choosing which modules/tools to use to address gender, social, and power norms during reflective dialogues, teams must first identify the most relevant norms by engaging community groups who are most negatively impacted by these norms. Then program teams identify power holders that hold and influence these norms by conducting gender and power analysis (See **Section 5** for details). Through reflective dialogues with target groups and power holders, social and gender norms are surfaced and then critically assessed for how they contribute to or undermine shared goals and desires.

This critical reflection by community members is crucial for turning motivation for change into community-led action as these dialogues also offer the opportunity to envision alternatives to the current state of affairs. In the **plan for action** step, community members must first prioritize the issues they wish to address and then propose solutions to those prioritized concerns. CARE's role in guiding the planning process enhances the capacity of community members to weigh the feasibility and potential impact of the proposed solutions. The planning and decision making at a group level is a community-led process. This joint planning process is a reflection of relationships fostered through dialogue, further increasing both individual and **collective efficacy**. When communities **implement plans**, social, gender, and power inequities are challenged through **increased community activism to adopt and maintain positive changes**.

Finally, these on-going processes provide opportunity for **monitoring, evaluation, and learning**, including programs' understanding of SAA's contribution to the enabling environment (i.e. gender equitable norms) but also programs' ability to learn from and adapt to the sources of strength and opportunity already existing in communities.

iv. Do No Harm and SAA

The principle of "do no harm" means that those undertaking research, projects, or providing services, should not cause harm – intentionally or unintentionally. This includes harm caused by individual development actors, processes and projects that are implemented in communities by CARE, partners, and peer organizations. "Harm" can mean a range of things, including physical, emotional, or sexual violence, denial of basic human rights (i.e. access to education, political participation), social exclusion or stigmatization, and damaging local resources.

Harmful effects are often unforeseen and unintended: well-meaning individuals or organizations can easily make mistakes. Harm can be avoided through careful consideration of the complexity and sensitivities around the gender, social, and power norms that SAA addresses. This understanding of both the context and the impact of SAA on individuals and communities is the practice of "do no harm."

The following is a checklist of minimum standards for ensuring that programs using SAA do no harm. If CARE and partners cannot ensure that the following steps are fulfilled throughout implementation, the use of SAA should be reconsidered:

Transform staff capacity

- Ensure program staff have a strong understanding of perceptions and attitudes about gender, social, and power norms in the local context – including forms and prevalence of GBV, even if this is outside the programs' explicit goals and objectives. This can be achieved by conducting a gender and power analysis at the start of the intervention (see **Section 5** for further guidance).

Reflect with communities

- Before facilitating critical reflective dialogue with communities, complete a gender and power analysis and use the findings to tailor tools/modules and processes to the context.
- Facilitate reflective dialogues using non-judgmental, locally appropriate language.
- During SAA discussions, participants often choose to share personal stories or experiences. Facilitators should remind participants that sharing personal information is voluntary and that this type of information should be kept confidential. However, as confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, no one is obligated to participate. Participants *must* be given the 'right to pass'; to skip any question or activity that they are not comfortable with.
- It is likely that GBV will be discussed by participants during the course of reflective dialogues. If a participant discloses an incident, facilitators should be ready to listen and provide a referral to services for the survivor where available.

Plan for action

- It is important to plan for potential risks, including action to be taken if faced with strong opposition, or if children at risk of harm are identified. An awareness of the political situation, degree of press freedom, and government approach to human rights is important. Any potential risks to the facilitator and the team should also be discussed at this stage.
- Understand how ready the community is to change gender, social, and power norms addressed through SAA, and adapt the use of SAA accordingly.
- During planning, start with 'less sensitive' gender norms (such as household division of labor) before attempting to address 'more sensitive' gender norms (such as violence against women).

Implement plans

- Ensure that change is locally led, particularly when groups take action to challenge harmful norms. Change initiated through SAA must be based on local knowledge and visible local leadership.
- Where possible, facilitators should help groups identify stakeholders and allies to support their actions.
- If groups choose actions that might cause harm – to either SAA participants themselves or other community members – facilitators should alert project managers and work with the SAA group participants to identify appropriate actions to mitigate risk. For instance, if SAA participants choose to exclude married adolescent girls from the program's activities to dissuade parents from marrying their daughters early, this will result in married adolescents' exclusion and possible stigmatization. CARE staff and facilitators can work with SAA groups to celebrate appropriate age of marriage while not excluding those who either cannot or are not ready to adopt the positive behavior.

Evaluate

- SAA implementers – including field-level facilitators and coordinators – should monitor how SAA groups' dialogues and actions are developing, providing guidance to SAA participants if there is a potential for harm.
- All programs employing SAA should monitor and evaluate changes related to GBV. [CARE's guidance for GBV Monitoring and Mitigation with non-GBV Focused Sectoral Programs] should be referenced for monitoring and evaluation tools, processes, guidance, and ethical and safety considerations.

B. Steps in the SAA process

The core elements of SAA discussed in **Section 2** form the outer layer of the SAA process cycle, while the five steps below form the inner circle of the SAA process cycle. The last step, evaluate, is discussed in **Section 5** of this manual.

i. Transform Staff Capacity

Beliefs, attitudes, and values of staff are shaped by the societies they live in – just like the people in the communities where development programs operate. As seen in the TOC, SAA begins by transforming the capacity of program staff members. This continues throughout the process cycle. It usually begins with the staffs' own capacity transformation, which is a continuous process. This process usually begins with training-of-trainers for SAA with program staff.

In SAA, staff transformation has two core elements:

Self-reflection

Development workers unconsciously hold biases and beliefs they've learned through their own socialization processes. Self-reflection encourages them to become aware of and address these so that they do not reinforce or perpetuate these stereotypes while facilitating the SAA process.

Building skills to facilitate critical reflection and dialogue (CRD)

Staff members' own reflective practice helps increase their confidence and comfort talking about and facilitating discussions about gender, power relations and other social norms that are usually taboo. CRD enables individuals and communities to question and, challenge restrictive norms, envision alternatives, and act together to shift norms.

The purpose of transforming the capacity of the CARE staff is three-fold:

1.

Strengthen capacity at individual level to reflect on one's own biases and beliefs that influence work, enhance comfort with talking about sensitive issues, and build comfort with new perspectives and ideas.

2.

Build staff, partner, and organizational capacity to facilitate the SAA process, use SAA tools, and critically analyze issues for SAA implementation.

3.

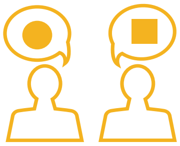
Continuously strengthen the SAA process to explore new themes that arise from community dialogues, refine approaches, and adapt tools.

Because SAA aims to challenge deeply held and accepted gender norms and stereotypes, implementing SAA requires core communication and facilitation skills to lead communities through CRD on sensitive social topics. Key SAA facilitation skills include:

Creating welcoming, inclusive, and respectful spaces

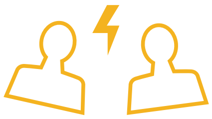
Building trust with colleagues and the community

Encourage interaction and exchange amongst participants



Respectfully managing different points of view

Avoid using messages but instead use probing skills to prompt critical thinking



Managing conflict and tension over sensitive issues and deeply held beliefs

Active listening, inviting everyone to speak up, not interrupting

Withholding judgment and not discouraging opinions

Summarizing dialogue and emphasizing key points

ii. Reflect with Community

Reflect with community, the second step of SAA, is a continuous process of exploring the underlying causes of gender, social, and power norms. SAA uses participatory tools to facilitate CRD to surface the root causes of development. challenges related to gender and social norms. While the specific issues will differ across contexts, they should all be linked to gender, social, **and power** norms.

Reflecting with community involves three phases:

Explore:

A gender and power analysis engages communities in identifying the gender, social and power issues that negatively impact development outcomes. Discussions should take place in a safe space and facilitators should not be judgmental of community members' thoughts, beliefs, and practices.

Challenge:

Through discussing and exploring the identified norms, community members recognize that some values, customs, beliefs, and behaviors negatively affect their wellbeing and development. SAA facilitators guide participants through this sensitive process, asking probing questions to enable community members to reflect upon who is affected by inequitable norms, how they are affected, and what negative consequences this has for individual and community wellbeing.

Motivation for positive change:

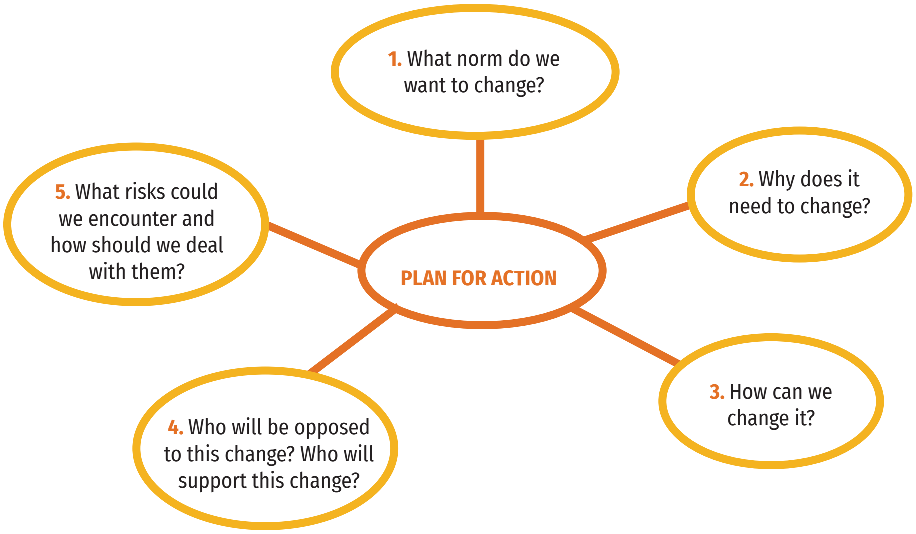
Through recognizing how gender, social, and power norms can negatively affect development and wellbeing participants begin to envision positive alternatives.

iii. Plan for Action

Planning for action is a vital step in turning motivation for change into individual and collective action for sustainable transformation, centering around communities' own identification and prioritization of practical actions to challenge gender, social, and power norms. Multiple issues may have been addressed during SAA dialogues, such as women's workload, decision-making power within the household, and unequal distribution of food among family members. After these dialogues occur, participants can choose if and how they want to take action on one of these issues.

SAA facilitators help communities move through the planning process by understanding whether actions will influence change, who will participate in the actions, and the barriers to implementing actions and the changes communities seek. For instance, SAA participants may identify speaking to the religious leader about the issue of women's workload and how this affects their ability to breastfeed. The facilitator then facilitates a discussion with participants to decide if this alone will make a change in their community, if they need to do additional actions to create the change they seek, and if there are potential risks involved with their chosen actions. The planning process also builds capacity of the community for collective action and prepares them for implementing their plans.

Steps to facilitate plan for action



Broadly, planning for action involves the five steps in the web diagram. In a truly participatory action planning process everyone is heard, especially vulnerable and excluded groups and individuals. Some important points for facilitators of this step of SAA are listed below.

Key discussion points when facilitating community dialogue during the planning for action step

1. Priorities:

Keep the dialogue focused on the key issues participants want to tackle with SAA.

2. Entry points

- Which stakeholders should be approached? Who from the community will lead the process?
- Where will the planned activities occur? This includes the geographic location as well as the physical location within communities (i.e. in a household, at a health center, during a community-level meeting, etc.)

3. Actions

- What will be the guiding strategy – advocacy and campaign or livelihood generation etc., or mix of several actions?

4. Logistics:

Who will implement and when?

- Will the intervention be immediate, short-term, or long-term?
- Is capacity building and support needed?
- Who will mobilize resources and how?
- What risks are involved as it challenges social norms and values?

iv. Implement Plans

The fourth step of SAA is implement plans, which includes both individual behavior changes and community led social change through collective action. Implementing plans developed by communities is very sector and project-specific as plans are implemented within other programming interventions. It is important that implementation of action plans is flexible to ensure that they are responding to changes in the context that occur during implementation.

The implementation process follows the Do No Harm Framework to ensure that unintended negative impacts are prevented and mitigated as sensitive gender norms are challenged. Involvement of other stakeholders and implementation of a series of activities may bring about change in the gender, social, and power norms, as these norms are deep rooted in the culture of the community.

3.1 Introducing Your Partner to the Program[1]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To introduce spouses to the program and be sure that they understand the program and how they will be encouraged to be involved and to support their spouses. To practice active listening and build support for women's participation in the program.
TIMEFRAME	45 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	Quiz questions on the program
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space to form circles, both standing and sitting

Background

A mutual understanding of what the program is, especially how it requires men's support of women's participation, is key to accomplishing program (or other development program's) goals. When a group member's spouse is introduced early in the intervention, they have a better grasp on what their role can be in supporting their partner in the program and to improve their partner and entire family's livelihoods.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** Welcome the partners to the session and have them introduce themselves. Have a leader of the project/producer group go over the ground rules that the group has established.

▶ STEP 2. **Warm-up: "In this group you find respect..."** Ask the group to make a circle, including the facilitator. Make sure the circle is closed. Explain that we are going to experiment with taking risks. The circle represents a wall of protection – inside this space, participants can practice safely walking with their eyes closed.

Ask for one volunteer to experiment with walking with his/her eyes closed while the others provide a safe space. The volunteer stands in the middle while the facilitator explains, "You will close your eyes and start to cross to the circle until you reach one side of the group. The group member will receive you gently and guide you to another person in the circle. The group will take care that you feel safe. You can experiment as long as you like."

Enforce the rules that no one will laugh or make jokes while the volunteer is experimenting.

Ask the volunteer:

- How did it feel to be led by others?
- How did others receive you?
- What feelings (e.g. anxiety, safety) did you have?

1 Adapted from: Pawlak, Peter, Henny Slegh, and Gary Barker. (2012). *Journeys of Transformation: A Training Manual for Engaging Men as Allies in Women's Economic Empowerment.* CARE International in Rwanda and Promundo. Pp. 30–32.

Ask the group:

- How did it feel to be responsible for guiding others? What did we do to create a safe space?
- How does this relate to real life? What things make you feel comfortable discussing with a group?
- What can we do in our project groups to make each other feel comfortable?

Allow several volunteers to experiment for a total of 10 minutes.

End by pointing out we will be taking risks and talking about topics that we don't always share. It's important to create a strong circle of support. All participants have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the circle.

▶ **STEP 3. Project Quiz.** Develop a short quiz, asking several questions about the project. Ask for men's answers but allow women to share their knowledge to fill in the information gaps. Questions might include:

- What is the project?
- How often do groups meet?
- What is the purpose?
- How long will the project last?
- What are the responsibilities of group members?
- What will members learn?

After explaining the basic program, ask:

- What is the role of men (spouses) in the project? How will they be expected to participate?

Collect ideas from participants and enforce the key points for a total of 15 minutes.

- Explain that project participants will be learning agriculture and marketing techniques.
- They will be learning budgeting and bargaining skills that may also be useful to men and to the whole family.
- They will be learning about nutrition and health – information that both fathers and mothers need to make good decisions. Spouses are encouraged to attend all nutrition and health sessions.
- In addition to agriculture, nutrition, and marketing skills, the project will create a safe circle for men and women to discuss problems and to understand one another's points of view.
- There will be special sessions where spouses are strongly encouraged to attend, so that both spouses benefit.

▶ **STEP 4. Supporting each other.** Separate the groups into men and women. Explain that women who are engaged in farming and business have many competing responsibilities at home. To grow their business and agriculture enterprises, they need full support from their spouses and families.

- Ask women to come up with a group list of how their partners can support them to succeed.
- Ask men to come up with a group list of how they can support their partners to succeed.

Bring the groups together, and have the men and women share their lists for a total of 20 minutes. Discussion questions:

- Were the women's lists the same as the men's?
- What were the common points raised by men and women? Are these achievable goals?
- What surprised you about this session?
- Based on what you learned, what opportunities do you see for supporting your wife/partner?
- What have you learned from this session? How can this help you in your lives and relationships?

▶ **STEP 5.** Thank participants for creating a safe space and make sure they know when the next session is.

3.2 Agricultural Group Case Study #1: Land & Input Access[2]

SEASON	Case studies should be started in Pre-Sowing season and then used in future seasons; the timing of each specific case is not important
OBJECTIVE	To show how forms of gender discrimination within the community and household can leave women farmers behind and affect the well-being of the family and community. To compare what is happening in the story with what is happening in the community.
TIMEFRAME	*1 hour (x 5 sessions)* This role-play is intended to be broken up and read over a series of weeks as a continuous story. Each week, the facilitator will read the same introduction, and then choose one of the role-play scenarios for discussion. Each session should take a maximum of one hour.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Translated copy of the scenarios, in local language
IDEAL WORKSPACE	This exercise can be done by reading aloud, or you can ask for volunteers to act out the scenarios

Background

Around the world, women play vital roles in agriculture, but they are rarely recognized as farmers, and extension services are less likely to reach them. Even when they have access to extension services and support, they face many disadvantages. They must juggle household and farm work; they often get late access to land and inputs; they may get less information for marketing. This case study explores some of these common challenges that female smallholders and their families face and allow participants to come up with potential solutions for this fictional village – and for their own community.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 1. Introduction** Explain to participants that you are going to start reading a story that requires active listening. Remind them of your discussion on the last agricultural group case study, if applicable. You will read this story every time. Start telling aloud the story:

> *"The story's village [MAY INSERT VILLAGE NAME] was a farming community, where both women and men grew crops. Recently, men had started going away for work, leaving women to do most of the farming. Women did their work by hand. Women's production was low, and by the end of the season, many had to sell their crop right away, when the price was lowest. Many of the children went hungry at the end of the season, and malnutrition was common."*

Pause and check that participants are listening before continuing:

> *"Now in that area there is a Development Committee, which saw the problems of the women and organized different supports to them. The Agriculture Department and some NGOs organized the women into groups for training. A loan group supported women to get small loans. The village chiefs gave some land for demonstration plots, and*

2 Adapted from: *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual* (Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994).

the women started to meet every week for training. The women learned improved planting techniques and new seed varieties to improve their yields. They learned when to plant, weed, and harvest, and how to sort through at the end of the harvest. They learned about nutrition, how to grow a nutrition garden, and how to intercrop vegetables and beans to grow a diverse diet.

They learned about how to set a good price for the crop and to estimate the cost of production. The women of the village were very excited about these initiatives, and the opportunity to earn income."

▶ **STEP 2. Read the role-play scenario.** Pause and explain to the participants that we are going to look inside some of these households and see what happened within the group. Read the following story aloud or ask for volunteers to act out the scenario.

CASE STUDY #1: AISHA'S STORY

Aisha went to the agriculture training and learned about new varieties of seed that would have huge yields. She knew that they had to be planted early.

In this village, women did not have their own land but had to wait for the head of the household to divide up the family land. Aisha was given a small, not very fertile piece of land far from the house.

She asked her husband to purchase seed for her, because she was not allowed to go to market on her own. Her husband first bought his own seed, and he forgot the name of the new variety. After purchasing his own seed variety, there was only a little money left for her seed variety. He bought a mix of the old and new.

When she got the seed, the quality of the seed was poor, and Aisha's crop was late and missed the rains. The crop did poorly, and she worried about being able to pay the children's school fees. Her husband wondered why she had not learned anything from those agriculture trainings! He said this is why extension services should be given to men.

▶ **STEP 3.** When the reading/role play is over, **finish each story** by saying:

"At the end of the day, the men of the village wondered why their wives had learned nothing at all from their agriculture training! The women of the village wondered why they felt farther behind than before!"

▶ **STEP 4. Discuss the scenario** by asking:

- What was happening in the story?
- What did the character hope to achieve?
- How did he/she try to apply new knowledge?
- What prevented her from succeeding?

▶ **STEP 5. Apply these ideas to your communities and groups** by asking:

- Does this type of scenario also happen in our community? Why?
- Is there anyone within our group who is struggling with these problems?
- How are they coping with these issues?
- What can we do to change the situation?

▶ **STEP 6. A solution for the village**. Ask for volunteers to envision a better scenario for the women of the village and act out the ideal scenario.

3.3 Agricultural Group Case Study #2: Nutritional Decision Making[3]

SEASON	Case studies should be started in Pre-Sowing season and then used in future seasons; the timing of each specific case is not important
OBJECTIVE	To show how forms of gender discrimination within the community and household can leave women farmers behind and affect the well-being of the family and community. To compare what is happening in the story with what is happening in the community.
TIMEFRAME	*1 hour (x 5 sessions)* This role-play is intended to be broken up and read over a series of weeks as a continuous story. Each week, the facilitator will read the same introduction, and then choose one of the role-play scenarios for discussion. Each session should take a maximum of one hour.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Translated copy of the scenarios, in local language
IDEAL WORKSPACE	This exercise can be done by reading aloud, or you can ask for volunteers to act out the scenarios

Background

Around the world, women play vital roles in agriculture, but they are rarely recognized as farmers, and extension services are less likely to reach them. Even when they have access to extension services and support, they face many disadvantages. They must juggle household and farm work; they often get late access to land and inputs; they may get less information for marketing. This case study explores some of these common challenges that female smallholders and their families face and allow participants to come up with potential solutions for this fictional village – and for their own community.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 1. Introduction**. Explain to participants that you are going to start reading a story that requires active listening. Remind them of your discussion on the last agricultural group case study, if applicable. You will read this story every time. Start telling aloud the story:

> *"The story's village [MAY INSERT VILLAGE NAME] was a farming community, where both women and men grew crops. Recently, men had started going away for work, leaving women to do most of the farming. Women did their work by hand. Women's production was low, and by the end of the season, many had to sell their crop right away, when the price was lowest. Many of the children went hungry at the end of the season, and malnutrition was common."*

Pause and check that participants are listening before continuing:

> *"Now in that area there is a Development Committee, which saw the problems of the women and organized different supports to them. The Agriculture Department and some NGOs organized the women into groups*

3 Adapted from: *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual* (Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994

for supported women to get small loans. The village chiefs gave some land for demonstration plots, and the women started to meet every week for training. The women learned improved planting techniques and new seed varieties to improve their yields. They learned when to plant, weed, and harvest, and how to sort through at the end of the harvest. They learned about nutrition, how to grow a nutrition garden, and how to intercrop vegetables and beans to grow a diverse diet.

They learned about how to set a good price for the crop and to estimate the cost of production. The women of the village were very excited about these initiatives, and the opportunity to earn income."

▶ STEP 2. **Read the role-play scenario.** Pause and explain to the participants that we are going to look inside some of these households and see what happened within the group. Read the following story aloud or ask for volunteers to act out the scenario.

CASE STUDY #2: MWAJUMA'S STORY

Mwajuma was excited about the nutrition lessons she learned in her agriculture group. She learned that eggs, milk, beans and vegetables were important for the children and would help them grow strong and healthy.

The land on which she previously grew beans was now being used by her husband to grow tobacco, which he sold at market.

So instead of growing beans, Mwajuma started a vegetable garden. Unfortunately, the nearest stream was 2km away and she had no extra time to go and fetch water for the garden and no one to help her. The vegetables did not get enough water, and many of them died.

Mwajuma spent some of her money from her crops to buy nutritious eggs and milk for the children. Her husband – who had not attended the nutrition lessons – yelled at her for spoiling the children, when this money could have been used to buy rice.

▶ STEP 3. When the reading/role play is over, **finish each story** by saying:

"At the end of the day, the men of the village wondered why their wives had learned nothing at all from their agriculture training! The women of the village wondered why they felt farther behind than before!"

▶ STEP 4. **Discuss the scenario** by asking:

- What is the problem in the story?
- What did the character hope to achieve?
- How did he/she try to apply new knowledge?
- What prevented her from succeeding?

▶ STEP 5. **Apply these ideas to your communities and groups** by asking:

- Does this type of scenario also happen in our community? Why?
- Is there anyone within our group who is struggling with these problems?
- How are they coping with these issues?
- What can we do to change the situation?

▶ STEP 6. **A solution for the village**. Ask for volunteers to envision a better scenario for the women of the village and act out the ideal scenario.

3.4 Agricultural Group Case Study #3: Workload Sharing[4]

SEASON	Case studies should be started in Pre-Sowing season and continued in all seasons; the facilitator should choose the Case Study that corresponds to challenges women are facing
OBJECTIVE	To show how forms of gender discrimination within the community and household can leave women farmers behind and affect the well-being of the family and community. To compare what is happening in the story with what is happening in the community.
TIMEFRAME	*1 hour (x 5 sessions)* This role-play is intended to be broken up and read over a series of weeks as a continuous story. Each week, the facilitator will read the same introduction, and then choose one of the role-play scenarios for discussion. Each session should take a maximum of one hour.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Translated copy of the scenarios, in local language
IDEAL WORKSPACE	This exercise can be done by reading aloud, or you can ask for volunteers to act out the scenarios

Background

Around the world, women play vital roles in agriculture, but they are rarely recognized as farmers, and extension services are less likely to reach them. Even when they have access to extension services and support, they face many disadvantages. They must juggle household and farm work; they often get late access to land and inputs; they may get less information for marketing. This case study explores some of these common challenges that female smallholders and their families face and allow participants to come up with potential solutions for this fictional village – and for their own community.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 7. Introduction**. Explain to participants that you are going to start reading a story that requires active listening. Remind them of your discussion on the last agricultural group case study, if applicable. You will read this story every time. Start telling aloud the story:

> *"The story's village [MAY INSERT VILLAGE NAME] was a farming community, where both women and men grew crops. Recently, men had started going away for work, leaving women to do most of the farming. Women did their work by hand. Women's production was low, and by the end of the season, many had to sell their crop right away, when the price was lowest. Many of the children went hungry at the end of the season, and malnutrition was common."*

Pause and check that participants are listening before continuing:

4 Adapted from: *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual* (Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994).

"Now in that area there is a Development Committee, which saw the problems of the women and organized different supports to them. The Agriculture Department and some NGOs organized the women into groups for training. A loan group supported women to get small loans. The village chiefs gave some land for demonstration plots, and the women started to meet every week for training. The women learned improved planting techniques and new seed varieties to improve their yields. They learned when to plant, weed, and harvest, and how to sort through at the end of the harvest. They learned about nutrition, how to grow a nutrition garden, and how to intercrop vegetables and beans to grow a diverse diet.

They learned about how to set a good price for the crop and to estimate the cost of production. The women of the village were very excited about these initiatives, and the opportunity to earn income."

▶ **STEP 8. Read the role-play scenario.** Pause and explain to the participants that we are going to look inside some of these households and see what happened within the group. Read the following story aloud or ask for volunteers to act out the scenario.

CASE STUDY #3: ZAINABU'S STORY

Zainabu had a plot of land of her own, and she started her seed on time, following the new techniques she had learned in the agriculture group. But planting in rows and weeding took much longer than the old way. She brought the baby with her, but she worried about the ones she left at the home. She also had meetings once a week with her group, which took time.

When she returned home, she still had to finish all the household work. Her mother-in-law scolded her for being a lazy wife and neglecting the children, and her husband was angry because dinner was late. She got up earlier and went to bed later, and started to feel exhausted and sick. She missed several meetings, so she missed some key information about marketing. When she called a group member to ask for price information, her family and neighbors gossiped about her and said she was disrespecting her husband.

Zainabu came less and less often to the meetings. Some of her group members thought she was lazy, while some said she was simply not capable of adopting new practices.

▶ **STEP 3.** When the reading/role play is over, **finish each story** by saying:

"At the end of the day, the men of the village wondered why their wives had learned nothing at all from their agriculture training! The women of the village wondered why they felt farther behind than before!"

▶ **STEP 10. Discuss the scenario** by asking:

- What is the problem in the story?
- What did the character hope to achieve?
- How did he/she try to apply new knowledge?
- What prevented her from succeeding?

▶ **STEP 11. Apply these ideas to your communities and groups** by asking:

- Does this type of scenario also happen in our community? Why?
- Is there anyone within our group who is struggling with these problems?
- How are they coping with these issues?
- What can we do to change the situation?

▶ **STEP 12. A solution for the village.** Ask for volunteers to envision a better scenario for the women of the village and act out the ideal scenario.

3.5 Agricultural Group Case Study #4: Income Control[5]

SEASON	Case studies should be started in Pre-Sowing season and then used in future seasons; the timing of each specific case is not important
OBJECTIVE	To show how forms of gender discrimination within the community and household can leave women farmers behind and affect the well-being of the family and community. To compare what is happening in the story with what is happening in the community.
TIMEFRAME	*1 hour (x 5 sessions)* This role-play is intended to be broken up and read over a series of weeks as a continuous story. Each week, the facilitator will read the same introduction, and then choose one of the role-play scenarios for discussion. Each session should take a maximum of one hour.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Translated copy of the scenarios, in local language
IDEAL WORKSPACE	This exercise can be done by reading aloud, or you can ask for volunteers to act out the scenarios

Background

Around the world, women play vital roles in agriculture, but they are rarely recognized as farmers, and extension services are less likely to reach them. Even when they have access to extension services and support, they face many disadvantages. They must juggle household and farm work; they often get late access to land and inputs; they may get less information for marketing. This case study explores some of these common challenges that female smallholders and their families face and allow participants to come up with potential solutions for this fictional village – and for their own community.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 1.** **Introduction**. Explain to participants that you are going to start reading a story that requires active listening. Remind them of your discussion on the last agricultural group case study, if applicable. You will read this story every time. Start telling aloud the story:

> *"The story's village [MAY INSERT VILLAGE NAME] was a farming community, where both women and men grew crops. Recently, men had started going away for work, leaving women to do most of the farming. Women did their work by hand. Women's production was low, and by the end of the season, many had to sell their crop right away, when the price was lowest. Many of the children went hungry at the end of the season, and malnutrition was common."*

Pause and check that participants are listening before continuing:

> *"Now in that area there is a Development Committee, which saw the problems of the women and organized different supports to them. The Agriculture Department and some NGOs organized the women into groups for training. A loan group*

5 Adapted from: *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual* (Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994).

supported women to get small loans. The village chiefs gave some land for demonstration plots, and the women started to meet every week for training. The women learned improved planting techniques and new seed varieties to improve their yields. They learned when to plant, weed, and harvest, and how to sort through at the end of the harvest. They learned about nutrition, how to grow a nutrition garden, and how to intercrop vegetables and beans to grow a diverse diet.

They learned about how to set a good price for the crop and to estimate the cost of production. The women of the village were very excited about these initiatives, and the opportunity to earn income."

▶ STEP 2. **Read the role-play scenario.** Pause and explain to the participants that we are going to look inside some of these households and see what happened within the group. Read the following story aloud or ask for volunteers to act out the scenario.

CASE STUDY #4, ZUHUR'S STORY

Zuhura was eager to join the loan group, because she wanted to invest in some tools to make her production easier, and she wanted to expand production of a variety of groundnuts that was in demand on the market.

Zuhura's husband gave her the initial loan seed money, but when it was her turn to take the group loan, he took the loan and invested it in his own livestock production. Every time she tried to ask her husband for the repayment, her husband scolded her and said that it was his money to begin with. He also said his activities are more important because he is head of the household.

Zuhura has already missed three payments to the group and is starting to feel ashamed.

Zuhura worked hard at her crops and had a good harvest. At the end of the season, though, it was her husband who took it to the market. He collected the money and distributed the money as he thought best. He used some to repay his own loans, some to purchase livestock feed, and some on leisure. The rest he gave to Zuhura for the children's school fees. By the time she got the income, there was not enough for her to invest in her production or purchase the tools she needed.

▶ STEP 3. When the reading/role play is over, **finish each story** by saying:

"At the end of the day, the men of the village wondered why their wives had learned nothing at all from their agriculture training! The women of the village wondered why they felt farther behind than before!"

▶ STEP 4. **Discuss the scenario** by asking:

- What is the problem in the story?
- What did the character hope to achieve?
- How did he/she try to apply new knowledge?
- What prevented her from succeeding?

▶ STEP 5. **Apply these ideas to your communities and groups** by asking:

- Does this type of scenario also happen in our community? Why?
- Is there anyone within our group who is struggling with these problems?
- How are they coping with these issues?
- What can we do to change the situation?

▶ STEP 6. **A solution for the village**. Ask for volunteers to envision a better scenario for the women of the village and act out the ideal scenario.

3.6 Agricultural Group Case Study #5: Role-model Men[6]

SEASON	Case studies should be started in Pre-Sowing season and then used in future seasons; the timing of each specific case is not important
OBJECTIVE	To show how forms of gender discrimination within the community and household can leave women farmers behind and affect the well-being of the family and community. To compare what is happening in the story with what is happening in the community.
TIMEFRAME	*1 hour (x 5 sessions)* This role-play is intended to be broken up and read over a series of weeks as a continuous story. Each week, the facilitator will read the same introduction, and then choose one of the role-play scenarios for discussion. Each session should take a maximum of one hour.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Translated copy of the scenarios, in local language
IDEAL WORKSPACE	This exercise can be done by reading aloud, or you can ask for volunteers to act out the scenarios

Background

Around the world, women play vital roles in agriculture, but they are rarely recognized as farmers, and extension services are less likely to reach them. Even when they have access to extension services and support, they face many disadvantages. They have to juggle household and farm work; they often get late access to land and inputs; they may get less information for marketing. This case study explores some of these common challenges that female smallholders and their families face, and allow participants to come up with potential solutions for this fictional village – and for their own community.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction**. Explain to participants that you are going to start reading a story that requires active listening. Remind them of your discussion on the last agricultural group case study, if applicable. You will read this story every time. Start telling aloud the story:

> *"The story's village [MAY INSERT VILLAGE NAME] was a farming community, where both women and men grew crops. Recently, men had started going away for work, leaving women to do most of the farming. Women did their work by hand. Women's production was low, and by the end of the season, many had to sell their crop right away, when the price was lowest. Many of the children went hungry at the end of the season, and malnutrition was common."*

Pause and check that participants are listening before continuing:

> *"In that area there is a Development Committee, which saw the women's problems and organized different supports to them. The Agriculture Department and some NGOs organized the women into groups for training.*

6 Adapted from: *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual* (Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994).

A loan group supported women to get small loans. The village chiefs gave some land for demonstration plots, and the women started to meet every week for training. The women learned improved planting techniques and new seed varieties to improve their yields. They learned when to plant, weed, and harvest, and how to sort through at the end of the harvest. They learned about nutrition, how to grow a nutrition garden, and how to intercrop vegetables and beans to grow a diverse diet.

They learned about how to set a good price for the crop and to estimate the cost of production. The women of the village were very excited about these initiatives, and the opportunity to earn income."

▶ STEP 2. **Read the role-play scenario.** Pause and explain to the participants that we are going to look inside some of these households and see what happened within the group. Read the following story aloud, or ask for volunteers to act out the scenario.

CASE STUDY #5: MOHAN'S STORY

Mohan's wife Marusa was a member of the agriculture group. He attended a meeting and learned about the project and how much time his wife would have to spend learning the new techniques and attending meetings. He listened to the things she had learned – including how work in the household were unevenly distributed between men and women. He was pleased with her initiative and wanted to support her.

He started to carry water and firewood for Marusa and to feed the children when she was busy. Marusa wasvery happy. But neighbors started to gossip that Marusa bewitched him. Mohan's friends laughed at him and said he was becoming a woman. They said Mohan needed to use his fists sometimes to show who was in charge. Some of the elders in the village said that it was not their culture for men to do women's work.

Mohan became embarrassed and stopped helping around the home. Marusa felt sad as things became less peaceful at home.

▶ STEP 3. When the reading/role play is over, **finish each story** by saying:

"At the end of the day, the men of the village wondered why their wives had learned nothing at all from their agriculture training! The women of the village wondered why they felt farther behind than before!"

▶ STEP 4. **Discuss the scenario** by asking:

- What was happening in the story?
- What did the character hope to achieve?
- How did he/she try to apply new knowledge?
- What prevented her from succeeding?

▶ STEP 5. **Apply these ideas to your communities and groups** by asking:

- Does this type of scenario also happen in our community? Why?
- Is there anyone within our group who is struggling with these problems?
- How are they coping with these issues?
- What can we do to change the situation?

▶ STEP 6. **A solution for the village**. Ask for volunteers to envision a better scenario for the women of the village and act out the ideal scenario.

3.7 Daily Clock[7]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To illustrate the inequality in workloads and to show the value of women's work. To practice sharing household responsibilities more equally
TIMEFRAME	1–1.5 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip-chart and marker, or available materials
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for men and women to work separately on their clocks before they are brought together for a discussion

Background

Women and men are assigned different roles and do different things throughout the day. Women often work longer hours when we count both their work at home and their work outside the home, while men often have more leisure and rest time. Many of the activities that women do – cooking, childcare, cleaning, fetching water – are not considered "work" because they are unpaid. If they were to stop these activities, however, the household would not continue to function.

Because women's household activities are not considered as important as men's, women often have less respect and less power in the family and the community. They may be overburdened but often cannot ask for support. Many women may also not realize that the work they do is important.

When women are entirely responsible for household work, they may be unable to participate in meetings, get information, or gain skills to improve their farm production or other businesses. Sharing workloads more equally is important for the development of the household, and the relationships within the family.

Note: *This exercise is more effective if done with mixed-sex groups, but it can also be revealing for women-only or men-only groups.*

Steps to follow for the activity

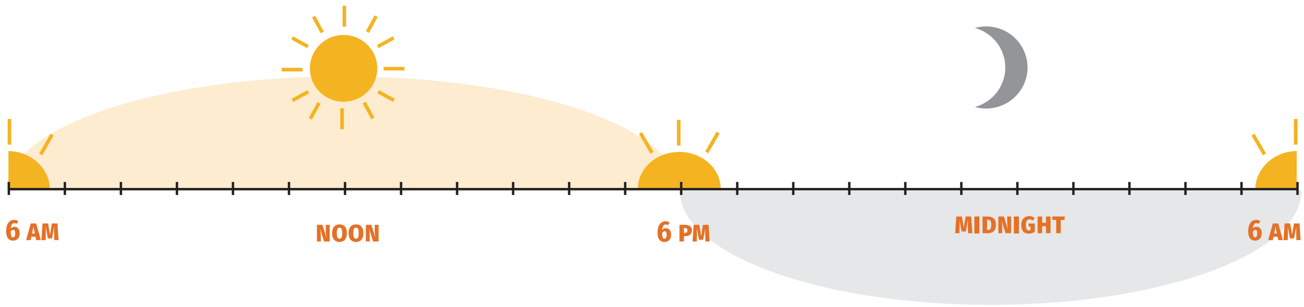
▶ STEP 1. **Introductions.** Explain that in this exercise, we are going to talk about all the tasks that men and women do to keeping the household running.

Divide participants into single-sex groups (separate men and women). If working with only men or only women, have one group of participants role-play the opposite sex.

▶ STEP 2. **Drawing the clocks.**

- Ask participants to imagine a typical day for a typical man/woman like themselves, from the time they wake up to the time they go to bed.
- On a flip-chart, ask participants to draw a timeline that shows all the hours of a 24-hour day, from sunrise to sunrise.

7 Adapted from: Pawlak, Peter, Henny Slegh, and Gary Barker. (2012). *Journeys of Transformation: A Training Manual for Engaging Men as Allies in Women's Economic Empowerment.* CARE International in Rwanda and Promundo. Pp. 40–42.



- Have participants draw or write all the tasks that they do throughout a typical from waking to bed. If they wake up at night (i.e. to breastfeed), include those tasks as well. Include leisure and rest time as well as paid and unpaid work.
- Allow participants 15–20 minutes to draw the clocks or timelines.

▶ STEP 3. **After 20 minutes, bring the groups together.** Have participants place their timelines/clocks side by side. Have one member of each group explain the clocks to the other group.

Ask participants to briefly describe their timelines/clocks and point out:

- How are the days similar?
- How are they different?
- What happens during busy times of the year (i.e., harvest or planting)?
- What happens when the women are menstruating?

▶ STEP 4. **Lead a discussion, refer to the following questions as needed:**

- Who is involved in earning income? How is paid work valued?
- Who is involved in growing food? How are these activities valued?
- Who is involved in caring and household activities? How are these activities valued?
- What would happen if these care-giving activities stopped for a day or several days? Are caregiving tasks "work"? Are they easy?
- Who gets more sleep and leisure time? Why? Why is leisure time important?
- What are the needs of women and girls when they are menstruating? How does this affect household resources (either energy in fields and income from crops or costs of materials for menstruation)?

▶ STEP 5. **Reflection and action:**

- What do you think of this overall pattern? How would you like to switch tasks for a day?
- What changes would you like to see to make the picture fairer?
- Are there men in this community who share household work with their wives? What do people think about such men?
- Are there women who ask for support from their husbands and families? What do people say about such women?

***Action**: What is **one** specific practice that you may try this week in your own home to help balance your own clocks?*

Key points

- Men and women *both* can be good caretakers and income-earners.
- Household work is very valuable and important to keeping the whole family going.
- When household tasks are shared more equally between men and women, women can be more productive on their farms, participate in important group meetings, and have better health.
- When men/fathers participate in caring work, they can enjoy more time with the family, be good role models for their sons, and feel proud of caring for the family and their wives.

3.8 Harmony in the Home Role-Play

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To illustrate the possibility of changing gender roles, and to demonstrate a positive scenario of cooperation and sharing household work
TIMEFRAME	30 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	Props for the play (cooking pot, doll, etc.)
IDEAL WORKSPACE	A space large enough for participants to sit/stand and watch role-playing

Background

Many times, the idea of change can be intimidating. Some family members may agree to share work more equally, but others may be fearful of what others will say. This exercise allows participants to envision what cooperation within the home could look like, and how family members might start sharing some non-traditional tasks, and in the process, enjoy spending time together.

Note: *This exercise should take place after the "Daily Clock" exercise.*

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** Ask group members to recall some of the key points from the "Daily clock" exercise and ask whether they have talked about this with partners or with their families. Explain that this exercise is going to continue some of the discussions we've had earlier on this topic of working together in the home.

▶ STEP 2. **Role-play of a harmonious home.** Ask for three volunteers to act out a short scene. Take the volunteers aside and explain that they are going to illustrate a scenario in which in-laws and husbands are performing some of the roles that are usually allocated to women only. They are to demonstrate a happy scenario, in which every member is chatting cheerfully with each other.

Allocate each player a role and have them choose what they are going to do, for example:

- Mother-in law (busy cooking, helping child with homework)
- Woman (keeping business records, counting cash)
- Husband (washing clothes, fetching water, bathing child)

Start the role-play, having the three to do their activities and chat with each other, happily, for a few minutes.

▶ STEP 3. **Player Discussion.** Stop the action and ask each of the three players, in turn:

- How do you feel about role-playing this situation?

▶ STEP 4. **Observer Discussion.** Turn to the other participants and begin a discussion about the scene. Ask:

- How do you feel about watching this situation?
- Are the family members treating each other with respect? How so?

- What would the neighbors think about the situation?
- Could this situation happen in your household or community? What would need to happen so it could become true?

STEP 5. Role-play of a negative scenario. Using the same (or new) volunteers, ask them to act out a second scenario, in which each of the family members is doing their typical roles, and shouting or silencing each other.

- Mother (cooking, breastfeeding, washing, helping children with schoolwork at the same time)
- Mother-in-law (resting, criticizing)
- Husband (impatient for dinner)

Stop the action and ask the participants to describe what they saw. Ask:

- How do you feel about watching this situation?
- Are the family members treating each other with respect? How so?
- What would the neighbors think about the situation?
- Does this situation happen in your household or community?
- Which scenario feels more like life – the first or second?

STEP 6. Checking on our actions. Ask the group members to first discuss how the workload-sharing is going in their own households. Then ask for volunteers to role-play (or describe) an actual situation when they asked for help from their family, or where they supported their family members. After they are describe these scenarios, ask the group members to discuss:

- Was the outcome positive? Negative?
- What are the obstacles to asking for help?
- What are the obstacles to trying new roles?
- How can women assertively ask for support from household members?
- How can the group help them get support from families?
- How can the group help them while experimenting some changes in how they behave in the household?

3.9 Household Decision-Making Pile-Sort[8]

SEASON	Vegetative Stage
OBJECTIVE	To explore who in the household has authority to make important decisions, and how decision-making could be more equal
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Pieces of different colored cardboard or paper (cut up into rectangles), and markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Will need flat space, where participants can spread the colored cards out on the ground and all can view

Background

Gender is one form of power, and within the household, different household members have different power/authority to make important decisions. Social rules and gender upbringings usually give the head of household (usually a man) the main authority for making the most important household decisions.

Although men and women participate "jointly" in many decisions, women do not always have real or equal say in the decision. They may be "consulted" about the decision; but if they cannot change the final outcome, they do not really have equal say. In some cases, family members may simply be "informed" about a decision, after someone else has already made it – they have no real control over the decision.

When women are not empowered to make more decisions on their own, the household runs less efficiently since they must wait for another person to make decisions. When one person makes decisions for others, they have a tendency (whether they realize it or not) to act in their own interest.

Within the same household, women sometimes have different perspectives, needs, and information than men. This is important for making decisions that benefit everyone in the family. Women also make significant contributions to the income and care of the family therefore they have a right to participate in the important decisions.

When families have a discussion process where both spouses can participate fully in the decision-making process, they may have a better relationship and can make sounder decisions.

Steps to follow for the activity

▸ STEP 1. **Introduce the exercise.** In every household, there are many decisions that need to be made to maintain the family well-being and future plans. Important decisions can be difficult to make. Today we are going to explore what those decisions are, who makes them, and how they are made. Split the participants into two groups – one for women and one for men.

Ask participants to brainstorm a list of the critical decisions that are needed to keep the family fed, and to maintain the family well-being.

8 Adapted from: *Group Empowerment: Core topics, Strategies, and Tools for Group Dialogues.* (2012). CARE Pathways. Pp. 45.

STEP 2. Decide on important household decisions. Have groups spend 10 minutes brainstorming a list of important decisions (12–15) that household members may need to make. Write one decision per index card. Give examples if needed, such as investing in farm equipment, deciding when a child should marry, deciding what to plant, deciding whether to start a business. As participants are brainstorming, briefly discuss why each decision is important.

STEP 3. Organize decisions. For each group, on a piece of flip-chart or on the ground, create categories labelled:

- A woman by herself
- A man by himself
- A woman and man together

Have participants discuss each of the different decision cards, and place it under one of the three categories above based on who normally makes that decision. Ask participants if they have missed any tasks.

STEP 4. Facilitate a discussion around the following questions for each group:

Looking at the piles we have created, who makes the most decisions? *(Count the decisions in each category.)*

- Look at the decisions in the "man alone" category.
  - What type of decisions are these?
  - Why are these decisions usually only made by a man?
  - What happens if a spouse disagrees with this decision?
- Look at the decisions in the "woman alone" category.
  - What type of decisions are these?
  - Why are these decisions only made by a woman?
  - What happens if the spouse disagrees with this decision?
- Look at the decisions in the "joint" category.
  - What types of decisions are these?
  - Why do these decisions usually have to be made together?
  - What happens when partners disagree?

Ask for an example of one of these important "joint" decisions where partners ***disagreed or had*** difficulty coming to agreement. Then, ask:

- Who was involved?
- How do you finally reach an agreement?
- Did you feel you had equal say in the decision? Why/why not?
- Was everyone happy with the outcome of the decision?

Ask for an example of one of those important "joint decisions" ***where both partners had equal say in the process*** and reached an agreement. Then, ask:

- Who was involved?
- How did you finally reach an agreement?
- Did you feel you had equal say in the decision? Why/why not?
- What happened if you could not reach an agreement?
- Was everyone happy with the outcome of this decision?

Ask:

- What do you think about the pattern of decision-making that we have described above?
- What cards would you like to move from one pile to the other? (Allow participants to shift cards to different pockets)

STEP 5. **Discuss with the groups.** Bring the separate groups (men and women) together. Allow each group 5–10 minutes to share their discussion while the other group listens. After sharing, ask:

- What surprised you about the other group's presentation?
- What are the similarities between the two groups' discussions?
- What are the risks or harms to the family when one person makes decisions without respecting the views of the others?
- What are the benefits to the family of a process in which both partners have equal voice in the decision?

STEP 6. **Putting it in practice.** Have the participants turn to a neighbor. Discuss one specific change that women and men said they would like to see in terms of decision-making.

- What would a more satisfactory decision-making process look like?
- How could you start to make this change?
- What's one small action you will you take this week to practice this?

STEP 7. **Record the goals**. Have the group leader record goals to follow up in the next meeting.

3.10 Act Like a Man, Behave Like a Lady[9]

SEASON	Sowing/Weeding
OBJECTIVE	To identity the differences between rules of behavior for men and for women; To understand how these gender rules can negatively affect the lives of both women and men
TIMEFRAME	45 minutes–1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip-chart, markers, tape
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit and stand

Background

This activity is a good way to understand perceptions of gender norms. Remember that these perceptions may also be affected by class, race, ethnicity, and other differences. It is also important to remember that gender norms are changing in many countries. It is getting easier, in some places, for men and women to step outside of their "boxes." If there is time at the end of the exercise, discuss with the group what makes it easier in some places for women and men to step outside of the box.

> ***Note:*** *This activity can be done in a mixed- or single-sex group. For more intimate conversations, you may want to work with single-sex groups. When working with a mixed-sex group, divide the groups into 2 when they are writing the lists. Bring them back together to share.*

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Identify stories of gender norms.** Ask the male participants if they have ever been told to "Act like a Man." Ask them to share some experiences of someone saying this or something similar.

- Why do you think they said this? How did it make you feel?

Now ask the female participants if they have ever been told to "Behave like a lady." Ask them to share some experiences of someone saying this or something similar.

- Why do you think they said this? How did it make you feel?

▶ STEP 2. **Categorize behaviors.** In large letters, print on one sheet of flipchart paper the phrase **"Act Like a Man."** On another sheet, write the words **"Behave Like a Lady."** Ask participants to write all of the behaviors that **women** are told in their community and what **men** are told in their community are told about how they should behave to be a "proper" man or woman (see the chart on the next page for examples). Write these on the sheet.

▶ STEP 3. **Discuss the behaviors.** When the group has no more to add to the list, ask one participant to read them aloud. Facilitate a discussion around the questions listed below.

- What do you think of these two lists? What are the differences between the two?

9 Adapted from: *Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Transformation: The Group Education Manual. (*2008). The ACQUIRE Project and Promundo. ISBN 978-1-885063-77-9. Pp. 72.

- Can any of these messages can be potentially harmful? Why? (Place a star next to each message identified as harmful and discuss one by one.)
- How does living in the box limit **men's** lives and the lives of those around them?
- What happens to **men** who do not follow all of these gender rules (e.g. "live outside the box")? What do people say about them? How are they treated?
- How does living in the box limit **women's** lives and the lives of those around them?
- What happens to **women** who do not follow gender rules? What do people say about them? How are they treated?
- Are these rules fair for both men and women?

Chart Example:

ACT LIKE A MAN	BEHAVE LIKE A LADY
Be the breadwinner	Be passive and quiet
Do not cry	Be the caretaker and homemaker
Don't ask for help	Don't complain
Use violence to resolve conflicts	Be seen, not heard
Stay in control and do not back down	Follow men's lead
Drink alcohol	Be smart, but not too smart
Smoke	Produce children
Make decisions for others	Get married

▶ STEP 4. **Role-play the opposite sex**. Ask for a **male volunteer** to do a role-play in which he "acts like a **lady**." Ask a female volunteer to do a role-play, in which she "acts like a **man**." Afterwards, ask:

- Why does this make us laugh?
- How do we learn these rules of behavior?
- What might be the benefits of "living outside the box" for individuals, families and communities?
- How can you, in your own lives, challenge some of the unfair ways in which men/women are expected to act?
- How can you in your own household enable children to 'live outside the box'?
- What about when menstruating? Are there rules, spoken or unspoken, or taboos that you are "supposed to follow" but do not?
- What is one action you might try this week?

Discuss with participants how throughout their lives, men and women receive messages from family, media, and society about how they should act as men or women and how they should relate to other women and to other men. Many of these differences are made by society and are *not* part of our nature or biology. Many of these expectations are completely fine, and help us enjoy our identities as either a man or a woman.

However, some gender stereotypes and rules can negatively impact our lives and communities, and limit our potential.

▶ STEP 5. **Tell participants to think collectively about how to challenge them and promote more positive gender sensitive interactions in our communities**. Say, "We are all free to create our own gender boxes and rules and to decide how we choose to live our lives as human beings."

3.11 Learning to Listen[10]

SEASON	Sowing/Weeding
OBJECTIVE	To demonstrate and practice active listening skills (using mind, heart, and body language) to improve communication and understanding; to reflect on how gender affects whose voice is heard (in a household or group)
TIMEFRAME	30–45 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	None
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to be able to sit in groups of three

Background

Within groups or within a household, gender, status and rank often determine whose voice gets heard. When people are routinely *not* listened to, they may become frustrated, or they may begin to believe that their opinions are not important.

Good communication is critical to working in groups, to building harmonious relationships, and to joint decision-making. Active listening is a communication skill that takes practice to develop. It requires paying attention, empathy (caring), and openness to seeing from another's perspective.

This exercise enables participants to practice active listening, and to reflect on communication in the household or in groups.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Divide participants into groups of 3**. Ask participants to think about a moment in their life when they were very happy. Have each group decide who is A, B, and C:

- A is the storyteller
- B is the listener
- C is the observer

Explain that when you give the signal, A begins to tell her/his story, B must listen actively, and C should watch. Give the signal for storytellers to start.

▶ STEP 2. **Repeat the scenario.** After a few minutes stop the process. Without stopping to discuss, give the next set of instructions. Repeat the scenario, but this time, A will continue telling the story but now B will not listen actively or pay attention to the storyteller. Again, C must observe.

10 Adapted from: *Nutrition Family Community.* Helen Keller International in Bangladesh and Save the Children, USA. Pp 15–17. ISBN 978-984-33-1706.

▶ STEP 3. **Discuss the scenarios.** After a few minutes stop and discuss what happened:

Ask the **observers**:

- How did you know that B was listening?
- How could you tell when they stopped listening?
- What body language did you use to show that they were paying attention?
- What body language showed that they were not listening?

Ask the **storytellers**:

- How did it make you feel when they were or weren't listening?
- How did it change the way that you told your story?

▶ STEP 4. **Reflect.** With the entire group, ask participants to reflect on their own experiences:

- Have you experienced situations like this before? What happened? How did you respond in these situations?
- Why is active listening an important part of communication?
- How do you know when active listening takes place in your home?
- How do you know when active listening takes place in community meetings?
- What can we do to make sure that everyone's voice is heard (in the home, or in a group)?

▶ STEP 5. **Explain and discuss**. Say, "People speak with their whole bodies, and we need to listen with our whole bodies – heads, hearts, and hands and feet.

- Listening with our head means being open, non-judgmental, and interested.
- Listening with our heart means putting ourselves in the other person's perspective.
- Listening with hands and feet means using body language to pay attention to the speaker."

▶ STEP 6. **Ask participants to get back in groups of three.** One speaker and one listener sit facing each other, and the third is the observer. Speakers have 2 minutes to talk about their hopes for the future. Listeners and observers must listen and not interrupt. After 2 minutes, call "stop," and ask the listeners to repeat what the speaker said.

Ask the observers:

- Did the listener give an accurate summary? Did the listener reflect the speaker's thoughts, ideas, emotions and intentions?

▶ STEP 7. **Summarize the key points about active listening.**

- Working together requires us to listen well and be clear when we speak.
- Listening is hard work; it means having an open ear to others.
- Active listening is through the head, heart, and body: Listen to thoughts, feelings, and intentions.
- Communication is a give and take: both speakers and listeners have to make an effort for it to succeed.
- Within the household, everyone has important things to say.
- Better decisions can be made when everyone in the household has a chance to be heard.
- When we listen actively to our family members, we show respect and bring harmony to the home.

▶ STEP 8. **Discuss takeaways.** Practice active listening in your home. Repeat what others have said. Think about whether or not you can report their message accurately. Share what you have learned today with your family members.

3.12 Persons and Things[11]

SEASON	Sowing/Weeding
OBJECTIVE	To illustrate the existence of power in relationships and its impact on individualsand relationships
TIMEFRAME	40–60 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	It is important to be sensitive to how participants react to being assigned the role of "persons" or "things" and to be prepared to make the necessary accommodations or changes. For example, rather than have the participants actually carry out the role-play, the facilitator might invite participants to discuss in pairs how "persons" might treat "things" and the feelings that this might generate for the "persons" and "things."
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for moving around; may want to take the exercise outside

Background

Power is at the heart of gendered roles and relationships. There are different forms of power: Power over (power to control others), power to/power within (power to achieve one's goals), and power with (power to act together to achieve common aims).

Gendered social norms, beliefs, and institutions tend to vest men with *power over* women, from laws and policies down to household-level interactions. It is essential to understand the extent and impact of men's power over women (and vice versa), as well as the meaning of equality in power between men and women. This requires that men and women understand how they see themselves compared to others of their own sex.

Some men (and women) feel that men need to have power over women in order to maintain order and stability. When humans are in a position to exercise power *over* others, they can fail to respect others' dignity, perspective, or humanity. This exercise helps participants to explore what it feels like to be powerless and to have power over others. It helps reflect on how men and women within families can take responsibility toward sharing power, and using this shared power *jointly* in positive ways.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Divide the participants into three groups**. Each group should have the same number of participants. *Note*: If the number of participants does not allow for an even distribution, assign the "extra" participants to the third group which, as described below, will be the observers.

▶ STEP 2. **Tell the participants that the name of this activity is: *Persons and Things***. Choose, at random, one group to be the "things," another to be "persons," and a third to be "observers."

11 Adapted from Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Transformation: The Group Education Manual. (2008). The ACQUIRE Project and Promundo. ISBN 978-1-885063-77-9. Pp. 73

STEP 3. Read the following directions to the group:

- **THINGS:** You cannot think, feel, or make decisions. You have to do what the "persons" tell you to do. If you want to move or do something, you have to ask the person for permission.
- **PERSONS:** You can think, feel, and make decisions. You can tell the things what to do.
- **OBSERVERS:** You just observe everything that happens in silence.

STEP 4. Assign each "person" a "thing" and tell them that they can do what they want with them (within the space of the room).

STEP 5. Carry out roles. Give the group five minutes for the "people" and "things" to carry out their designated roles.

STEP 6. Change roles. After five minutes, tell the persons and things that they will switch and that now the "persons" will be "things" and "things" will be " persons." Give them another five minutes to carry out their designated roles.

STEP 7. Start a discussion. Ask the groups to go back to their places in the room and use the questions below to facilitate a discussion.

Ask the following questions to the "persons" and "things" groups:

- How did your "persons" treat you? How did you feel? Did you feel powerless? Why/why not?
- How did you treat your "things"? How did it feel to treat someone this way? Did it make you feel powerful? Why or why not?
- Why did the "things" obey the instructions given by the "persons"?
- Were there "things" or "persons" who resisted the exercise?
- In your daily lives, do others treat you like "things"? Who? Why?
- In your daily lives, do you treat others like "things"? Who? Why?

Ask the following questions to the "observers" group:

- How did you feel not doing anything? Did you feel like interfering with what was happening? If yes, what do you think you could have done?
- In our daily lives, are we "observers" of situations in which some people treat others like things? Do we interfere? Why or why not?

Ask the following questions to the whole group:

- If you had been given a chance to choose between the three groups, which would you have chosen to be in and why?
- Why do people treat each other like this?
- What are the consequences of a relationship where one person might treat another person like a "thing?"
- In your communities, do men most often belong to one of these three groups? Which group?
- Do women most often belong to one of these three groups? Which group? Why do you think this is?
- What are the factors that give people power in relationships? In what spheres of your own life do you have power?
- How does society/culture perpetuate or support these kinds of relationships?
- What can we do to make sure that different groups such as men and women live in an equitable world where they can enjoy the same opportunities, equal treatment, and equal rights?

3.13 Household Decision-making: Cash-flow Tree

SEASON	Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To value the contributions of women to household budgets and to discuss how men and women can have equal voice in household financial decisions
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip-chart and marker, or materials such as leaves, branches, sticks
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Will need flat space, where participants can spread the tree out on the ground and all can view

Background

Gender is one form of power, and within the household, different household members have different power/authority to make important decisions. Social rules and gender upbringings usually give the head of household (usually a man) the main authority for making the most important household decisions.

Although men and women participate *jointly* in many decisions, women do not always have equal say in the decision. They may be "consulted" about the discussion, but if they cannot change the final outcome, they do not really have equal say. In some cases, family members may simply be *informed* about a decision, after someone else has taken it – they have no real control over the decision.

Evaluating the sources of income and spending priorities can help families make decisions together. Looking at the health of the family cash "tree" can help men and women see where they can trim back some unnecessary branches or invest in some of the stronger roots (income activities). This activity gives family members a tool to discuss their own priorities and see where they are in agreement.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduce the activity.** Explain that we are going to illustrate a picture that discusses the health of our family budget, and how we manage it. Ask participants to draw a tree (like the one below) that represents an average household from their group. Explain:

- The tree represents our household financial situation. The roots represent all of the activities that bring food and income into the household. The deepest, thickest roots represent the most important sources of income.
- At the top of the tree, we have the branches, which represent all the different expenditures. The highest, longest branches represent the most important expenditures. The less important ones are on lower, shorter branches.

▶ STEP 2. **Have groups draw their own tree.** Divide participants into separate groups (men and women), and ask participants to draw their own tree, labelling the roots with all of the different sources of income and the branches with all of the expenditures that are made in the household.

Starting with the income sources at the roots, ask participants:

- Who is responsible for the work?
- Who brings this income into the family?

Draw a **symbol** of a man or woman (or both) next to each of the roots, indicating who is responsible.

▶ **STEP 3. Identifying decision-makers.** Moving to the branches, ask participants:

- Who usually makes these expenditures?
- Who has the final decision about them?

Draw a picture of a man or woman (or both) next to each of the branches.

▶ **STEP 4. Discuss the overall health of the tree** with the separate groups using the following questions:

- How healthy is the tree?
- What expenditures are most important for investments in the health and future of the family?
- Are any expenditures harmful or less important for the health and future of the tree?
- What changes would you make to increase inflows or to trim back some of the branches?

▶ **STEP 5. Discuss competing demands for money and how families make decisions about what to spend.**

- Who seems to be contributing to the inflows of income (the roots)? Who seems to be controlling the expenditures (the branches)? Why is that?
- What expenditures can women make on their own? Why? Do women get enough cash-flow to purchase things they need for their menstruation and inner wear?
- What expenditures do women generally not have much influence over? Why is that?
- What are the areas of disagreement over finances? How do these discussions get resolved?
- Looking at this picture, what changes – if any – would you like to see in how decisions are made?

▶ **STEP 6. Discuss the different trees.** Bring the groups together and have each present their drawings and their discussions. Ask the participants:

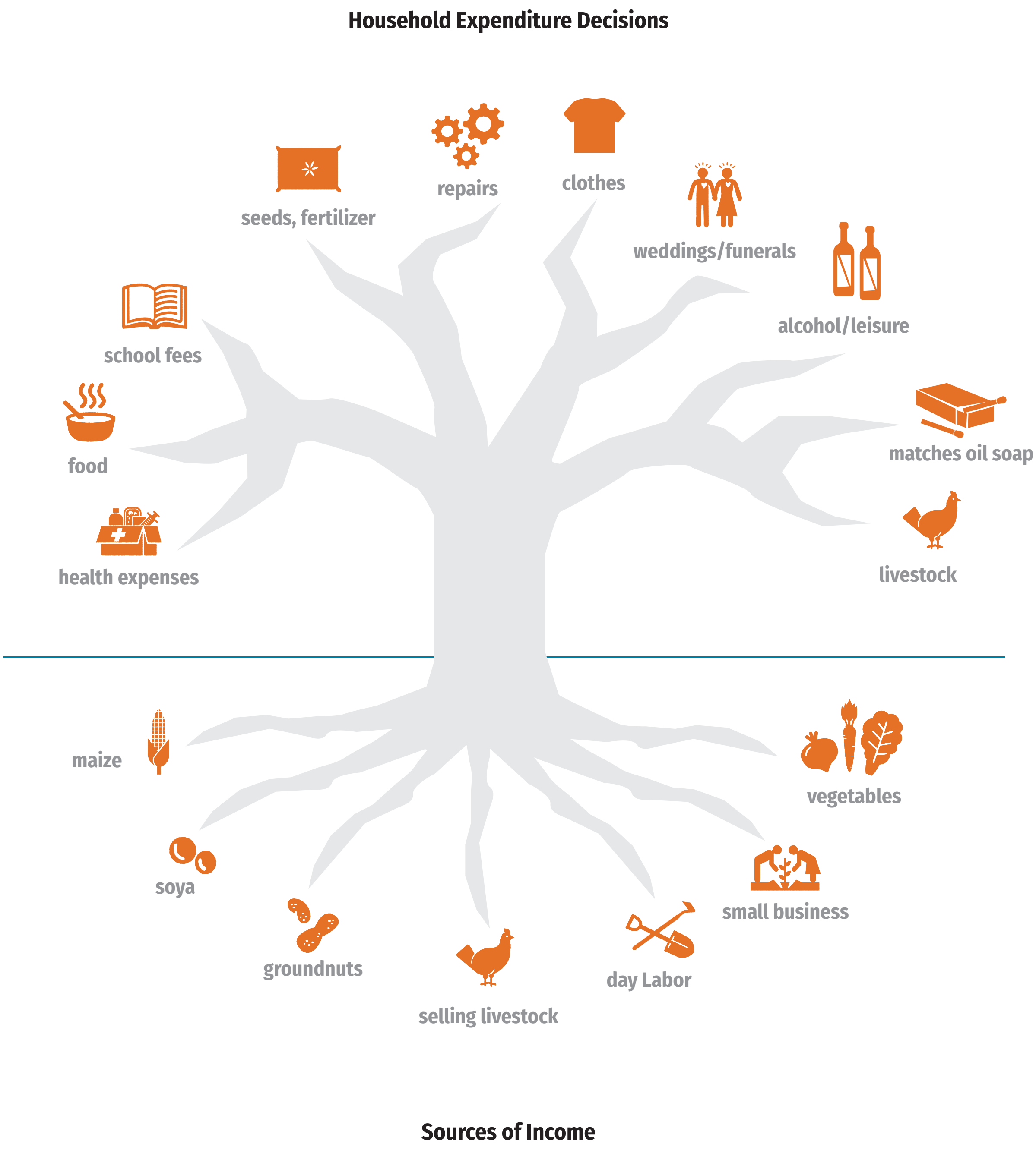
- What are the similarities between the trees?
- Where are men and women in agreement? Where are their priorities different?
- What do you notice about the contributions of men and women to the cash inflows? What would happen to the health of the tree if women were not present?
- What do you notice about the presence of women at the expenditure level? How might the health of the tree be improved if women were equally represented at the top of the tree?

▶ **STEP 7. Show how important women are in the household.** End by emphasizing the importance of women's contributions to the household financial well-being and the importance of jointly assessing the priorities.

Some key points:

- Women and men often agree on the same major priorities and what expenditures are wasteful.
- Women have a lot of information about what's happening within the household and with the children and with the crops; when we listen to each other's perspectives, we can make better decisions.
- Many of the smaller income streams below the tree are managed by women; investments into these channels might improve the health of the tree.
- Women's labor makes huge contributions to the main agriculture streams of income that support the household; they have a right to have some control over these income decisions.

▶ **STEP 8. Homework and next steps.** Ask the participants if they will be able to use this diagram to discuss the budget and spending and savings patterns in their own families. What support (from the group) might they need to try this exercise at home?



Household Expenditure Decisions
seeds, fertilizer
repairs
clothes
weddings/funerals
alcohol/leisure
school fees
food
matches oil soap
health expenses
livestock
maize
vegetables
soya
small business
groundnuts
day Labor
selling livestock
Sources of Income

3.14 Fishbowl Session with Men and Women[12]

SEASON	Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To share experiences related to gender issues (gender roles) and to develop a better understanding of and empathy for the experience of the other sex
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	None
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Will need large space, where men and women can sit in two concentric circles. Ideally, start with a lively warm-up exercise

Background

Collaboration means having the skills to listen, advise, negotiate, and create trust. Collaborating around different household responsibilities (including agricultural productivity and running a business with your partner) also means looking and listening to a partner in different ways and being aware of the capacities of the other person. This exercise gives men and women the opportunity to listen to and encourage their partners.

Note: *The discussion questions proposed here are specific to the program. However, facilitators can use this fishbowl discussion process to talk about* <u>*any*</u> *pressing issues that are concerning men or women. The purpose is to create equal platform for men and women to speak, listen, and be heard.*

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Start with a short energizing warm-up**.

▶ STEP 2. **Divide the male and female participants into two groups.**

- Ask the women to sit in a circle in the middle of the room facing each other, and the men to sit around the outside of the circle, facing inward.
- Begin a discussion by asking the women the questions listed below. At this time, the men's job is to observe and listen to what is being said. They are not allowed to speak.

▶ STEP 3.1. **Discussion for Women:**

- What have you learned or achieved with the group that you are most proud of?
- What is the most difficult thing you have experienced so far as a woman working with the program?
- What do you want men to understand about the program, so that they can better support women in producer groups?
- What are some changes you have noticed in your household? How have these helped you?

After 15–20 minutes, close the discussion and have the **men and women switch places.** Lead a discussion with the men, while the **women listen**.

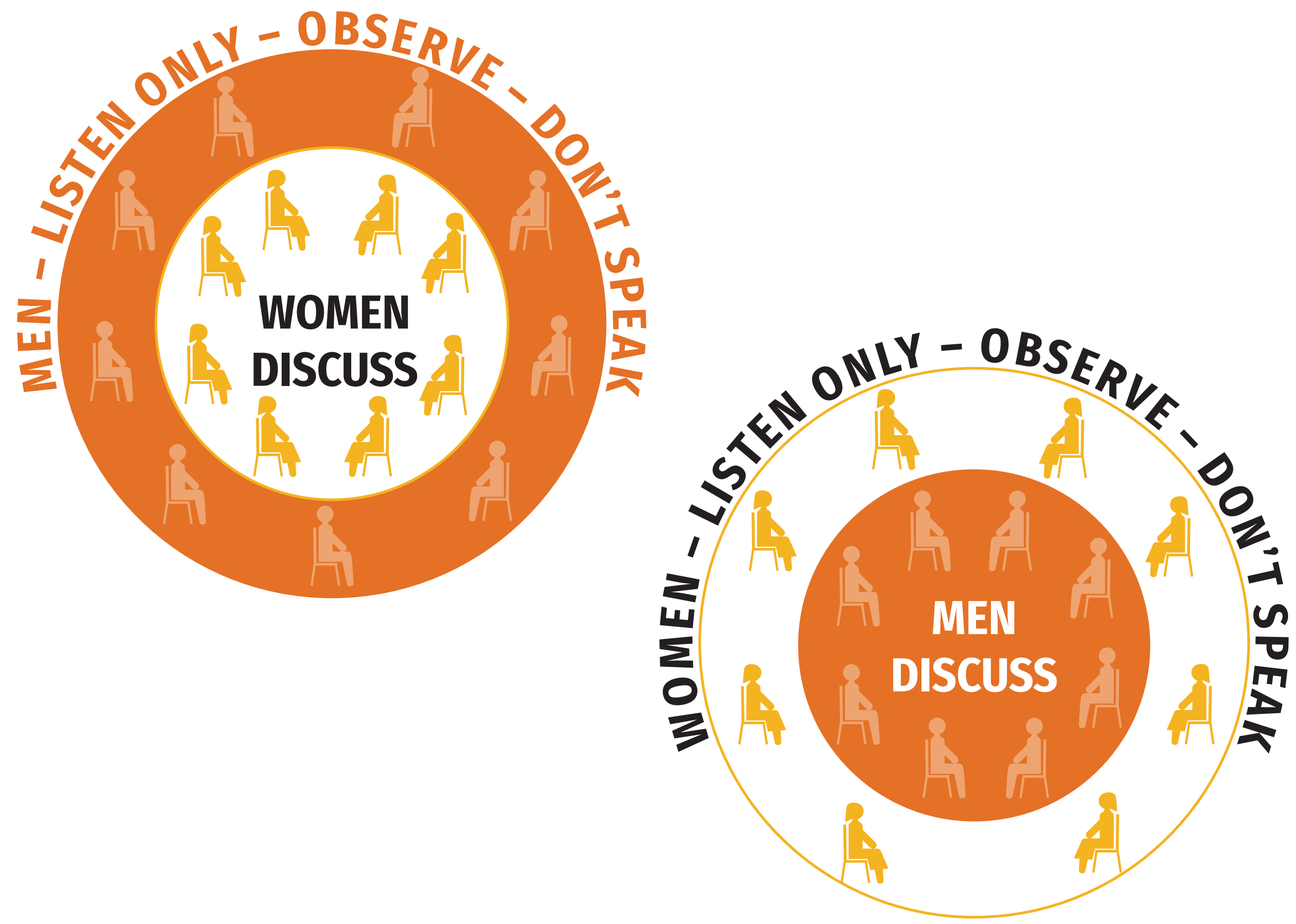
12 Adapted from: Pawlak, Peter, Henny Slegh, and Gary Barker. (2012). *Journeys of Transformation: A Training Manual for Engaging Men as Allies in Women's Economic Empowerment.* CARE International in Rwanda and Promundo. Pp. 47–49

STEP 3.2. Discussion for Men:

- What have you learned from the program?
- What do you find difficult to understand about the program?
- What are some changes you have seen in your household or community? How do you feel about them?
- What are some concerns you have?
- How can men and women support and understand each other in the program?

STEP 4. Joint reflection. Bring the groups together and discuss the session. Use these questions to wrap-up the session:

- How did it feel to listen without speaking?
- How did it feel to speak and be listened to?
- What did you learn (from the men/women) that surprised you?
- How can we create opportunities in the home to listen attentively and speak honestly to our partners and family members?



3.15 Envisioning Empowerment: Vision Drawings

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To explore women's views toward empowerment through visioning dreams and future life goals and to identify key domains for change
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip-chart & markers, or pieces of colored paper & scissors to create symbols
IDEAL WORKSPACE	This can be introduced as a group or individual tool, and as a monitoring as well as goal-setting exercise. A large group can be broken into smaller groups of 3–5 participants. The facilitator can help groups to list common goals at the end of the exercise

Background

Empowerment is a subjective and personal process of change. While a project may have certain objectives that represent women's empowerment, they may not be the most important goals for women and group members themselves. Creating a vision diagram is a tool for project implementers and participants to reflect on progress and future life goals, and to ensure that the project is leading toward goals that matter to the impact group.

Creating a vision diagram also gives group members a tool to practice setting goals and tracking them over the course of the project – this in itself can be an empowering process.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Break group into smaller groups of 3–5 participants**. Explain that in this exercise, we will have a chance to explore our dreams future life goals and plans – What we envision for our group and for ourselves.

▶ STEP 2. **Ask the group members to close their eyes and look into the future, 5 or 10 years ahead.** Ask them:

- What kind of life do you hope to see for yourself, for the members of this group?
- How do you want things to look like?
- What will you be doing?
- How are your farms and business?

Ask them to consider and brainstorm:

- Changes they hope to see for themselves
- Changes they hope to feel for themselves
- Changes they hope to see in relationships with other people (community or family)
- Changes they hope to see in the community or in the laws

▶ **STEP 3.1. Visualize the future.** Ask participants to open their eyes and allow 20 minutes for them to draw pictures of their envisioned futures. Lay the drawings out so that everyone can see them.

Note: *As you draw, think of realistic targets with tracked actions and milestones and actions needed to reach your logically layering milestones.*

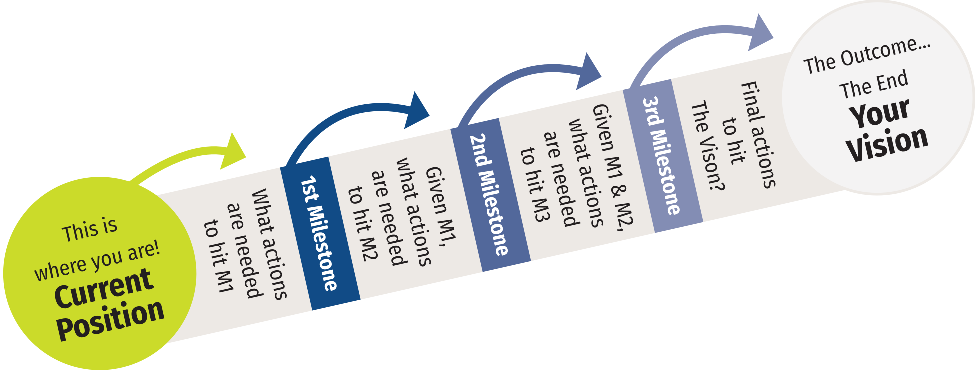
- Ask them to consider the following questions:
  - o What do you currently have towards realization of your goal/vision?
  - o What opportunities are there to achieve your goal/vision?
  - o What constraints could hinder achievement of your goal/vision?
  - o What can you do to maximize the opportunities and minimize on the constraints?
  - o What image do you have of an empowered woman?

▶ **STEP 3.2. Ask participants to:**

1. Draw image or a vision of an empowered woman or man (it could be yourself)
2. Place the vision drawing of the empowered woman on the far right of the vision drawing.
3. Draw the image of where you are currently.
4. Consider questions in **step 3.1**

Lay the drawings out so that everyone can see them

Identify the **Opportunities** that the project needs, to take advantage of, derived from the challenges/gaps that women/youths/Agribiz/SMEs need to address to realize the vision. . .



Document your **Challenges** that you project/ initiative needs to overcome given the Opportunities available to realize your Vision. . .

Linda Mayoux and IFAD, (2020), Gender Action Learning System Implementation Toolkit

STEP 4. Lead a discussion on the aspirations, around the following questions:

- What kind of changes *in yourself* would make it easier for you to build the kind of life you want? (What changes have you seen in *yourself* so far?)
- What kind of changes *in relationships with others* would make it easier for you to build the kind of life that you want? (What changes in *relationships* have you seen so far?)
- What kind of changes in the community/marketplace/laws would make it easier or possible for you to build the kind of life you want? (What changes in the community have you seen so far?)
- What changes have been or would be *most* important to you? Why?

Probe the discussion and take note of:

- Changes in laws, policies
- Changes in social norms, attitudes, violence, mobility
- Changes in services provided and accessed
- Skills and activities that have been most empowering/enabling so far
- Support requested from the project or stakeholders

STEP 5. Use the discussion to recognize the achievements and changes, and to identify the priority issues that the group can focus on to achieve their visions. Ask the group:

- What steps can be taken to meet some of these goals?
- What obstacles can be anticipated in making these changes?
- What support (from project or others) is needed to help bring about these changes.

3.16 Gender-Based Violence: What It Is and How to Prevent It[1]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To help participants relate GBV with power abuse To show how men's power over women could result in violence against women
TIMEFRAME	1 hour and 30 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group
METHOD/TOOL	Value Clarification
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart, idea cards, markers
VENUE	VESA/VSLA Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction

The term gender based violence (GBV) refers to violence that is directed towards another person, in which his/her gender is a factor. As we know, violence is related to power. When one has power, he/she can abuse this power and become violent. In general, men are assumed to have power over women, and that is one of the reasons that conflict between partners often turns into violence against women. Violence can harm the psychological, economic, sexual and physical well being of a person.

In this module, we reflect on one form of interpersonal violence: acts of violence that occur between family members, in particular, by men's use of violence against female partners, spouses or wives. One of the most common forms of interpersonal violence is gender-based violence (GBV). Similarly, GBV occurs when a woman beats a man (this is less common due to the position of women in society). In our session, we focus on men and the different ways men can abuse power and become violent against women – wives/partners, female colleagues, daughters, etc.

Warming up questions

The facilitator can start this module with the following warming up questions.

What are the common types of gender-based violence observe in the community?
Which sex is most vulnerable against this violence? What are the major causes?
Does GBV have consequences for food security and better nutrition of a HH?
Are there any measures/penalties the community is enforcing to correct the person/s who commit such violence?
What ideas can you suggest that will terminate such violence?
Who is responsible in handling GBV? Why?

1 Adapted From: CARE Ethiopia. (2014).*Social Analysis and Action (SAA) for Food Security Programs Facilitation Manual*. Pp. 37–38

Activity Steps

▶ **STEP 1. Define.** On a chart, the facilitator writes the four types of violence discussed above and asks the following question: Who can give examples of GBV between partners: psychological, economic, sexual, physical?

The facilitator then allows discussion on examples and then continues with the following questions:

- When is an act perceived as violent?
- What ideas, beliefs, and perceptions in society may fuel violence? (E.g., men have to beat women.)
- How can a nonviolent relationship contribute to increased profits from VSLA/VESA involvement, food security and better nutrition?

▶ **STEP 2. Value clarification**

Read the following statements and ask them to agree or disagree and ask why? Let them give reasons why they chose to agree or disagree.

Statements

- A husband who has sex with his wife against her will is using his natural power, therefore this cannot be called sexual violence.
- Sexual violence does not happen between partners.
- A woman who does not ask her husband for permission to go to the VSLA group does not respect her husband, and the husband can force her to stay in the house for a week.
- Psychological violence cannot be considered a serious offence because it does not hurt.
- A husband, who spends all his money in the bar, without permission from his wife, is committing a form of economic violence.
- A woman who talks in public in the presence of her husband is a bad woman and should be called a “bad wife” or a “witch.”
- A husband who allows his wife to spend the VSLA savings on her own needs must have been “poisoned” by her; he is not a normal husband.
- A husband who beats his wife when she disappoints him is showing his love for her. This is not physical violence.

▶ **STEP 3. Prevention.** Ask the following questions

- Ask the groups to discuss how they can stop GBV (in the four types of violence) and prevent themselves and their neighbors from experiencing GBV.
- Let the participants make a plan of action for educating other families in their village about GBV, and to support community members in their effort to prevent men from committing violence.
- Give the following homework for male participants: Each participant should ask his wife/partner how she perceives the way he deals with his role as “the boss” or the most powerful member of the household and what she would like to change or to do differently. (Note: only ask and listen. No debate.)
- Summarize the discussion based on the responses from the groups and the information provided at the beginning of the session.

3.17 Women's Economic Empowerment VS GBV[2]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To identify immediate, underlying and root causes of GBV against women To unpack reasons for why women's economic empowerment decreases the risk of GBV against women To unpack reasons for why women's economic empowerment increases the risk of GBV against women
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group
METHOD/TOOL	"Vote with Your Feet" and "But why"[3]
MATERIALS NEEDED	Large sheets of flipchart paper, markers or pens
VENUE	VESA/VSLA Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction

Different school of thoughts/theories present different evidence for showing the correlation between women's economic empowerment and GBV. While WEE increases GBV against women according to some it decreases it for others. Through two SAA tools – "Vote with Your Feet" and "But Why", participants will be able to explore the diversity of opinions, and be provided with an opportunity to reflect on their own attitudes around commonly held beliefs. Also, the "But Why" tool will help participants to go to the root of both perspectives and identify the gender/social norm that needs to be challenged for GBV to stop.

Note to the Facilitator

Of the many theories, family stress and dependence theories are for the argument that women's economic empowerment will decrease their risk to GBV. According to family stress theory, stress caused by unemployment and lack of income contributes to Intimate Partner Violence hence economic contributions from women should decrease the likelihood of Intimate Partner Violence. Dependence theory asserts that by empowering women economically, their negotiation and bargaining power will be increased which help ensure safer relationship or quit it all together. On the other hand, according to resource theory, violence can be used as method of maintaining power and control over resources hence women's increased control over financial resources will result in increase in violence as an attempt by men to maintain control over women. In support of this assertion, relative resource theory states that if men perceive WEE as a threat to their status; in other words, if it tries to shake the status quo, violence will increase[4].

2 CARE Ethiopia (2028). Social Analysis and Action (SAA) in Food and Nutrition Security Programming. A manual for addressing gender and social norm barriers to promote gender transformative changes in Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) Programming.
3 Adapted from: CARE. (2018). Social Analysis and Action Global Implementation Manual. Pp. 26 & 39
4 Mejia. et al. , (2014). *Perspectives on Gender-Based Violence and Women's Economic Empowerment in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*. Retrieved from https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/sr-14-111/at.../document on July 2, 2018.

Activity Steps

Part I: Vote with Your Feet

▶ STEP 1. **Explain the purpose of the tool to the participants:**

- This is a group learning exercise, where everyone in the group gets to have their opinion on the statements and reflect on their own attitudes around commonly held beliefs. The objective is to understand the diversity of opinions and give everyone an opportunity to reflect on their own attitudes around commonly held beliefs.
- It is important that we show each other respect and refrain from judging, interrupting or ridiculing others.
- Our values and attitudes are not “right” or “wrong”. They are simply the lens through which we view our world.

▶ STEP 2. **Post/lay two cards with “agree” and “disagree.”** Place the agree/disagree cards at opposite ends of the space, so that everyone can see them with enough space for people to be able to move to either side – written or drawn for non-literate participants. If working with non-literate groups, decide together on symbols that depict the feeling of “agree” and “disagree”.

▶ STEP 3. **Read the following statements one after the other.** Ask participants to reflect quietly (without discussing with one another) on their own attitude or opinion about a statement, and then move to the card that represents their opinion (agree/disagree).

Statements

- Women’s risk of violence decreases if their male partners are employed
- Social expectation of masculinity makes men feel ashamed from not being able to provide for their wives or family and expose them to perpetuate VAW
- Men are less likely to be perpetuators of violence if they are highly educated
- Exposure to child abuse increases risk of GBV perpetration by men
- Low-socio economic status decreases risk of GBV perpetration by men
- Alcohol and drug use increases risk of GBV perpetration by both men and women
- Societal norms that support the use of violence as a method to discipline or control women increases risk of GBV perpetration by men
- Ideologies that man must prove their masculinity by being the sole providers increases risk of GBV perpetration
- Weak legal sanctions for GBV impact on the risk of Violence
- Conservative cultural contexts that limit women’s status and opportunities outside of marriage decreases domestic violence
- Domestic violence increases if women arrive at higher economic status then their husbands
- Domestic violence decreases if women have education levels equal with or higher than their partners

▶ STEP 4. Once all participants have moved, **ask them to discuss with those near them why they have chosen that group** if they feel comfortable. (An activity after participants took side one each and every value statement)

▶ STEP 5. **Invite participants of each group to share their reason for agreement/disagreement.** Ask:

- Would someone care to share with the other group why they are standing where they are?
- How does it feel to be in the group they are in? (Note: the small group may have just one or two people – ask, how does it feel to be in the minority?)

STEP 6. After hearing the views of each group, **ask the participants if anyone would like to change their place and move to a different card**. If participants moving would like to share, the facilitator should explore why they are doing so.

- Remind participants that the objective is not to argue or convince people to change their opinions, but rather to genuinely understand and learn about different opinions.
- Ask participants if they have any question or clarifications about the points raised during the discussion.

STEP 7. Use the following reflection questions for a closing discussion:

- Did you learn anything new from this discussion? Any surprises? Did this discussion change anyone's understanding of the beliefs and norms? What are the advantages of discussing, challenging or changing our beliefs, attitudes or behaviors?
- What are the disadvantages, consequences, or sanctions?
- How could people be helped to challenge the beliefs we discussed and change their behaviors?

STEP 8. To sum up, **thank participants for their contributions, and summarize with the following key points**:

- We all hold positive and negative beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that affect us in different ways. The tool demonstrates what views the community holds with regard to some of prevalent gender, social, and power norms.
- Our attitudes and values are often contextual and situational – they are not often black and white, so it may not be easy to know how we feel. It is important to notice that everyone does not necessarily hold the same values or opinions on certain issues even though this is what is assumed.
- Even people who seem to be like us and whom we respect may have different ideas or opinions. It is our duty to respect these differences and understand why we have them.

Part II: "But Why"?

STEP 1. Introduce the exercise to the participants by explaining its purpose which is to analyze underlying causes of GBV against women and its correlation with WEE in view of developing strategies to challenge them

STEP 2. Divide the group in smaller groups of five-six participants.

STEP 3. Each sub-group is given one of the following two social norm for analysis by the facilitator,

i. Women's Economic Empowerment Decreases risk of GBV against women
ii. Women's Economic Empowerment Increases risk of GBV against women

STEP 4. Each group draws a circle in the middle of a sheet of flipchart paper and writes or draws the norm inside the circle to begin the analysis.

STEP 5. Each group discusses "but why does this norm exist?" Each immediate answer is written in separate circles around the central circle.

STEP 6. Repeat the activity for each of the immediate answers and keep asking "but why does this happen?" until the group can think of no more answers and the root causes have been surfaced.

STEP 7. After completing the process **each sub-group presents its "But Why" diagram and initiates a discussion** within the group using some of the following questions:

- What are the most common reasons found for the norm discussed? Why are these the most common?
- Did you learn anything new about this norm through this exercise?
- How are norms you discussed in groups interconnected?
- Who are adversely affected by these norms?
- Does anyone benefit from these norms?
- Is there a need to change any of the norms we discussed? Why? Why not?
- What can be done to change it? Who can support this change?

STEP 8. **Further discussion.** It is highly likely that participants start to think about why women's economic empowerment is a reason for both increase and decrease in Gender Based Violence against women. This should lead them into deeper reflection about major factors that contributes to GBV against women beyond economic factors. In that case have further discussions on the following topics

- What non-economic factors are major contributors for GBV against women?
- What should interventions focus on? Who should do what?

STEP 9. **Sharing beyond the group.** While reminding participants that personal stories and experiences shared during the dialogue should be kept within the group, encourage participants to share what issues were discussed and what they learned with the family and friends who were not present if they feel comfortable doing so.

3.18 A Conversation about Conflict[5]

SEASON	Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To explore thoughts and experiences participants have as it relates to conflict To inspire productive ways of conflict resolution for harmony
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group – May be easier to discuss topic separated into women groups and men groups and then discuss findings as plenary.
METHOD/TOOL	Conversation
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart of Conflict Approach Chart, markers
VENUE	VESA/VSLA Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction

Different people can have different views regarding something they care about. Failure to understand this and absence of empathy lead people into a conflict. This module will help participants learn from their past/present conflict experiences and see if they dealt with them effectively focusing on the issue than the person.

Activity Steps

▶ STEP 1. **Introduce conflit.** The Facilitator introduces the session to the participants. "We all deal and often struggle with conflicts. (The Facilitator should give relevant cultural/community specific examples of conflicts.) We encounter many different kinds of conflict every day without necessarily connecting them and seeing some of the patterns and lessons to be learned. This activity is an opportunity to explore conflict in our life, our beliefs about it, how it looks, how it impacts us, how we deal with it and what our options are."

▶ STEP 2. **Define conflict.** First, the word 'conflict' means many different things for different people. During this activity we will be exploring its meaning. It is what 'conflict' means to you. Yet for the purpose of this exercise, we can say that 'conflict is a disagreement about something that you care about.' I will be asking 5 questions related to family and you should answer as it applies to your own situation. There is no right or wrong answer. For each question, you should choose 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5; with 0 meaning "almost always NO" and 5 means 'almost always YES'. (The Facilitator should decide to use 0–5 or other appropriate symbols.)

When each question is read, each participant should choose their own answer (from 0 to 5) and record it on the ground in front of them or in their mind. (The Facilitator should provide each participant time to answer each question.)

5 Adapted from: A Conversation about Conflict, A Facilitator's Guide, Search for Common Ground, 2003. As cited in Access Africa. (2013). *Village Savings and Loan Associations (VS&LAs): Programme Guide-Field Operations Manual with Integrated Gender.* Pp. 129–131.

Questions:

1) Is it easy for you to raise an issue or disagree?
2) When in conflict, can you share your feelings, especially anger?
3) Do you deal with the 'real' issue and find a resolution? (The Facilitator should give an example here to explain what is meant by 'real' issue. If a husband does not help washing up and a conflict is started – Is it the superficial reason of washing up or is it a deeper issue, such as respect in the relationship?)
4) Is everyone's voice heard and respected?
5) What would it take to create a safe or comfortable space for conflicts and differences?

▶ **STEP 3. Discuss in small group.** Ask participants to now pair up with a neighbor and discuss their findings. Reassure participants that they don't need to share anything they are not comfortable talking about. Tell them they will have 10 minutes to share. At 5 minutes, tell them they are half-way through.

▶ **STEP 4. Debrief group.** Debrief the entire group by asking:

- What came up in your discussion?
- What insights or patterns did you see?
- What similarities or differences did you see?
- What did you answer for Question 5?

▶ **STEP 5. Personalize conflict.** Let's now move to discuss the concept of conflict and the role it plays in our lives. Ask the group: What does the word conflict mean to you? What role does conflict play in your life? How often do you experience conflict?

▶ **STEP 6. Facilitate the discussion with additional questions:**

- Why do we have conflicts?
- Is it possible not to have conflict?
- Do you consider conflict to be normal?
- Do you believe we have more or less conflict than say, 5 years ago?
- What do you think of this idea: "Conflict is a natural part of life, it is everywhere and is a part of every relationship"?

▶ **STEP 7. Is conflict good or bad?** Let's discuss now if we think conflicts are good or bad. Shut your eyes and try to think of one of your first experiences of conflict. After two minutes as them to turn to their neighbor and discuss the conflict. Discuss for 5 minutes using these questions:

- What happened in this conflict?
- What lessons did you learn from this experience?
- What beliefs about conflict did you develop?

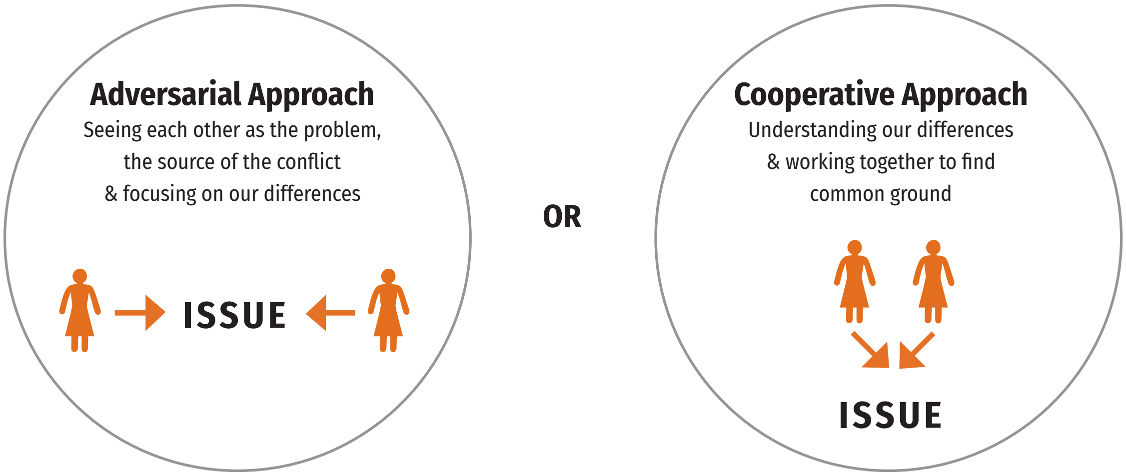
▶ **STEP 8. Debrief as the whole group.** Use these questions:

- How did these experiences influence the way you perceive or react to conflict today?
- Are there conflicts that can be easily resolved?
- Did any of the earlier conflicts have a positive outcome?
- What makes a conflict have positive or negative consequences?
- What do you think of this idea: Conflict is neither positive nor negative? It is the way we deal with the situation that will turn it into something destructive or an opportunity for growth.

▶ **STEP 9. Handling conflict.** Let's now discuss how we handle conflict. What is your usual response to conflict? What are your immediate or automatic emotions, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors?

STEP 10. Dealing with conflict. There are two different ways to deal with a conflict – you can either focus on winning, convincing, overcoming the person you're in conflict with OR you can engage that person as a partner and work together on the problem you have.

Conflict Approach Chart



Discuss: Review the chart and discuss the two approaches. Provide an example:

If only my husband or wife was more understanding or less selfish, etc. Or you can focus on: How can we have a relationship that works for the both of us? This second question frames the situation differently.

STEP 11. Ask them to discuss as large group or in pair. Use questions-

- How did each of you deal with the problem and each other?
- Which model/approach were you the closest to?
- How did the conflict affect your relationship?
- Did you get to the real issue and resolve it?

NOTE: Depending on the level of the participants, may decide to present them with scenarios that relate to the chart and two approaches and then ask questions about the scenarios.

STEP 12. Conflict as a choice. What do you think of this idea: "Conflict is a choice, although this is not the easy answer to all problems, there is always a choice"

STEP 13. Making conflict work. Let's discuss how do we make conflicts work for us? Ask the group: When we're in conflict do we really think about the options we have in the way we react? How confident are you in your ability to deal with conflict?

STEP 14. Discuss as large group or in pairs-

- Think back to the conflict you recalled earlier, what tools and skills did you use to deal with this conflict?
- What have you found useful in dealing with conflicts?
- What skills, processes and qualities do we need to deal with conflict and all the emotions that go with it?
- What do you think of this idea: Dealing with conflict can be learned and practiced?

STEP 15. Disscuss. Let’s now discuss what we are willing to do. Remember the questions at the beginning. How would you feel if you could answer YES to all those questions? How would you describe that feeling?

STEP 16. Discuss as large group:

- What would it take for that to happen, answering YES to all those questions?
- What would become possible in our families and our communities if we were able to?
- Do you see a connection between the way we deal with our personal conflicts and other, larger conflicts?
- What do you think of this idea: We each make a difference. There is a connection between the way we deal with our everyday conflicts and the larger ones. Change takes place one person at a time until it becomes the norm.

STEP 17. Conclude by asking: How useful have you found this conversation? What do you leave with?

3.19 Conflict Resolution[6]

SEASON	Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To consider situations which provoke conflict at the household level. To discuss what happens and why, and how one can avoid or resolve such conflict.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed, Yet the role plays should be discussed in gender separate groups and then findings discussed in plenary
METHOD/TOOL	Role Play
MATERIALS NEEDED	Props, markers, flipchart paper
VENUE	VESA/VSLA Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction

This module will help participants understand different scenarios that could lead to violence. Through role plays, participants will demonstrate how different scenarios lead to conflict and what better ways of dealing with such scenarios could lead to conflict resolution.

Activity Steps

Role Play Scenarios: These should be adjusted to the context and culture of the community being trained.

- Food – The husband arrives home and the food is not ready because the wife is late back from a VSLA/VESA meeting;
- Mobility – A woman goes out to visit other women and her husband comes home to find her absent;
- VSLA loan – the woman's loan has been used to buy a seed or other agricultural inputs for her husband. Repayment time arrives and she has to get the money from him.

▶ STEP 1. **Facilitator discusses with participants that conflict is present when two or more parties perceive that their interests are incompatible, express hostile attitudes or pursue their interests through actions that damage the other parties.** Interests can differ over:

- Access to and distribution of resources (e.g. Territory, money, energy sources, food);
- Control of power and participation in political decision-making;
- Identity (cultural, social and political communities); and
- Status, particularly those embodied in systems of government, religion, or ideology'

6 Adapted from: Access Africa. (2013). *Village Savings and Loan Associations (VS&LAs): Programme Guide-Field Operations Manual with Integrated Gender.* Pp. 132.

▶ **STEP 2. Introduce the Role-Play scenarios to the participants.**

▶ **STEP 3. Split participants into smaller groups.** (Make sure they are not mixed. If although the VSLA/VESA has 2 or 3 men then have to ask which women would be willing to work with them in a group.)

▶ **STEP 4. Assign the role-plays to the number of groups you have.**

▶ **STEP 5. The groups discuss the role-play scenario.** Then they work on the role-play they are assigned.

▶ **STEP 6. Each group presents the role play to the larger group.**

▶ **STEP 7. Either after each role-play the larger group discusses the role-play and discusses what can happen as a result of such a scenario as well as strategies to work through the conflict.**

Note to the Facilitator: The facilitator can also discuss if violence is a result of these conflicts or if it is raised by participants. Discuss how such conflicts can lead to violence against women and strategies to avoid or address violence.

3.20 Cross the Line[7]

SEASON	Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To provide participants the experience of trying to negotiate
TIMEFRAME	20 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed
METHOD/TOOL	Role Play
MATERIALS NEEDED	rope, tape or something to make a line on ground
VENUE	VESA/VSLA Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction

This module will engage participants in negotiations. Participants will be able to learn techniques and strategies to win someone over. The role play is about developing negotiation skills.

Activity Steps

▶ STEP 1. **Divide your group into two teams.**

▶ STEP 2. **Each team picks a team leader.**

▶ STEP 3. **Place the teams on opposite sides of the meeting/training space and run a piece of rope, tape or mark a line in ground down the middle of the meeting space.** Players cannot move to the other team's side. The leaders stand across from each other during this game.

▶ STEP 4**. Each team tries to negotiate with the leader of the other team to make him move to their side.** They can debate, cajole and even bribe the leader into changing sides. All bribes must be honored by the team for them to successfully win the game. The other team tries to negotiate with the other leader.

▶ STEP 5. **Discuss outcomes of activity.** Who won and why? Was it easy to negotiate with the leader? Which strategies worked? Which ones didn't? Why?

7 http://www.ehow.com/list_6754703_negotiation-skill-games.html#ixzz2Ue5tSSjm. As cited in Access Africa. (2013). *Village Savings and Loan Associations (VS&LAs): Programme Guide-Field Operations Manual with Integrated Gender.* Pp. 133.

3.21 Safe space for women's productive engagement[8]

SEASON	Vegetative Stage
OBJECTIVE	To understand types and forms of violence happening in the community To unpack the impact of violence on women's productive engagement To realize the impact of violence against women on men
TIMEFRAME	1 Hour
PARTICIPANTS	Work with women and men in separate groups to allow for greatest participation. General observations can be shared in larger group setting. Alternatively can host this session twice – once with women and another time with men.
METHOD/TOOL	Village Mapping9
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart, idea cards, markers, tape or stones. Use symbols to represent different ideas instead of words. Have group develop the symbol.
VENUE	VESA/VSLA Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction

Violence Against Women (VAW) limits women's productive engagement. Understanding the types and forms of violence within a community will help women take precaution, men realize its impact and community members find solution to prevent and respond to such acts. The village mapping tool will help participants name the types and forms of violence at every spot which is the very first step of planning to eliminate it and promote safe space for women's productive engagement. Participants will also realize the impact of playing the role of a perpetuator; in this case men, given the result of violence isn't to the advantage of perpetuators as well given there are consequences; both personal and legal.

Activity Steps

▶ STEP 1. **Ask the group to draw a map of their village considering women's movement in their productive engagement.** From home to the market – where do they stop by? If group has done a mapping exercise before, ask them to use it as a reminder to draw the map for their village.

▶ STEP 2. **Use the map to discuss where different types and forms of violence occur, to whom and by whom?**

8 CARE Ethiopia (2028). Social Analysis and Action (SAA) in Food and Nutrition Security Programming. A manual for addressing gender and social norm barriers to promote gender transformative changes in Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) Programming

9 Access Africa. (2013). *Village Savings and Loan Associations (VS&LAs): Programme Guide-Field Operations Manual with Integrated Gender.* Pp. 163.

STEP 3. List the different forms of violence that arise and categorize it per types of violence as sexual, emotional, physical, etc.

STEP 4. For each form under each type of violence, ask participants:

- When is violence tolerated or not tolerated? Why?
- Who tolerates violence? Why?

STEP 5. Ask question to probe into the role or value of using violence and perception of violence with the community. The questions may include:

- What is the role or value of using violence to men (power, pain, pleasure)? To women?
- When is it acceptable to talk about certain types of violence and when is it not?
- Where are the silences and where are the bragging points?
- For men who don't use violence, what are the factors supporting and consequences related to that behavior?

STEP 6. Ask participants to take a look at the village map and let them respond to the following "where" "what" and "how" questions. In each one of the spots marked as places where violence occurs:-

- What types and forms of violence against women are there for that specific spot?
    - How does it limit women's right to movement and productive engagement?
    - How can it affect women's group engagement? (Ability to save, build savings, start or grow a business, etc.)

- How does violence against women affect men? (This question should go beyond the discussion about men being husbands, father and brothers. The facilitator should encourage people to talk about those men who abuse women and how it affects them too.)
- What can be done to change attitudes and behaviors around violence against women?
- How can we transform spots marked with violence in our map to make our village a safe space for women? The facilitator should encourage participants to mention practical steps as installing lights, more water points, and active community based mechanisms for GBV prevention and response, etc.

3.22 Women's representation and decision making in formal and informal institutions[1]

OBJECTIVE	To explore the extent of women's participation and representation in formal community institutions. To examine the obstacles and barriers that hinder women's progression into leadership and decision-making positions. To assess societal perceptions and attitudes regarding women's capacity for leadership and decision-making roles.
TIMEFRAME	2.5hours
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group
METHOD/TOOL	Storytelling and value clarification
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart and marker
VENUE	Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction:

Women's empowerment is needed for a woman to realize her full human rights: the combined effect of changes to her own aspirations and capabilities, the environments that influence or dictate her choices, and the interactions she engages in each day.

Formal and informal spaces may include village committees, government administration, village savings and loans groups, in addition to other public groups and forums. The ability to participate meaningfully in public spaces and claim one's rights goes beyond token representation and quotas for under-represented groups within a forum or association. Meaningful participation involves environments where individuals may actively contribute to decisions, where their ideas are heard and considered, and where they can take part in leadership or decision-making.

Women in CARE's intervention areas are less empowered, and with the cultural setting and social attitudes towards women, are not able to fully exercise their rights. Women are not allowed to speak in public, such as in meetings or in any other community gathering. Women are given less value and respect for participating in public engagements than in their engagement in household matters. As a result, women also are discouraged to assume leadership and decision-making roles.

In recognition of these challenges and the urgent need for change, this module is designed to engage participants in an exploration of the utmost importance of women's participation and voices within both formal and informal institutions. By delving into the complexities of women's empowerment, this module seeks to shed light on the integral role it plays in advancing gender equality, human rights, and societal progress. Through interactive discussions, activities, and critical

1 Adapted From: CARE Ethiopia. (2014).*Social Analysis and Action (SAA) for Food Security Programs Facilitation Manual*. Pp. 17-19

reflections, we aim to empower individuals to champion the cause of women's representation and decision-making, fostering a more equitable and inclusive world.

Activity Steps:

STEP 1. Brainstorming

Introduce the topic and objective of the session. Ask participants to brainstorm on the relevance of the topic to their context. Ask participant to brainstorm their perceptions towards women speaking in public and representation in leadership in the kebeles/woreda (District).

STEP 2. Story telling

Tell participants the story of Abebech and her husband (please use context appropriate name).

The Story of Abebech and her husband

Abebech and Ato Mola are a married couple blessed with four children. They often attend community meetings together. However, something troubling lingers in the background of their interactions. Abebech, whether she has valuable opinions or not, seldom speaks during these gatherings. One fateful day, as they both attended a kebele meeting, Abebech finally summoned the courage to raise her hand, eager to share what she believed to be important for their community. To her dismay, the chairman denied her the opportunity to speak, leaving her heartbroken.

On their way back home, Ato Mola erupted with anger directed at his wife. He expressed his deep disappointment and embarrassment at Abebech's audacity to raise her hand in front of the other meeting participants. He questioned her, "Why do you insist on speaking in public? What important contributions could you possibly have to demand the floor in front of all these people? Do you intend to disgrace me in front of everyone? You are well aware that women are not meant to speak in public." Finally, he decreed that Abebech would no longer accompany him to any meetings in the future.

Moderator may summarise the learnings after all have contributed as follows: This story sheds light on the pervasive gender inequalities that continue to silence women in public spaces and deny them the opportunity to have their voices heard. It serves as a reminder of the challenges many women face when trying to engage in community matters, highlighting the urgent need for change and gender equality in all spheres of life.

Let participants re-tell the story in their own words to check they understood the story.

STEP 3. Discussion Points

Pose the following questions for participants to discuss:

- Does Abebech's story relate to your situation?
- Do you know anyone who has similar story to Abebech and her husband?
- How does Abebech's experience reflect broader gender inequalities or stereotypes in our society?
- What strategies or initiatives can communities and organizations implement to encourage and support women like Abebech to have a voice and participate actively in public spaces and decision-making?
- In your opinion, how can we challenge and change cultural norms and beliefs that perpetuate the idea that women should not speak in public or be active participants in community matters?

- What role should men, like Abebech's husband, play in promoting gender equality and supporting women's participation and leadership in various aspects of life, including public forums and meetings?
- How can we create safe spaces for women to voice their opinions, share their concerns, and actively contribute to community development without fear of backlash or discrimination?

STEP 4. Value Clarification

Tag the following value statements on different corners of the space/place of the room

- Women are fragile and emotional hence unfit to be leaders
- Women don't have knowledge to represent their HH or community in formal and informal associations
- Men are natural leaders because they are rational beings
- All women are better at communicating with their children over communicating their ideas to the public

Read the statement out loud. Ask participants to stand with the statement that they think best suits their beliefs and attitudes towards women and men. Ask participants the reason why they choose their stand/statement.

Pose the following questions to ignite the discussion:

- Do women speak in public? If yes, give some examples.
- Do you feel comfortable being represented by a woman?
- Is it acceptable for women to speak in public? Do you think their ideas are respected?
- Do women safely move from one place to another by themselves? E.g. to market, health post, kebele or other places?

STEP 5. Wrap up the session

Take the group through an analysis of why women do not feel at ease speaking in public and try to find out cultural and attitudinal perception on the issue of speaking in public. Highlight how this is due to their exclusion from the public space and major community concerns are taken care of only by men. Meanwhile, women are not accustomed to how to engage with formal institutions in their vicinity. It is inevitable that women need to be empowered to meaningfully participate in community discussions and decision-making.

Furthermore, our discussion has shed light on the deep-rooted gender inequalities that often prevent women from feeling at ease when speaking in public. We have explored the cultural and attitudinal perceptions surrounding this issue and discovered that women's reluctance to speak in public spaces is closely linked to their historical exclusion from such spaces. In many communities, major community concerns have traditionally been addressed primarily by men, while women have been left on the sidelines. Moreover, women may lack the knowledge and experience necessary to engage effectively with formal institutions in their vicinity, further limiting their participation.

As we reflect on these insights, it becomes clear that empowering women to actively and meaningfully participate in community discussions and decision-making is not just a matter of individual empowerment; it is an essential step toward achieving true gender equality. It is crucial for communities and organizations to work together to break down the barriers that hinder women from having a voice in public matters. By providing opportunities for education, mentorship, and creating inclusive spaces where women's perspectives are valued, we can foster an environment where women can confidently speak up, contribute to community development, and have a lasting impact on the decisions that affect their lives. It is through collective efforts that we can move closer to a more equitable and inclusive society where every voice is heard and valued.

3.23 Leader, Roles, and Characteristics of a Leader[2]

OBJECTIVE	To define the concept of leadership.To recognize the attributes of an effective leader. To comprehend the various roles of a leader. To identify and develop personal leadership qualities. To understand the importance of voicing opinions and rights. Toexhibit confidence measures and provide support to group members.
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group
METHOD/TOOL	Group work
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart, markers/chalk, A4 papers, tape, and picture of active and non-active leaders
VENUE	Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Introduction

Leadership is a dynamic and essential aspect of human interaction and societal advancement. It surpasses individual actions, resonating through organizations, communities, and societies. In today's ever-changing world, grasping the principles of effective leadership is of paramount importance. As we commence our exploration of leadership, we will delve into six core aspects that encapsulate this empowering concept.

- First, we will define leadership's essence, emphasizing that it's not just a title but a powerful force for change and inspiration. This foundational understanding sets the stage for our exploration of leadership's transformative potential for women.
- Next, we will uncover the qualities that distinguish effective leaders, making it clear that leadership is not reserved for a select few but can be developed and practiced by anyone willing to embrace its principles.
- Furthermore, we will examine the multifaceted roles leaders assume within teams, organizations, and communities. We'll explore how these roles contribute to achieving collective goals and aspirations.
- Moreover, our journey into leadership involves recognizing personal leadership qualities and nurturing them. We'll highlight the importance of self-awareness as a leader.
- Additionally, we'll emphasize the significance of voicing opinions and advocating for rights within the context of leadership. Leadership thrives on diverse perspectives and the willingness to champion justice and equity.
- Lastly, we'll delve into the vital role confidence plays in leadership, understanding that it empowers leaders and enables them to provide unwavering support to their team members.

2 Adapted from: *CARE International in Lao PDR (2018). Facilitator's Guide _ Leadership Training for Women Groups 1*. Retrieved from Combined_Women-Leadership_Facilitators-Guide_English_2018_CARE-Laos.pdf on August 31st , 2023

As we embark on this enlightening expedition into leadership, remember that it's not just a destination but a continuous journey of growth and evolution. Together, we'll uncover its intricacies and discover how each of us can become a catalyst for positive change and progress.

Session 1: What is a leader?

▶ **STEP 1.** Ask participants to think of an effective leader or a person they know, this person can be a leader in their village or in community such as head of village, village elder, LWU, head of group, young active leader, etc;

▶ **STEP 2.** Divide participants into group (3 to 4 people per group) to draw a picture of the effective leader on a flipchart and discuss about these questions:

1. What is her/his job?
2. Why he/she is an effective person/leader?
3. What did they do differently from other leaders you know to make them stand out?

- When finished group work, post the picture of leaders on the wall and each group select one representative to present their work, take turn to another group;
- During each group presenting their leader, facilitator take note of their answers of above three questions beside the picture they drew;
- Wrap up:
    - Facilitator goes picture by picture and compare the different points of an effective leader from each group, as well as and the reason why she/he is an effective leader. Highlight the similar and different points (if any);
    - Explain to participants that each good leader doesn't need to be the same (as you see from the picture) because they are different, work with different people, live in difference community but the important thing is a leader should be the person who cares about others and does their job well.
    - The Facilitator should check If the picture of the effective leaders are mostly those of men or most of them are women or equally between women and men. Facilitators discusses with participants, about the chief of their village, are they men or women? if most of the village chiefs are men, facilitator asks participants to think of why most of the leaders shown here/at the village are men? Can women be leaders? If yes or no, why? Can women be effective leaders?

- Facilitator summarizes participants' responses and highlights that women and men have the same right to be leaders, though in reality, , men are more often leaders because of cultural believe/practices and social norms in their community. Men have more advantages and more chances to be elected as leaders because they have more opportunities compared to women such as opportunity to access education, information. Women can be leaders as men and can be good and effective leader as well. Women and girls should have equal opportunity in all stages and all levels as men and boys;

STEP 3. Facilitator present the definition of the leader

> Leader: The leader is a person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country. In a group setting, a leader brings the group members together and facilitates to set a clear goal/vision for the group, motivates group members; guide group members through the work process and build morale/encourage towards achieving the group decisions.
>
> Effective leadership - this is a collective effort in which everyone is involed, it takes setting direction, creating alignment, and building commitment (DAC).

Session 2 – What are leader's roles?

STEP 1. Ask participants to work in the same group to discuss what roles leaders have? Or what does someone do as a leader?

- Participants can write the answers on flipchart (for the group who can write) and select their group representative to present the results in a big group;
- For participants who cannot write, remember what has been discussed in the small group and share results of their discussion in big group. Facilitator note the roles they presented on flipchart hanging on the wall;
- Wrap up - facilitator grouping the similar roles presented and present participants the general roles of the leaders, as follow:

Leader Roles:

- Call and gather women's group members to join meetings or training.
- Organize and facilitate the meeting of group members.
- Facilitate information sharing, decision making process to reach a consensus.
- Facilitate developing of group work plan, lead to implement it and share results.
- Represent the women's group with village authority, other and outsiders.
- Help group members to improve their knowledge and skills.

Session 3: What are the characteristics of an effective leader?

STEP 1. Review participants' effective leadership characteristics

- Facilitator explains to participants that each of them will come in front of the room and tell other participants about themselves (if participants are too shy to come in front of everyone they can stand where they are and speak to the room);
- Give 10 minutes to participants to think about these questions.
    1. What are some of your characteristics that could make you an effective leader? Think of your characteristics that are appreciated by other people.
    2. Did you hear anything from group members or other villagers' opinions about your leadership, if yes, what did they say? (Good and weak points)?

STEP 2. Give participants 2 minutes each to present their answers loudly and clear voice; do the same with all participants.

- During participants' presentation, facilitator take note on flipchart hung on the wall of their answers.
- Wrap up - facilitator summarizes answers for each question and present the characteristics of an effective leader, as follows:

Characteristics	Description of the Characteristic
Self-confidence	Believing in yourself that you can do it, able to speak out and can negotiate with others
Express own voice	Have your own voice, as well as other group members, knows that you and all group members have the right to share opinion, able to be critical on issues and raise questions
Motivate others	Able to bring people together to translate group idea to accomplish some tasks, play an active social role in the community.
Self-control	Handling/managing our feelings well and dealing with negative emotions effectively.
Social-awareness	Being sensitive to other people's feelings and understanding their point of view; respecting many different points of view.
Social skills	Our ability to relate to and understand others of their needs and points of view, as well as communicate effectively
Ask participants to add more characteristics	

- Highlight that each person have their own characteristics within themselves and that might differ from other people's

Session 4: Build effective leadership characteristics

▶ **STEP 1.** Build self – confidence: ask 2 or 3 volunteers to come up and speak in front of everyone to tell a small story (for example last time they went to the market or join the meeting).

▶ **STEP 2.** Do the same with some other participants and then discuss with participants these questions:

1. How did you feel by standing and speaking in front of everyone?
2. Why did you feel like that? If you feel shy/fear/nervous/un-confidence.
3. How can you/we overcome these? what can you do to improve your confidence?

▶ **STEP 3.** Show pictures to participants of a woman standing and talking to other people and a picture of a woman sitting apart and being very shy. Ask participants what each of the 2 women can achieve.

- Remind participants that practicing speaking in front of others can help to overcome shyness/fear/nervousness/lack of-confidence.
- Facilitator share key points for self-development, as follow:

Self-development: - learning new things and building new skills

- Keep practicing your good performance/action in your family, in the group and in community.
- Open mind to learn new knowledge, skills and apply new lesson learnt into everyday life practice
- Learn from making mistakes made by yourself and others and do not let it happen again
- Accept feedback from other group members, villagers and be willing to make the change.
- Care about yourself for example look after your health, wearing clothes that makes you feel comfortable and confident

STEP 4. Build confidence on how to express your own voice: ask participants to share their experiences in the past by using these questions:

1. What issue or topic that you feel you cannot say in the presence of people in your family?
2. Why do you feel like that? What are the reasons?
3. What will you do to make yourself to be able to say what you want?

Facilitators take note on flipchart of each issue follow up above questions.

- Wrap up – facilitator summarizes the issues the participants cannot speak about and review the reasons why they cannot speak about them. Explain to participants that they have the right to raise all the issues they want without fear.

STEP 5. Build confidence to motivate others: ask participants to think of a person they know who helped them to do something good and they were happy with the result.

- Select few participants to present to everyone how that person motivated them and what they did to motivate them.

STEP 6. When each participant finished presenting, facilitator ask participant these questions:

1. What can you do to copy from that person?
2. Why would you do that?
3. How will you motivate other people in your family, and in the group?

Wrap up – facilitator summarizes their answers and explain the importance for a leader to try to motivate others act as a motivator.

3.24 Skills of an Effective Leader[3]

OBJECTIVE	To acknowledge/realize the skills needed for a good leader To understand how to improve their skills to be the good leader; such as communication, facilitation, team building, modeling and making a plan.
TIMEFRAME	2hours
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group
METHOD/TOOL	Reading story, group work, game, presentation and role-play
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart, markers/chalk
VENUE	Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

Session 1- Skills for leadership

▶ **STEP 1.** Breakdown participants into groups (3-4 people per group); facilitators read the story of Ms. Phetsaman (please use context appropriate name).

A Short Story: Phetsaman's journey towards the leadership

Phetsaman is the village head of Khounsai village, Dak Cheung District, Sekong Province. She is a member of Women Income and Nutrition Group (WING) that CARE works with. She was a village Lao women union for years and then she was elected as a village head because of her, confidence and ability to motivate people to improve the situation.

As a leader she attended many meetings, as well as activities organized by the village and CARE's project. When she joins the meetings and the activities she learns a lot from these events to improve her skills and share with group members.

She gathers group members regularly and facilitates group meetings to share information, asks group members to share their issues or problems, make decision on what actions to take, prepares work plan with the group, divides responsibility among group members and reports the work progress.

As a leader she needs to listen to group members, she asks questions and help to reach a consensus between group members to decide what actions need to be taken and to make a plan.

"As a village chief, I have lots of responsibilities. I coordinate meetings, facilitate and solve the conflict, identify poor family or orphans and recommend for support. I provide coaching to women in the village once in every two months. During the meeting, all women need to speak, and we focus in creating equal opportunities especially in education to both girls and boys."

3 Adapted from: *CARE International in Lao PDR (2018). Facilitator's Guide _ Leadership Training for Women Groups 1*. Retrieved from Combined_ Women-Leadership_Facilitators-Guide_English_2018_CARE-Laos.pdf on August 31st , 2023

She needs also to motivate groups' members to work as teams. She also needs to show the right example to the groups' members by her own actions so that members are motivated to act like her.

For village future improvements, Phetsaman realizes that her village needs help and support. She taught and coached other group members and active people in the village to be leaders and supports other villagers based on their needs. She also supports women to improve their knowledge and skills so that they can be leaders one day in the future. Phetsaman's dream is to be a head of village cluster in the future. Below is her message linked to her tasks as a village leader.

▶ **STEP 2.** After reading, lead discussion based on the below questions:

1. Why Phetsaman was elected as the head of village?
2. How did she facilitate the group meeting?
3. How did she communicate with group members?
4. What did she do in terms of decision-making?
5. What did she do for group formation?

- Group select their representative to present the outcome of their discussion.
- Wrap up - facilitator summarize participants' answers and present the areas that leader needs to have skills to fulfill leaders' roles

Effective Leadership skills

1. Effective Communication
2. Facilitation decision making to reach consensus
3. Team building
4. Modeling or image building
5. Making a plan

Session 2: Build skills for leadership

▶ **STEP 1.** Build communication skills: assign 5 participants to do role-play to facilitate a group member meeting (as organized by themselves in their village). The topic of the meeting is to decide with the group about group rule/policy (meeting topic can be different from this based on how participants can identify by themselves or facilitator can help);

- One participant act as a leader and four others acts as group members, the remaining participants act as observers.
- Remind remaining participants that, you all will observe each person action such as simple language, listening and pay attention to the speaker, asking question about the situation rule, etc;

▶ **STEP 2.** Ask the role-players and observers to respond to these questions in front of the big group/ in plenary:

- Actor as a leader: how did you feel to act as a leader? What was the most difficult things for you to gather people and lead the meeting?
- Actors as group members: what did you get from this meeting? If no one ask question, why?
- Actor as observers: from this activity, what did you see from both leader and group members performance/action/ voice/listening/asking question/ body movement?
    - Wrap up - facilitator summarizes answers from participant and present key communication skills below

Communication

- Be clear on what you want to communicate
- Speak clearly and loud voice
- Ask clear and open questions such as why? how? What? etc
- Listen carefully to participants
- Share relevant information that will benefit others
- Act and show your confidence
- look at people to get their attention
- Open for everyone to ask question and response

STEP 3. Facilitation on decision making to reach consensus

- Divide participant in to 2 to 3 groups and play game moving a rock and an egg by a spoon.
- Groups select a person to move a rock for the first round and an egg later by not touching it by hand while moving and by closing eyes, the all group members help to move that person at the same time without dropping the rock and egg from spoon.
- Assign a person in the group be a leader who facilitate the group to make decision on how to move the rock and egg to the goal without providing instructions, only provide material and let participants make decision their own.
- When all groups finish - facilitator ask each group to share in big group how did they decide to move the rock and the egg and what different approach they used between moving a rock and an egg.
  - Wrap up – facilitator summarizes the result of their approach on decision making processes. Share with participants the relation between game playing and the real situation where they have to make decisions in the group such as moving egg. Making decisions on hard work or important work is similar to carrying an egg and making sure that it will not fall down but it is opposite compare to the decision making of moving a rock. Then facilitator present the technique or skills below;

Facilitation skills for group decision making:

- Know well of the purpose of what you must discuss or to do and what topic
- Ask group member their opinions to have diverse options
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each option
- Select together the option that everyone thinks is the best

STEP 4. Team/group building

Ask participants to think of game moving rock and egg they played and answer these questions:

1. For group leader: please share with us of how did you discuss with team to play this game?
2. For person who carry the rock and egg: will you be able to move the rock and egg to the goal without getting help from others?
3. For group members: What did you learn from playing this game in term of helping and support each other?
   - Wrap up – facilitator summarize about unity; make other people see the same goal and make it happen.
   - Remind participants that this can be used to build your group to be strong and support each other and then present the below technique to participants

Skills for team/group building:

- Share the purpose of the group with everyone and make sure that they understand it well
- Build relationship among the group such as visit and meeting individual/group members regularly, fairly sharing information that is useful for them ,
- Show members that they can trust you and that you are willing to help and give advise;
- Learn and value about the needs and understand the feeling of the group members
- Influencing – bring group members together and clearly share responsibilities

STEP 5. Modeling

Brainstorming with participant about two leaders (these pictures are the same picture used in the part of build self-confidence),

- One who is an active and shows the characteristics of a good leader such as confidence, etc;
- Another one is not an active leader, very shy, never shares information, etc.

1. Ask participants of which leader can be a good model for you? Why?
2. How will you be the good model for other?
    - Wrap up – facilitator summarize and present be low a good modeling

Role modeling:

- Act and demonstrate, be active and show good example such as, have a strong voice, be brave to speak out, ask questions and show active body movement
- Care about others and share information you have
- Help other without hoping to receive benefit from them
- Open and listen to everyone who need help and support
- Act in positive way and show positive attitude to individual and to the group
- Have a high responsibility such as doing all your tasks, completing work on time, following group request and plan,
- Be Honest – do what you say and promise,

STEP 6. Making a plan

Show the group of Ms. Phetsaman picture, as below and ask these question

1. What do you see in the picture?
2. Why does she do that?
3. What benefit will she get by doing that?
4. Did you do the same as her with your family? If yes, please share, if no, how will you start to make a plan for yourself and group?
    - Wrap up –facilitator summarize and present skills to make a plan as below, including present an example of table of work plan below

Example: Table of work plan					
No.	Activity	Method/how	Time	Responsible Person(s)	Expectation (outcome)

Making a plan:

- Facilitate group members by asking what they want to do and to achieve by when
- Once completed agree on a group work plan with group member
- Present the work plan to the group for understanding and agreeing
- Divide responsibility with group members to implement the plan
- Closely follow up and implement the plan with group members
- Record of work done and share the progress of plan implementation and results with group members

3.25 Exploring one's own understanding and experience related to Leadership and Gender Justice Work[4]

OBJECTIVE	To help participants to build an understanding of the contextual issues that surround WL To promote the understanding that each person is a leader in their own right and that leadership is not limited to formal leadership. To be able to explore the strengths, challenges and opportunities that exist for individuals to practice transformative leadership.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group
METHOD/TOOL	Marker, flip chart
MATERIALS NEEDED	Speed dating
VENUE	Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

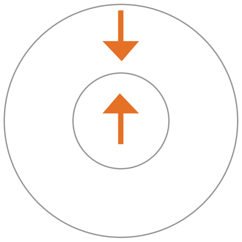
▶ **STEP 1.** Leadership can be defined in a broad range of contexts- political, economic, social, community, family/household leadership etc. The Leader that I admire/find inspirational/that I want to be like! Ask participants to think about a leader, role model that they have admired, liked, and think what this leader represents. Draw or represent this information on piece of paper provided. Share your drawings and explain Why this is a leader and what you like about them!

What are those qualities you admire about them!

▶ **STEP 2.** Ask participants to number off as 1 and 2. The 1's take their chairs and form a circle in the center of the room facing out; the 2's form a circle around them facing in so that everyone is sitting across from someone else at comfortable conversational distance. See Figure 1.

- In each of the rounds, pose a question for the pairs to discuss. Give participants 5-10 minutes to discuss each question. There is normally time for 3 or 4 rounds.
- After each question, call for highlights of the conversation to be shared aloud for the whole group.
- Between questions ask people in the inner circle to move 2-3 seats over so that everyone has a different partner for each question.
- As a group discuss what taking on leadership roles can do for self-confidence, how taking on a leadership role can change community group/dynamics, and what the value of doing

Figure 1



4 Adapted from: CARE International in Uganda (2018). *PepsiCo Women Leadership Training.*

so might be. Further discuss strategies for how one might take on a leadership role and manage those who are uncomfortable with a woman taking on a leadership role. Finally, discuss what the group thinks will happen if women chose NOT to take on leadership roles in their communities.

Questions for discussion:

- From your personal experiences (your home, with peers, circle of friends, work/community engagements) share an experience in which you took on leadership and how it made you feel?
- What do you consider as important qualities for leadership?
- What do you consider as important values a leader should hold?
- When would you consider one to be a good leader/ strong or admired leader?
- What are you going to do to, change in order to become that leader that is good, admired?
- As a leader, share a challenging experience in which you contributed to bring about transformation. What made it successful?
- Reflecting on your work in the communities, share how your work enables women and girls to become leaders.

Key Learning Points

- Recognize that leadership is about influencing others towards a specific goal - that we are all leaders. We must recognize that there are challenges in leadership taking on but that there are also opportunities, and we should encourage/acknowledge each other roles. There are challenges and we need joint efforts to work at all the different levels of the unifying framework to ensure that transformative change happens. Acknowledge the need for all to be involved in leadership.
- Leaders create a compelling and shared vision for the future, providing a sense of purpose and inspiration.

There are different types of leaders:

1) Autocratic leaders make decisions without consulting their teams.
2) Democratic leaders allow teams provide input before making a decision,
3) Laissez-faire leaders don't interfere; they allow the team to make many of the decisions.
4) Transactional leaders assume that work is done only because it is rewarded

3.26 Leadership challenges and solutions[5]

OBJECTIVE	To explore challenges to women Leadership To propose solutions to address these challenges To share experiences and stories of challenges in leadership and possible solutions To understand what it means to be an effective leader.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
PARTICIPANTS	Mixed group
METHOD/TOOL	Marker, flip chart, Various items that can be used as Obstacles
MATERIALS NEEDED	Discussion and game
VENUE	Meeting Place
NOTE	Start the session with reflection from participants on their action plans following the previous session!

▶ **STEP 1.** Ask 4 Women volunteers to share what their experiences of Leadership have been- what positions they hold, how they came to take on the leadership position, what are the challenges they have faced as leaders, what can those they lead have done to enable them to have a better leadership journey.

▶ **STEP 2.** After the women share their stories, ask participants to discuss challenges women face as leaders in the, VSLA, Producer group, Political leadership and as leaders in their families/homes (social arenas)

▶ **STEP 3.** How can Women deal with these problems themselves but also be supported to overcome these challenges.

▶ **STEP 4.** Tell participants that they will be playing a game called -Guiding/Leading the "blind". Ask the participants to pair up. Ask one person from each pair to be the "blind person". The other person will be the one guiding him/her.

▶ **STEP 5.** Explain that the role of the "blind person" is to keep their eyes closed and follow the instructions of the person who guides. The role of the guiding person is to keep their eyes open and protect the other from collisions. The goal of the exercise is to move through the obstacle course (Prepare an obstacle course with chairs or other objects. It does not need to be too difficult)

▶ **STEP 6.** Tell participants that talking is not allowed. The guiding persons will communicate to the guided ones with the following touch signals:

a. Touch on the middle of the back means walk
b. Subsequent touches on the middle of the back mean walk faster
c. Touch on right shoulder means turn right
d. Touch on left shoulder means turn left

5 Adapted from: CARE International in Uganda (2018). *PepsiCo Women Leadership Training.*

e. Touch both shoulders at the same time means stop.

Please note that guided persons should be touched gently.

1. Make sure everyone understands their roles, and the signals. Then start the exercise.
2. After all pairs have made it through the obstacles, stop the exercise and have each pair switch roles. The guided persons are now guiding and vice versa.
3. When all pairs made it through the course, all participants mix up in the group again.
4. Conclude with a short discussion in the plenary.

Questions for discussion:

- How did it feel to be the one guiding? How did it feel being guided?
- What were some of the challenges of guiding? What were some of the challenges of being guided?
- What did you enjoy most about each role and which one did you prefer – please explain?
- What did this exercise teach you about leadership? What does it mean to be an effective leader?
- What do you believe is the role of those following leadership?

Key Learning Points

- Both roles have their particular challenges and responsibilities.
- There needs to be an effective communication between the leaders and those following leadership.
- As a leader you need to have the context in mind, be foresighted, scan the horizon for opportunities, obstacles and act in an anticipatory way. You need to communicate the objective of your actions.

Additional Materials and Tools to Gender in FFBS

Social Analysis and Action in Food and Nutrition Security Programming

Social Analysis and Action (SAA) is one of CARE's models for supporting gender and social norm barriers transformation. It is a community-led social change process through which individuals and communities explore and challenge social norms, beliefs and practices around gender that shape their lives. SAA uses participatory tools – some developed by CARE and some borrowed from others – to achieve the long-term goal of empowering vulnerable communities through the advancement of equitable gender, social and power norms.

The manual has modules that detail how to integrate Social Analysis and Action into Food and Nutrition Security covering gender in Production, Access to and Control over income, Gender in Leadership and Women as Farmers and Value for their Triple Roles etc. The Gender dialogues are tailored to the agricultural seasonal calendar which shows the relevance of seeing seasonal activities with a gender lens. These seasonal activities touch upon the different domains of change in agriculture as production and productivity, marketing, access to finance etc.[13] The SAA in FNS manual has covered 9 gender domains in FNS which include; agricultural production, access to and decision-making power over productive resources, control over use of income, leadership in the community, time use, GBV and HTP Prevention and Support, Family Planning, Women as farmers, and gender for introductory session.

Gender Action Learning System (GALS)

GALS is a community-led empowerment methodology applying the principles of social and gender justice, inclusion and mutual respect. GALS promotes participatory and analytical skills at all levels as a means of visioning, planning and implementing change as individuals, households, communities and organizations.

GALs specifically focuses on developing new visions for relationships between women and men as equal human beings and implementing changes in gender inequalities in resources and power. GALS promotes gender tools that can be used along the FFBS tools to reinforce gender tool 4.15 i.e. the journey to the empowerment vision and the gender balance.

13 CARE (2018): Social Analysis and Action (SAA) in Food and Nutrition Security Programming

4. Sustainable Agriculture Tools

Introduction

Sustainable agriculture aims to "sustain farmers, resources and communities by promoting farming practices and methods that are profitable, environmentally sound, and good for communities." CARE takes an integrated, holistic, and participatory approach to sustainable agriculture, which aims to: increase food production, produce safe foods, increase food security and improve nutrition, provide appropriate approaches for adaptation, increase climate resilience, expand market opportunities and improve incomes, protect and enhance natural resources, safeguard biodiversity, and, where appropriate, increase carbon capture and storage. These outcomes are based on CARE's principles of engagement in small-scale agriculture which are effectively to seek impact that is **sustainable, productive** (yielding profit as well as healthy diets), **equitable** and **resilient** (**SuPER)**.

FFBS integrates approaches to ensure that all **SuPER** principles are respected and consider systems-based and rights-based approaches. These tools provide education and guidance on the most critical and foundational components of sustainable agriculture, from a multitude of disciplines or paradigms, to ensure farmers have a range of resources that can be adapted to their needs, including: climate-smart agriculture (CSA) and climate-resilient agriculture (CRA), agroecology, regenerative agriculture, conservation agriculture, carbon farming, and nature-based approaches.

The tools provide farmers with the opportunity to acquire new technical information and gain new knowledge, while building on traditional and existing knowledge and skills, to achieve impactful results and greater resilience. The tools put farmers in control of experimenting, learning and building confidence and agency to make decisions. The tools aim to stimulate farmer problem diagnosis, inquiry, and identification of new and innovative methods to build local knowledge of practices that help adaptation to climate change and development of long-term sustainability plans. Critically, the tools are designed to be adapted to address gender-based inequities in the way practices are introduced or discussed, shared, promoted and adopted. Additionally, the tools can be scaled for various sizes of farms and homestead gardens, and can and should be adapted to local context.

Using the Sustainable Agriculture Tools: the facilitator should become familiar with the tools in advance, as this will support preparations and organization. While many modules could be used as stand-alone tools for increasing knowledge and skills, **results will be stronger when educational sessions are provided for** each section. The tools are divided into five sections, with multiple modules per section. Some modules are absolutely necessary in order to set up and manage a successful FFBS demonstration plot. Other modules have educational information and multiple technical options to choose from. It is important to remember that learning and adoption of new practices occurs over time; therefore, it is recommended to introduce new concepts and experiment with new practices over time, based on the group's own knowledge, existing practices and needs.

Section 1: Preparing for Sustainable Agriculture in FFBS: Divided into two subsections:

- In "Planning for the FFBS Demonstration Plot," it is critical that all six modules are conducted.
- In "Production Planning for Sustainable Agriculture," based on what practices participants are already using, introduce new modules and concepts over time. It is recommended to add 1–2 experimental practices per growing cycle.

Section 2: Sustainable Crop Management: It is important to conduct educational sessions from each major topic during pre-sowing in order to strengthen existing knowledge, and add/tailor new experimental practices, as needed and desired. This section also can and should be utilized throughout the growing cycle to support the development of new skills.

Section 3: Harvest and Post-Harvest: At a minimum, conduct educational sessions on each topic and continue to add and adapt experimental practices.

Section 4: Evaluation, Learning and Celebration: Both modules must be conducted to achieve strong results. “Evaluation of the FFBS Plots” must happen regularly throughout the cycle. Equally important are “Farmer Field Days,” that provide an opportunity to share learnings and highlight successes!

Section 5: Reducing Food Loss & Waste: At a minimum, conduct the educational session to raise awareness and discuss solutions. Work with participants, when the time is appropriate, to create an approach to reducing food loss and waste through CARE’s Gendered Circular Economy Model to Reducing Food Loss and Waste.

Annex: This section offers an additional Companion Planting chart as a reference that can be easily adapted for local needs.

4.1 Planning for Activities During the Agricultural Season

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	Provide an overview of the scope and format of the FFBS activities to be completed during the agricultural season Familiarize staff and facilitators with key FFBS activities

Background

This session helps the facilitator and the FFBS participants to develop an understanding, prepare for the FFBS activities, and make agreements on the structure of the program.

▶ STEP 1. **Build Understanding.**

Conduct a brief discussion on Sustainable Agriculture

Introduce the concept of sustainable agriculture and the FFBS approach to sustainable agriculture, as described in the introduction section. State one definition of sustainable agriculture is

> **Sustainable agriculture aims to "sustain farmers, resources and communities by promoting farming practices and methods that are profitable, environmentally sound, and good for communities."**

Ask the participants: What does this mean to you? Do they have other ideas or understandings of the what sustainable agriculture means?

Describe some potential benefits from taking a sustainable approach, such as:

- increase food production, produce safe foods, increase food security and improve nutrition, provide appropriate approaches for adaptation, increase climate resilience, expand market opportunities and improve incomes, protect and enhance natural resources, safeguard biodiversity.

Determine Participant's Priorities

Conduct a simple assessment to determine what crop (or crops) will be the main focus. This may evolve over time, as participants may wish to experiment with new crops or varieties. Be sure to use the Gender Tools to help guide the conversation. It is important to ensure that women's voices are included, as women and men may have different priorities.

Ask the following questions and include additional questions, as appropriate:

- What is the main crop they hope to focus on?
- What are the challenges and constraints participants are currently facing growing this crop (or crops)?
- If possible and available, are participants interested in experimenting with new crops?
    - Note: the modules in "Production Planning for Sustainable Agriculture" can support designing diversified cropping systems
- Based on participant's current understanding of sustainable agriculture, are there certain topics or areas that they would like to focus on? Are there skills they would like to strengthen? Are there new skills they would like to learn?

STEP 2. **Map Participant's Role and Responsibilities.**

The facilitator and participants should determine who will be involved and what their roles will be. Include experts who can provide support on local challenges and solutions, raise awareness, and build local support.

For example, have discussions on the following:

- What will the selection procedures be of participating farmers?
- How and who will be involved in selections or formation of the groups?
- Who will take the facilitation role?
- How will the lead farmer and other group leaders (if any) be chosen?

Participants	Responsibilities
CARE Staff (for example: Agriculture Lead, Program Manager for FFBS, etc.)	
Facilitator	
Participants	
Lead Farmer	
Individuals and Group Participants	
Stakeholders	
Extension Officers	
Local Experts	
Research Institutions	
Other Participants and/or Stakeholders	

STEP 3. **Determine meeting schedules.** Share with participants that the FFBS activities are based on crucial meetings depending on timing of the season and the crop. Every meeting, farmers exchange knowledge and learn something new about the crops, constraints, and new or adapted ways to deal with these constraints. During these meetings, other trainings on gender, nutrition, markets, and community mobilization are delivered.

STEP 4. **Plan the meetings.** Meeting planning is an important component. It involves:

- Determining when meetings will begin and end, based on the activities that need to occur before planting, during the season, and after the farming cycle
- Deciding the frequency of the meetings – based on the lifecylce of the crop – the farmers should meet every week or two weeks generally, over the entire productive cycle, and decide on the length of each meeting (important to consider time constraints of participants, especially women). Think through what the length of time is for each meeting to achieve greater participation and effective engagement
- Determining the location and time of day of the meetings; suggest a fixed day and time to facilitate organization

- Creating a short list of activities for each meeting, such as: checking who is present/absent, work and observation in the field, identifying special topics to be discussed

Important: **Use information gathered during the assessments before activities start to define when and how to meet so that women can easily participate.** Be sure to ensure there is a gender balance in meetings. Meetings should be planned on times and days that women are able to attend. Also, strategies should be used to ensure women are able to appropriately participate.

Find a Sample Meeting Plan below and adapt as needed:

Discuss with participants the importance of the following key components of meetings:

Observations: During each meeting, farmers will make observations in small groups on plants, soil, weeds, diseases, insects, climate, and more. Please find a template in the "Evaluation of the FFBS Plots" module.

Discussions: Tell participants, "During each meeting, these observations are then presented and discussed with the larger group under the guidance of the facilitator. This should lead to discussions on recommendations for action, and a consensus regarding crop management."

Other Topics: Share with members that, according to budget and availability, local experts and specialists may attend the meetings or visit at different points throughout the season. They can be invited to present on special topics related to agriculture, food safety, marketing, nutrition, climate trends or any topic of interest to the group. Topics could include: Agriculture (such as germination tests, soil health, water conservation, weeds and weed control, diseases, insect pests and their control, seed saving practices and more), Gender (such as child/forced marriages, gender-based violence, and more), Marketing (such as relations with buyers, identifying markets, and more), Nutrition (such as breast feeding, choosing what to plant, and more). *Discuss with members what are some potential topics that may be interesting to them based on their experiences, needs, and contexts.*

Sample Meeting Plan

DATE	
ATTENDEES	
TIME	**ACTIVITIES**
30 minutes	Greeting Short stories, joke telling, fun exercises for team building. Use one of the group strengthening tools for this purpose Attendance Check Presentation of Schedule
60 minutes	Field Work (planting, weeding, thinning, compost application, and time with experimental practices) Observations (using "Observation Form") Discussions and note-taking of observations by work group
30 minutes	Large group discussion of observations Group Action Plan
XX	Special Topic, if determined with participants
30 minutes	Evaluation of the day's activities Planning of next meeting Closure

4.2 Selecting the FFBS Plots

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To select a piece of land for the FFBS demonstration plots
TIME FRAME	30 minutes
USED TO	Familiarize staff and facilitators with key FFBS activities
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart paper and marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space for all participants to sit

Background

Once participants have registered for the FFBS, a farm for the FBBS plots must be selected in consultation with participants and local leaders. Involving the community in this process will enhance their participation and ownership of the process as well as their willingness to attend lessons in the selected locations.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **As a group, take the participants through some of the criteria for choosing FFBS plots.** The selected farm should:

1. Be situated in the community in which the growers live. Take into consideration the farmers/group's recommendations. Consider if there is community land that can be used for the FFBS plots. If seeking privately owned land, discuss options for using the land (examples: will the owner donate the use of the land for free? Would the owner agree to rent the land for a small fee?).
2. Be representative/similar to the participants' farms in terms of the soil type (such as compacted soil, low soil fertility, low nutrient content, etc.), topography (slope), water availability, presence (or lack of presence) of other crops, trees, shrubs, etc.
3. Have management problems common to the area to allow for participatory learning.
4. Not have problems that will make it difficult to show positive results after implementing FFBS improved practices; for example, avoid abandoned farms for demonstration plots.
5. Be close to the village and near a road for easy accessibility and visible by others in the community; if a road location is not possible, then the site should be along a well-travelled footpath so that non-FFBS farmers can observe operations.
6. Have a total size of at least 1 hectare (2.5 acres); if the farm is too small, the FFBS plots will cover a large area of the total farm and the farm owner may fear implementing new practices.
7. Have an owner ready to release the plots, if using privately owned land, for FFBS by agreeing to allow all management/cultural practices on the plots without restriction and to all of the requirements and requests made by FFBS participants; written contracts with farm owners may be helpful in some cases (see below). However, it is critical to consider literacy among FFBS participants and what the alternatives are to formal agreements, if a contract cannot be used.
8. Be worked on by all FFBS participants.
9. Have a size determined by the planned crop(s) and treatments that are to be evaluated.

▸ STEP 2. **Based on the understanding of the key criteria (above) discussed during the training, help guide the assembled farmers' group through a selection of appropriate plots.**

▸ STEP 3. **If needed, the plot owner and the community should sign a mutually binding contract outlining the terms and conditions of their agreement.** Use the contract found on the next page as an outline.

Example of a Contract with Plot Owner and FFBS

Contract between (please print names):

_______________________________	_______________________________
Farm owner	**Relevant authority e.g., farmer organization**

In relation to the Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS) that will take place in the village of XXX, the above-mentioned parties agree to the following terms:

1. The farm owner agrees to let the FFBS use [a part of her/his farm...specify area] for the implementation of the FFBS.
2. The area to be used by FFBS and will consist of ___ number of plots of ___ size (or specified area) chosen by the FFBS facilitator and participants. One or two plots will be used for implementing practices decided on by the FFBS participants. On the other plot(s), participants will implement management practices normally done by the farm owner or those agreed upon as common within the group. All work on the plots will be carried out by the FFBS participants.
3. The farm owner agrees to allow the FFBS participants to carry out all practices as necessary for learning objectives. FFBS participants will be allowed to make observations on other parts of the farm (beyond the plots mentioned in 2).
4. The farm owner agrees to respect all requests from the FFBS related to activities on the two/three plots.
5. The FFBS will supply all inputs used on the FFBS plots.
6. The farm owner agrees that he/she will not seek compensation from the FFBS _________ (project, farmer organization) even if he/she suffers loss in production due to weather and other stresses.
7. The length of this contract will be _____ months, from _______to ______, ____ (year).
8. This contract can be ended without notification under the following circumstances:
   - Failure by either party to respect their obligations as set out in this contract
   - Failure to limit FFBS activities to the area/crops mentioned in this contract

Signatures: Plot owner, FFBS team leader, community representatives & authorities.

Plot Owner____ Date: ____________________

FFBS Team Leader_______________________________________ Date: ____________________

Community Representative _________________________________ Date: ____________________

Authority ____ Date: ____________________

4.3 Seasonal Calendar

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To understand existing practices and knowledge for annual agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, and/or fishing activities; identify constraints and support in determining experimental practices.
TIME REQUIRED	2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip charts, markers
WORKSPACE	Enough room to sit and stand

Background

The seasonal calendar is a graphic planning tool that lists the activities of the production cycle throughout the year, including characteristics, activities, and production needs during each cycle. The information generated in open dialogue between members and facilitators can be varied and rich. The seasonal calendar will help identify existing knowledge and practices, help to determine experimental practices to address constraints, and guide activities throughout the agricultural seasons.

Before beginning the activity, explain to participants that the objective of the activity is to gain an understanding of their existing practices and identify constraints and challenges. Explain that this information will help you to determine the best recommendations to provide during FFBS.

Consider inviting local sustainable agriculture experts to this session, or share the information with them afterwards and ask for advice. This can help to determine which FFBS experimental techniques to recommend as well as additional specialized techniques that are best suited to local context. Additionally, local experts can help to identify other resources and innovations that are available to support learning and success.

After the activity is complete, the facilitator should reflect on the information provided before making recommendations. Additionally, this information will be used when creating the FFBS Calendar, so be sure to save all the information gathered!

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 1.** Ask the participants to **build consensus** on and list the key crop activities that occur.

▶ **STEP 2.** **Draw a vertical diagram** in which the months of the year are indicated along the top of the sheet and the crop, along with the associated agricultural activities for that crop are listed down the left-hand side.

A template is on the following page of the types of information to gather. Be sure to adapt as needed.

▶ **STEP 3.** Ask volunteers to speak about their **monthly seasonal activities** for key crops. On the diagram, record the monthly activities for each crop underneath the corresponding month. It is important to cover the key crops identified, as they influence decisions on time and resource allocation for all crops.

Note: If the farmers are growing more than one crop and/or incorporating livestock it may be easiest to create separate calendars.

▶ **STEP 4.** With the information collected, lead discussions about some **key issues around the seasons and crops** that give further insights into the farming system. Some examples are: seasonal needs for and availability of labor; seasonality and variability of rainfall and drought; availability of irrigation; incidence of crop diseases.

▶ **STEP 5.** Together with the farmers, try to **match periods of several important constraints with the different stages of the crop during the season**. Write the name of these constraints along the bottom row of the chart in the appropriate month(s). Examples of these constraints are: weeds, insects, diseases, drought, and soil fertility. Draw attention to the differences in constraints between men and women and make note of these in the table. These may serve for discussions in the FFBS gender modules or be further discussed here.

▶ **STEP 6.** Try to **draw attention to and explain the FFBS approach** to possible solutions for these constraints. Stress the importance of future observations in the experimental field and the farmers' own fields.

Template for Seasonal Calendar

Crop Name:	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Seed Selection												
Germination Test												
Compost Preparation												
Land Preparation												
Using Climate Information												
Soil Health and Nutrient Management Practices												
Water Use and Water Conservation Practices												
Weed Management												
Pest and Disease Management												

Crop Name:	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Harvest												
Post-Harvest												
Value Add Products												
Constraints												

Important Next Steps

▶ STEP 7. **Add all agricultural activities to the FFBS Calendar,** including experimental activities. Incorporating all activities into one comprehensive FFBS Calendar is recommended. Having all activities in one calendar will support planning and organization.

4.4 Setting Up FFBS Demonstration Plots

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To set up the demonstration plots for the FFBS, determine experimental practices, set up plot, and identify materials required to conduct activities throughout the season
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart paper and marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space for all participants to sit

Background

As part of the planning process for FFBS, the experimental practices will be determined, facilitators and participants consider the plot size, the number of beds (or growing areas), and materials required to run their specific FFBS plots. As this time, the facilitator should be prepared to make recommendations on experimental practices to test. It may be necessary to obtain advice and data from reliable local sources to assist in choosing the possible solutions to be demonstrated or tested.

Important Note on Sequencing: Farmers will have already identified constraints in production and possible solutions at a group level in previous sessions; the facilitator will also have gained a better understanding about existing knowledge and practices in the Seasonal Calendar activity; and the facilitator may already be conducting educational sessions from the ”Production Planning for Sustainable Agriculture” section during this pre-sowing time. All of these steps should support the facilitator’s recommendations for experimental practices.

Important Consideration:

Note that some proposed solutions to constraints may require high labor costs or inputs, and may not be the best choice in every year or for every farmer. Each plot, and growing area, will be evaluated throughout the season and at harvest time in terms of both yields and costs to help determine the best solutions and under what conditions (such as rainfall, labor availability, markets, etc.).

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Determine experimental practices.** Facilitator should recommend experimental practices based on their understanding of needs, interests, and how to build on existing knowledge and practices. Along with participants, choose the experimental practices (at least 1–3 per experimental bed). These can differ per site according to the wishes of the farmers and the constraints of each crop. Additionally, the number and types of experimental practices will vary based on the size of the plot(s) and beds/growing areas and the desires of the group. Experiments may be completely new or can adapt new ideas to existing knowledge of an approach. This can change from season to season as more participants or groups are brought into the program.

Examples of experimental practices can include:

- Different crop rotation and intercropping techniques
- Use of compost alone or in combination with fertilizers (currently used, or new ideas)

- Indigenous and improved seed varieties –early maturing, resistant to pests and diseases, etc.
- Different soil health and nutrient management practices
- Different water conservation and management practices
- Different integrated pest and disease management practices
- Incorporate local experts' knowledge and traditional practices with a new idea in the FFBS toolkit

EXAMPLE PLOT 1		
Bed 1 – Farmers Practice	**Bed 2 – Experimental Practice**	**Bed 3 – Combination Practices**
Organic Compost or Fertilizer	Inorganic/Synthetic Fertilizer	Combination of Both

EXAMPLE PLOT 2		
Bed 1 – Farmers Practice	**Bed 2 – Experimental Practice**	**Bed 3 – Combination Practices**
Farmer's Practice to Pest Management	New Ecological Pest Control Method	Package of Integrated Pest Management Adapted to Need (example: planting companions + monitoring and handpicking insects + strategies to improve soil health; or try biological/natural pesticide)

EXAMPLE PLOT 3 **Minimum 3-Cycle Crop Rotation Experiment**		
Bed 1 – Farmers Practice	**Bed 2 – Experimental Practice**	**Bed 3 – Combination Practices**
Farmer's Practice with 2–3 Crops Planted	2–3 Crops Planted with Crop Rotation Plan	2–3 Crops Planted + Crop Rotation Plan + Minimum of 1 Intercropping Technique

▶ STEP 2. **Determine plot size.** Together with farmers, determine the ideal demonstration plot size. Plots that are too large may cause farmers to concentrate on working rather than learning, and those that are small may prevent the comparison of treatments.

- The recommended size per demonstration plot is 30 meters x 20 meters, or smaller, but can be changed depending on the crop and its spacing requirements.
- The number of plots will depend on the number of FFBS sites and the number of participating villages.

▶ STEP 3. **Divide the plots into beds (or growing areas) and determine size.** Divide the plots into different beds (or growing areas), to provide a few areas to compare practices. Together with farmers, determine how many beds are desired. Here is an example of how beds could be divided into types:

- **Bed 1 – Farmers Practice Bed:** Dedicate one bed/area to growing as farmers currently grow
- **Bed 2 – Experimental Practice Bed:** Designate one bed/area to experimental practices
- **Bed 3 – Combination Practice Bed:** Designate one bed/area that combines current practices and new ideas. *Research shows that resilience is often built by combining existing knowledge with new ideas!*
- **Bed 4 – Additional Experimental Bed:** If land is available and participant interest is present, small side beds/areas can be established for additional trials.

Exercise

Once the number of beds and bed sizes have been determined:

- Draw the full plot and beds on a large piece of paper
- Make a record of the sizes of each bed.
- This record keeping will support additional exercises in the "Production Planning for Sustainable Agriculture" section, in addition to short- and long-term planning, management, and goals

▶ STEP 4. **Make a record of Steps 1–3.** Use this template as an example and adjust as appropriate.

Bed Number/Name	Size	Practices
Bed 1 – Farmers Practice		
Bed 2 – Experimental Practice		
Bed 3 – Combination Practices		
Bed 4 – Additional Experiments		

▶ STEP 5. **Identify materials required for installing experimental plots and beds.** Based on the size and type(s) of experimental plot(s) and beds, prepare a list of materials required to establish them. This list may include the following:

1. Rope, measuring tape, sticks, pegs, name plate or tags for the each of the test plots
2. Seeds of choice crops (local variety and improved resistant/ tolerant varieties) and intercrop (appropriate varieties for sustainable agriculture and farmer's preferences) (Modules 2.5–2.8 can strengthen technical knowledge, help determine seed types, and seed quality and quantities).
3. Organic fertilizer (compost, manure or farmyard manure) and/or mineral fertilizer (composite and/or nitrogen fertilizer). See module "Compost Preparation."
4. A sprayer to treat pests and diseases.

▶ STEP 6. **Fill out a table of the required materials for all the FFBS plots and beds.** Be sure to include:

1. Seed: Variety, Quantity, Quality (from germination – 80% recommended)
2. Organic fertilizer type: Compost (preferred), manure, farmyard manure (depending on availability)
3. Organic fertilizer quantity: Rates and measures of application
4. Mineral fertilizer type: composite, nitrogen
5. Mineral fertilizer quantity: Rates and measures of application

▶ STEP 7. **Develop a list of materials needed.** Some materials will be required to set up the plot, while others will be used later during the evaluation period (see "Evaluation of the FFBS Plots"). Use the following as a guide and adjust as needed.

ITEM	USE	WHO USES IT?	NUMBER PER FFBS SITE	FREQUENCY (SEASON/ CYCLE)	TOTAL
Measuring tape	Plot measurement	All participants	1	1	1
50-meter cord	Plot measurement	All participants	1	1	1
Name Plate/Signage	Labeling Farmer's Practice, Experimental Plots/ Beds, Practices, Treatments	All participants	2–4, depending on number of plots/ beds, experimental practices, treatments	1	1
Notebook	Observe and Note	Farmers	20–30	1	20–30
Blue and Red Pen	Observe and Note	Farmers	20–30	1	20–30
Pencil	Observe and Note	Farmers	20–30	1	20–30
Eraser	Observe and Note	Farmers	20–30	1	20–30
Document Holder	Observe and Note	Farmers	20–30	1	20–30
Measuring Tape (2m)	Observe and Note	Farmers	20–30	1	20–30
Scissors	Cut paper, tape, etc.	Workgroups	4–5	1	4–5
Calculator	Calculating seed quantities				

ITEM	USE	WHO USES IT?	NUMBER PER FFBS SITE	FREQUENCY (SEASON/ CYCLE)	TOTAL
Permanent Marker Set (1 blue, 1 red, and 1 green)	Present observations on flip chart	Workgroups	4–5	2 or 3	8–10 or 12–15
Poster-sized paper sheets	Present observations	Workgroups	4–5	14 to 18	56–70 or 72–90
Bags of various sizes, depending on crop volume	Harvest Plots	All participants	10, depending on number of plots/ beds, experimental practices, treatments	1	8–10

▶ **STEP 8. Label plot(s) and demonstration beds.** Install necessary name plates or signage that clearly labels the bed number and name, along with the type of practice.

A name Plate / Signage example of a plot. FAO

4.5 Using Climate Information

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	Support farmers to understand, interpret, and apply both historical and short-term climate and weather forecasting, including information from traditional forecasters, to update Seasonal Calendars and inform planning of agricultural activities
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Listed under each activity in this module

Activity 1. Understanding and interpreting historical climate information/graphs

Materials required: A full set of climate graphs for the nearest available weather station. Make sufficient copies to ensure that you are able to leave one for each of the farmers.

Why is it useful for farmers to understand the historical climate information for their location?

Historical climate information is useful for farmers as it enables them to better understand their local climate and therefore make more informed decisions about their crop, livestock and livelihood options.

Preparation

- Provide appropriate climate graphs for the location in which you work. Ensure you understand them and think about the questions that farmers may have.
- Introduce the concept of historical climate information and, if necessary, how it is collected.
- Explain how this information can be useful in informing farmers' crops, livestock and livelihood decisions.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Begin by passing around the graph that shows total seasonal rainfall.**

▶ STEP 2. **Explain that the horizontal line displays the years and that the vertical line shows the total amount of rainfall that fell in the rainy season each year.** To help explain this and check that farmers understand, it is helpful to ask farmers questions.

Example questions to check understanding of the graphs:

- What year had a drought?
- What year had heavy rainfalls?
- How much rain was there in X year?

▶ STEP 3. **Explore the data with the farmers by asking questions.** You should establish whether or not: the data shows that things are different in the last few years compared to 30/40/50 years ago? (i.e. are there any trends?); the data shows that, from year-to-year, the changes are bigger (or smaller) than they were 30/40/50 years ago? (i.e. has the variability increased, decreased or stayed the same?)

Example questions to explore data:

- Does the graph show that there is *more* rainfall recently than there was 30/40/50 years ago?
- Does the graph show that there is *less* rainfall than there was 30/40/50 years ago?

- Does the graph show that, from year to year, the amount of rainfall varies/changes *more recently* than it did 30/40/50 years ago?
- Does the graph show that, from year to year, the amount of rainfall varies/changes *less recently* than it did 30/40/50 years ago?

▶ STEP 4. **How does this information compare with the farmers' perceptions of the weather and climate in the area over the past 30 years or more?**

Example questions to compare perceptions and past climate:

- Do you think weather and climate have changed in the last 30 years or more?
- If so, how do you think it has changed?
- Do you think rainfall is higher, lower, or the same?

▶ STEP 5. **When you've finished discussing the graph on seasonal rainfall you should share and explore each of the following graphs with farmers:**

- Season start date
- Season end date
- Season length
- Temperature
- Number of dry spells
- Lengths of longest dry spell
- Timing of dry spells
- Extreme rainfall events
- Any other graphs you have been supplied with for your location If there is not enough time to discuss each of the graphs then ask the farmers to select two or three of the graphs that they think will be the most useful for them to discuss.

▶ STEP 6. **Find a public place where all of the graphs can be displayed so that people can see and discuss them.**

Example questions for additional graphs:

- Do they show that things are different in the last few years when compared to 30/40/50 years ago (i.e., are there any new trends)?
- Do they show that, from year-to-year, the changes are bigger (or smaller) than they were 30/40/50 years ago (i.e., has the variability increased, decreased, or stayed the same)?
- Is this information useful and how could you use it for planning, choices and decisions?

Activity 2. Short-term forecasts and warnings

Materials required. For this activity, please have a handout explaining where short-term forecasts in the area come from and how they are communicated to farmers (this should be prepared by or with the National Meteorological Service) as well as a list of common terms used in short term forecasts and their explanation, translated into local languages.

If you are working in a location where forecasts and warnings can be sent by text to farmers, then you will also need to prepare a sheet to take the cell phone numbers and names of farmers who wish to sign up to receive this service.

What are short-term forecasts and warnings, and what can they be used for?

Short-term forecasts and warnings are produced by national and sometimes international meteorological organizations. These are normally for the next day or few days. Farmers can use these to make short-term decisions about their farming and livelihoods.

Preparation

- Make sure that you clearly understand and can explain exactly the meaning of each of the terms used in short-term forecasts and warnings.
- Prepare a list of terms used in local forecasts and warnings for each farmer.
- Prepare a handout explaining where short-term forecasts in the area come from and how they are communicated to farmers (this should be prepared by or with the National Met Service).
- If applicable, prepare a sheet to take the cell phone numbers and names of farmers who wish to sign up to receive this service if you are working in a location where forecasts and warnings can be sent by text to farmers. A template is provided at the end of this module.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Pass around the copies of the handout which shows where forecasts come from and how they can be received by farmers.**

▶ STEP 2. **Explain each of the pictures/diagrams in turn.**

▶ STEP 3. **In different countries short-term forecasts will have different content and can be presented in slightly different ways.** Using the activity sheet with examples developed for your location, explain to farmers:

- How often (when) the different forecasts are produced.
- What main aspects of the weather the forecasts cover.
- The past 'skill' of the forecasts (if this information is available).

▶ STEP 4. **Go through the terms that are used in local forecasts and warnings for your area and agree with farmers about what they each mean (including in their local language).** Note: there is likely to be information for each of the different ways of disseminating forecasts (e.g., radio, mobile phones etc.).

▶ STEP 5. **Provide each farmer with the list of terms to take home.**

Activity 3. Use of short-term forecasts and warnings

Materials required. For this step, farmers will need their "Seasonal Calendars," activity sheets providing the terms used in short-term forecasts and warnings, and a sheet giving example forecasts and warnings. The kinds of information and the terminology in the short-term weather forecast will differ from country to country and should be translated into local language/s. This sheet needs to be prepared by or with the National Meteorological Service.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Explain that the purpose of this exercise is to practice using short-term forecasts and warnings, and for farmers to identify how they might use actual forecasts during the season.** We don't know what the forecasts will be but practicing will help to improve preparedness by thinking about possible responses and learning from each other.

▶ STEP 2. **Pass around the copies of the sheet which gives example short-term forecasts and warnings.**

▶ STEP 3. **Ask farmers to have their Seasonal Calendars ready to look at.**

▶ STEP 4. **Ask farmers to imagine that it is now near the start of the season** (give a date, e.g. about one week before the season normally starts).

▶ STEP 5. **Read out the first example forecast.**

▶ STEP 6. **Ask the farmers to interpret the forecast** (discuss and agree what it means). Then ask farmers to individually think about:

- What effects, if any, could the forecast have on their farm? Consider each of the enterprises and main options they have, and any activities they have planned for the start of the season.
- What actions, if any, might they take in response to the forecast?

▶ STEP 7. **Ask farmers to share and discuss examples that they have come up with.** Note: Again, remember that different farmers may decide to do very different things, depending on their circumstances, farm, aims etc. In many cases farmers may decide not to make changes or adjustments.

▶ STEP 8. **Continue this exercise with the different examples of short-term forecasts and warnings**, by reading out each forecast/warning and then repeating steps 5 and 6.

Activity 4. Incorporate Local Forecasting

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Ask the farmers what local forecasting methods they use.**

▶ STEP 2. **Use this sample table for collecting farmer cell phone information to sign-up for sms climate alerts if applicable.**

Farmer name	Sex/Gender	Location	Livestock or crop farmer?	Mobile phone number

Final Considerations

Facilitator and participants should consider the following: based on activities conducted in this module, does it change how and when activities occur? Be sure to update the Seasonal Calendar, and overall FFBS calendar, to reflect any necessary changes.

4.6 Ergonomic Safety for Women

SEASON	Pre-season; to be used to increase awareness about an appropriate work environment
OBJECTIVE	To make sure women farmers and workers are safe, comfortable, and productive performing agricultural and livestock activities in the field
TIME REQUIRED	1–2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart, markers, pens
WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for both standing and sitting.

Background

In general, agricultural and livestock tools were designed and manufactured for men's uses. Tools height, size, and shape favor strength and male body type. Hence, most women might have difficulties manipulating, using, and operating conventional tools. However, in developing countries, women represent approximately 43 percent of agricultural labor.[1]

It is critical to take preventive measures to reduce pain or injury to the body, as well as adapt tools that are better suited for women.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Review with Participants the Ergonomics Meaning and Its Application.**

Working in agricultural or livestock tasks most of the time are done in a stooped position, subjecting to farm equipment vibration, carrying heavy weights in awkward positions, kneeling often, working with arms above shoulder level, or frequently moving hands and wrists.

Ergonomics is an applied science concerned with designing and taking into consideration the body's physical capabilities and limitations regarding work tasks, tools, and the job environment. It is important to define tasks, select tools and create a work environment for women that are ergonomically appropriate. Making small changes can reduce stress on the body that could result in injury, discomfort, long-term pain, and/or fatigue.

▶ STEP 2. **Discuss with Participants Risks Associated In Agricultural and Livestock Activities.**

Ask the participants why working in agriculture is difficult on the body.

Use an introductory exercise and organize the group into subgroups.

- Make a list of the type of farms the participants work in.
- Identify activities, and risks associated with that activity, especially for women.
- What are the type of tools women have and use? Are they the same tools as for men?
  - Why are the same tools for women and men problematic?
  - How could they be better (easier on the body, safer to use, etc.)?
- Are certain activities harder on the body?

1 CIGAR. 2021. Recognizing the Agricultural Efforts of Women. https://www.cgiar.org/news-events/news/cgiar-celebrates-international-womens-day-2021/

- Are there certain pressures that result in risks? Use the information below to stimulate conversation and discussion.

  In general, farm workers are paid by unit rate, they must keep up a rapid, sustained speed and maintain attention to detail. Some farm activities are performed during certain seasons and respond to the market's demand for a specific schedule of delivering products. It means there is no waiting time. Most agricultural and livestock products are perishable and to keep their quality and expand their shelf life need to be handled, classified, packed, and stored in a short period. Some activities required to be performed alone, working under long hours with occupational exposure to livestock, zoonosis, falls, machinery vibration, dust exposure, and wearing hats and personal protective equipment.

▶ STEP 3. Identify Potential Consequences of Working in an Unergonomic Environment.

Discuss with participants the most common side effects of working in an unergonomic environment. Use the information provided to facilitate the discussion. Also, use examples that were mentioned by participants in ▶ STEP 1.

Work-related disorders may be a consequence of working in a physically stressed position such as forceful gripping, kneeling, lifting, squatting, bending, twisting, and exposure to vibrating equipment. These injuries affect muscles, nerves, and ligaments. These are the leading causes of injuries and illnesses for agricultural workers.

▶ STEP 4. Select Basic Methods for Reducing Stress to the Body.

Use the list of methods provided below to identify methods to reduce stress when working in a farm environment. Discuss the list with participants and determine which strategies can be used. Encourage participants to use simple changes that can make a big difference.

Focus on Prevention Strategies:[2]

- Carry heavy objects, close to the body rather than with arms stretched out.
- Bend the knees, lift with leg muscles and keep the head in a neutral position.
- Avoid locking knees.
- Avoid prolonged kneeling because that causes occupational injuries during harvesting, transplanting, or weeding.
- Alternate activities with repeated movements, such as harvesting or weeding, with a low-repetition task.
- Promote different types of work movement, changing from sitting, standing, and walking and back again.
- Take stretch breaks.

Utilize appropriate tools and safety measures:

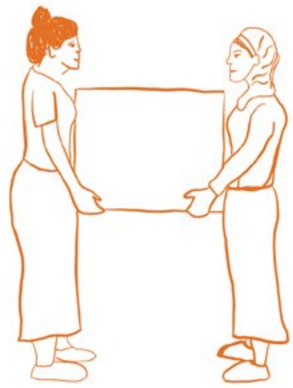
- Identify, modify or design tools using ergonomics principles.
  - Work with local agriculture experts to identify drudgery reducing tools and technologies, such as improved hand tools and farm implements that are more appropriate for women.
- When tools require force, handle size should allow gripping all the way around the handle, and cover handlers with smooth, slip-resistant material.
- Implement ergonomic changes in agricultural and livestock operations along with worker safety training.
- Never place needed tools above shoulder height.
- Make sure tools and often-used items are reachable within the length of the worker's arm.
- In a standing workstation, use floor mats and adequate station height.
- Use appropriate protective equipment that meets the ergonomic needs of women during spraying, harvesting, working with animals, lifting and handling.
- Keep bags or boxes weight below 50 lbs (23 Kgs) and lift between hand level and shoulder level.

These methods help to prevent injuries, reduce force, and improve efficiency (less repetition).

2 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2001. Simple Solutions: Ergonomics for Farm Workers. https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2001-111/pdfs/2001-111.pdf?id=10.26616/NIOSHPUB2001111

Lifting Do's and Don'ts[3]

Do
Lift as a team



Do lift bulky or heavy loads as a team. Doing so is smart and the safe way to work.

Do
Turn with legs

Do move your legs and feet when turning or lowering the load. Avoid twisting at the waist.

Do
Use your legs

Do lift the load using your powerful legs and buttocks muscles. Your feet should be wide apart, head and back upright. Keep abdominal muscles tight and the load close.

Do
Use equipment

Do use equipment like hand trucks, dolly's or wheelbarrows to do the heavy lifting. Its much less work with less risk of injury.

Don't
Lift bulky loads alone

Don't lift bulky or heavy loads alone. Doing so puts great stress on your low back muscles and spine.

Don't
Twist when lifting

Don't twist when lifting, lowering, or carrying any load as this increases your risk of back injury.

Don't
Use your back

Don't lift the load wiht your rear end high and your head low. Use you leg muscles, not your weaker low back muscles.

Don't
Lift heavy loads

Don't lift heavy loads when you can use equipment. It is less work and less stress on your low back..

3 Adapted from: Farm Safety, Nova Scotia. 2020. Ergonomic Safety for Farm Women Webinar Summary. https://farmsafetyns.ca/ergonomic-safety-for-farm-women-webinar-summary/

STEP 5. **Conduct Final Collective Reflection.**

Bring back subgroups into the main group and discuss group findings together.

Allow each sub-group to present their findings related to ergonomics, and give each group 5–10 minutes to present, and do a final reflection.

Idea: Create an Action Plan! Write down the commitment participants will make to improve ergonomics! Regularly check in with participants to see if they have followed through! Ask how the changes feel.

4.7 Compost Preparation

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To encourage use of locally available materials to prepare organic compost that is economically and environmentally sound, and in line with the FFBS approach to sustainable agriculture
TIME REQUIRED	2–3 hours, in addition to regular maintenance
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Shovel, forked hoe, materials to compost, garden hose/buckets for water, finished compost or high-quality garden soil
WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit for lessons, and outdoor location that will be suitable for a long-term compost pit or pile

Background

By learning about the benefits of compost as well as how to construct and maintain a compost pile, FFBS participants will be able to transform their household waste into material that improves their crops. Familiarize participants with the definition and benefits of composting. Determine which local resources are available to create the compost, and which composting method to experiment with.

Steps to follow for the activity

▸ STEP 1. **Discuss with participants the importance of composting.**

Share with participants the following definition:

- Composting is the decomposition, or "rotting," of organic matter by microorganisms. The process of recycling and managing the right amounts of organic matter can create a valuable soil amendment that has endless benefits for soil and plants.

Share the many benefits of using compost. Compost is an environmentally friendly and cost-effective method of creating a high-quality soil amendment that:[4]

- improves soil health and adds beneficial soil microorganisms
- provides plants nutrients, such as nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P), and potassium (K)
- improves plant growth and increases crop yields
- helps the soil to retain moisture and improves water infiltration
- helps prevent soil erosion and nutrient run-off
- mitigates climate change through reductions in carbon emissions from fertilizer production
- reduces food waste by recycling food scraps
- reduces the need for chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or other inputs (which has many environmental and health benefits and can also help to save money!)

▶ STEP 2. **Prepare to compost.**

Compost is prepared by managing 4 main basic elements: water, oxygen (air), nitrogen ("green" organic matter such as food scraps and coffee grounds), and carbon ("brown" organic matter such as dead leaves and straw). A large and complex community of microorganisms then feeds on the inputs that create the valuable compost.[5]

Review the following chart with participants and use as a reference. Determine what is available for the compost. Consider how to make the chart visible for participants, even including drawings of what locally available materials can and cannot be composted.[6]

YES for compost

Nitrogen "Green" Organic Matter	Carbon "Brown" Organic Matter
· vegetable & fruit scraps · green garden waste · eggshells · tea bags and loose tea leaves · coffee grounds · grass clippings · animal manures (from grass, grain and hay eaters, such as cow, horse, chicken, sheep, goat, rabbit)	· fallen, dried leaves · woody matter (bark, twigs and branches, wood chips) · shredded cardboard · shredded paper · paper bags · corn stalks · sunflower stalks

NO for compost

· plastic · metal · Styrofoam · glass · breads and grains	· pet waste · diseased plants · weeds (that have gone to seed) · meats, fish, fish bones · dairy	· oils (and oily products) and grease · fats (and fatty products) · grass clippings that have pesticides on them · wood that has been treated · dog or cat manure

4 UC Santa Cruz, Center for Agroecology. 2023. Teaching Organic Farming and Gardening, Making and Using Compost.

5 Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC). 2020. Composting 101. https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-101#whatis

6 Rodale Institute. 2023. Backyard Composting Basics. https://rodaleinstitute.org/education/resources/backyard-composting-basics/

STEP 3. **Choose the Location**

Choose the location depending on the environment you live in. If you live in a rainy climate, avoid placing the compost in a place with poor drainage where the compost could become too soggy. If you live in a sunny place, try to put the compost in a shady place, or out of direct sunlight, so the compost does not become too dry.

Clear a corner by a fence or near the end of the farm for the compost. It should be close to a water source and easy to reach (to throw away household waste, and easy to add other Carbon "Brown" Organic Matter, and Nitrogen "Green" Organic Matter).

STEP 4. **Collect Composting Materials.**

Composting can happen throughout the year. However, depending on a number of factors, compost can be ready at different times, anywhere from 4 weeks to 4 months or longer.

- For the FFBS cycle, it's best to begin the process at least 3–4 months before the finished compost is needed for the growing season. This will give plenty of time to prepare the compost.
- Begin collecting items early and as often as possible. Be sure to keep "green" matter and "brown" matter separate until determining the composting technique below that will be used.
- Small matter breaks down faster than larger matter. Large pieces can be chopped into smaller pieces to help decompose more quickly.
- Discuss how items will be regularly collected and added.

STEP 5. **Choose the Technique.**

There are many composting techniques. This module will highlight simple, cost-effective techniques that do not require many additional resources.

Discuss each of the following methods with FFBS participants and decide together which technique is preferred. Emphasize to participants that h*ow fast the finished compost is ready depends on how regularly the compost is maintained*.

An example of a compost pile.

Compost Pile (Open Pile)

This is a very simple and affordable method. This technique is simply on the ground.

- Clear the space of all weeds and grass.
- The pile should be at least 1 meter high, 1 meter wide, and 1 meter long (3 feet high, 3 feet wide, and 3 feet long). The pile can be larger if it's possible to maintain, such as 1.5 meters high, 1.5 meters wide, 1.5 meters long (5 feet high, 5 feet wide, and 5 feet long).
- Dig out 6 inches (15 centimeters). This step can improve drainage during periods of heavy rains.
- Start by layering at least 4 inches (15 centimeters) of large and dry vegetation such as small tree branches and twigs, as this will help with aeration and additional drainage.
- Add 4 inches (10 centimeters) of Carbon "Brown" Organic Matter.
- Add 2 inches (5 centimeters) of Nitrogen "Green" Organic Matter.
- Bury the Nitrogen "Green" Organic Matter with 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) of healthy garden soil.

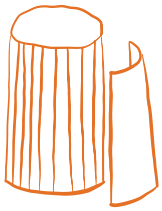
Tips:

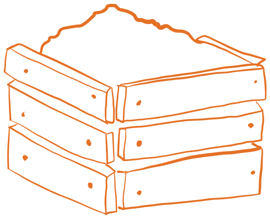
- *Water each layer.*
- *During the rainy season, make sure the top of the compost pile is rounded (or the pile is in a triangle shape), to help excess water run off the pile.*
- *Cover the pile with a tarp or similar material during heavy rains or winds.*

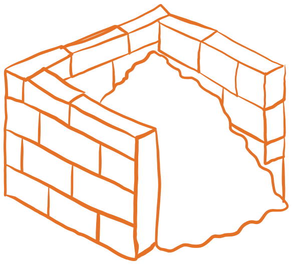
Container Composting

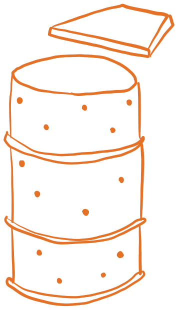
This method is similar to the Compost Pile method. The difference is the compost is created and maintained in a container. Many different types of structures work well for Container Composting.[7] Advantages of using this method include keeping out excessive water and keeping the compost insulated to help materials break down faster. This method also helps the pile to stay orderly. The disadvantages are the additional materials and cost.

- Structures could be made of chicken wire, wood, or other local resources.


Chicken Wire


Wood panels


Brick


Drum

Pit Composting

This is an underground method that some find to be a tidy method, as materials are out of site.

- Materials should be small or chopped up with this method, as there is less air.
- Prepare 3 pits of 1 meter deep, 1 meter wide, and 1 meter long (3 feet deep, 3 feet wide, and 3 feet long). The length of the pit can be increased according to the space available and your compost requirement.
- In the first pit, layer Carbon "Brown" Organic Matter and Nitrogen "Green" Organic Matter until the materials are level with the ground.
- Water each layer.
- After 4 weeks, turn the materials from the first pit into the second pit.

7 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2015. Farmer's Compost Handbook. Experiences in Latin America. https://www.fao.org/3/i3388e/i3388e.pdf

- Continue adding layers to the first pit.
- After 4 weeks, turn the materials from the second pit into the third pit.
- Turn the materials from the first pit into the second pit.
- At this point, all pits should be full!
- After 12 weeks, the third pit should be finished compost.

Continue Rotation for a Continuous Supply of Compost!

- *Continue rotating the materials from pit to pit.*
- *If this rotation is followed, there will be a fresh supply of finished compost each month!*

▶ STEP 6. Maintain the Compost.

Discuss who is responsible for maintaining the compost. Add the tasks to the Seasonal Calendar, as well as the FFBS Calendar.

Continue to add Carbon "Brown" Organic Matter and Nitrogen "Green" Organic Matter.

- *While there are different methods for adding materials, a good rule of thumb is adding 2–3 times more volume Carbon Brown Matter to the volume of Nitrogen Green Matter.*
- *Try to make sure that food scraps are buried by brown materials. This will help to keep rodents and pests away!*

Turn the compost regularly to ensure it is aerated with a shovel or forked hoe every 1–2 weeks.

- *Turn the pile from the inside out! Move the materials from the inside to the outside. Move materials on the outside of the pile into the center.*

Sprinkle a shovel or so of finished compost (in subsequent seasons) or healthy garden soil over the compost to add live microorganisms.

Moisten the compost periodically with water, as needed.

▶ STEP 7. Monitor the Compost.

Check the temperature! Natural decomposition does the work of transforming the materials, heating the pile to between 120–140 degrees Fahrenheit (49–60 degrees Celsius) in a short matter of time. The middle of the pile should be HOT!

- *If manure is being used, please use a thermometer (see tips below).*
- *If manure is not being used, drive a long stick into the middle of the pile. If it is hot, the process is going well and working. If it is not hot, more maintenance is required (perhaps adding more water if the pile is too dry).*

Check the moisture content! The pile should be moist (but not too wet!). Use your hands to feel the compost. A good way to determine is that the compost should feel like a damp sponge.

Check for signs that the compost is finished (between 3 weeks to 16 weeks, but longer if you are using manure).

- *Your compost is ready to use when all the materials turn into clean-smelling, crumbly, earth-like brown substance. There should not be any recognizable materials.*

▶ STEP 8. Using Finished Compost.

It's time to use the finished compost to enrich the soil!

It is recommended to add and mix compost directly to the soil when preparing beds (or growing areas) before planting. However, there are many other ways to use finished compost, from bed preparation to crop management during the growing cycle, and after the planting cycle to cover the soil.

Amounts/rates of application will vary depending on soil health. It is advised to work with local experts, such as local agricultural extension offices and agricultural specialists, research institutes, and more.

Share the following chart with participants, which includes basic guidelines on how finished compost could be used.

Using Finished Compost	
Purpose	**Recommendations on What to Do**
Soil Amendment	Work/mix 1–2 inches of compost into the top 3–5 inches of soil
Vegetables	· At the end of each growing cycle, add a layer of compost (1–3 inches, but any amount is helpful if it is evenly distributed) on top of the bed. Mix into the soil at the start of the next growing cycle. · When planting seeds, create a furrow and add compost to the furrow before covering with soil · When planting seedlings/plants, put a handful of compost into the hole and gently mix as you cover the plant · As plants grow, add compost around the base of the plant. This can be as little as one-half inch or less. Just be sure that the compost is "finished" (meaning it has properly matured). In this method, it is best to avoid using compost with high levels of animal manure to make sure compost does not burn plants.
Trees, including fruit trees, and shrubs	· Apply compost as mulch by adding up to 2 inches of compost out to the drip line (or the outermost leaves of a tree). Do NOT place compost directly against the bark.
Perennial Plants	· Spread 1–2 inches of compost around perennial plants before or after the planting cycle to improve drought resistance and increase nutrients

Using Animal Manures Safely

It is important to share the benefits as well as the risks of using animal manure with participants.

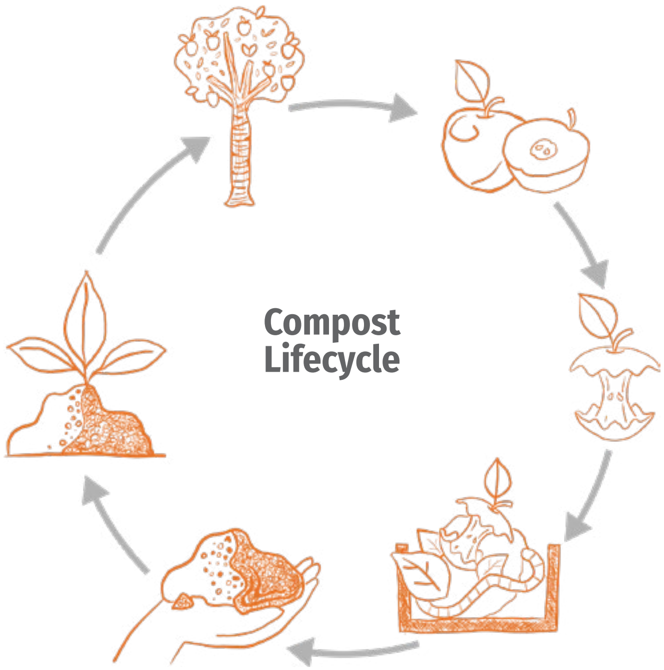
Animal manure is an excellent way to add nutrients to the soil. However, it is important to understand the risks involved, as well as how to use animal manure safely. The facilitator should raise awareness to participants on the following risks, challenges, and potential solutions.

- *Risks: animal manures contain pathogens that are harmful to humans. If pathogens contaminate the soil, it can be harmful when people consume foods that came from the contaminated soil.*
- *Solution: when animal manure is used in compost, the compost must reach a high temperature between 131–140 degrees Fahrenheit (55–50 degrees Celsius). The temperatures must remain this high for several consecutive weeks.*
- *The best way to reduce risk is to utilize a long-stemmed thermometer to take temperatures from the middle of the compost.*

Compost Troubleshooting

Use this table as a reference when experiencing in challenges during composting.[8]

Problem	Solution
Bad Odors	Add more browns and turn the pile
Not Heating Up	Add greens or larger amounts of browns and greens
Too Dry	Add greens or water
Too Wet	Add browns or decrease greens
Flies	Bury any exposed food scraps under browns or composting materials
Animals, Rodents	Bury any exposed food scraps under browns or composting materials



8 National Center for Appropriate Technology, Appropriate Technology Transfer (ATTRA) Sustainable Agriculture. Composting: The Basics. https://attra.ncat.org/publication/composting-the-basics/

4.8 Crop Diversification

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	Raise awareness about the importance and benefits of crop diversification
TIME REQUIRED	1 Hour
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart paper and marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space for all participants to sit

Background

This session is important in raising awareness about the importance and benefits of crop diversification. Strengthening understanding can increase interest to diversify, which can support FFBS participants in many ways. Familiarize participants with the definition and benefits of crop diversification, then lead the discussion that follows.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 1.** **Ask participants: "What is crop diversification?"** Give an opportunity for members to add their thoughts on what it is.

Then share, "Crop diversification simply means growing more than one crop in a farm, field, or growing area. Diversification can happen by growing a new crop, adding more high-value crops, or by integrating animals (livestock, fisheries, bees). Crop diversification could also mean growing a mix of traditional crops and new ones."

Use the below table to detail the benefits of crop diversification and how it is one of the most effective methods to create resilience:[9]

BENEFITS OF CROP DIVERSIFICATION	
Climate Resilience	· Healthy and diverse ecosystems are more stable, and can better absorb and recover from shocks and stressors, such as extreme weather events and long term climate change
Environmental	· Reduce pests and diseases, improve soil structure, conserve moisture and increase overall water security · Increase beneficial pollinator populations and protect and enhance biodiversity
Economic	· Reduce economic risks involved with only growing one or few crops (example, if one crop does not perform well one year, home consumption and market opportunities can still exist with others; or helps to protect against commodity price fluctuations) · Expand market potential, increase access to niche markets, help to create new or expanded enterprises · Improve income
Nutrition	· Increase the availability and diversity of nutritious foods to meet household consumption needs (especially for women, children, and adolescents), as well as for livestock
Gender	· Contributes to transformation of gender roles (including opportunities and decision-making) when crops are chosen carefully, that allow for more inclusive participation (such as crops that are not typically considered to be male dominated)

9 University of Nevada, Reno. Crop Diversification. https://extension.unr.edu/publication.aspx?PubID=3816

STEP 2. Discuss how crop diversification could easily be incorporated on the farm or home garden.

Use the questions and template below to guide discussion. Adjust as appropriate for your group. Be sure to record responses, as this will help with the next module.

CROP DIVERSIFICATION	
Can you think of other benefits that could come from crop diversification?	
Can you share your own experiences with crop diversification? Are you already growing multiple crops?	
What are the barriers to trying new crops?	
What different types of vegetables, grains, or fruits are readily available to plant?	
What crops already grow well? What are the factors that make them grow well or restrict growth	
What traditional crops are most desired?	
Are there new crops or varieties that you have recently grown? How did they perform? How many times have you grown them? How did they taste?	
What new crops or varieties do you know about that are interesting to try growing to eat at home?	
What crops were identified to grow from the Market Assessment?	
What crops will be grown?	
For home consumption and nutrition needs?	
For Market?	

4.9 Crop Rotation

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	This session helps to understand the basics of crop rotations, as well as supports FFBS participants in determining what will be planted where
TIME REQUIRED	2 Hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart paper and marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space for all participants to sit

Background

Crop rotation, in simple terms, simply means changing the planting location of crops, on the same plot of land, each farming season or planting cycle.

Every crop is part of a plant family. Crops in the same family have similar nutrient requirements, which means if the same family is planted, the same nutrients are taken from the soil. Also, plants in the same family are vulnerable to similar insect pests and diseases.[10] When crops are planted in the same exact place over and over, insects and diseases have a reliable place to thrive. Over time, insects and diseases increase in that location, and become very hard to control. Often strong fertilizers are used, which can be harmful, expensive, and possibly lead to greater problems. Crop rotations can help!

Crop rotations can return nutrients to the soil and help with nitrogen fixing (thus contributing to climate change resilience). Crop rotations can also disrupt pests and disease cycles, which help to reduce insect pests and diseases without the use of synthetic fertilizers. Crop rotations can also improve soil health![11]

Understanding a few basic principles can help to plan for successful crop rotations. Using these principles can be very beneficial on all sizes of land, from a small-scale demonstration plot to a homestead garden, to farms of all sizes.

Many recommendations say, if possible, rotate crops so crops are only in the same location once out of every 3–4 planting cycles.

Be sure to discuss the definition and benefits of crop rotations with participants before beginning the activity.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Help participants understand Plant Characteristics.**

Use the tables below as references to create a crop rotation plan with participants.

Tell them that "Understanding these basic principles can strengthen knowledge and improve plant health and productivity."

Note: *For this session, use local experts for special discussions, especially when introducing new crops or varieties.*

10 California State University., Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems. 2023. Crop Rotation. https://www.csuchico.edu/regenerativeagriculture/ra101-section/crop-rotation.shtml

11 Rodale Institute. 2023. Crop Rotations. https://rodaleinstitute.org/why-organic/organic-farming-practices/crop-rotations/

Plant Family Classifications

Share the following points with participants:

- While crop rotation can range from very simple to very complex, ***the most important principle is NOT to plant a crop from the same family in the same location in the next planting cycle***.
- Simply grow your crops from the same family in a new area each planting cycle.
- As a first step, increase understanding about plant family classifications for common vegetables and crops grown around the world.

Use the below table to help guide discussion on what crops would be of most use to participants.[12] Be sure to customize the list with locally grown and/or traditional crops to the list to ensure this knowledge is more applicable to the farmers and community!

PLANT FAMILY CLASSIFICATIONS		
Plant Family (Common Name)	**Common Vegetables and Crops**	**Locally Grown/ Traditional Crops**
Bean, Legume and Pea Family	alfalfa, beans (bush beans, dry beans, green beans, lima beans, long beans), chickpeas (garbanzo bean), cowpeas (black-eyed beans), clovers, edamame, fava beans, lentils, peanut (groundnut), peas (peas, snap peas, garden peas), soybeans, vetches (hairy vetch)	
Carrot Family	carrot, celery, chervil, cilantro/coriander, dill, fennel, parsley, parsnip	
Cabbage and Mustard Family	arugula, bok choy (pak choi), broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, collard greens, horseradish, kale, kohlrabi, mustard greens, radish, rutabaga, turnip	
Cucumber and Squash Family	cucumber, gourds, melons, pumpkin, summer squash, watermelon, winter squash	
Goosefoot Family	beet, chard, spinach, sugar beets	
Grass Family	barley, corn/maize, oats, millet, rice, rye, sorghum, wheat, teff	
Knotweed Family	buckwheat, rhubarb	
Lily and Onion Family	garlic, leek, onion, shallot	
Mallow Family	okra	
Mint Family	basil, marjoram	
Nightshade Family	eggplant, pepper (bell and chili), potato, tomato, tomatillo	
Sunflower Family	chamomile, chicory, dandelion, endive, escarole, Jerusalem artichoke, lettuce, radicchio, tarragon, safflower, sunflower	

***Note:** perennial plants (meaning plants that come back each year without having to be replanted) have not been included in the list above, as they will often not move each year. This includes many vegetables (such as asparagus), fruit trees (such as apples), and herbs (such as mint, rosemary, thyme).

12 PennState Extension. 2023. Plant Rotation in the Garden Based on Plant Families. https://extension.psu.edu/plant-rotation-in-the-garden-based-on-plant-families

Nutrient Needs

Share the following points with participants:

- Another good strategy is to rotate crops with different nutrient needs.
- Alternate crops that are heavy feeders (which means crops that require a lot of nutrients) with crops that are light feeders (which means crops that require less nutrients).

Use the below table to discuss the differences in nutrient needs across crops and how this affects crops on participant farms.

Nutrient Needs	
Type of Crop Feeders	**Common Crop Examples**
Heavy Feeders	beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, collards, corn, cucumber, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, radish, parsley, pumpkin, squashes, spinach, tomatoes
Light Feeders	carrot, chard, garlic, leeks, onion, mustard, parsnip, rutabaga, pepper, shallot, turnip
Soil Builders (Nitrogen "Fixers")	crops in the Bean, Legume and Pea Family

Example: corn/maize requires a lot of nitrogen. Plant a soil builder crop from the Bean, Legume and Pea Family after corn!

Root Depth

Share the following points with participants:

- Another great practice to consider is to alternate crops that have different root lengths.
- Deeply rooted crops bring nutrients to the surface that shallow rooted crops can use the following planting cycle.
- There are variations in root depth for some varieties. But, use the following table as a general reference when experimenting.

Root Depth	
Shallow Rooted	broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, Chinese cabbage, corn, garlic, leeks, lettuce, onions, parsley, potatoes, radishes, spinach
Moderate Rooted	bush beans, beets, carrots, chard, cucumbers, eggplants, mustard, peas, peppers, pole beans, rutabagas, summer squash, turnips
Deep Rooted	alfalfa, artichokes, lima beans, parsnips, pumpkins, winter squash, sweet potatoes, potatoes, sunflower, tomatoes, watermelons

STEP 2. Consider Additional Strategies for Crop Rotations.

Land Fallowing

Share the following points with participants:

- Allow a location that has been planted to lay fallow (meaning, do not plant a crop) for one planting cycle. You can add compost (refer to the "Compost Preparation" module) or add a cover crop. While it can be very difficult to not plant in all available space, if this is possible, allowing land to lay fallow has many benefits, including improving soil health long-term.

Plan a Crop Rotation

Have Fun! Advocate for this step as a time for experimentation, creativity, and new ways of thinking! Also, this is a time to remind the FFBS participant that simple changes now can help with BIG and positive results immediately and in the long term. Remind them that there is no one right way! Even if there are only two crops being grown, creating a crop rotation plan is still beneficial, and will create something to build upon! Remind participants that the most important principle to NOT to plant a crop from the same family in the same location in the next planting cycle.

STEP 3. Group Plants together.

Retrieve your record from the "Crop Diversification" discussion. Fill in the table below based on that outcome of what crops will be grown for markets and/or home consumption. Be sure to use the references from the tables in Step 1.

Plant Family (Common Name)	What Crops Will Be Grown in the FFBS Demonstration Plot
Bean, Legume and Pea Family	
Carrot Family	
Cabbage and Mustard Family	
Cucumber and Squash Family	
Goosefoot Family	
Grass Family	
Knotweed Family	
Lily and Onion Family	
Mallow Family	
Mint Family	
Nightshade Family	
Sunflower Family	

STEP 4. Divide the Planting Location.

Take the following steps with participants:

- On a piece of paper, draw the planting area or areas that was determined in "Setting Up FFBS Demonstration Plots." Maybe it is a simple square or rectangle to represent one plot. Maybe it is multiple shapes to represent multiple plots.
- Divide the demonstration plot into beds, or different sections, of similar sizes. Name each bed or section with a number, letter or symbol.
- Based on the crop rotation principles, decide which family of crops will be in each bed. Write it inside the bed, or sections, that were drawn.
- Decide the length/time of the crop rotation. This will be based on the number of beds, or sections, that were created.

For example, a 2-Year Crop Rotation (or 2-Planting Cycle Rotation) needs 2 beds. A 3-Year Crop Rotation (or 3-Planting Cycle) needs 3 beds.

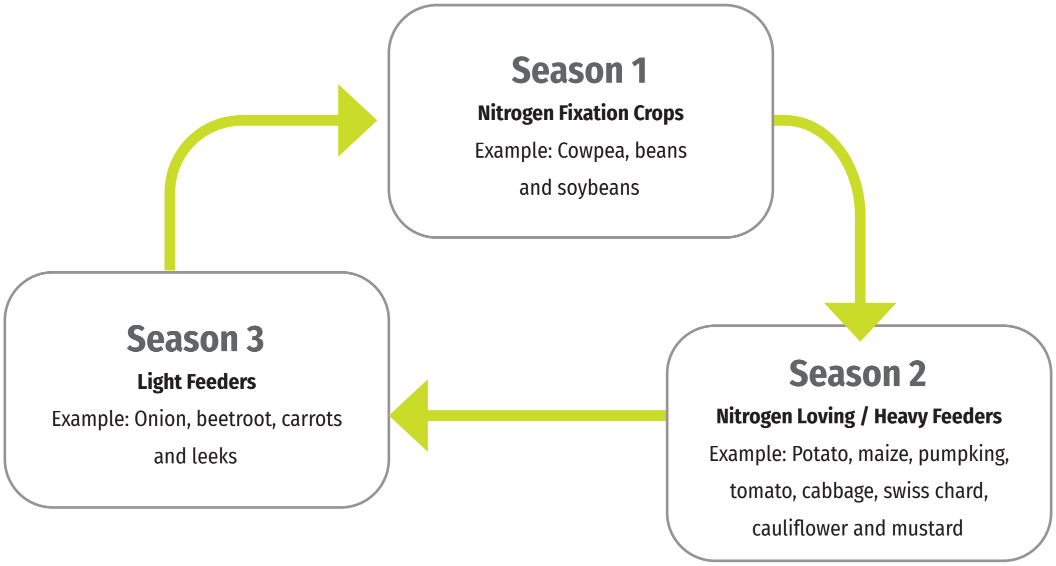
Tip: *more than 1 crop can be grown in the same bed! To keep it simple, grow crops in the same family in one bed. However, to make it more diverse, use techniques (such as techniques found in the "Intercropping and Companion Planting" module) that further confuse insect pests and help build even healthier soils and more productive plants!*

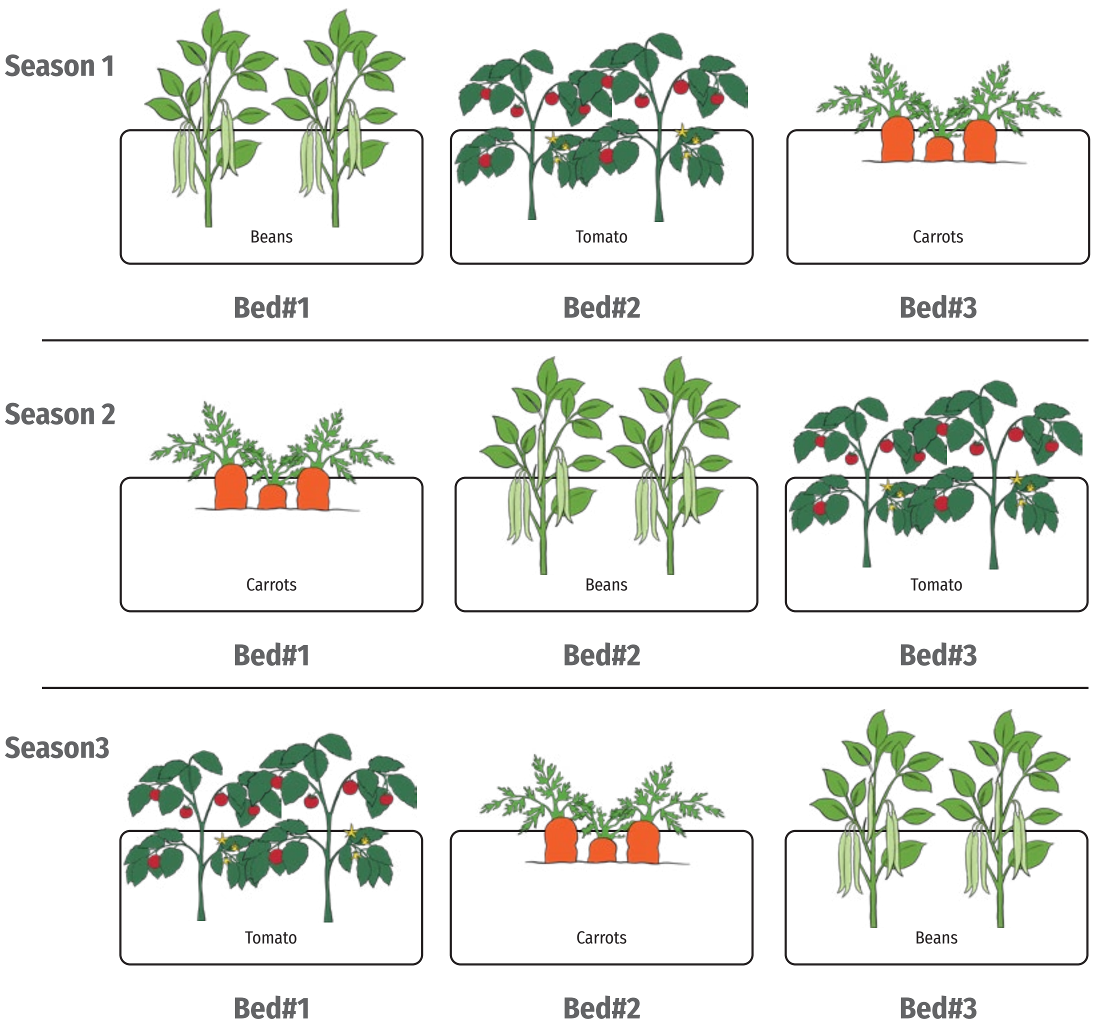
Remember: participants have different knowledge and skills to build on. Discuss the best plan for them! If it's possible, be sure to invite local experts to planning conversations to get more advice!

- Set up the rotation. Move crops in a rotational cycle each planting season.

Simple Crop Rotation Examples

Example 3-Year (or 3-Planting Cycle) Crop Rotation Using Principles[13 14]





13 https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Three-season-crop-rotation-which-can-insure-food-availability-all-year-around-with-soil_fig1_324220633

14 University of Florida, IFAS Extension. 2019. Planning the Garden: Crop Rotation. https://nwdistrict.ifas.ufl.edu/hort/2019/03/26/planning-the-garden-crop-rotation/

STEP 5. Tell participants to design their Own Crop Rotation.

Below is a simple way to think about how to design a crop rotation (add more or less beds, and adjust the number of years accordingly, depending on the exact situation). Simply take a piece of paper, color code, and fill in the crops in each bed for Year 1, and then put them in the next space for each year after.

This exercise can be conducted and applied towards the FFBS demonstration plot if there is more than one growing cycle; however, this is also a great educational exercise to conduct regardless, so that participants may learn the principles to apply to their own farms or kichen gardens.

YEAR 1		
Crop 1	Crop 2	Crop 3
Bed 1	**Bed 2**	**Bed 3**

YEAR 2		
Crop 3	Crop 1	Crop 2
Bed 1	**Bed 2**	**Bed 3**

YEAR 3		
Crop 2	Crop 3	Crop 1
Bed 1	**Bed 2**	**Bed 3**

A Note on Record Keeping

Keeping a record of the Crop Rotation plan, and what was actually planted each growing cycle in a specific location, is critical! Constantly encourage the development of strong record keeping skills and habits!

4.10 Intercropping and Companion Planting

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	This session helps to understand the basics of intercropping and companion planting and helps participants to apply methods
TIME REQUIRED	2 Hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart paper and marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space for all participants to sit

Background

Intercropping (sometimes referred to as "interplanting") is growing two or more crops in close proximity.[15] There are many forms of intercropping, including companion planting. Companion planting is often an excellent "push-pull" strategy used for pest control, pollination and more! An example of a push-pull strategy that works is by utilizing plants that deter (or push) pests from food crops by using less key crops to attract (or pull) pests to locations where beneficial insects can prey on them.

This section will focus on simple techniques that can help to maximize resources (such as water, light, and nutrients), and allow a larger amount of crops to be grown on a smaller amount of land. Additionally, using various techniques can be an effective (and preventative!) method to pest management!

Note: *Intercropping and companion planting will help to add more crops into the crop rotation, using simple principles, which could increase crop diversification and nutrition benefits, as well as gender considerations in crop choices.*

- This session can be used for FFBS participants that wish to plant various crops.
- Also, this can be used for more advanced groups that wish to expand upon existing demonstration plots and their crop rotation plans.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss with FFBS participants various methods for intercropping and companion planting and determine different types of plants per category to experiment with.**

Share with participants how the following methods maximize space, and offer additional benefits:[16]

Fast Growing Crops and Slowing Growing Crops

Plant fast growing crops with slow growing crops. While the slow growing crops are developing, fast growing crops can already develop and provide a source of income and food. Additionally, the fast-growing crops will help to serve as a living mulch, which will increase soil moisture and suppress weeds. Examples include:

- Plant fast growing crops, like lettuce or spinach, in between slowing growing crops like carrots.
- Plant beans (especially short varieties) in between tomatoes and peppers.
    - o Ask participants to list **fast** growing crops
    - o Ask participants to list **slow** growing crops

15 SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education). Guidelines for Intercropping. https://www.sare.org/publications/crop-rotation-on-organic-farms/guidelines-for-intercropping/

16 John Jeavons. 1991. How to Grow More Vegetables..

Important: *Remember that crop cycles and lengths to crop maturity vary according to weather and climate. It is important to be aware of possible threats to early maturing crops.*

Sun-Loving Crops and Partial-Shade Tolerant Crops

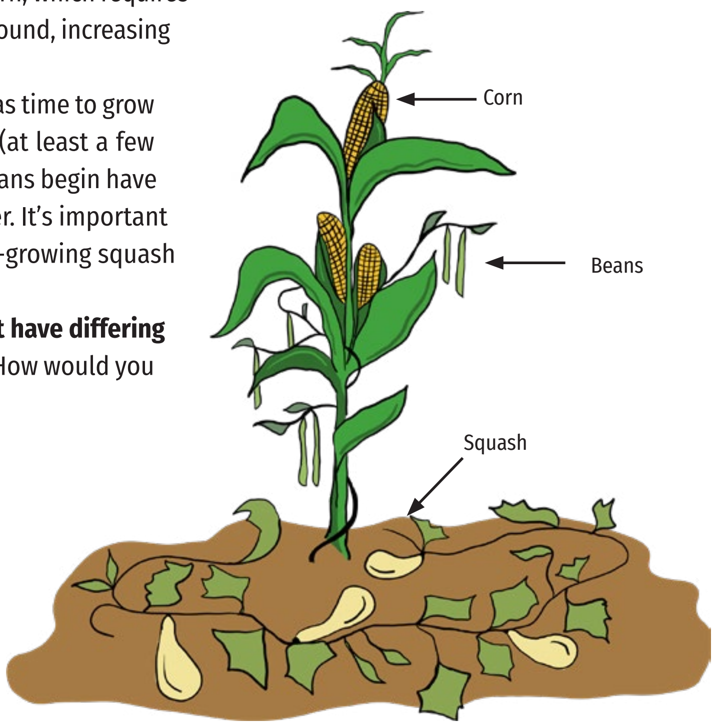
Plant crops that thrive in warm, bright conditions with crops that can tolerate or prefer partial shade. Also, consider planting shade-loving crops under trees and shrubs (or consider planting new trees and shurbs that can also contribute to climate adaptation efforts):

- A great example is planting corn and beets!
  - Ask participants to list **sun-loving** crops
  - Ask participants to list **partial-shade tolerant** crops
  - Ask participants to consider how to use existing trees and shrubs? What about planting new trees and shurbs?

Crops of Differing Heights

Consider how crops of differing heights can be used to support one another, and reduce the need for external resources, such as stakes or trellising materials.

- A great example is the **"Three Sisters" planting method**, a centuries old method attributed to Native American tribes, which consists of planting corn, climbing beans, and squash together. In this method, the corn supports the pole beans. The beans add nitrogen to the soil for the corn, which requires a lot of nutrients. The squash spreads across the ground, increasing soil moisture and suppressing weeds.
  To experiment: Corn should be planted first so it has time to grow above the other crops. When the corn has grown (at least a few inches or more), then plant the beans. Once the beans begin have started to emerge, plant the squash 1–2 weeks later. It's important corn and beans have time to establish before fast-growing squash is planted.
- Ask participants: **What crops are being grown that have differing heights**? Can you think of other examples to test? How would you consider timing the plantings?



The three sisters planting method

Companions Plants, Allies and Enemies

Research shows that some plants support each other better than others. Here are some beneficial combinations, as well as combinations to avoid. Use the reference, listed in the Annex section on page 225. Work with farmers and experts to add local and traditional plants, as well, at the bottom of the table provided.

Ask participants:

- What are the known plant companions, allies, and enemies?

Photos illustrating intercropping and companion planting at different stages:




Ask participants:

- Are there other methods of intercropping and companion planting that participants use?
- What are traditional practices that have been passed down from generation to generation?

▶ STEP 2. **Plan for Intercropping and Companion Planting.**

Grab your exercises from the "Crop Rotation" exercise, with your filled in table of "What Crops Will Be Grown?" Now consider:

- Are there any intercropping and/or companion planting techniques to test in order to maximize benefits, such as space and productivity, soil health, and pest management?
- Are there traditional techniques that were mentioned in the discussion that could be tested in addition to new ideas?
- Now, list which methods that participants would like to try. Be sure to add this into the "Crop Rotation" plan that was created.

Plant Family (Common Name)	What Crops Will Be Grown?	Intercropping and Companion Planting Techniques to Test
Bean, Legume and Pea Family		
Carrot Family		
Cabbage and Mustard Family		
Cucumber and Squash Family		
Goosefoot Family		
Grass Family		
Knotweed Family		
Lily and Onion Family		
Mallow Family		
Mint Family		
Nightshade Family		
Sunflower Family		

4.11 Resilient Seeds and Germination Tests

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To make best decisions towards building a diverse, resilient seed system; to verify the quality of the available seed and determine its viability to improve chances for good crop establishment
TIME REQUIRED	2 Hours + observational time for germination tests
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip Charts, Markers/Pens, Containers/Paper towels, Seed, Water/Spray Bottle, Calculator
WORKSPACE	Lessons: Enough space for all participants to sit Germination Test: seed bed, or appropriate spot for seeds in paper towel test

Background

High-quality and culturally desired seeds are critical components in sustainable agriculture. Participants will make decisions on seeds based on a number of important reasons. When choosing seeds for FFBS, consider a few strategies that could help to build a strong local and diverse seed system:[17]

- Choose locally- and regionally-adapted seeds, including farmers' own seeds
- Mix traditional varieties with improved varieties
- Choose a mix of seed types, when possible, such as open-pollinated, heirloom, hybrid
- Consider seeds that are uncoated, and are fungicide-free and neonicotinoid-free (which can be harmful to important pollinators, including honeybees and native, wild bees)
- Select seeds that are resistant to local pests and/or are drought tolerant
- Support farmers to recognize certified seeds if they chose/wish to buy those seeds
- Host local experts to teach on saving, conserving, storing, and sharing local varieties

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss with participants.**

- Are there ideas for how to add more diverse seeds to the FFBS demonstration plots?

▶ STEP 2. **Share with participants how the germination test improves seed quality.**

Share with participants: The germination test allows the farmers to check whether their seed is of sufficient quality for sowing and whether they are adequately prepared for the cropping season. The germination test can also be used to test the quality of several different planting areas, different varieties of a crop, and different seed treatments, as well as evaluate seed storage conditions. The germination test also allows farmers to purchase varieties in smaller quantities, allowing them to test the quality first before buying a larger amount.

There are two methods to test. The first method can be conducted in a seedbed. The second method can be conducted indoors. The indoor method may be most appropriate if smaller quantities of seed are available and/or if participants are interested, but hesitant, of trying a new variety.

17 Seed and Knowledge Initiative (SKI). 2022. Diverse, Farmer-led Seed Systems. https://www.seedandknowledge.org/diverse-farmer-led-seed-systems/

▶ **STEP 3. Decide in advance with participants which method to test.** Also, if there are multiple seed varieties to test, experiment with both methods.

▶ **STEP 4. Determine how many seeds to test.** The more seeds available to include in a germination test, the greater the accuracy will be in results. However, farmers do not always have large quantities to spare. When possible, **test the germination of 100 seeds.** But tests can also be conducted with as little as 10 seeds

▶ **STEP 5. Conduct selected germination method for testing.**

#1 – *Seedbed Method*

Note: adjust seed numbers as needed.

▶ **STEP 1. Introduction.** Explain that to grow crops, you need three key elements: the seed, the soil, and the climate (which includes temperature, rainfall, and sunshine).

▶ **STEP 2. Preparation of the seedbed.** Explain that germination heavily depends on the preparation of the seedbed; proper preparation requires that the plot be clear of weeds, plant material, and debris and that the soil is evened out. The soil also needs to drain well to avoid water logging.

▶ **STEP 3. Planting.** Count out the number of seeds to test for the given crop species. Sow them in a 1-meter row. Wait for the plants to grow over the next 5–7 days (although some varieties may take longer). If there is no rain, make sure to water the plot well every 2 days.

▶ **STEP 4. Determining germination percentages.** After 1 week, count and record the number of germinated (emerged) plants. In order to determine the germination percentage, divide the total number of germinated seeds by the total number of seeds in the test and multiply by 100.

Total number of germinated seed / total seeds x 100 = Germination %

For example:

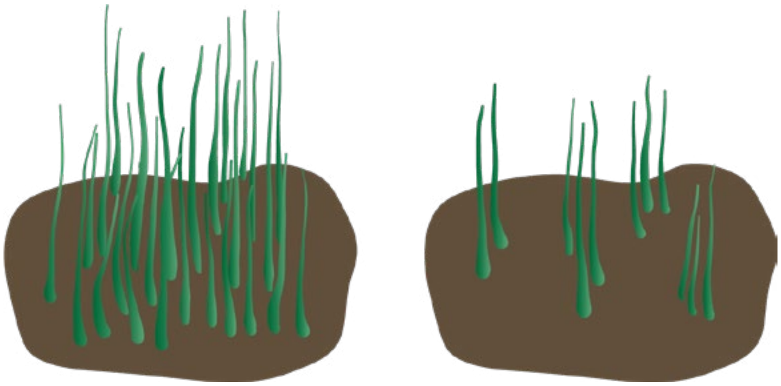
- if 100 seeds were planted and 75 plants emerged, the germination percentage would be
  75/100 x 100 = 75%

- If 20 seeds were planted and 10 plants emerged, the germination percentage would be
  10/20 x 100 = 50%

▶ **STEP 5. Follow up.** There are various recommendations about seed usage based on germination rates. The following are general guidelines to support action based on germination rates.

1. If the seeds plot has about 70% or more germination and emergence (good seed quality), the seed lot can be used as planned.
2. If the seed lot has between 50%-70% germination and emergence, seeds may still be used if they are sown at higher rates than usual.
3. If the seed lot has less than 50% germination and emergence (poor seed quality), it is not advisable to use the seed lot.

A visual of different germination rates can be seen on the following page.



Comparison between good and poor germination

#2 – *Paper Towel Method*[18]

Note: If paper towels are not readily available in a community, this method may be most useful in Training of Trainer setting.

▶ STEP 1. **Label each test,** if more than one variety is being tested at a time. Simply write the name of the variety on a paper towel with a sharpie.

▶ STEP 2. **Use a double thick paper towel and spread across a waterproof surface.**

▶ STEP 3. **Moisten the paper towel (damp, not dripping wet).** If a spray bottle is being used, you can place seeds on paper towel first and spray with spray bottle afterwards.

▶ STEP 4. **Place a minimum of 10 seeds on one half of the towel.** Ensure there is adequate spacing to best observe sprouting.

▶ STEP 5. **Fold half of the paper towel (without seeds) over the seeds,** covering completely. Very lightly press down, and moisten the towel again, if needed.

▶ STEP 6. **Place the towel in a plastic bag.** Do not seal the bag, as air is needed for germination.

▶ STEP 7. **Place bag in a warm (but not hot) area.**

Note: cool season crops, such a lettuce and spinach, may not sprout if temperatures are hotter than 80°F/27°C

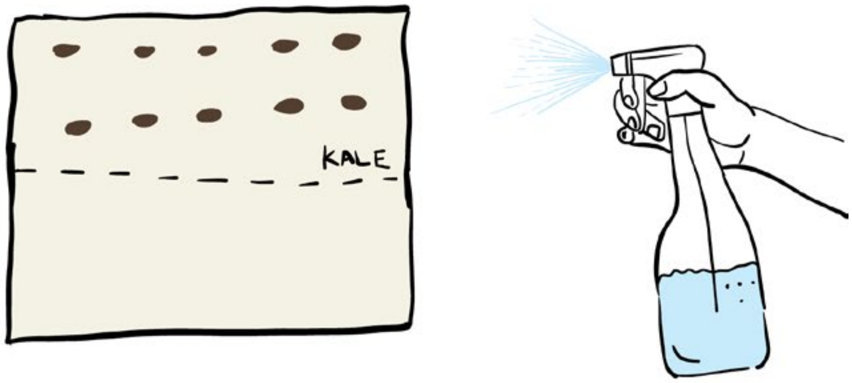
▶ STEP 8. **Check the bag each day and ensure the towel does not dry out.** Moisten the towel with a spray bottle or other methods.

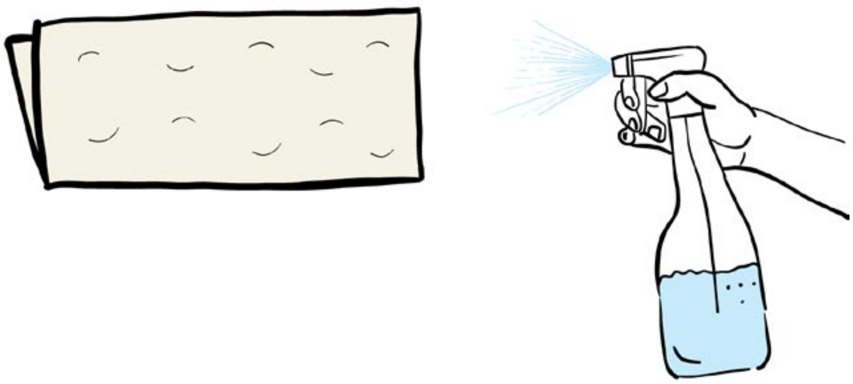
▶ STEP 9. **Monitor the seeds every 2–3 days.** Most seeds will germinate within 1–2 weeks (some varieties, such as eggplant may take longer).

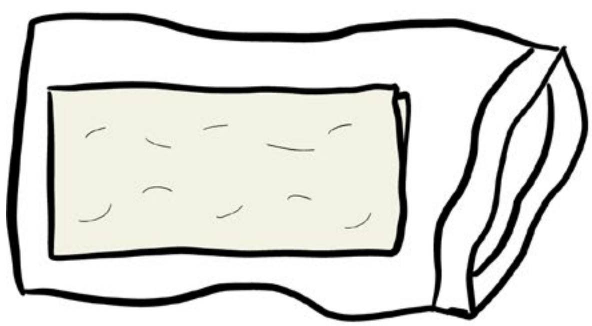
▶ STEP 10. **Monitor the quantity of germination, as well as the quality of the seeds.** Healthy seeds will have uniform germination, will not have fungal or bacterial growth.

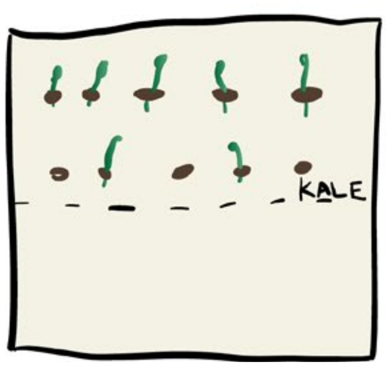
▶ STEP 11. **When it seems most seeds have germinated, make your count.** The number of seeds that germinated represents the germination rate.

18 High Mowing Organic Seeds. 2023. How To Do a Quick Germination Test At Home. https://www.highmowingseeds.com/blog/how-to-do-a-quick-germination-test-at-home/









ıated seed / total
rmination%

4.12 Effective Seed Use

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	This session helps to illustrate effective seed use, such as understanding quantity, spacing, depth and more
TIME REQUIRED	1–2 Hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart paper and marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space for all participants to sit

Background

Increasing knowledge on effective seed use can make a big difference in the health and productivity of crops. Increasing skills and knowledge can help farmers save money, improve crop production, and plan for future goals.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss the guidelines for experimentation.**

There are many different resources available regarding effective seed use. It is important to understand the recommendations for the specific crop varieties.

Important Considerations Include:

- **Quantity of Seed:** Understanding quantity of seeds needed can help to save seeds and money! It is important to have sufficient seeds, but equally as important to not plant more seeds than needed. This understanding can also support future financial and production planning goals.
- **When to Sow:** crops thrive under many different conditions. Understanding the correct time of year (season, soil temperature, etc.) to sow will improve germination and a plant's ability to thrive.
- **Seed (and plant) Spacing:** Understanding spacing is critical to success and can often result in increased yields. Sometimes if crops are too close, they may compete for nutrients. Other times, they simply may not have the space to fully develop and will only grow to small sizes, (such as root crops, like carrots and beets). Other times, crops need more airflow to decrease the chances of mold and fungal diseases (especially in humid/rainy environments). While other times, spacing of different crops may provide support in weed suppression. Experimenting with spacing can reveal how small changes can make a big impact.
- **Planting Depth:** Understanding the depth to plant a seed is essential. The depth will depend on the seed variety, the location and soil type. It is important that seeds are planted at the proper depth to receive the needed amount of light, correct moisture amounts, aeration, temperature and protection.
- **Thinning Needs:** If seeds are directly sown, "*thinning*" may be required. Thinning is the technique of removing seedlings to avoid overcrowding, allowing the healthiest and strongest seedlings to grow and develop to their full potential. The most effective way to thin is to snip crowded seedings at the soil line (instead of pulling) to avoid damaging the roots of other seedlings. However, it's best to get local advice on specific varieties, especially new varieties. Also, remember that often thinned parts of plants can still be used for consumption or livestock!

STEP 2. Discuss with participants.

Now that crops have been chosen by participants. Now, it's time to determine how to use seeds most effectively. Ask participants:

- With the crops that have been chosen for the demonstration plots and beds, do participants have successes or challenges that they want to share regarding seed use? Have they experimented with how to use seeds?
- Were new crops chosen that they are unfamiliar with? Do they know of local resources and guidelines for how best to use the seed?

STEP 3. Determine seed needs.

In this session, if possible, work with local experts, including seed producers, extension officers and research institutes, for advice and to support planning efforts.

Using flip chart paper and markers:

- Write *how much seed is needed*, *when to plant*, *what spacing will be used* between seeds (and rows!), *planting depth*, and *thinning needs*.
    - Be sure to note what are existing versus experimental practices in order to compare results.
    - Encourage strong record keeping skills which can help farmers save time when planning for future plantings

4.13 Minimum and Conservation Tillage

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	Raise awareness of benefits of minimum and conservation tillage methods. Determine if this method is of interest to experiment with
TIME REQUIRED	30 minutes
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart and marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit for lessons, and FFBS plots/beds for experimental practice and observation

Background

Traditional tilling methods occur when preparing the seedbed before planting, and involve "digging, overturning, and mixing the soil," which can "disrupt the soil's natural health, remove nutrients and limits its ability to capture carbon." Making small changes can result in big, and positive impacts! One method is through Minimum and Conservation Tillage! The goal of conservation tillage is minimizing soil disturbance, which can lead to soil erosion caused by wind or water.

There are many benefits to minimum and conservation tillage methods, including:

- Reductions in soil erosion by retaining crop residue on the soil surface,
- Improvements in soil health by minimizing disturbance to healthy soil organisms and their habitats (such as earthworms, fungi, bacteria), and retaining organic matter found in healthy soils,
- Enhanced water conservation by reducing compaction to soil, and increasing water infiltration and water-storage capacity,
- Reductions in carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions caused by use of farm machinery and equipment, as well as the cost and use of fuel.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Share with the participants what conservation tilling is.**

Conservation Tillage (or Minimum Tillage) by definition, from the Conservation Technology Center, is: "any tillage and planting system that covers 30 percent or more of the soil surface with crop residue, after planting, to reduce soil erosion by water."

There are various methods for conservation/minimum tillage, including:

- No/Zero Till – soil is undisturbed by tillage the entire year. The crop is sown directly into the soil.
- Strip Till – minimally disturbs the row or bed being planted and covers the rows in between (or walking paths) with crop residue.
- Ridge Till – permanent ridges are created and crops are sown on top of the ridge. Crop residue is left in between the ridges.

Note: *Some soils that are deeply compacted may require initial (or occasional/intermittent) tillage/ploughing. Using a combination of methods and making slow changes over time will help the farmer make the best decision for them.*

STEP 2. Discuss using the following guiding questions:

- What types of tillage methods are farmers currently using?
- Have they observed challenges associated with other tillage methods (not minimum/conservation methods)?
- Are they familiar with other soil friendly practices related to reduced tillage methods?
- Are there traditional methods that sound similar?
- Is there interest in experimenting with conservation/minimum tillage methods?

Recommendations:

- Invite a local expert to this session as a guest speaker/guest educator (such as experts in regenerative agriculture or organic agriculture) to determine the best method for conservation tillage for the area.
- Remind participants that like many approaches in sustainable agriculture, benefits of conservation/minimum tillage occur over time.

Encourage participants to test conservation/minimum tillage methods in a bed (or growing area) for at least a period of 3 growing cycles. Remember to keep good records and take photos!

In the next module, the toolkit will promote one simple method to experiment with conservation tillage methods – the Permanent Bed. The Permanent Bed can utilize a combination of minimum/conservation tillage methods.

Examples of Conservation tillage methods

4.14 Permanent Beds

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	Raise awareness of benefits of minimum and conservation tillage methods. Determine if this method is of interest to experiment with
TIME REQUIRED	1–3 Hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Shovel, spading fork, or other farm tools to create bed; Compost or other amendments that are desired to work into the soil.
WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit for lessons, and FFBS plots/beds and designated bed (or growing area) to experiment

Background

The ways in which the bed (or growing area) is prepared is a critical step in sustainable agriculture. Creating permanent beds can provide endless benefits, including building and maintaining healthy soils, increased drainage, and no soil compaction. This allows for a loose soil structure that supports crops roots' ability to extend deep into the soil and attain the greatest amount of nutrients. Permanent beds can make mechanical weed control easier, such as hand hoeing or hand weeding. As permanent bed systems support soil health, this can result in higher yields. Additionally, permanent beds are labor efficient after the initial creation, as it saves the farmer time and energy from building new beds each year.[19]

Examples of Permanent Beds

A permanent bed is simply a dedicated growing area separated by walking paths. In this method, once created, farmers never step on the bed, which drastically reduces soil compaction and improves soil health. Only the pathways are compacted. Permanent Beds can be in any shape. The most important principle to follow is ensuring the design doesn't require walking into the bed.

19 Market Gardener Institute. Biointensive Agriculture: How to Cultivate in Permanent Raised Beds. https://themarketgardener.com/farming/biointensive-agriculture-how-to-cultivate-in-permanent-raised-beds/

Illustration adapted from *the market gardener,* https://newsociety.com/books/m/the-market-gardener

Idea
Designate 1 experimental bed as a Permanent Bed. Add more each growing cycle, if the participants agree on the value.

Steps to follow for the activity

Creating a Permanent Bed

▶ STEP 1. **Clear the area.** Remove any rocks, debris, weeds, etc. Loosen the soil at the bottom of the bed, using a shovel, spading fork, or other farm tool, to improve drainage.

▶ STEP 2. **Determine the Width.** The demonstration plot lengths will have already been determined in "Setting Up the FFBS Demonstration Plot." However, width of beds is very important in Permanent Raised Beds. Ideally, the width of the bed is wide enough to plant multiple rows, or blocks, but shallow enough that farmers can easily reach across and work in all rows (or growing areas), without having to step into the bed.

- One recommendation is the permanent raised bed should be no wider than 75 centimeters (or approximately 30 inches).

▶ STEP 3. **Build the Bed.**

- Shovel healthy (garden) soil into the designated bed.
- If possible, fill the bed with a mixture of half garden soil and half compost.
- Height Recommendations: depending on the available soil and compost, build beds with about 10–15 centimeters (or roughly 4–6 inches) of soil.
- It is okay to create a flat permanent raised bed. Just be sure that walking paths are clearly distinguished from the permanent raised bed.

Tips:

Wet/Rainy Climates: *try raised mounds*
Dry Climates: *try sunken beds to increase water retention*

▶ **STEP 4. Walking Path Width.** This will depend on the space available. A good thing to remember is the wider the walking path, the less nongrowing space is available. However, it is important to make sure the walking path is clearly marked, will have room for farmers to pass one another, and perhaps even space to sit and work, if that is desired.

Tip: *Establish a "living walking path."*

▶ **STEP 5. Use Minimum or Reduce Tillage, if needed.** If the soil is compact, or there are large chunks of soil, it will be best to initially lightly till/cultivate the soil, using local methods. It is important to aerate the soil, to increase water retention, and help crop roots to reach deep into the soil. Ideally, as the soil structure and health improve each growing cycle, the need for tillage will become less.

▶ **STEP 6. Add Amendments, if needed.** Adding additional nutrients to the soil is a very important step. Depending on the local context, farmers may wish to add fertilizers they are familiar with.

- Also, work with local experts and experiment with new ideas, such as biofertilizers!

▶ **STEP 7. Create a Smooth Seedbed.** Smooth out the planting area. Use a rake, or any other local tools. Also, this can be done by hand, too.

Note: More Benefits of the Permanent Raised Bed System!

A major benefit to permanent raised beds systems is incredible soil building potential. This can impact yields and reduce the need for large amounts of external inputs (and save money!).

Also, permanent raised beds systems work incredibly well with Crop Rotations, as you rotate your plans between the permanent raised bed.

Illustration adapted from *the market gardener,* https://newsociety.com/books/m/the-market-gardener

4.15 Soil Health and Nutrient Management

SEASON	Pre-sowing and continuous
OBJECTIVE	To increase knowledge and skills of best practices to improve soil health and nutrient management
TIMEFRAME	2–3 hours, in addition to regular maintenance
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Shovel, forked hoe, materials to compost, garden hose/buckets for water, finished compost or high-quality garden soil
WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit for lessons, and FFBS plots/beds for experimental practice and observation

Background

Healthy soil is a living ecosystem and is essential for productive, sustainable and resilient farms and therefore food security. It is critical that farmers learn how to create and manage healthy soils and nutrients. This tool helps to increase knowledge on soil health and nutrient management. Farmers will identify their current soil health and nutrient management practices and understand basic guidelines to improving management plans. Farmers are encouraged to utilize and/or experiment with new practices.

Steps to follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss the basic concepts of Soil Health and Nutrient Management and share the basic guidelines for Soil Health and Nutrient Management.** Keep a record.

What is Soil Health? Soil health can simply be defined as soil quality. However, the aim in sustainable agriculture is to have *healthy and fertile soil*.

- One definition of *healthy soil* is the “continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans.”
- Soil fertility is “the ability of a soil to sustain plant growth by providing essential plant nutrients.”

Healthy soil performs very important functions including:

Reduces erosion, improves the quantity and quality of crops, maximizes water infiltration, improves nutrient cycling, saves money on inputs, and improves resiliency.

- Discuss the definitions and functions of healthy soil. What do these mean to the farmers? Are these ideas similar? What makes them different?
- What other ideas do they have? What does Soil Health mean to them?
- What are their current practices for creating healthy soils?

What is Soil Nutrient Management? Soil nutrient management is managing the application of fertilizers, compost, manures, amendments, and "organic by-products to agricultural landscapes as a source of plant nutrients." There is a common way to think about and approach soil nutrient management, known as the "Four Rs:"

1. Right Source – matching the right type of nutrient addition (fertilizer/amendment) to the specific crop needs
2. Right Rate/Amount – using the proper rate (amount) of application for the crop needs
3. Right Time – applying at the correct time makes nutrients available when the crop needs them
4. Right Place – using the appropriate method of application

- Ask farmers to share their experiences with managing soil nutrients.
- While the concept might be new to some, what are their current practices that use the principles of "Four R's?" What resources did they use to apply best practices in soil nutrient management?

STEP 2. Discuss how to Improve Soil Health and Nutrient Management.

Some very important practices to building and maintaining healthy soils have already been touched upon in earlier sessions of the FFBS Agriculture Tools, such as crop rotations, intercropping, compost, and conservation tillage. However, developing a basic understanding of guidelines for improving soil health and nutrient management will help farmers acknowledge strong existing practices, while identifying new practices to build in.

This should not be viewed as a full list of best practices. There are many methods, including traditional practices that will not be included in this list, that farmers will want to include. This should be viewed as a technical reference to continue developing skills and knowledge.

Take participants through the guidelines and discuss the principles and practical methods. Ask questions like:

- What existing practices, under each principle, did they already identify in the initial discussion?
- Are there are methods they use and would recommend?
- Are they interested in trying new ideas? Which ones?

Fill out the table below, and adapt it, as needed. This will identify existing strong practices and new practices to incorporate in order to develop a strong Soil Health and Nutrient Management Plan.

Soil Health and Nutrient Management		
Principles for Improving Soil Health and Nutrient Management	**Farmer Practice**	**New Practice to Incorporate**
Increase Soil Cover		
Minimize Disturbance		
Maximize Biodiversity		
Maximize Presence of Living Roots and Plants		

Increase Soil Cover

T*his is the most important principle* for reducing water and wind erosion, increasing water infiltration rates and reduction of moisture loss, improving germination rates due to reduced temperature and moist environments, improvement of soil organic matter and biological activity in the soil and suppressing weed growth. A good rule to follow is that ***soil should be covered whenever possible***.

Some methods to increase soil cover include:

- Leave crop residues in the field (however, it is important to remove crop residues that had disease)
- Use organic mulch and organic material as mulch, when possible
- Plant cover crops, intercrops, and relay crops
- Increase crop diversification by planting and protecting multipurpose seedlings

Minimize Disturbance

While some disturbance may be unavoidable, it is important to reduce disturbance as much as possible to build healthy soils. Also, as new practices are adopted, disturbance can be reduced slowly over time.

- Use conservation tillage, including creating Permanent Raised Beds (see "Permanent Beds" module).[20]
    - Traditional tillage methods should only be used when soil is compacted to help aerate the soil and improve moisture movement with in the soil, and then slowly transition to conservation tillage methods
- Rotate livestock to reduce overgrazing
- Use the Four R's principles for Nutrient Management to reduce chemical disturbance (such as over application of amendments, especially chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, etc.)
    - Conduct a soil test, when possible, to determine the nutritional state of the soil, in order to determine appropriate nutrients needed

Maximize Biodiversity

The "Crop Diversification" module discusses the great importance of increasing biodiversity. Biodiversity is extremely important for soil health. Benefits include breaking disease cycles, providing habitat for bees and native pollinators, and providing habitat for important microorganisms living in the soil.

- Plant diverse crops
- Increase soil's organic matter content, as well as the production of biomass (the number of living microorganisms in the soil) by incorporating compost, sowing diverse cover crops, intercrops, or relay crops.
    - Include leguminous crops in crop rotations to rejuvenate soils that are exhausted
- Integrate livestock
- Incorporate trees and shrubs to restore soil structure, improve nutrient cycling, reduce erosion, reduce soil moisture evaporation, and improve water sources.
    - Work with local experts to incorporate various agroforestry practices, including Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration and Assisted Natural Regeneration

Maximize Presence of Living Roots and Plants

When possible, keep plants growing throughout the year. This will help to feed the soil and reduce erosion.

- Plant cover crops
- Establish perennial plants, including plants that can be used for food (to increase income and food security), such as fruit trees, perennial herbs, and traditional perennial plants.

20 UC Davis. 2021. Conservation Tillage. https://sarep.ucdavis.edu/sustainable-ag/conservation-tillage

4.16 Water Smart Agriculture (WaSA)

SEASON	Pre-sowing and continuous
OBJECTIVE	To identify existing community practice and instill new practices and knowledge on environmentally and economically sustained soil heaths for optimum crop/plant growth and productivity at seedling, root development, tasseling/flowering and maturity stage; optimum soil moisture during rain/irrigation; and proper percolation of excess water, give participants an increased understanding on Water Smart Agriculture (WaSA) approaches and options for small scale farmers
TIMEFRAME	2–4 hours, depending on session
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Paper and markers, pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit for lessons, and FFBS plots/beds for experimental practice and observation

Background

To ensure high and sustained productivity and production, farmers must learn how to manage water resources in an integrated manner using Water Smart Agriculture (WaSA) comprehensive approaches and principles. This tool helps farmers identify their current water management practices, reiterate the importance of improved practices, and discuss combination techniques.

WaSA is an approach to efficiently harvest, store, access and utilize water throughout the year. It is about packaging the right choices effectively with a sustainable balance, as well as support farmers through farmer-to-farmer uptake and dissemination-take learning as a constant process.

What makes WaSA different?

- WaSA uniquely emphasizes soil as a centerpiece to the challenge and solution of a sustainable future, recognizing that the soil system is the ultimate water delivery vehicle.
- WaSA focuses on water as a key agricultural constraint.
- WaSA brings both the water and agriculture sectors to the table.
- Although distinctive, WaSA is very much in alignment with Climate Smart Agriculture and sustainable intensification (SI).
- WaSA is needed with or without climate change.

What WaSA should be?

1. **Soil Smart** – start with investing in soil management and conservation practices that preserve soil moisture, reduce evaporation, and enhance the biological potential of soil (See Soil Health & Nutrient Management section).
2. **Rainfall Smart**
   - Plant crops and select varieties that maximize harvests within a rainy season.
   - Conduct land management practices that maximize infiltration (e.g., micro-terraces and live barriers)
   - Harvest and store rainwater in-situ to extend the growing season.
3. **Irrigation Smart** – invest in efficient, small scale, supplemental irrigation that minimizes losses through percolation, drainage, evaporation (such as drip irrigation).

WaSA Approaches:

- Managing soils to manage water, including Integrated soil fertility management (ISFM).
- Conservation agriculture methods.
- Water harvesting and supplemental irrigation.
- Appropriate improved varieties.

WaSA major principles:

- Maximize outcomes that are owned locally – assist farmers to identify and apply 'best fit' water management system.
- Ensure sustainability of resources – ensure that resource utilization does not have negative impact on other users and future uses.
- Transition to resiliency to shock and food security
- Build on learning and sharing

Targets/collaborators to implement WaSA:

- WaSA supports smallholder farmers to integrate soil and water management to increase agricultural productivity and enhance conservation of natural resources.
- Collaborators can include donors, private sectors, government, research/academic institutions, media, etc.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Briefly explain the commonly used WaSA practices for different context by their major category such as.** Ask farmers to think about how they may have learned these principles elsewhere in FFBS, and consider how they have many benefits (soil, water, etc.).

- Conservation agriculture includes minimum/conservation tillage (see "Minimum and Conservation Tillage Module), permanent soil covers (such as mulching, permanent pasture, and diversification of plant species including crop rotation, inter/mixed cropping).
- Physical water and soil conservation measures such as level bunds/terraces, trenches, basins etc. Those contribute to reduce runoff and enhance rainwater infiltration, cutoff drain/waterways/graded bunds to safely drain excess runoff to water harvesting structures and/or to permanent river channels.
- Water harvesting structures such as ponds, reservoirs/wells/gully bottoms, subsurface storages, etc., will be used as source of water /moisture for crops as supplementary irrigation during critical moisture shortage.
- Biological measures such as upland afforestation, alternate use of fruit /fodder trees with other crops, strip permanent fodder development within crop fields, and more. This will reduce rainfall impacts/slowdown runoff velocity and thereby facilitate water infiltration rates, improve soil fertility and structure, minimize water/soil moisture loss through evaporation.

Note: *While briefing on the above terms, it will also important to mention (in simple and locally used words) factors which limit applications of different practices such as soil characteristics (texture, structure, depth, fertility status), rainfall (intensity, duration, volumes), land features (steepness, slope length, shapes and patterns-density of gullies, streams), policy and social related issues (communal land management and use, development of communal facilities such as water ways, gully development, perennial water sources uses like streams, springs , rivers, etc.).*

▶ STEP 2. **Brainstorm with farmers on their current water management practices**, and list out all locally applied practices from the brainstorming, helping them to outline their understanding of the benefits and challenges of each, e.g., labor for making ridges, skills and experiences, technical support etc. Support the farmers to list out WaSA practices they have not implemented so far but they know/saw somewhere implemented by others.

STEP 3. Take participants through the basic guidelines for the development of integrated water management systems by following up on one of the topics from the brainstorm. If you have many farmers, divide them into groups and have them discuss the benefits of the topics below:

Rainwater Harvesting (RWH):

It is the technique of collection and storage of rainwater at the surface and/or in the sub-surface before it is lost as runoff. It is broadly grouped as in-situ and ex-situ water harvesting techniques.

1. In-situ rainwater harvesting is a technique where rainfall is collected where it falls. Some of the widely adopted techniques are bunding, terracing, contour farming, broad bed furrow, micro-basin, ridge and tie-ridging, mulching, and deep ploughing. The application of these different techniques will depend on different factors such as soil characteristics, topography, rainfall characteristics, crops type, etc.
   Note: proper structure for removal of excess runoff needs to be arranged.

2. Ex-situ rainwater harvesting is the technique where the runoff is diverted and stored in a natural or artificial reservoir for later use. Examples of commonly used runoff storing structures are dugout ponds, diversion bunds, tanks, sub-surface reservoirs, etc. Water from perennial surface/ sub-surface sources also collected through check dams, bunds, percolation tanks, etc. The most important systems in ex-situ water collection are catchment area, collection system and utilization systems. Based on availability of water and individual capacity to invest, the farming system can apply one of the following combinations:

   - Use for supplementary irrigation for crops
   - Combination of supplementary irrigation and short duration fish culture
   - Crops + Fish + perennial crops (on the embankment)
   - Crop + Fish + perennial crops + light duty winter crops

Some examples of Water Harvesting Structures:

On-farm ponds-construction of ponds/ dikes around the crop field will help to collect excess water from the field and use for supplementary irrigation, irrigating lighter duty winter crops, short duration fish culture and development of horticultural crops on the embankment. This practice will increase crop and irrigation intensity, productivity, and income. If it is adopted at scale, it can:

- Reduce total runoff volume and peak rate of runoff and thereby reduce soil erosion
- Reduce water logging where drainage is not possible, and rainfall is intensive
- Enhance percolation in the field and increase ground water recharge
- A means /base for complementary use of rainwater, surface water and ground water which certainly increase crop intensity and irrigation intensity
- Productivity and production of the watershed will enhance

Water tanks – in high rainfall areas (above 1000 mm), water tanks or a series of water tanks can be constructed uplands of the crop field along the drain line of the watershed and collect runoff for later use. A well /wells can also be developed immediately below the crop field to collect water that joined the well through seepage from the tank and percolation loss from the field.

Micro-catchment rainwater harvesting – the method of collecting surface runoff from contributing area with overflow distance of less than 100 meter (328 feet) and store it consumptive uses in the root zone of an adjacent infiltration basin. The micro-catchment area is the function of active root zone, water holding capacity of the soil, runoff coefficient, cultivated area, rainfall, and actual evapotranspiration. It is most suitable for horticultural and tree crops.

Note: the micro-catchment area is a plot within the field surrounded by soil ridge and drain towards the center where the tree /crop is planted. The tree/crop will have its own infiltration basin where runoff will be collected and infiltrated to the soil.

Broad bed furrow system – consists of broad beds of about 100 cm (about 40 inches) wide separated by sunken furrows of about 50 cm wide, above 15 cm depths and with longitudinal slopes of less than 1%. It is highly suitable for deep vertisols.

Advantages:

- Enhance moisture storage in the soil profile
- Facilitate safe disposal of excess surface runoff
- Provide optimum soil aeration
- Provide better drained soil
- In soils with low water holding capacity than deep vertisols, runoff from furrows can be collected and stored in tanks/ponds
- Encourage double cropping/inter cropping

Other complementary practices for good soil health and alternative income means:

- Establish /implement appropriate upland runoff management structure like cutoff drain, waterways
- Consider gully rehabilitation, development and use plan including producing different crops such as permanent fodder grass, fodder trees, and horticultural crops starting from the bottom to the embankment/berms respectively
- Upland catchment development for effective and sustained development of bottom crop lands
- Use of upland degraded and impermeable slopes for runoff collection-rock catchment rainwater harvesting
- Consider roof water harvesting and individual wells as an option for homestead gardening and other productive uses
- Consider use of alternative technologies such as micro-drip irrigation, solar energy for lifting irrigation water, simple soil testing tools, water moisture measurements – where and when applicable
- Fallow periods to rest the land and allow for infiltration where and whenever possible
- Application of organic fertilizer to increase the moisture retention capacity of the soil, especially for sandy soils; remember that large amounts are required, when compared to non-organic fertilizer
- Carrying out deep tillage, when absolutely necessary, to loosen any compacted or hardened layers that are impeding root penetration
- Use of drainage channels where soils are not well drained, and use of raised beds and ridges to increase root depth even where there are no drainage problems
- Putting organic matter in zaï pits (planting pits, planting basins, small water harvesting pits) before the rainy season to attract termites which perforate compact soils with their tunnels.
- Avoiding nutrient waste; do not allow burning of residues or stubble, nor the export of nutrients out of the farm (and preferably not out of the field), except for those nutrients in the harvest.
- Substituting the use of nitrogenous fertilizers by sowing legume crops as part of the rotation, as intercrops, relay crops or as cover crops.
- Protecting the field from grazing animals at critical periods to protect young trees in Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration of agroforestry systems.
- Reducing soil and environmental pollution, e.g., by reducing the use of plastic bags.

4.17 Weed Management

SEASON	Pre-sowing and continuous
OBJECTIVE	To enable farmers to identify different types of weeds, competition mechanisms, and appropriately manage
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip Chart and Marker
WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit for lessons, and FFBS plots/beds for experimental practice and observation

Background

Developing sustainable management measures is very important. Weed management lessons enable farmers to understand: the concepts of competition between crops and weeds and the mechanisms through which weeds hinder crop growth; how competition between crop and weeds can be influenced to the advantage of the crop; and weed-free periods. By using this tool, farmers will be able to improve their weed management skills and have more positive outcomes.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Define and Identify "Weeds"**

In farming systems, weeds are defined as unwanted plants that interfere with production, by limiting or completely disrupting other crops' production. In a broad sense, weeds are all other plants in a growing area, other than the crops specifically sown by a farmer.[21] Certain plants are not sown by the farmer but are left in the field for other uses and needs, such as amaranth and wild watermelon. These are often not considered weeds by farmers.

In the group, determine the different weeds that occur in the farmers' fields. List these weeds on the flip chart.

▶ STEP 2. **Discuss "Why do weeds have a negative effect on crops?"** Explain that weeds produce negative effects on crops because:

1. There is competition for resources between weeds and the crop for: water, food (nutrients/elements in the soil), air, light, and space
2. Weeds may host diseases and animals; some weeds act as hosts or attractants to pests while others may provide a safe haven for animals such as rabbits and rats and certain plants are particularly good vectors for crop-impacting disease
3. Parasitic weeds such as *Striga* don't just compete with crops for resources, they actually extract water and nutrients through connections between their roots and those of the crop
4. Some weeds produce substances that are toxic to crops and humans
5. Weeds may reduce yields and crop quality in the short- and long-terms, affecting income

21 Mark Schonbeck. 2011. Principles of Sustainable Weed Management in Organic Cropping Systems.

▶ STEP 3. **Understanding the critical weed-free period of the crops.** Most crops are sensitive to weed competition during the early developmental stages (first 3–4 weeks after emergence). With the group, outline the sensitive crop development stages for each of the crops in a table like the one listed below:

Crop	Stage	Sensitivity to Weeds

▶ STEP 4. **Discuss on problematic weeds.** With the farmers, observe and/or list the most problematic weeds for each crop in the location. Collect samples and write the names (in local language) and periods when they occur, as follows:

Name of Weed	Crops Affected	Time of Appearance (Crop Stage)	Measures Farmers take to Manage Them

▶ STEP 5. **Discuss steps and options for creating a sustainable Weed Management Plan.** Regardless of crop and weed type, there are standard weed control mechanisms that farmers can plan for and apply to avoid major losses due to weeds. After going through the options highlighted in the last step, take the farmers through the following measures and discuss their contributions and plans for sustainable weed management:

Pre-Farming Cycle

- Identify the weeds before planting. What are the known weeds that are problematic?

Preventative:

There are many preventative techniques that have already been presented in the FFBS Agriculture Tools that support sustainable weed management. Build in these strong practices, that have multiple benefits:

- Choose Resilient Seeds. Prevention through good quality crop seed that is devoid of weed seeds and with high germination potential,
- Plan a strong Crop Rotation, which will help to confuse weeds, and ultimately help to reduce them,
- Grow Cover Crops, which will ensure that weeds do not have space to grow (and ultimately reduce them),
- Plan for strong sustainable agriculture methods that help to kill weed seeds, including the following: appropriate mulching techniques including crop residue management, create a Crop Diversification Plan, use compost, and other strong techniques such as intercropping.

Control:

- Eliminate the weeds during the critical times
- Biological control methods, using living “agents,” such as grazing animals
- Chemical control (use of herbicides) should be used as a last resort, and with a high emphasis on minimal and safe use, as well as a plan to reduce and/or eliminate use long-term

Long-Term Strategy:

- Continue to identify and understand weeds on farm. Adapt Weed Management Plan accordingly.

4.18 Pest and Disease Management

SEASON	Pre-sowing and continuous
OBJECTIVE	To ensure that ecological, and integrated pest and disease management practices follow the principles of sustainable agriculture; increase knowledge on new practices and techniques
TIMEFRAME	2 hours, and throughout FFBS cycle
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip charts, pens, pencils
WORKSPACE	Enough space to sit for lessons, and FFBS plots/beds for experimental practice and observation

Background

Pests and disease are an unavoidable component of agriculture, but they should be managed as early as possible to prevent harmful impacts on crop quantity and quality output. This tool is a guide to explain pest and disease management, identify relevant causes and impacts, and effectively monitor and manage crop pest and disease challenges to mitigate crop damage and improve yields.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Strengthen Understanding of pest and disease management.**

Ask participants, "What is an Ecological Approach to Pest and Disease Management?" Give time for responses then share:

Systems that approach pest and disease management which rely heavily on agrochemicals can often result in much more harm than good. The heavy use of pesticides have caused many pests to become resistant. This has led to the creation of more potent and toxic agrochemicals. These toxic chemicals can harm important pollinators, harm critical ecosystems (including water sources), human health, and more.

An ecological approach to pest and disease management can result in incredible benefits. An ecological approach is a preventative approach which "instead of reacting to pest problems with off-farm inputs, ecological strategies prevent problems from arising by proactivity addressing their root caused, such as low biodiversity, stressed crops and degraded soils."[22]

▶ STEP 2. **Prevent pests and disease.**

Share with participants the principles for Ecological Management of Pests and Disease. Strengthen an understanding for preventative strategies for ecological management of pests and diseases. Explain that the FFBS approach is based on integrating various best principles and practices. Many of the approaches in the FFBS toolkit already promote the principles that aim to create healthy farms and production systems that reduce pests and disease.

Discuss the following principles and strategies, then list the preventative strategies farmers are already doing. What have they started doing through the FFBS Agriculture Tools? Are there other traditional practices not listed here connected to the principles?

22 Sustainabile Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). 2020. A Whole Farm Approach to Managing Pests. Part One: An Ecological Approach to Pest Management. https://www.sare.org/wp-content/uploads/A_Whole-Farm_Approach_to_Managing_Pests.pdf

The **preventative principles and strategies for ecological management** are below with some example practices.

Promote biodiversity

- Crop diversity, crop rotation for healthy soil biodiversity, cover crops
- Work with local experts and leaders to incorporate traditional and native crops that may have more natural resistance
- Protect and help natural enemies of pests and disease. Many natural enemies of pests and disease live within the crop field. Others live in wild plants in nearby fields. Natural enemies must also be managed so that they become abundant and effective.

Create healthy crop habitats

- Developing strong practices in soil health and nutrient management is essential; healthy soils help crops to become stronger defenders against pests, diseases, and weed
- Strong, vigorous plants thrive in healthy crop habitats and can tolerate insect and pest damage.

Reduce disturbance to soil and non-crop vegetation

- Cover crops, minimum/conservation tillage

Minimize off-farm inputs

- Reduce synthetic fertilizers and pesticides; use crop residue mulch, composts and biofertilizers

▶ STEP 3. Identify and Monitor – Observe, Learn and Strengthen Expertise.

Review basic guidelines to planning for monitoring and identifying pests and diseases.

In this step, farmers continuously become experts: Explain that in integrated pest and disease management, one tries to establish the relation between the environment and the development of crops. By observing the field and the crops, farmers become more conscious about the interaction between the environment and the crops. This knowledge will allow them to identify constraints on crop growth, to make informed decisions, and to adapt strategies that minimize negative effects.

Conduct regular field observation and analysis

- Farmers can only make good decisions if they have useful information. Insect pests, natural enemies, diseases, the crop's growth stage and the weather are among the factors that should be observed and analyzed.

Farmers become experts

- Farmers must have confidence in their own knowledge and ability to make decisions. If not, they may unintentionally cause harm; ex, if they use too much pesticide.

The specific steps (these steps can take place before the farming cycle to ensure best preventative plans in place, during the farming cycle to continuously learn, and after the cycle during evaluation to help support further decision-making):

Revisit the Seasonal Calendar and FFBS Calendar created earlier in the season. **Update management plans**, as needed, to include the following, if missing:

- Make a schedule and maintain records: determine how often farmers will monitor for pests and diseases. Be sure to keep excellent records (guidance found in "Evaluation of FFBS Plots"). Record findings, including types, locations, recommendations, and responses to recommendations after action has been taken.
- How to examine the pest/disease on the crop
- How to identify beneficial insects and pollinators (and the plan to ensure no harm is done to them)
- Pest/disease symptoms
- How to score for incidence and severity (found below)
- How to record that information
- How to collect and preserve samples
- How to represent pests/diseases in drawings if necessary

- What else is useful to mention for an integrated approach (e.g., weeds, water, fertilizers, weather conditions, etc.)
- Traditional agricultural practices done the previous week (fertilizers, spraying, watering, etc.)
- Important observations and recommendations

STEP 4. Begin to work on FFBS plots.

Divide participants into groups of 4–5, depending on the total number of participants.

To make the working time as short as possible, have different groups work on each of the FFBS plots. The same work groups should be maintained throughout the season, but the plot they observe should be changed. Have each group select one person to record all data for a given time period (this can be rotated among group members).

Have participants collect data on various aspects such as growth, diseases, pests, and predators, and enter the information in sheets developed for each crop (since each one has unique characteristics and challenges). The corresponding information sheet should score disease incidences (found below) and severity (for example: at 6 weeks, 3 months after planting, and at harvest).

Sequence:

- **Identify Pests and Diseases:** Ask the farmers to list the names of the pest and disease challenges for specific crops. Can they also list the beneficial insects and pollinators in a separate column? List these in local names. If possible, use samples to demonstrate the diseases/pests, and drawings to demonstrate the beneficial insect or pollinator?
- **Rank Pests and Diseases:** Ask the farmers to list the names of the pest and disease challenges for specific crops. Can they also list the beneficial insects and pollinators in a separate column? List these in local names for translation later.

Once these are identified, have the group rank the diseases/pests from most important to least important (in terms of management priority using numbers or another ranking system (such as placing a certain number of stones or other small items) to designate an order.

Score Disease Incidences and Severity:

- Disease incidence is done by counting the number of plants in each plot that exhibit disease symptoms; divide this by the total number of plants in the plot and multiply by 100 to arrive at the percentage incidence.

- Disease severity scores on leaves will be done on a scale of 1–5 where a score of 1 means no disease symptoms were observed, and a score of 5 means the most severe infection was observed.

STEP 5. Begin Discussions and Collect Recommendations.

After the evaluations are completed at each point of observation, each group should calculate and record averages and discuss and synthesize findings for presentation to the larger group. Small groups should present findings from their own plots to the group in plenary.

With the help of the facilitator, the groups then hold discussions on actions to take to manage any challenges encountered. Make sure that the group comes up with actionable items and set timelines for undertaking activities.

4.19 Mulching

SEASON	Pre-sowing and continuous
OBJECTIVE	Consider the benefits and various techniques of adding mulch

Background

The are endless methods and best practices in sustainable agriculture. Mulching is another example of best practices and techniques to consider.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Increase knowledge about mulching, including benefits and techniques.**

What is Mulch?

Mulch is simply a protective layer that covers the soil.[23] Mulch provides many benefits, which include the following: protects from soil erosion, adds organic matter to the soil, improves soil fertility, improves degraded soils, improves water retention, suppresses weeds, regulates soil temperatures, makes great use of and reduces farm waste, increase crop yields, and can increase carbon sequestration (or soils ability to absorb and hold carbon).

Timing of Mulch

Be careful about mulching newly planted seeds, as it could decrease light needed to germinate.

Choosing Mulch

Choosing the best mulch method (including time and state of plant growth) is an important consideration. The type of mulch that is chosen will depend on the local environment and the function it needs to serve. Ask farmers if they currently use mulch methods that work well. Also, be sure to work with local experts, such as local agricultural extension offices and agricultural specialists, research institutes, and more.

Use this chart as a reference as a guideline on basic types of mulch:[24]

Types of Mulch		
Types	**Examples**	**Considerations**
Organic Mulch	Compost, bark, wood chips, leaves, seed hulls, grass clippings, nut shells, newspaper, cardboard, straw, crop residues (especially legumes), agroforestry residues	Be careful to choose organic matter that does not contain weed seed. Ensure the type chosen will not become a breeding ground for pests. Dry, woody mulch may break down slower and will not provide as many nutrients as other "green" mulches. Wood chips may remove important nitrogen and nutrients from the soil. Use barks and wood chips around trees and shrubs.
Inorganic Mulch	Gravel, stone, fabric	Plastic can also be used but is not recommended for environmental and leaching concerns; also, as plastic can become very hot, there is the potential it will harm living organisms in the soil. Inorganic mulches can suppress weeds, but will not add nutrients to the soil.
Living Mulch	Clover and other ground covers	An excellent method, but may require more advanced skills and maintenance initially.

23 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Mulch. https://www.usda.gov/peoples-garden/soil-health/mulch

24 Tilth Alliance. 2023. What is Mulch? https://tilthalliance.org/resources/what-is-mulch/

Ask Participants:

- Are participants already using mulch?
- Have they experimented with different practices mentioned in the table above?
- Are there local materials that could serve as mulch?

Tips:

- Plan in advance when and how often to mulch.
- Mulch around plants after weeding.
- Bark mulches are also great in walking pathways to suppress weeds and designate clear walking paths!
- Inorganic mulches are great in walking pathways.

Climate Considerations for Mulch:

- **Hot/Dry Climates:** use thicker layers of mulch to retain moisture and regulate soil temperature
- **Cool/Wet Climates:** consider mulch types carefully and use a thinner layer of mulch to protect soil and reduce runoff, while allowing excess moisture the ability to evaporate. Using too much mulch in cool/wet climates can actually cause unintended negative problems, such as fungal issues such as mold, or attracting pests, such as slugs and snails.

A Few Examples of Mulch

Straw and fabric as mulch

Straw as mulch, around plants, and in walking pathways.

Chopped or shredded (dry) leaves will attract earthworms.
Whole leaves can be used as well but will break down.
Slower than chopped or shredded leaves.

Crop Residue Mulch from the plant that was harvested.
A huge benefit to this method is crop residue has the incredible ability to sequester carbon in the soil (or increase soil organic carbon). This improves soil health and helps the climate!

4.20 Harvest Methods and Handling Practices

SEASON	Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To establish proper harvest method & handling practices according to the crop
TIME REQUIRED	2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart, marker pens
WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for both standing and sitting. If it is possible deliver this session near a harvest field to have practical activities and demonstration of harvest techniques.

Background

Harvesting is the process of taking out a part plant or a whole plant from the field or a production structure (greenhouse, high tunnel, vertical wall, etc.) for human consumption. This is done when plants or part plants have reached the physiological stage where they have nutritious and edible parts. Good agricultural harvest practices range from having in place before starting the harvesting season the harvesting techniques according to the crop, tools, containers, and equipment to worker health and hygiene.

In general farmers have two methods of harvesting: hand harvesting and mechanical harvesting. Decide which method to use based on the market destination, field size to harvest, field accessibility, labor availability, harvesting cost, and the technology available. Special skills are required for proper harvesting and that is why training workers before the harvest activities begin is relevant when harvesting either mechanically or by hand.[25]

Facilitator Notes

It is recommended facilitators understand how variables such as respiration rate, temperature, relative humidity, and ethylene can favor decay, loss of quality, and food loss in harvest crops.

The facilitator can use an icebreaker or introductory activity to get to know each other and start engaging farmers on the harvest topic. It is important to know the farmers' experience, type of crop, harvest practice they are applying, and problems they have been facing around this topic.

25 State of Vermont, Agency for Agriculture Food and Markets. 2021. On-farm food safety tips for fruit & vegetable growers. https://agriculture.vermont.gov/produce-program/produce-safety-bite-pre-harvest-practices

The facilitator can divide the group into several groups to promote participation and/or work with different products. Harvest practices will be selected within the group for the prioritized crops. Post-harvest handling practices are included in another session. Hence, this session is exclusively oriented to harvest.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Encourage farmers to share their experience in harvesting crops.** Ask the farmers about the type of crops they harvest, for example, root crops, vegetables, leafy greens, fruits, grains, and cereals.

Also, start to identify the methods and harvest practices they applied during the harvest season. Include the following topics in the discussion:

- Harvest training
- Harvest tools, containers, and equipment
- Crops field heat and how it affects quality and food losses
- Workers' health and hygiene (Food safety)
- Infiltration
- Transportation

▶ STEP 2. **Discuss the importance of training the harvesting crew before or during harvesting.** This depends on the availability of time. When training, use pictures, videos, posters, and images to facilitate the training, and if it is possible do some short practices in the field crop to grab experience. The technical harvests training could include:

- Inspecting, cleaning, and maintaining harvest containers
- The best time to harvest
- Crop characteristics to harvest (size, color, stage of maturity)
- Best harvest technique (minimal handling, proper cooling, and appropriate transportation)
- Training in health and hygiene, including practice in hand washing, the correct use of the bathroom, and handling injuries in the field

▶ STEP 3. **Based on crops identified in step 1, promote a conversation on how to select:**

- Harvesting tools, containers, and equipment
- Depending on the crop and harvest method producers will need knives, pruners, containers, baskets, harvest bins, tables, brushes, and other harvest aids
- Farmers must wash and sanitize tools before use in the field and between uses with various crops

STEP 4. Select the harvesting practices and resources to harvest the prioritized crop or crops. Take the group through the crop-specific harvest management practices on the three main objectives (retain quality, reduce food losses, and food safety). Guide the conversation by discussing the following pieces of information and fill out the table below with the discussed practices:

- Crop respiration rate, temperature, relative humidity, and ethylene release (if it is needed).
- The importance of harvesting the crop at the right maturity; and ensuring the right moisture content at harvest and during drying and storage (using crop-specific measures for moisture content).
- Use of recommended harvesting practices and methods of preparation for specific crops, e.g. curing of root, tuber and bulb crops before further handling or storage. Note that harvesting practices should cause as little mechanical damage to produce as possible; gentle digging, picking and handling will help reduce crop losses.
- Training about the best time of day to harvest, crop characteristics to harvest (size, color, stage of maturity).
- Storage conditions for harvested grains and cereals.
- Single-use cardboard harvest bins can be used only once.
- Never stand or sit on harvest bins.
- Removed as much soil and plant debris as possible from the harvest containers before moving them into a packing shed or storage shed.
- Do not store harvest containers directly on the floor or against a wall.
- Cooling methods for produce.
- Infiltration during cooling.
- Inspecting, cleaning, and maintenance of tools, harvest containers, and transport vehicles.
- Worker training about health, hygiene, dropped produce, produce contaminated with feces.
- Washing hands after eating, smoking, touching or working with animals, using bathrooms.

Crop	Worker Training	Tools, harvest containers, and equipment	During harvesting	Immediately after harvesting

STEP 5. Start harvesting the crop in the field or other production structures such as greenhouses, high tunnels, hydroponics facilities, vertical structures, etc. Organizing the crew and assigning plots, harvesting tools, drinking water, first aid kits to handle injuries, washing hand stations, and bathrooms. Also, identify the way and vehicles to move the harvested crops.

Farmers/workers harvesting produce in the field or production structure for fresh consumption must follow these considerations:

- Do not harvest produce contaminated with feces (human, animal, or bird).
- Do not harvest bruised produce, damaged by insects, rodents, or birds, and produce that is diseased.
- Do not harvest dropped produce on the ground.

▶ STEP 6. **For some crops, rapid cooling after harvest is essential to the maintenance of optimum quality.** The first consideration at harvest is the removal of the produce from direct sunlight, and secondly, to precool as quickly as possible. Precooling refers to the field heat removal from crops immediately after harvest, or at postharvest. Field heat is the difference in temperature between the actual temperature of the harvested crop, and the optimal storage produce temperature.

If it is necessary to have in place a cooling method for the harvested crop (fruits or vegetables), make sure to select the one that helps reduce food losses, retain quality, and prevent microbial contamination. The table below shows a few common methods of cooling vegetables:

Cooling method	Crop	Comments
Room cooling	Apples, potatoes, pumpkins, etc.	Place your produce into a room colder than the current temperature of the crop until it gets down to the desired temperature. It applies to all vegetables. Precooling is one of the most effective ways to keep produce quality.
	Cabbage, carrots, papayas, mangoes, leafy greens, etc.	Fast cooling, uniform cooling in bulk if properly used. Some produce such as cantaloupes, mangoes, apples, and tomatoes are susceptible to infiltration*.
Ice cooling	Onions, asparagus, roots, stems, flower types vegetables, radishes, etc.	Limited to produce that can tolerate water-ice contact
Forced-Air Cooling	Peppers Strawberries Cucumbers	Faster than room cooling. Container venting and stacking are needed for effective cooling.

*Infiltration refers to the movement of water from the tank into the produce pulp. It happens when the dump tank water is cooler than the produce pulp temperature. Pathogens in the water contaminate the produce. Look for specific produce to determine the susceptibility of infiltration and the conditions that favor it.

If harvesting grains or cereal make sure to identify and secure the storage area and the best way to protect the harvested products from rain, sun, and animals.

▶ STEP 7. **Packaging the crop in the field or transporting it to a packing facility.** If the crop is packed in the field farmers must apply the appropriate postharvest techniques. If the crop is transported to a packing facility producers must use a vehicle that has been cleaned and when necessary sanitized.

▶ STEP 8. **Reflection with the group aimed at the main discussed points, prioritized harvest practices, and takeaways of the session.**

General ideas for the summary:

- Why is harvest important? It helps to retain quality, reduce food losses, and deliver products in good conditions at packing facilities for post-harvest.
- Technical and health and hygiene training are required to implement a proper harvest method & handling practice.
- Inspect regularly tools, harvest containers, and other aid harvest equipment. Make sure those are functional, clean, and when necessary disinfected. It applies to vehicles to transport the products, as well.
- Expensive cooling not always is required. Look for the cheapest, most efficient, and easy to implement.
- Infiltration is a huge problem that can lead to cross-contamination if the water for cooling is contaminated. Or it can affect the crop quality even when the used water meets quality criteria.

4.21 Post-Harvest Practices and Sanitation

SEASON	Post-harvest
OBJECTIVE	To establish a shared understanding of the significance of post-harvest management and sanitation
TIME REQUIRED	2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart, marker pens
WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for both standing and sitting. If it is possible deliver this session near a postharvest field or postharvest facility, such as a packing house. It is easier to learn and share experiences by seeing real examples and touching things.

Background

Effective management during the post-harvest period is the key to reaching the desired objectives. There are many interrelated steps involved in all postharvest management, as produce is often handled by many different people, and transported and stored repeatedly between harvest and consumption. While particular practices and the sequence of operations will vary for each crop, there is a general series of steps in post-harvest handling systems that will be followed for the purposes of this toolkit.

A good management system starts by keeping things clean during postharvest handling. Farmers must consider keeping clean everything that touches or impacts produce. For example:

- packing materials, worker hands and clothing, postharvest water, packing equipment (sorting tables, containers, scales, conveyor belts, etc.) coolers and storage areas, and transport vehicles. In general, all food contact surface that touches the harvested produce.

The handling practices rely on the type of harvested produce and how these are consumed. Fresh produce usually consumed raw are more sensitive to microbial contamination such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites. These pathogens may cause foodborne illnesses or outbreaks. Produce that are processed, cooked, or receive a microorganism kill step before consumption are less sensitive to microbial contamination. However, most produce are sensitive to chemical and physical contamination.

Post-harvest handling practices are implemented from the field, during transportation to packing facilities, sorting, washing, packing, storage, and distribution to markets. These practices extend product shelf life and maintain quality, reduce food losses, and protect consumers' health (food safety).

Facilitator Notes

Before starting this session with farmers, it is recommended for facilitators to review key concepts such as postharvest, food loss, food safety, cleaning and sanitizing. Look for local materials relevant to these topics and the audience, for instance, postharvest local industry regulations, factsheets, extension articles, videos, photos, etc. This session has general guidelines to be applied in any context and crops producers are working with.

Facilitators should develop a brainstorming or group discussion focused on problems or risks associated with the packing environment, such as microorganisms, chemicals, and physical hazards. The discussion must be centered on the main produce harvested by the audience and the problems they have associated with postharvest. Once farmers have identified problems or risk it is recommended to rank or prioritize those risks and after they would choose the postharvest practices that can solve the problems or reduce risk. At the end of this session, the facilitator should review and conduct a group reflection around the main discussed practices, respond to audience questions and clarify concepts or audience doubts.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Review the below definitions with participants.**

Definitions

- **Post-harvest:** It is the stage of crop production that could include cooling, cleaning, sorting and packing the crop for storage, transportation and delivery to markets.[26] The crop handling during this stage largely determines its quality and safety for consumers.
- **Food loss:** It refers to the total modification or decrease of food quantity or quality which makes it unfit for human consumption.
- **Food safety**: It refers to the practices implemented during handling, processing, and food distribution, that preserve the quality of food to prevent contamination and food-borne illnesses.
- **Cleaning**: It is the physical removal of dirt from food contact surfaces which can include the use of clean water and detergent.
- **Sanitizing**: It is the treatment of a cleaned surface to reduce or eliminate microorganisms.

▶ STEP 2. **Ask farmers why they think post-harvest losses are important and to share some of their experiences around such losses.** Allow them to come up with their own ideas, but make sure that they include the following topics in the discussion:

- Postharvest
- Food safety
- Quality assurance
- Better storage
- Better protection from pests
- Reduce food losses (quantity & quality)
- Cleaning and sanitation
- Better marketing opportunities

▶ STEP 3. **Take farmers through a brainstorming session on the causes of post-harvest losses and loss of product quality and safety for consumers.** Please rank the problems or risks' importance and what is affecting them if it is possible. Allow them to come up with their own ideas, but make sure that they include the following topics in the discussion:

Causes (prioritization)	Mark or explain the problem or risk		
	Postharvest loss	Product quality loss	Safety of consumers
Inefficient harvesting and handling methods			
Lack of technical knowledge on different components of harvest (i.e., processing)			

26 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Chapter 2- Post-Harvest System and Food Losses. https://www.fao.org/3/ac301e/AC301e03.htm

Causes (prioritization)	Mark or explain the problem or risk		
	Postharvest loss	Product quality loss	Safety of consumers
Labor shortage during harvest season			
Harvesting immature and over-mature crops			
Poor processing techniques			
Poor sanitation practices			
Limited drying facility			
Excess rain-fall exposure			
Lack of storage facilities			
Rough transportation/ loading/unloading			
Little or no access to new technology			
Lack of a farmer friendly business model			

▶ STEP 4. **Take the farmers through the three main objectives of applying post-harvest technology and proper management practices to produce.** These are applied to:

- Reduce losses between harvest and consumption
- Extend shelf life and maintain quality (reduce perishability of products, appearance, texture, flavor and nutritive value)
- Protect consumers' health (food safety)

Identify at least one management practice to solve the problems and reach these three objectives.

Top causes /problems/ risks	Proper management practices		
	Reduce food losses	Extend shelf life and maintain quality	Protect consumers' health (food safety)

▶ STEP 5. **Take the group through the crop specific post-harvest management practices on the three main objectives.**

Guide the conversation by discussing the following pieces of information:[27]

- When sorting for rejects, remove any product that is decayed, damaged, or too small to avoid contamination from aflatoxin and other pathogens
- To wash produce, use water that must meet quality requirements, it also applies to water for washing hands, making ice and ice slurries used for postharvest cooling

27 USAID & Winrock International. 2012. Post-Harvest Handling Training Manual For Extension Workers. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00J949.pdf

- Use of simple technologies for packing, ranging from a simple shed in the field or a separate structure with cooling and storage facilities. Cooling is not always required but if you do so keep coolers at the right temperature.
- Packing containers and packing materials should be stored in a covered area, and not on the floor, to reduce the risk of contamination from pests, windblown dirt, and other contaminants.
- Use of simple and appropriate packing methods and packaging materials that can help to maintain product quality and reduce mechanical damage during handling, transport, and storage
- Inspect and maintain equipment to avoid cracked hoses, torn rubber door seals, standing water on the floor, dirty conveyor belts or brushes, and rusty equipment at packing facilities.
- Avoid condensation, especially from walls, ceilings, cooling equipment, and pipes over packing lines and storage areas.
- Post-harvest insect pest control methods that offer alternatives to chemical treatments for insect and disease control, such as the use of indigenous technical knowledge. Note that sometimes produce must be chemically treated to control insects or decay-causing organisms. Be sure your pest control method is controlling the pests you have.
- Indigenous technical knowledge plays a key role in post-harvest management. As the farmers to list some of the practices that they have traditionally used that are effective for postharvest insect and disease management. Encourage them to keep applying these methods
- Use of storage structures, methods for ensuring adequate ventilation, and simple technologies for modified atmosphere storage for each crop
- Transport practices that can reduce losses and methods for handling at destination (wholesale or retail markets)
- Simple methods for processing fresh produce such as adding value by drying (e.g., cassava)
- Cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces and transportation vehicles to prevent cross-contamination at packing facilities. Implementing 4 steps: i) Remove any obvious dirt, organic material, and debris from the food contact surface. ii) Apply an appropriate detergent and scrub the surface. iii) Rinse the surface with clean water, making sure to remove all the detergent and soil, and vi) Apply a sanitizer approved for use on food contact surfaces. Rinsing may be necessary. Let the surface air dry, especially wooden surfaces.

▶ **STEP 6. Reflect with the group on the main discussed points, prioritized post-harvest management practices, and takeaways of the session.**

- Post-harvest management implies handling of produce from the field to consumption. Implementing postharvest to reduce food losses and keep produce quality and food safety.
- Reflection on handling, transporting, packing, sorting, washing, and storing products that involve risk of contamination with chemical, physical or biological hazards. Choose the most important for the producers in the session.
- All packing areas, regardless of age or design, must have sanitation practices that minimize contamination risks. Identifying all the food contact surfaces and focusing on keeping these clean is a priority as the produce move from the field through the packing and storage areas.
- Congratulate producers and encourage them to act on implementing good handling practices.

4.22 Adding and Creating Value in Agricultural Products

SEASON	Post-harvest
OBJECTIVE	To identify proper strategies to add or create value in agricultural or livestock products
TIME REQUIRED	1 hour and 30 minutes
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip chart, marker pens
WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for both standing and sitting.

Background

Farmers seek to find strategies for adding value to agricultural or livestock products to increase farm income and profit. Value-added agricultural or livestock products are seen as a critical strategy to sustain small farms, small ranches, families, and their communities.

In this module, we will review two methods for farmers, capturing value and creating value. Capturing value refers to adding value by processing and/or marketing. Also, creating value refers to products or services that are unique by their quality attributes.[28]

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss with participants what they understand by adding and creating value.** The facilitator should lead a brainstorm with the audience to encourage participation and engagement of all participants.

▶ STEP 2. **Use pictures, videos, posters, images, and the information provided below to facilitate the identification of strategies for creating and adding value to agricultural or livestock products.**

Strategies for adding value

Value-added entails changing a raw agricultural product into something new by using packaging, processing, drying, or any other type of process that differentiates the product from the original raw product. Examples of value-added agricultural products or livestock include casava flour, bagged salad mix, artisan bread, sausages, and yogurt. Some strategies to add value to products are:[29]

- Processing fruits and vegetables: The use of recipes for homemade salsa, jams, jellies, and chutney, and transforming fruit into juice. Processing methods might be homemade or the application of an industrial process. There might be compliance regulations for processing depending on the raw material, ingredients, final product, and market requirements.

28 National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture. Adding Value to Farm Products. https://attra.ncat.org/publication/adding-value-to-farm-products-an-overview/#capturing

29 Cornell Cooperative Extension. 2019. Value Added Processing. https://tioga.cce.cornell.edu/for-farmers/value-added-processing

- Packaging: Packaging of fresh fruits and vegetables and livestock products help to maintain quality from farm to consumer tables. Bags, crates, hampers, baskets, cartons, bulk bins, and palletized containers are convenient containers for handling, storing, transporting, and marketing fresh produce and livestock products. The package must identify and provide useful information for the consumers.
- Drying fruit and vegetables and crop roots: Most of the time fruits and vegetables are cut into pieces of the same size, shape, and thickness that will dry evenly. Some fruits and vegetables are suitable for drying, some examples are apples, apricots, bananas, blueberries, cantaloupe, cassavas, carrots, celery, cilantro, corn, green beans, mangoes, pears, peaches, plums, strawberries, sweet potatoes, potatoes, and tomatoes. There are several methods of drying and the most common could be preheated dehydrator, oven drying, solar drying, and sundried.
- Fruits pulp: Pulping applies to the production of fruit purees in crops such as squash, pineapple, mangoes, banana, and others.
- Ready to eat: It refers to food that will not be cooked or reheated before serving. This includes salads, cooked meats, smoked fish, and cheese.
- Canning: Agricultural products can be packed into metal cans or glass jars; this method is useful in places where refrigeration is limited or nonexistent. In the canning process, vegetables are often cut into pieces, packed in cans with a food preservative, and receive severe heat treatment before packaging to ensure the destruction of bacteria.
- Dairy products: The milk produced on dairy farms can be processed in several products, including cheeses, yogurts, sour cream, flavored milk chocolate, and other processed foods.
- Milled grains: Milling of grains produces bran, which is the external layer of the larger grains. It also produces semolina, made up of medium-sized particles. The ultimate product is flour, which is the finest particles of the milled grain. The most common crops for milling are maize, barley, rice, wheat, soybean, oats, and others.

Value-added products have high demand in niche markets and local markets. Hence, farmers should focus on taking advantage of this opportunity. This is the key to success in value-added agriculture niche markets, where small-scale farmers can be most successful in creating value and establishing a profitable business. For small-scale farmers and smallholder livestock, it is recommended to start adding value by applying simple strategies such as sorting fruits and vegetables by size, sorting eggs by size, using unique local packaging, and recipes for homemade salsa or sausages.

Strategies for creating value

Creating value usually requires learning the application of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), livestock production practices, food safety practices, marketing skills, labeling, packaging, treatability, and other compliance issues and insurance. Tools to take advantage of this strategy are consumer education, promotion, and advertising. Some strategies to create value are:

- Organic products: Usually, organic production refers to the holistic management of production, emphasizing biological processes and minimizing the use of non-renewable resources. For an agricultural product to be considered organic, it needs to be certified by an accredited entity.
- Brand image: To create a farm brand, the idea is to communicate intangibles out of the farm. It is the same way of pulling product intangibles out to sell them. The farm brand is the story that sits like an umbrella over all individual products. It is the farm personality, and it affects what farmers do and how they do it. To tell a story successfully, it is important to consider three elements: the subject, the audience, and the method.
- Labelling:[30] Labelling provides information, illustrative or in written form, about the origin, quality, process and ingredients of a product on the packaging or product presentation. It can be a geographical indication (GI), a territorial label, fair trade, or another type.
- Non-Timber Forest Products: "These products are naturally produced in forests and can be harvested for human use without cutting down trees" (M. Gore, 2018). Examples of these products are nuts, berries, mushrooms and medicinal plants. These products could be divided into four categories: Edible and culinary products, specialty wood products, floral and decorative products, and medicinal and dietary supplements.

30 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT. 2022. Labelling and certification schemes for Indigenous People's foods. https://www.fao.org/3/cc0155en/cc0155en.pdf

▶ **STEP 3. Ask the participants about the type of crops they produce or the livestock products they produce and identify strategies they use for adding or creating value.** The facilitator should divide the group into two or more subgroups by products they harvest or livestock they produce. This exercise should be around 30 minutes. Each group should write down their ideas.

▶ **STEP 4. Bring back subgroups into the main group and discuss findings in plenary.** Allow each sub-group to present their findings, and give each group 5–10 minutes to present, ask and respond to questions.

▶ **STEP 5. Final reflection with participants to summarize the main discussed strategies prioritized adding or creating value, and resources participants will need to the strategies they selected.**

- Discuss ideas for collective value addition and aggregation for markets.

4.23 Evaluation of the FFBS Plots

SEASON	Sowing, Vegetative Stage, Harvest
OBJECTIVE	Enable farmers to make periodic observations on both the farmer practice and FFBS experimental plots/beds, collect and record data, draw conclusions on good practices
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip charts, marker pens, containers, soil, seed, water
WORKSPACE	FFBS plots/beds for observation, and additional space to sit and stand as a group

Background

Learning in the FFBS process is seen as a four-stage cycle: first-hand experience and action, reflection, generalization of lessons, and application of lessons. Evaluation of the FFBS plots will elicit full involvement from the farmer, empower farmers to create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories, and enable them to use these theories to make decisions and solve problems in their farms and lives. Reflection on their observations will be reinforced with a focus on the concepts of economic **return on investment** and **adaptation** to climate variability and change at the end of the season.

Steps to follow for the activity

Use the sample Observation Form as guidance and adapt as needed.

▶ STEP 1. **Explain the types of observations that will be made during the season**, and how the information recorded from these observations can be used to help famers compare and reflect on the solutions to their constraints from Session 2.3

▶ STEP 2. **Establish workgroups.** During each session, divide the farmers into groups of 5–6 people; each group will carry out observations on a different section of the farm. Ensure that the entire farm is covered by these groups by creating smaller groups or assigning larger sections. Provide each group with an observation sheet (on the next page) and create a large observation table (based on the sheet) with lines for each farm section on the flip chart.

STEP 3. Make observations in the field. Instruct groups to carry out observations on each of the FFBS plots and the environment in accordance with the form shown below. Make sure to draw attention to the following before the observations are made:

- Develop specific data collection protocols for pest and disease surveillance for each crop/pest; use for data collection purposes.
- Develop a specific data collection protocol to record labor inputs in person-hours or days and any input expenses, to compare labor and costs for each treatment at harvest.
- Develop a protocol to evaluate the yields of harvested crops, either by weight or volume, to compare yields for each treatment at harvest.
- Observe & record growth parameters of the crops (plant height, number of leaves) in a given number of plants per plot (about 10–15 depending on crop) per group. These plants should be randomly picked while the participants walk in the farm in a Z- or M-shape.
- Collect samples of pests, insects and weeds that cannot be identified & seek guidance from agricultural extension/ research facilitators. If anyone has a camera, please take photos.
- List names in local language for translation later if not found.

STEP 4. Start data processing. After observing and notating all the important parameters, the group should come together to record their farm section information onto the flip chart.

STEP 5. Begin group presentations and discussions. Select someone from each group to present findings at a plenary discussion as well as discuss recommendations for future actions. Ask a few questions to find out how group dynamics and leadership have evolved during the observation period. Note that:

- Although farmers are free to criticize one another, this criticism needs to be constructive and restricted to the observations and the presentation itself.
- It is important that everyone should have a say, even if some of the presentations and discussions are lengthy. However, it is recommended to allocate specific time for presentations and ask that the time is respected.

STEP 6. Compare crops and technologies for Return on Investment. After the harvest is completed and measured, ask participants to reflect on the following questions as regards the FFBS plots and their own experiences:

- which ones had the highest yields?
- which crops had the highest market value?
- which ones required the most labor or inputs?
- which ones balance good yields and crop value with labor or inputs requirements to produce a good Return on Investment?
- what conditions are necessary to obtain a good Return on Investment?
- which ones seem the best suited for farmers with limited resources?

Note: *FFBS plots will only test a few options in any given year and any given context. Therefore, the discussion will benefit from farmers drawing on their many years of collective experience to reinforce their analyses, especially as regards balancing labor and input needs with expected yields and crop values to compare Returns on Investment of a given crop, technology, and context. While this type of analysis is usually done by agricultural, group facilitation offers the possibility of making qualitative comparisons to improve future decision making.*

STEP 7. Compare crops and technologies for adaptation to variable rainfall. Ask participants to reflect on the following questions as regards the FFBS plots and their own experiences:

- Which ones are most likely to be most beneficial in a season where rainfall is *below* what is considered normal?
- Which ones are most likely to be most beneficial in a season where rainfall is *above* what is considered normal?
- Which ones might be beneficial in either situation?
- Which ones seem the best suited for farmers with limited resources?

Note: *Link participant's answers to these questions to the modules on Climate Information Module. At the end of the season the farmers can evaluate how well the seasonal forecast correctly predicted rainfall amounts. They can also reflect on whether they would change their choices of crops and technologies to take better advantage of similar forecasts in the future.*

Evaluation of FFBS Plots – Sample Observation Form

Date:			
Bed:			
Date Planted:			
Weather: *Sunshine, Rainy, Cloudy, Windy* *Temperature (hot, moderate, cool)*			
OBSERVATIONS			
	Crop Name:	**Crop Name:**	**Crop Name:**
Plant Stand: (number of plants)			
Soil Moisture: (Dry, moist, wet, flooded)			
Diseases:			
Pests:			
Beneficial Insects / Pollinators:			
Weeds:			
Deficiencies:			
Soil Health:			
Predators:			
Other Observations:			
Recommended Actions Based on Observations:			

4.24 Farmer Field Days

SEASON	Vegetative Stage
OBJECTIVE	To introduce the improved practices (as a result of Production Planning and Crop Management) to the rest of the community to stimulate their interest for the collective engagement learning agenda. This could also be a time to invite special guests.
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip charts, marker pens
WORKSPACE	Enough space for movement, a space for community members to sit

Background

Farmer Field Days are events where farmers evaluate the performance of their crops/livestock using a range of criteria determined by the farmers and facilitators. Field Days are attended by the farmers, community members who are not FFBS participants, extension staff, other NGOs working in the area, and other interested stakeholders. Field Days can be held during different times of the season to teach about different seasonal topics and be a time to celebrate successes.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Decide on the Field Day date(s)**. They can be done at multiple points during the crop season, depending on the objective(s). A program and list of invitees should be developed for each planned Field Day, with number of invitees limited to the capacity of the field to avoid overcrowding. These dates can be added to the "Seasonal Calendar" or decided throughout the growing cycle.

▶ STEP 2. **Ensure a good layout for activities.** The facilitator and FFBS participants should ensure a good layout of field-day activities, with easy access and facility of movement around the field. Plots should be labeled clearly.

▶ STEP 3. **Guide the FFBS participants to develop a simple evaluation sheet to score each of the important attributes for that Field Day objective (sample on next page).** This sheet will be unique to each crop since attributes vary across crops. Make sure to have this form translated to the local language and provide one form to each Field Day participant. As an alternative, this could be conducted orally.

▶ STEP 4. **Begin the Field Day.** During the Field Day the facilitator should:

1. *Provide* suitably large visual material and also, if necessary, a loudspeaker, to ensure that all can hear. Check that extension literature and other material are available for consultation and take-away.
2. *Encourage* the farmers in the FFBS to take most of the initiative; be ushers to ensure flow and guide the visitors by allocating roles to teach the invitees on what they have been learning on each of the plots. Determine farmers to speak beforehand on certain topics.

▶ STEP 5. **Conclude the Field Day by bringing all the participants together**. Start by reviewing the day's proceedings and the main items seen and discussed, conducting a question and answer session, and explaining any future relevant FFBS and extension activities. Remember to distribute any dissemination materials prepared to the community.

For help in planning future field days, a simple questionnaire can be administered to a sample of farmers. Below you will find some sample questions but adjust and add more questions that the farmers are interested in knowing.

Sample Questions for Field Day Evaluation Form

- Name
- Gender
- Education Level
- Have you participated in FFBS?
  - If yes, what is your main activity?
- How far is the field day from your home (how much time did it take you to come)?
- How did you find out about the Farmer Field Day?
- What are the three key lessons (practices) you learned today?
- Which lessons or practices will you apply on your farm as soon as possible? Name one.
- Is there any practice you would like to apply but feel unable to?
  - If yes, which one?
  - Why?
- Do you think the Field Day is a good way to share information?
- Is there another information-sharing method that you think works better for you?
  - If yes, which one?
- What did you like about the Field Day?
- Which aspects of the Field Day could we improve on to meet your needs?

Section 5: Food Loss & Waste

4.25 Reducing Food Loss and Waste

SEASON	Pre-Sowing, Sowing/Weeding, Vegetative Stage, Harvest, Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	This session helps to understand how and where Food Loss and Waste (FLW) occurs. It will give guidance on how to reduce FLW across the food system, from production to post-consumption. Additionally, it will raise awareness about the importance of a Circular Food Economy Model and illustrate how to bring a model into the local context.
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
MATERIALS REQUIRED	Flip charts, marker pens, containers, soil, seed, water
WORKSPACE	FFBS plots/beds for observation, and additional space to sit and stand as a group

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss the difference between food loss and food waste.** Begin the discussion by asking participants what they think food loss is followed by asking what they believe food waste is. After hearing those answers, share the following definitions:

> **Food loss** refers to food that gets spilled, spoilt or otherwise lost, or incurs a reduction of quality and value during its process in the food supply chain before it reaches its final product stage. Another way to think about this in simpler terms is "food loss usually happens at the **production, post-harvest and processing stages** of the food chain."
>
> **Food Waste** refers to food that completes the food supply chain up to a final product, of good quality and is fit for consumption, but still doesn't get consumed because it is discarded, is left to spoil, or expire. Or another way to put this is "Food waste generally refers to **produce lost during marketing & distribution, thrown away by the consumer," as well as what happens post-consumer.**

▶ STEP 2. **Ask participants, "Where do we find Food Loss and Waste and why is it important?"**

Food Loss and Waste happens across the entire food value chain and occurs at very high rates! It's important to note that many models for Food Loss & Waste look at a Linear Economy model, such as the diagram above. A linear economy follows a "take, make, use, dispose" system. This generates a high amount of waste as every stage. FFBS promotes designing a Circular Approach into your FFBS interventions (that you will find on the following pages).

To stimulate discussion, share some of the following points:

Food Loss and Waste facts[31]:

- One third (**1.3 billion tons**) of food produced globally is lost or wasted.
  - 44% occurs in low-income countries. In both situations, **small-scale farmers and hungry, undernourished people suffer the most.** If we could reverse this, it would result in "preserving enough food to feed 2 billion people," OR twice the number of undernourished people across the globe.
- **30–40% of total production in low-income countries** can be lost before reaching market.
  - These losses can be as high as 40–50 percent for root crops, fruits and vegetables, 30 percent for cereals and fish, and 20 percent for oilseeds. The loss of marketable food reduces producers' incomes likely having larger impacts on already disadvantaged people– like women and youth
- **Resources are lost** when food is lost or wasted (water, soil, seeds, energy, labor...).
  - Around 38% of total energy consumption is utilized to produce food that is either lost or wasted, and
  - The total volume of water is estimated at 45 trillion gallons of water, equal to 24 percent of all water used for agriculture.
- Although women play a critical role in the agriculture sector and food value chains, women "face specific constraints in accessing essential productive resources, services and information, and in participating in decision-making," which impacts women's ability to "fully contribute to and benefit from reducing food loss and waste."[32]
- Many low-income countries experiencing the problem of food loss and waste have a large youth population, with median ages around or below 20 years, who are in need of nutritious food for their developmental needs. When these constraints are reduced, youth can become champions for information sharing, good practices, and solutions to mitigate food loss and waste. This could lead to improved food security, better nutrition, as well as income opportunities.

▶ STEP 3. Use a Circular Approach to Identify Challenges and Solutions to Reduce Food Loss and Waste.

What is a Circular Food Economy?

In a Circular Food Economy, "activities at all levels of the food value chain rebuild overall systems health by designing out the concept of waste." They "maintain raw material sources, reduce environmental impacts of production and consumption, help support economic activities, and products can circulate through systems and society."

A Circular Food Economy helps to[33]:

- eliminate food loss and waste across each food value chain
- provide entrepreneurship opportunities at each stage, and boost the local economy
- protect local, renewable resources

31 https://www.wfp.org/stories/11-facts-about-food-loss-and-waste-and-how-it-links-sustainable-food-systems#:~:text=Around%20one%20third%20of%20food,about%20US%241%20trillion%20annually.&text=3.,to%20bed%20hungry%20each%20night

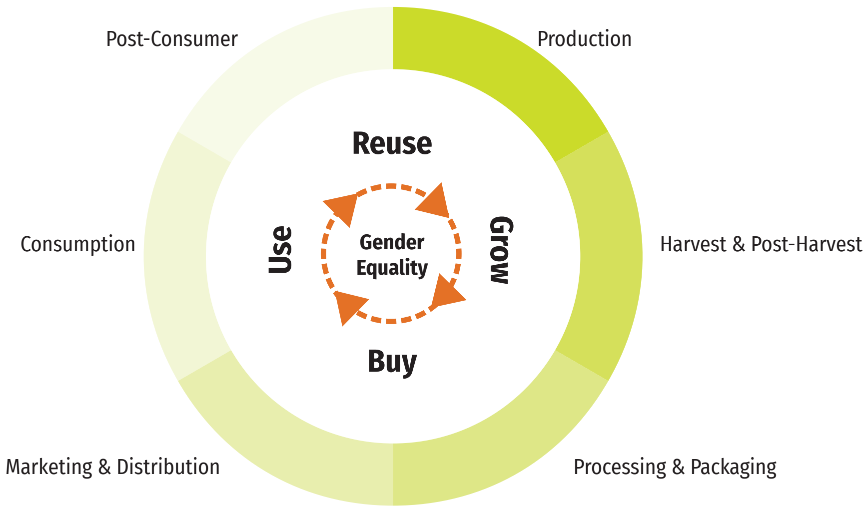
32 FAO. 2018. Gender and food loss in sustainable food value chains. A Guiding Note.

33 https://www.eitfood.eu/blog/transitioning-to-a-circular-food-economy-the-solution-for-food-waste-and-food-loss

Create a Circular Approach to Reduce Food Loss and Waste:
Draw the diagram below on a flip chart paper. Consider one main crop that is being grown.

- First, identify where food loss and waste occurs at each stage and ask who is impacted.
    - Reflect on how food loss and waste may impact some people differently, especially women and youth.
- Next, ask why those identified are most impacted. Work to understand what the constraints are.
- Identify potential solutions for each stage.
    - Consider if there are economic opportunities, incentives, and innovations that may further contribute to solutions, especially for women and youth.
    - Be sure to use the FFBS gender tools as well as other tools in FFBS when identifying solutions. This will support inclusive and gender transformative approaches.

CARE's Gendered Circular Economy Model to Reducing Food Loss and Waste



Ideas

Use the information below to support the discussion. Determine with participants action steps towards solutions. Be sure to involve local experts and entrepreneurs, as possible/desired (agriculture extension, private sector, researchers, and more) to determine solutions and increase support. In subsequent seasons, or when appropriate for participants, determine what additional solutions are possible, such as thinking of potential business opportunities at each stage.

Production:
There are many challenges at the production level that can result in loss in the field. Among many include poor or no production planning, poor soil, increasing pest and disease challenges, and limited access to services such as extension services and weather information. There are many solutions at the production stage to reduce loss, including gender sensitive and gender responsive farmer education and resources around the topics of production planning, diversified cropping systems, creation and ownership of inputs, and resilient seed system. Additionally, education and access to climate and weather information services lessens challenges.

Harvest and Post-Harvest:
Lack of knowledge, education, and resources can lead to food loss during harvest and post-harvest. Some factors that contribute to loss include lack of knowledge on best harvest practices, handling practice, food safety, and storage. Additionally, lack of tools, technology or appropriate storage can further result in loss. Through improved harvesting and handling practices, including increasing education and skills in best practices, some of these issues can be resolved. Additionally, post-harvest practices and sanitation, which includes topics such as food safety, cleaning and storage practices can improve farming outcomes.

Processing and Packaging:

Lack of, or poor processing facilities, along with poor packing and processing techniques and tools lead to loss at the processing and packaging stage of the food value chain. Lack of access to physical resources such as appropriate and safe packaging, often due to the high costs is a challenge. Lack of proper cold storage facilities often results in degradation of food quality, and often outright food loss. Repurpose processing byproducts into other value added products is one solution. Other solutions include environmentally friendly packaging using local resources.

Marketing and Distribution:

Challenges to transportation often result in unreliable market supply, which is compounded by asymmetric market information, and limited producer negotiation skills and power. When this takes place food often isn't sold in a timely manner, resulting in food loss. Women are especially disadvantaged as they often have more limited access to markets. Once produce arrives at a market, unsanitary conditions and often poor storage facilities result in spoilage, degradation, and loss of food. Through increased market knowledge, access to markets, local production and certification programs, and more, his allows producers new opportunities for their food to reach markets.

Consumption:

Once food reaches the consumer, food waste often results from poor shelf life of a food product, the lack of resources or knowledge to properly store food which leads to spoilage, discard of edible food, improper food preparation, and misleading or inaccurate food labels that led consumers to discard food inappropriately. Consumer decisions often lead to negative environmental and resource-level impacts as well. Nutrient waste is another type of food waste that occurs when food loses its nutrient value through improper storage or consumption methods. Through nutrition education, behavioral change activities, consumer education campaigns, and homestead kitchen gardens, waste can be reduced in communities.

Post-Consumer:

Post-consumption waste can affect the environment from its impact from being in landfills. It also often means that edible & nutritious food is disposed of rather than reaching consumers who have less access but who also need healthy foods. Waste at this stage also results in lost economic opportunities to repurpose waste into new products. Through compost education and other methods, other solutions can contribute to food recovery, and food re-distribution, which could lead to entrepreneurship opportunities to re-use food safely.

Additional Opportunities to Consider for Women and Youth:

- Build on technical capacity, mobilizing resources and funding to advance solutions led by women and youth entrepreneurs to improve food systems where loss and waste are prevalent. Youth can leverage their skills and technological know-know to create value and offer sustainable solutions that will contribute to diversified income and improved food security.
- Engage youth and explore youth-friendly learning spaces that include school and out-of-school youth programming to increase awareness and generate new ideas and solutions for food loss and waste mitigation.
- Support and fund opportunities for value-addition and income generating solutions via women and youth-led social enterprises and demand-driven solutions and services in FLW prevention and reduction. Skill development in food processing, recycling and digital solutions are pathways for greater youth engagement in problem solving a as innovators in FLW mitigation.

Annex

Companions Plants, Allies and Enemies: Research shows that some plants support each other better than others. Here are some beneficial planting combinations, as well as combinations to avoid. Use this as a reference. Work with farmers and experts to add local and traditional plants. What are the known plant companions, allies, and enemies? Use the chart for planning purposes.[1]

Plant	Plant Companions	Plant Allies	Plant Enemies
Asparagus	Basil, parsley, tomato	Pot marigold deters beetles.	
Beans	Beet (to bush beans only), cabbage family, carrot, celery, chard, corn, cucumber, eggplant, pea, potatoes, radish, strawberry.	Marigold deters Mexican bean beetles. Nasturtium and rosemary deter bean beetles. Summer savory deters bean beetles, improves growth and flavor.	Garlic, onion and shallot stunt the growth of beans.
Beets	Bush beans, cabbage family, lettuce, onion.	Garlic improves growth and flavor.	Pole beans and beets stunt each other's growth.
Carrots	Bean, lettuce, onion, pea, pepper, radish, tomato.	Chives improve growth and flavor. Rosemary and sage deter carrot fly.	Dill hinders growth.
Celery	Bean, cabbage family and tomato.	Chives and garlic deter aphids. Nasturtium deters bugs and aphids.	
Chard	Bean, cabbage family and onion		
Corn/Maize	Bean, cucumber, melon, parsley, pea, potato, pumpkin, squash.	Odorless marigold and white geranium deter Japanese beetles. Pigweed raises nutrients from the subsoil to where the corn can reach them.	Tomatoes and corn are attacked by the same worm.
Cucumber	Bean, cabbage family, corn, pea, radish, tomato	Marigold deters beetles. Nasturtium deters aphids, beetles and bugs, improves growth and flavor. Oregano deters pests in general. Tansy deters ants, beetles, bugs, flying insects.	Sage is generally injurious to cucumber.
Eggplant	Bean, pepper.	Marigold deters nematodes.	
Lettuce	Beet, cabbage family, carrot, onion, radish, strawberry.	Chives and garlic deter aphids.	
Melons	Corn, pumpkin, radish, squash.	Marigold deters beetles. Nasturtium deters bugs and beetles. Oregano provides general pest protection.	

1 Burpee. 2023. Companion Planting Guide. https://www.burpee.com/blog/companion-planting-guide_article10888.html

Plant	Plant Companions	Plant Allies	Plant Enemies
Onions	Beet, cabbage family, carrot, chard, lettuce, pepper, strawberry, tomato.	Chamomile and summer savory improve growth and flavor. Pigweed raises nutrients from subsoil and makes them available to the onions. Sow thistle improves growth and health.	Onions stunt bean, pea.
Parsley	Asparagus, corn, tomato		
Peas	Bean, carrot, corn, cucumber, radish, turnip.	Chives deter aphids. Mint improves health and flavor.	Garlic and onion stunt the growth of peas.
Peppers	Carrot, eggplant, onion and tomato		
Potatoes	Beans, cabbage family, corn, eggplant, pea.	Horseradish, planted at the corners of the potato patch, provides general protection. Marigold deters beetles.	Tomatoes and potatoes are attacked by the same blight.
Pumpkins	Corn, melon, squash.	Marigold deters beetles. Nasturtium deters bugs, beetles. Oregano provides general pest protection.	
Radishes	Bean, carrot, cucumber, lettuce, melon, pea.	Chervil and nasturtium improve growth and flavor.	Hyssop
Spinach	Cabbage family, strawberry		
Squash	Corn, melon, pumpkin.	Borage deters worms, improves growth and flavor. Marigold deters beetles. Nasturtium deters squash bugs and beetles. Oregano provides general pest protection.	
Strawberry	Bean, lettuce, onion, spinach, thyme.	Cabbage.	Borage strengthens resistance to insects and disease. Thyme, as a border, deters worms.
Tomatoes	Asparagus, carrot, celery, cucumber, onion, parsley, pepper.	Basil repels flies and mosquitoes, improves growth and flavor. Bee balm, chives and mint improve health and flavor. Borage deters tomato worm, improves growth and flavor. Dill, until mature, improves growth and health. Once mature, it stunts tomato growth. Marigold deters nematodes. Pot marigold deters tomato worm and general garden pests.	Corn and tomato are attacked by the same worm. Mature dill retards tomato growth. Kohlrabi stunts tomato growth. Potatoes and tomatoes are attacked by the same blight.
Turnips	Pea		
Cabbage Family (Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Kale, and Kohlrabi)	Beet, celery, chard, cucumber, lettuce, onion, potato, spinach.	Chamomile and garlic improve growth and flavor. Catnip, hyssop, rosemary and sage deter cabbage moth. Dill improves growth and health. Mint deters cabbage moth and ants, improves health and flavor. Nasturtium deters bugs, beetles, aphids. Southernwood deters cabbage moth, improves growth and flavor. Tansy deters cabbageworm and cutworm. Thyme deters cabbageworm.	Kohlrabi and tomato stunt each other's growth.

5. Marketing Tools

PART 1 – Understanding and Analyzing Market Forces

5.1 Introducing Marketing Concepts[1]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To introduce the marketing of farmers produce and to come-up with a common marketing vision for the group. The idea is to set the scene for farmer engagement with different market actors
TIMEFRAME	2 Hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip Charts and Markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Participants should have room to sit or stand

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit, including the minimum standards and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

This is the basic process of introducing marketing to the groups. The facilitator should introduce the concepts and help farmers understand that in order to successfully adopt a market focus, the group has to change its approach towards production and improve their own practices.

The focus of this session is not only to introduce marketing to the groups, but also gauge their interest and seriousness in adopting a different mentality and attitude regarding their production.

By the end of this session, the farmer group and all its members should have a clear understanding of and orientation to marketing, a group agreement to produce with the market in mind, and mindfulness of the change in production practices if they adopt a market orientation. This process should ensure that the group is committed and ready to change their production practices and adopt a market orientation for their work.

It should be noted that market success depends on a number of factors including the individual's ability to harness the opportunities that come to them.

1 Ferris, S., Kaganzi, E., Best, R., Ostertag, C., Lundy, M., and Wandschneider-Cali, T, CO. (2006). *A market facilitators guide to participatory agro enterprise development*. Central Internacionale de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT).

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Remind impact group members why producing for markets is different.** This explanation includes the following ideas:

- It is an empowerment program that promotes opportunities for community/group and family empowerment; it is not a grants, gifts, or provisions program.
- Typical agricultural enhancement programs focus on increasing yields or increase productivity; but when producing for the markets the goals are to help participants engage with organized, formal markets and produce for the market.
- It aims to empower women to participate equitably in markets.

▶ STEP 2. **Using flip charts, ask the farmers to draw a map or picture of their current production, post-harvest, and marketing practices.**

Typically, they will show the tools and methods they use, the postproduction activities such as drying techniques and preservation methods, as well as the marketing. This may include buyers picking the product from the farm.

▶ STEP 3. **Ask the participants about their current marketing constraints and strengths.** In group discussion, work towards providing solutions to these constraints.

Emphasize that most marketing challenges can be overcome if the farmers learn to produce with the market requirements and needs in mind.

▶ STEP 4. **Discuss their objectives** and how much effort the farmers will have to put into their production, their ability to work together and the fact that when producing for markets, commitment, hard work, and honesty are key for success. Ask them:

- Do they find these components necessary?
- Do they think that they can be successful in these efforts?
    - Which ones are most challenging?
    - Which ones do they feel confident doing?

▶ STEP 5. After they have drawn the first map, **ask participants to visualize what changes they would make if they were to be more successful** in their production, post-harvest, and marketing activities. They should make a new map to include these changes.

This market mapping process will help guide the farmer group on discovering changes they need to make to effectively achieve their vision.

▶ STEP 6. Place the 2 maps side by side and **discuss with the farmers some of the activities they could undertake to achieve their vision.**

Ask the following questions:

- Where are we? Where do we want to be in 3–5 years?
- What changes do we make to our production and marketing practices to get to our 3–5 year vision?
- What activities should be done in the short, medium, and long term?
- What kind of resources would be needed to make some of these changes?
- What do you anticipate to be challenges when making these changes?

5.2 Selecting a Market Research Committee[2]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To ensure that the farmer group has a small committee that is tasked to spearhead marketing activities for the group; to ensure that roles and responsibilities of this committee are understood and agreed upon by all the members of the group
TIMEFRAME	1 hour for discussion; 2 hours for selection and adoption of committee
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip Charts and Markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

In order to effectively plan for and implement marketing activities at the group level, the facilitator should work with the group to set up a marketing committee. This group should be comprised of a few group members whose responsibility is to spearhead all market related activities. The facilitator should introduce the idea and get members to understand the importance of these committees, provide guidelines for the election process of the committees, and then oversee the election/selection process of the committee. The roles and responsibilities of this committee should be outlined upfront and agreed upon by all members. This committee will be in more frequent contact with the facilitator outside of group sessions, so having a strong market research committee is very important.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** At the group meeting, remind the group on the conclusion points of the previous session on the changes need to achieve the vision, specifically the organizational one. Introduce the need to have specific individuals in the group to spearhead and take charge of marketing activities. Clarify that this is not a new management structure but a selection process of people that should take charge of all the marketing activities. Make sure that all participants understand the importance of having a committee; encourage them to add their own thoughts and ideas to the discussion.

▶ STEP 2. **Creating the Committee.** Conduct a discussion to have a common understanding of the committee mandate. When this is established, ask the group members to brainstorm on the number of people or post that should be part of the committee. Talk about both the size of the committee and their proposed roles and responsibilities. Always emphasize that the role of the committee is to represent their members and provide feedback to the rest of the group for joint decision-making. The numbers and composition will depend on the size of the group but should usually be between 3–6 individuals at most.

Discuss with the group the required criteria for market committee member as well as their roles and responsibilities. The points highlighted below can guide the discussion.

2 Ferris, S., Kaganzi, E., Best, R., Ostertag, C., Lundy, M., and Wandschneider-Cali, T, CO. (2006). *A market facilitators guide to participatory agro enterprise development*. Central Internacionale de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT).

Questions to ask:

- Why do we need committees to get work done?
- What should be the roles and responsibilities of the committee?
- How big should a committee be?
- What should be the attributes of a person elected to the marketing committee?
- How long should the committee serve?
- How should the committee relate to the other committees including the leadership of the group?
- How should the committee be selected?

Possible Roles of the Market Committee

- Some of the roles of this committee will include conducting market research, negotiating with buyers, identifying market opportunities, sharing regular market information and supporting members to plan for their production and marketing.
- The committee will help members estimate individual production and costs. They also maintain market information and constant communication with potential buyers.
- As groups mature, they may decide to split the market committee's function into two having a standalone input marketing committees and a standalone output marketing committee.

Possible Criteria for the Market Committee

- Some of the criteria for membership should focus on having members that show commitment, good communication, reading, writing, & mathematics. Not all members must possess these skills but the committee should have some members that exhibit these skills.
- Other potential good qualities to look out for these committee members include: being an active farmer, experience in leadership role, knowledgeable, trustworthy, hardworking, business skills (track record in selling), networking ability (especially with traders) and commitment for their group.

▶ **STEP 3.** Based on the group's discussion, the **group should determine a plan for selecting committee members.** These selections should be made according to the ground standard. Once the committee is selected, be sure to plan your next meeting/communication with the committee.

Conclude by reminding the group that the marketing committee will lead all marketing initiatives from this point forward. It's the work of the committee to undertake market opportunity identification and negotiate with traders on sale of their group's products. The committee will follow up on production practices to ensure that farmers are producing the right quality and quantity of products, and will also ensure that the groups' production and business plans are implemented.

5.3 Conducting a Market Survey

SEASON	Pre-sowing; Vegetative, and Harvesting Stages
OBJECTIVE	Enable participants will be able to gather information about demand and markets for their products
TIMEFRAME	This depends on the number of products and markets, and where the markets are; see below. *Single product* • Day 1. Afternoon: select a product and plan questions. • Day 2. Morning: visit market; afternoon: analyze information; evening: discussion. *Several products, several markets* • Day 1. Decide which markets to visit, prepare a questionnaire or checklist. • Day 2. Visit markets to gather information. • Day 3–5. Analyze information. • Day 6–7. Present findings to group.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Survey questionnaire, large sheets of paper, colored marker pens, notepads, pens or pencils, transport to and from market, refreshments
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

A market survey is an important way for farmers to gather information about the markets for their products. A simple market survey focuses on a single product in one market. A more complex survey may cover several products in several different markets.

PART I. Planning and Conducting Interviews

Steps to follow for the activity

PREPARATION

▶ STEP 1. **Work with the Market Research Committee to decide what types of information to collect.** This will depend on the nature of the product and the targeted market. Generally, the market research will focus on a product and its buying conditions.

▶ STEP 2. **Have the Market Research Committee decide which market(s) to visit and determine when you can visit trough the market map and recent markets information.** List the market sites to visit (village market, assembly market, town wholesale market, retail market, processing factory, shop), and the best dates and times to visit them.

▶ STEP 3. **Have the Market Research Committee plan the number of interviews in each market.** Plan to interview several traders or buyers individually so you can compare their answers. Pairs of team members can conduct interviews, with one person asking questions and the other taking notes.

▶ STEP 4. **Have the Market Research Committee prepare a questionnaire or checklist, based on the types of information you want to collect.**

▶ STEP 5. **Help the Market Research Committee finalize plans:**

- Prepare an introduction explaining why you are doing the survey.
- Rehearse. Discuss the interview procedure with the marketing committee and rehearse it with different farmers playing the roles of interviewer and interviewee.
- Arrange interviews. If necessary, contact the people you want to interview beforehand to determine a suitable time.
- Arrange transport. If the market is far away, you may also need to arrange for the team to stay overnight.

Activity

▶ STEP 1. **The facilitator should visit the market with the team of farmers.** Make contact with any market officials, to tell them what you are planning to do in the market. If the place is unfamiliar, walk through it to find out where your products are traded and who the team might interview.

▶ STEP 2. **Conduct interviews.** Approach the person you want to interview, introduce yourselves, and explain why you want to talk to him or her. Follow the interview plan you have worked out, and make sure you collect the information you need. Feel free to also explore interesting topics that you had not anticipated.

▶ STEP 3. **At the end of the interview, thank the interviewee for their time and information.** Make sure your notes are in order before going to interview the next person.

▶ STEP 4. **Afterwards, collate the information you have collected so you can analyze and present it.**

Questions to stimulate discussion:

- What do we need to know about the product and how it is marketed? What do we know already? What information do we need to check?
- How many people should we interview? What types of people – traders, managers, transporters, processors, consumers...?
- What is the best way to approach people we want to interview? Should we take notes during the interview, or immediately afterwards?
- What sorts of information may be sensitive or difficult to get hold of? Can we find out this information from any other sources?

NOTES

- Some of the questions (e.g., about prices) may be sensitive, and interviewees may be reluctant to answer – or give inaccurate responses. During an interview, start off with non-sensitive questions, then move on to the more difficult questions later. Ask about prices towards the end of your interview.
- Be sure that the person you are interviewing has time (if not, arrange to come back at a better time). Do not take more than 15–20 minutes with each person.
- Stop asking questions when the person is dealing with customers.
- Always thank the person you have interviewed for their time at the end of the interview.
- Adapt the interview guide or questionnaire (see interview guide) as necessary. The survey team can ask all of these questions for each product, or only the most important questions.

PART II. Analyzing and Reporting Market Information

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Bring together the members of the Market Research Committee that conducted the market study plus perhaps a few other group members to help with the analysis.**

▶ STEP 2. **Discuss the market survey experience with the committee to determine findings and implications for the farmers.** Ask the group:

- What did they learn?
- What did they find most interesting?
- What was surprising?
- How will what they learned impact them?

▶ STEP 3. **Summarize the information using a table.**

▶ STEP 4. **Decide who will present the information to the larger group of farmers.** It may be best to divide up the task of presentation among several members of the survey team.

▶ STEP 5. **Call a meeting with all the members of the group.**

▶ STEP 6. **Invite the team members to present their findings to the whole group.**

▶ STEP 7. **Facilitate a discussion of the findings to interpret the findings and explore their implications for the whole group.**

Questions to Stimulate Discussion

- What did the survey team members learn from the survey? What surprised them most? For each person, what was the single most useful piece of new information they learned?
- Of the various products and markets surveyed, which is the most promising? Which should the group explore further? Which are least promising?
- What would the group have to do to take advantage of the market opportunities they have identified?

5.4 Gendered Value-Chain Analysis[3]

SEASON	Pre-sowing, Sowing, Vegetative, harvesting, post-harvest stages
OBJECTIVE	To map where women are present in the key value chains that the project is working on and whether they are present as participants (producers, processors, value adders) or as controllers (sellers, managers), including being supported by spouses
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart and multiple colors of markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Any meeting place. The exercise can be carried out with men and women separately

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

This exercise is ideally completed through a focus group discussion with women and men who are all part of the same value chain, but it can also be done with a group of women and men involved in different value chains, provided that there are two or three women and men involved in one chain so that they can work on the assignment together. The facilitator should meet with the same focus group one year later to hold another discussion; consent should be obtained for follow-up when selecting the group for the first gendered value chain analysis.

Steps to follow for the activity.

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction and participant information.** Explain that we are going to spend some time to understand the enterprises that women and men are involved in and where they are placed in the production and marketing processes. Tell the group that the exercise will help us to identify relationships between players in the value chain, and where the opportunities to boost women's position and income-earning are, including for men that demonstrate support for their spouses.

▶ STEP 2. **Drawing the value chain.** Ask the group to draw a diagram of their value chain, using paper and markers or materials collected from around the village. See diagram 1.

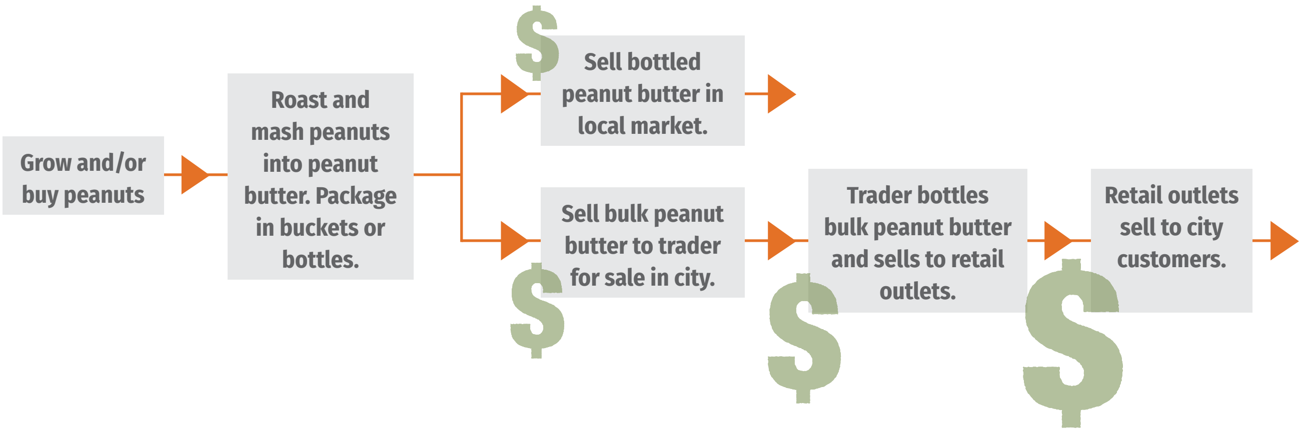
Diagram 1

3 From *LINKAGES Guide to Measuring Ultimate Outcome Indicators*

Note: *Make sure that they are diagramming the entire value chain and not just the processing or production stages in which Pathways beneficiaries are involved in their local village. If they don't have much information about downstream stages (such as international exports), they can take a best guess. The diagram needs to include all key steps, stages or processes, but does not have to be overly detailed.*

▶ STEP 3. **Most profitable stages.** Ask the group to mark the processes or stages in the value chain that are *most valuable* or that *make the most profit,* using a separate colour or symbol. See diagram 2 below.

Diagram 2

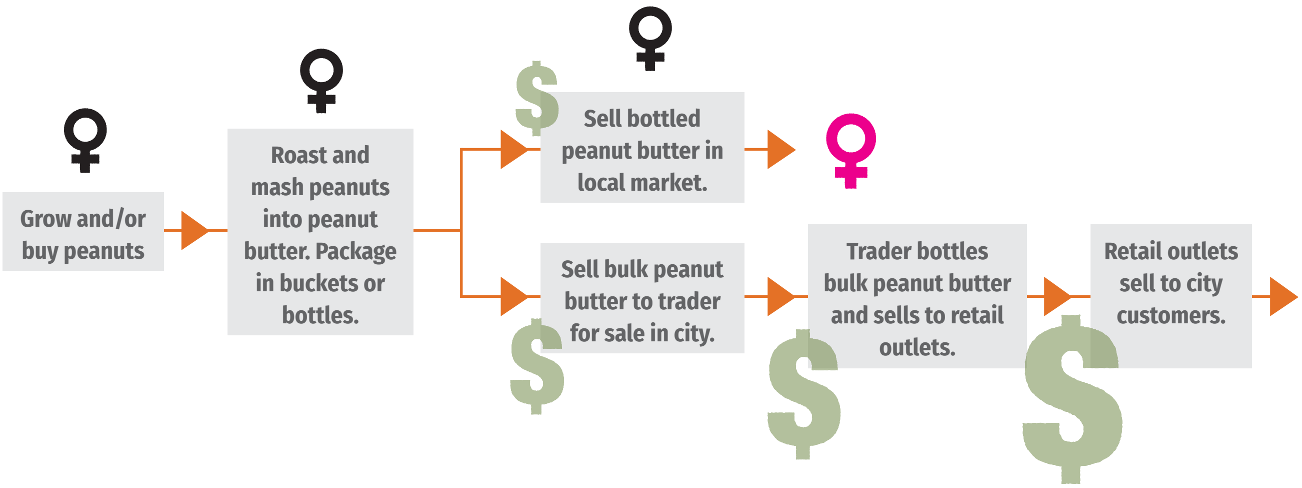


Note: *In this diagram, the larger the dollar sign, the greater the profit.*

▶ STEP 4. **Women's participation and control.** Ask the group to mark the processes in the value chain where they participate, using a separate color or symbol. See diagram 3 below. It's important to specify the category of poverty and the age (youth, adult, married, no married)

▶ STEP 5. **Ask the group to mark processes that they control with another color.** See diagram 3 below.

Diagram 3.

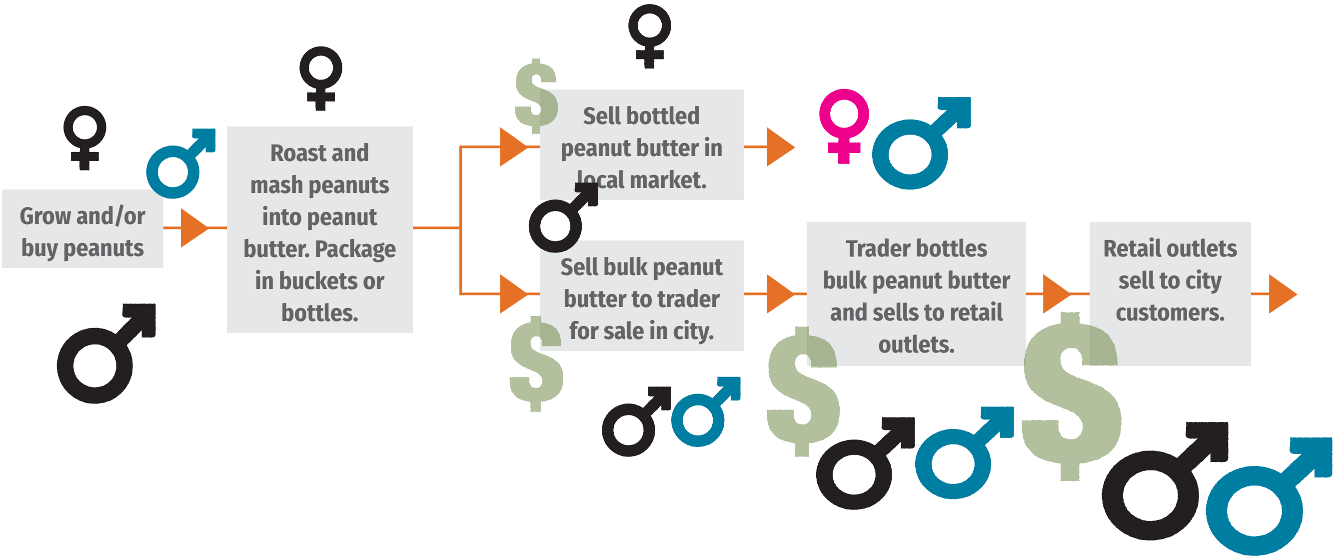


NOTE: *In the sample above, "participation" is marked by the black sign for woman and "control" is marked by the pink sign for woman. The larger the symbol, the more participation or control the woman has. When completing this exercise use different coloured marker pens to make the distinction between participation and control.*

▶ STEP 6. **Men's involvement and control.** Ask the group to mark the processes in which men are involved, using a separate colour or symbol. See diagram 4.

▶ STEP 7. **Ask the group to mark processes that men control with another color.** See diagram 4.

Diagram 4.



NOTE: *In the sample above, the black symbols for man represent participation and the blue symbols represent control. Note again that the larger the symbol, the greater control or participation. When completing this exercise use different coloured marker pens to make the distinction between participation and control.*

▶ STEP 8. **Analyzing the value chain.** Analyze the chart with beneficiaries to identify gender inequalities in control and access in the value chain. Ask the following questions:

- What are the stages along the value chain where there is greater value?
- Who are key actors in the processes that are the most valuable, women or men? Why do you think that is?
- Are women primarily concentrated in one or two processes in the value chain? Are these the most valued processes? The most skilled? The best remunerated?
- What skills, equipment, capital, information is required to enter the higher-valued stages?
- What are the main barriers for women to participate in these stages?
- What can women do to get into processes that are more valuable or that have more value add and control?
- What types of businesses are women more likely to be involved in, in this community? And men? Why is that?
- Within a household, who in the household typically makes the sale from this crop? Who makes the sale of the processed products? Can either partner make the sale, at any given time?
- What are the advantages or disadvantages that men and women have in finding markets and negotiating sales for their products? Why do you think that is?
- What happens at the household level, when earnings from the crop or processed products come into the household? How is the money from the crop or processed product distributed between spouses/and with other family members?

STEP 9. Identifying opportunities, constraints, goals. Identify the goals for the season and the project period by asking the following questions:

- What changes do you hope to see along this value-chain (including at the household level)? Why?
- What skills, support, information is required to realize these changes?
- What information, understanding do men need to have to help realize these changes? How can they be brought on board?
- What rules need to change to help realize these changes?

STEP 10. Summarize the key points of the discussion and point out where the Pathways program will support some of the goals they have identified. Use the discussion to identify the specific power issues or gendered constraints that the project can help address, or the additional resources and connections that may be needed.

Example summary of the sample diagrams charts and discussion:

> *Respondents noted that women have some role in growing peanuts, but the bulk of peanuts need to be bought, and this is men's job. Women are primarily responsible for making and bottling peanut butter. Women and men equally sell peanut butter in local markets and their control over the profits from this venture is about equal. It is primarily men who sell outside the village. There is a little more money to be made here, and men tend to hold this as part of household profits. Men are also primarily involved in and control interactions related to trading. This is where the most money is to be made. There are some women involved in retail sales and, if they own their own shops, they will control the profits, but mostly it is men who run these shops or own them and they control related profits.*

Make sure to store or photograph the diagrams so that they can be revisited in the next years of the project, to see if there have been changes.

Repeat after Year 1

Either by using the baseline diagrams and revising them or by drawing new diagrams, hold another discussion with the same focus groups after one year. Use the following questions:

- Has there been any change to where women are placed in the value chain? Where men are placed?
- Are women controlling more valued processes?
- Are there more women involved in the more valued areas in the value chain?
- Where have men moved to? Have they taken on less skilled, less well-paid tasks?
- Are men entering any areas where it used to be mostly women working, but where men are now seeing greater profit and opportunity because this area's value has increased?
- Are the activities to increase women's access to and control over the more valued areas in the value chain working? What can Pathways help do better?

5.5 Understanding Competition

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To help farmers understand what their place in the marketplace is vis-à-vis other market actors
TIMEFRAME	Two hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, Markers, Individual note books
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer. Familiarity with such concepts as market power and competitive analysis is a plus.

No market actor exists alone in a marketplace, and thus understanding one's place is essential for business planning and developing a roadmap for one's next steps. Competitive analysis is important to understand one's strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis others, as well as forming a good opinion of potential outside opportunities and threats.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **In the farmer group, initiate a discussion around how they understand the marketplace.** The basic understanding of interconnectedness of market actors can be illustrated by the following group exercise.

- Invite the participants to get up and walk around the floor. Instruct them to pick two other participants and keep equal distance between themselves and those two participants they picked.
- Out of the group now arranged on the training floor, the facilitator picks out three participants randomly asking them to stand close to the facilitator. Instruct the remaining participants to rearrange themselves to keep being equally distant from the other two participants they originally picked.
- When the group is once again has come to the equilibrium, explain that this is what happens in real market. Once some markets participants made their move, all other pieces move too. This shows how interconnected every actor is in any given market. Market actors change direction all the time forcing change to come naturally and constantly. Every smart market actor needs to see that 1) such change is constant (markets are dynamic), 2) it is in her best interest to anticipate this change and adjust as quickly as possibly (plan your move based on anticipated change, not on change that has taken place), and 3) see that there will be other actors who may adjust to the coming change faster than you are. The more aware you are of what they will do the better (competition is also constant and competitive positioning should be part of everyone's game plan).

STEP 2. In the farmer group, explain the dynamics of the competitive environment and explain a simplified five forces driving the intensity of competition for a given value chain.

- **Rivalry.** The facilitator invites the group to think of a market (choose any that is familiar to the group) and the number of people selling a same or similar product. How many other farmers they know selling it? If the number is large enough, do they think it is reflected in a lower or a higher price. Are there any large players selling the same product or is it mostly similar size holdings? Does any of the people they know that sell that product is more powerful than others and why? Explain the concept of rivalry between competitors that depends on the number and the size of competitors.
  The rule is: the greater the number of rivals in a market, the more intense the competition, the less competitive the position of an individual market player.

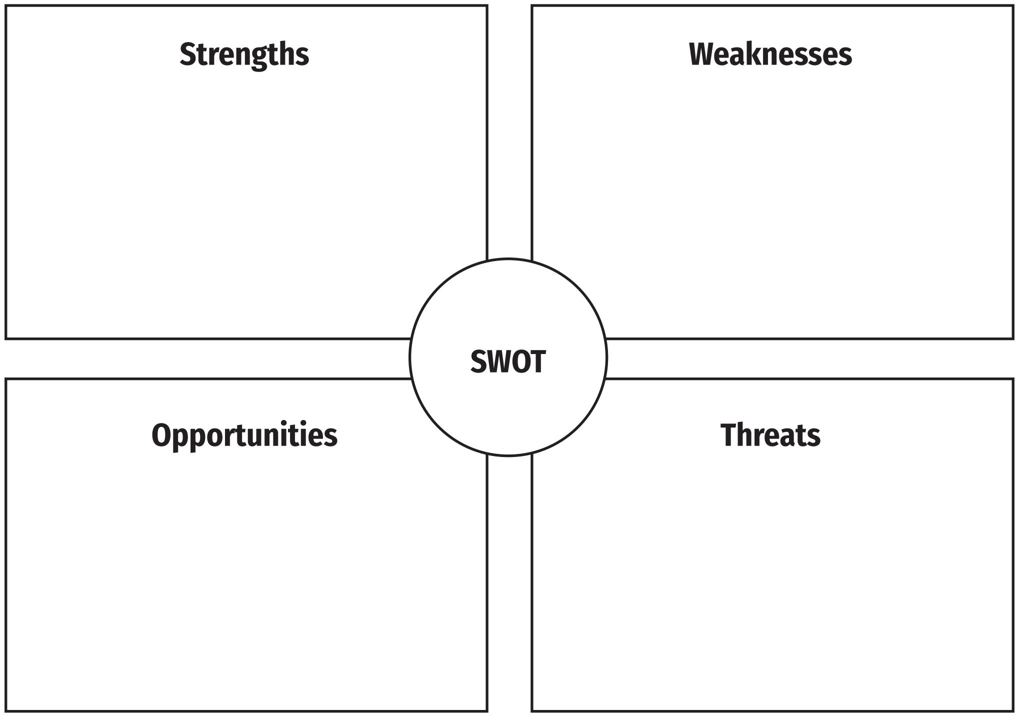
- **Substitutes.** Invite the group to think of the type of product we are discussing. What happens if the product suddenly disappears from the market? Will it be easy to replace with something else (e.g. will people easily replace maize with yams, chicken with lamb, tea with coffee, honey with sugar, etc.?) These products are called substitutes.
  The rule is: the fewer substitutes there are for the product one sells, the more competitive the position of an individual market player.

- **Suppliers.** Suppliers affect competition to an important degree. Invite the group to think of who the suppliers are for them to be able to produce the product in question. What are the inputs that go into making one's product? If there are traders in the group, who are they buying from? Are there many people they buy from or a few? How does this affect the individuals' power to negotiate best prices?
  The rule is: If many buyers rely on a relatively small number of suppliers, the easier it is for suppliers to control the price they ask of the buyers, and the less competitive the buyers (in our care producers and traders) are.

- **Buyers.** Invite the group to think who their buyers are? Are there many or few? If their buyers start asking prices that seem unreasonable, is it easy for the group members to find new buyers with better offers and switch? All these will determine the relative power of buyers.
  The rule is: the fewer the number of buyers in the market vis-à-vis the number of sellers, the more power the buyers have and the less competitive each seller is.

- **New Entrants.** One final important competitive force to keep in mind will be the ease of entry into the market. Invite the group to discuss what would happen if the price of the product they are selling increases manyfold, will it be hard for their neighbors – currently not engaged with that product – to invest and start competing with them? If the answer is no, it will be easy for them, then the barriers to entry are low. If the opposite is true, then the barriers to entry are high.
  The rule is: the lower the barrier to entry, the more intense the competition and the less power each competitor has.

STEP 3. In a group setting do a quick SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis using the five competitive forces. Facilitator divides participants into 2–4 groups and instructs them to think of themselves as market actors for any given product (they can use the product they chose in the previous exercise or find a new product). Each group will present its analysis after. A following diagram will help participants organize their analysis:



- **Strengths:** A factor that is internal to the market actor. The participant should think of their strength as something that they can control or that they themselves have, This could include a certain set of skills that are better than those of their competitors, better location close to the market, a better network of people willing to buy their product, better breed of cattle they have, better access to inputs or some specialized knowledge others don't have, supportive husband and other family members, etc.
  Action to take: see how you can link your strengths to the existing or future opportunities; keep skills sharp and ahead of competition; develop new skills to improve your position

- **Weaknesses:** Weakness is also internal: something that participants can control. It is the exact opposite of strength: lack of skills others may have, location further from the market, poor networks of buyers and suppliers, fewer family members who can help, lack of support from one's husband, etc.
  Action to take: Minimize the weaknesses as much as possible, focusing on ones that prevent you from linking to opportunities. Get to know more buyers, develop new skills, take an FFBS training, become part of a VSLA.

- **Opportunities:** Opportunities are external to the participant, something they cannot control. They could include buyers suddenly becoming interested in a certain product, new pro-poor or pro-business laws being enacted, a trade show taking place soon, new buyers coming to town, etc.
  Action to take: Link with strengths: see how you can use your strengths to jump on the existing opportunities and improve your position.

- **Threats:** These are also external, and cannot be controlled. Those include climate change, political, social and economic turmoil, currency depreciation, new large competitors moving in, etc.
  Action to take: Try to turn threats into opportunities by making changes to what you do. How can you use your strengths to do this? If you cannot turn them into opportunities, you will need to position yourself so that they damage your business minimally by planting your feet firmly, becoming more flexible for example diversifying your livelihoods, improving your diets, making necessary social adjustments, etc.

5.6 Concepts of Entrepreneurship

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To introduce the concept of entrepreneurship and why it's important for farmers that want to develop businesses to effectively link with markets and other actors in the marketplace.
TIMEFRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts and Markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Participants should have room to sit or stand

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

This module should follow/ be part of the process of introducing marketing concepts to farmers and should be used to highlight the need for farmers to take farming as a business and emphasize why the farmer field and business school approach seeks to change the way farmers approach farming. This attitude shift and mindset change is necessary in order to thrive in dynamic market spaces. It will also be followed by the business plan development.

The focus of this session is not only to introduce entrepreneurship to the groups, but also gauge their interest and seriousness in adopting an entrepreneurial mindset regarding transitioning their production toward commercializing.

By the end of this session, the farmer group and all its members should have a better sense and understanding of what it takes to be an entrepreneur and why the spirit of enterprise will define their success as a group.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session the facilitator and the farmers will know and understand

- The meaning of entrepreneurship, and an entrepreneur.
- Know what the Spirit of enterprise is and who has it.
- Know how you catalyze the spirit of entrepreneurship in the farmer field and business school.

- Assess the qualities of an entrepreneur.
- Build self-confidence to increase the enterprise spirit among individuals and the group.

It should be noted that market success depends on several factors including the individual's ability to harness the opportunities that come to them.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduce to the group the idea that taking farming as a business requires everyone to behave and think differently.** Business requires a different kind of mindset, different energy, and that from this point forward the farmers must work on farming with a sense of need and desire to grow their wealth in every aspect of their farming.

▶ STEP 2. **The facilitator will tell the farmers that in the session we will explore what entrepreneurship is, why it's important and that we will work together to identify the qualities of an entrepreneur** and work towards ensuring the group works to embody the spirit of enterprise in order to thrive and grow.

- The facilitator should introduce the session with several questions related to the enterprise spirit, asking the group some of the following questions to spur conversations. The facilitator should let the farmers know that the objective of the session is to help everyone think about these questions and find their own answers since this is in the spirit of enterprise.
  - What is enterprise Spirit?
  - Who has it?
  - How do you catalyze it?
  - What is entrepreneurship?
  - Who is an entrepreneur?
- *The Collins Dictionary definition of enterprise in different ways including is a business, firm, organization, or project especially one that requires boldness, initiative, energy, etc. Also defined as something new, difficult, or important that you do or try. Also defined as the activity of managing companies and businesses and starting new ones. The ability to think of new and effective things to do together with an eagerness to do them.*
- *On the other hand, the Collins Dictionary definition of Spirit is the nonphysical aspect of a person concerned with profound thoughts and emotions... attitude character and temperament. Spirit is also defined as the courage and determination that helps people to survive in difficult times and to keep their way of life and beliefs; also defined as the liveliness and energy that someone shows in what they do.*

▶ STEP 3. **The facilitator should spend time discussing with the farmers what each of these things mean in relation to their lives and to Agriculture.** Within the FFBS what it would mean to be an entrepreneur, to have the enterprise spirit and to catalyze it.

Exercise 1

Divide the group into smaller groups and ask them to list any 3 National or International names of people they know that embody the enterprise, Spirit. Also list 3–4 names of other local individuals within their communities that they believe embody the enterprise spirit.

After listing them, bring the group together and have each group read out their top 3 National/ International individuals and top3 local individuals that they believe embody the enterprise, Spirit. The facilitator should then lead the group into identifying and listing the reason why they selected the people they are selecting.

At the end of this exercise, have the farmers group list the 5 most important human characteristics necessary to become a successful entrepreneur.

STEP 4. Catalyzing the Enterprise Spirit. The facilitator will inform a discussion about how the FFBS will need to explore and develop their capacity to think innovatively to catalyze the enterprise spirit within the farming activities going forward. The goal of the groups' work being to increase income and reduce rural poverty but also improve the wellbeing and livelihood options of the community through sustainable enterprise management that is inclusive.

Exercise 2. How to make your first 20 Dollars. (Or any other local currency).

The objective of this exercise is to get the farmer group to understand that they can all be good entrepreneurs but will need to adopt a different mindset. Both men and women can make excellent entrepreneurs if they adopt a market orientation and think differently.

Preparation:

- Before participants arrive for the training the facilitator hides a small note of money either under the chairs/ mats or behind a tree in the general area where the meeting will be held.
- Before farmers come to the training the facilitator can identify one or 2 farmers upfront and let them know what he/she has done and gives them clues that after he asks the groups question they should wait and only get up when they sense the group hasn't caught up on the clues. Make sure one of the 2 chosen is a woman.
- Once the farmers arrive for the meeting and are ready to start, the facilitator should introduce the exercise and mention to the group that since they now know and understand entrepreneurship and why its critical for the group to be entrepreneurial, we are going to do some practical tests to check who in the group has the spirit of enterprise.
- Let the group know that you are giving them their first opportunity to make 20 dollars (or any smaller note in local currency you may have). Without divulging any other information let the group know they have only 10 minutes to do this. Some group members will initially look confused and keep quiet. Others might begin to suggest things that are not practical such as I will give you a haircut for 20 dollars, or I will sell you my shoes for 20 dollars. The facilitator will say no to all these ideas. If no one gets up, then one of the 2 people identified earlier preferably the woman can stand up and start looking around. The facilitator will ask the group to identify the actions of the woman who has stood, up. Slowly everyone will stand up and start looking until the hidden note is found.

Questions for discussion after the exercise:

i. What did you observe?
ii. Who made their first 20 dollars and why did they make it?
iii. How many people were given the opportunity to make their first 20 dollars?
iv. How come only one made it? Why were they successful while others were not?
v. What are the lessons learned from the exercise.
vi. Are women and men all capable of making their first 20 dollars?

The main lesson here is that to be an entrepreneur you need to get off your feet and go identify and take advantage of opportunities that exist out there.

The group needs to realize that to continue to make money and grow their business they are going to constantly get out of their comfort zones and go find the best opportunities. Addressing social norms and barriers that inhibit women from equal participation in identification and taking advantage of economic opportunities to spur entrepreneurship should be the goal of the group going forward.

STEP 5. An entrepreneur

An entrepreneur is any person who creates and develops a business idea and takes the risk of setting up an enterprise to produce a product or service which satisfies customer needs. Entrepreneur refers to the person and entrepreneurship defines the process. Both men and women can be successful entrepreneurs; it has nothing to do with gender. All entrepreneurs are businesspersons, but not all businesspersons are entrepreneurs.

To illustrate this. Think of Mary who grows cassava every season and at harvest brings it to the roadside and waits for passersby to purchase. Mary typically accepts the price offer from any passerby and is often incredibly excited if or when she is able to sell off her cassava. She sells from the same spot every season and typically always waits for passersby to purchase her product. She will ring the unsold cassava home and cook it for her family. Mary is a businessperson but is not an entrepreneur as her activity is routine and not structured.

Entrepreneurial thinking

The facilitator will discuss with the group what they need to do to be entrepreneurial and to adopt the spirit of enterprises. Successful entrepreneurs are:

- **Market led.** Understanding and addressing market needs.
- **Client oriented.** Always approaching your business from the perspective of what clients want and are looking for.
- **Competitive.** Recognizing that opportunity necessitates competition for resources, clients, opportunities and
- **Consistent.** Ensuring that the product is available timely, with quality and quantity.
- **Demonstrating Financial readiness.** Having business operating cash to meet input needs.
- **Prepared to analyze the odds and take risks.** Understanding that entrepreneurship involves a certain amount of risk and being able to know what extent of risk individuals and groups should take.
- **Efficient in decision making and reporting**
- **Identifying problems and finding practical solutions**
- **Self-motivated**
- **Innovative and Integrate new ideas**

5.7 Working with Group to Generate Business Ideas

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	As part of the market preparation tool and in line with the gendered value chain assessment this session looks at working with the group to generate business ideas.
TIMEFRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts and Markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Participants should have room to sit or stand

By the end of the module, learners will be able to generate several business ideas that can be carried out by a group or an individual. This should be guided by the market opportunity identification and gendered value chain analysis that are part of the Marketing tools. These help and support he group to identify opportunities that are suitable for them for a market, nutrition gender and productivity viewpoint. Opportunities should benefit most of the group members and selection as identified in the earlier module should take all these issues into consideration.

How to structure this session

- Explain that the session is about generating a business idea as a group and explain some of the key principles described below.
- Divide group into smaller groups and ask each group to develop a list of needs for products or services within their community. Advise the participants to approach this task by identifying a difficulty, the community is experiencing and then determining what product or service could help overcome that difficulty.
- Ask groups to share their feedback in plenary to develop a list of possible business ideas.
- Allocate two business ideas to each group and ask them to develop a list of skills/ experience that would be necessary to implement each business idea.
- Each group should share the key points of their discussions in plenary.
- Do a question-and-answer session.

What is a business idea?

Businesses start with ideas. Every individual and entrepreneur has the ability to develop and formulate business ideas. The thoughts and ideas are often related to what peoples/ societies needs and what can I do to make money by offering products and services that potential consumers would be willing to pay for.

Great business ideas should help you answer 4 main questions.

Which needs your business will fulfil for its customers. This is important in telling you what your current and future customer needs are, and successful businesses are those that are able to identify the customer needs and work to fulfill those needs. For a business to be sustainable and long term, the customer needs identified need to be current needs and any future needs.

What product or service your business will sell. For individual entrepreneurs and or groups to generate and grow businesses they need to know what products or services are in demand. The market assessment and gendered value chain assessment provides some ideas on potential products and services demanded. Entrepreneurs and businesses need to continuously identify needs so that they can evolve their businesses.

Who your business will sell to. This is critical for any business to know what or who their customers are and their preferences. The number of people interested in your product or service increase your business success. Being able to select a business idea where demand is greatest or where you will get most customers means the group is in position to generate significant revenues.

How your business is going to sell its products or services. This is important for the group and individual entrepreneurs to explore how to best sell their products/ services. In the example of Mary and cassava, a change in location and timing could increase her ability to sell and make money, so it's important that groups are able to identify the most effective ways to sell their products and services. The best businesses are always seeking to minimize costs so that they can increase profitability.

Business ideas are identified through positive, and creative thinking. They can come from different sources such as ideas built on local resources, local needs, local activities, interests and hobbies.

Exercise 1: Generating business ideas

This exercise will help the group identify and understand how to generate good business ideas. The exercise will involve some group brain storming, visits to successful groups and using information obtained from these groups to then focus on potential god business ideas.

▶ STEP 1. **The facilitator can subdivide the group into smaller grouping either by numbers or Gender.** Have female only subgroups and male only subgroups.

Ask each of the groups to take 10 minutes to identify a list of what they consider to be successful businesses in the area. Each group writes down on a flip chart the top 5–7 businesses in the community, listing the services they sell and giving reasons why they think these are successful businesses.

▶ STEP 2. **Ask both the female and male groups to present their top identified businesses in the community and brainstorm reasons why male and female members have listed different businesses if at all.** After this brainstorm identify and rank the top 3 businesses and plan a visit to them for fact finding.

▶ STEP 3. **Visit the 3 top businesses for brief conversations** (20–30 minutes). During these conversations, have the members of the group asking the entrepreneurs that own and run the identified businesses the following sets of questions. This visit can be done either by the entire group or members of the market committee who would then report back to the group members.

- Does the entrepreneur agree with the group that he/she runs a successful business?
- How did they decide to go into that business?
- Did they have any past family or personal business experience?
- Do they have other family members engaged in the business?
- Given a chance would they go into a different business?
- Was this their first business?

STEP 4. Once the visit is done the farmer group should compile the key information they have obtained from the entrepreneur and use the report to answer the following questions.

1. What lessons can you draw from the experience of the business owner?
2. What mistakes do you think the owner made?
3. How can you avoid the same mistakes?
4. What do you think has made the business a success?
5. Are there businesses that seem to be preferred by women and men and why?

Using this information, the facilitator should work with the group to identify both individual and group business ideas basing on the lesson and experiences interacting with the entrepreneurs visited. The group can come up with a long list of ideas on a flip chart and in plenary the facilitator can work with them to go through the list by answering the 4 important questions; **Which Customer** needs do you want to satisfy, **What products** or services do customers want, **Who are your likely customers** and **How will you** be able to supply the identified goods and services.

It is important to note that both women and men can often have different ideas and preferences when it comes to business. The facilitator should always give voice to all and understand the reasons for thoughts and choices.

5.8 Designing a Business Plan

SEASON	Vegetative Stage
OBJECTIVE	To help the farmer group understand why they should develop a business plan, write a business plan, and plan activities for the production cycle
TIMEFRAME	3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipcharts and markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

Business plans are crucial for successful businesses; the farmer group will be able to have a more clear vision of their goals and achievements if they create a business plan. At this point in the season, the farmer group has gathered much of the information that should go into a business plan; it just has not been assembled into a formal business plan. This tool helps guide the farmers through the learning and creation of a business plan for their products. The business plan development will base on the entrepreneurship training.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Explain what a business plan is.** In a session with the farmers, explain that a business plan is a document about the farmer group's future. It describes the producer(s), the product(s), how the product(s) is produced, how the producer markets the product(s), the risks the producer faces, approaches to mitigating risks, the business development objectives, the needs (technical, organizational, financial), Financial plan, the projection of income on 3 years at least and the time to recover the investment.

▶ STEP 2. **Organize the information.** Explain to the famers that all the information that has been gathered so far (the market, the costs calculated, the products agreed upon, and the developed action plans) needs to be brought together into one organized document; this will form a business plan.

▶ STEP 3. **Explain why the business plan is needed.** Some of the reasons for this include:

- **To guide the group over the long term.** So far, the group has made a series of decisions about their product and market. A business plan brings your ideas and decisions together and puts them in concrete form in one document to guide the group's direction.
- **To facilitate understanding and agreement.** Despite intensive discussions, members of the group may have different understandings of what the group aims to do. An agreed business plan helps identify and remove such misunderstandings.

- **To improve organization and decision-making.** Because a business plan follows a certain structure, it helps the group make sure it has gathered the information it needs and has organized it in a useable way. That makes it easier to make decisions.
- **To test and strengthen financial feasibility.** The business plan requires the group to compare its resources and income with its costs and expenditures. It shows whether the group can make a profit.
- **To measure performance**: The business plan gives the group clear targets, the members can use these targets to monitor their performance and make changes in the production season if the original plan needs to be amended.
- **To ensure continuity.** Farmers' groups change leadership. A business plan ensures that a new group of leaders can take over operations smoothly, reducing the risk of disruptions and abrupt changes in direction.
- **To "sell" the group.** Business partners such as major suppliers, contract partners, big customers, and business services may want evidence that the group has thought through their operations.. A business plan gives them the information and assurance they need.
- **To facilitate access to credit (convince lenders and/or donors).** Banks and microfinance institutions want evidence that the group's enterprise will be profitable before they will agree to lend it money. They usually require a business plan as a condition for a loan. Donors also want to be confident that the group is viable, which may also be determined through a business plan.
- **To guide implementation.** The business plan shows what the group needs to do to achieve its goals. It keeps the members and the management focused on what has been agreed. It acts as a framework for the group's implementation plan (the list of tasks and activities the group members have to do each year or production cycle).

▶ **STEP4. Fill in the business plan.** After going through some of the reasons why it is important to have a business plan, the facilitator should then provide the main parts of the business plan and work with the group to identify the information already available to help fill in the parts of the plan. The content that has been collected through earlier processes needs to be brought together. This can be done using the "Sample Business Plan" form found in the **Annex 3A.5**.

Now that the farmers have created their own business plan, remind them that they can use it going forward to plan both their individual production and group production. Ensure that all participants understand how to design their own business plan before ending the session.

5.9 Market Planning Part 1: Calculating Costs of Production and Marketing

SEASON	Vegetative Stage
OBJECTIVE	To enable farmers to estimate average expected end-of-season harvests for individual farmers and groups in order to effectively target appropriate market outlets for end-of-season marketing
TIMEFRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Checklist, simple calculator, pen and paper
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for all farmers and CBEAs to both stand and sit

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

In order to prepare the farmers for the marketing activities, the facilitator should support two key activities: estimating the farmers' costs of production and their output at the end of the season. This guide helps facilitate the first key activity, generating production estimation. A production estimation ensures that the groups has an idea of the total output from each of the individuals at the end of the season. This helps the group in 2 ways:

1. It ensures that the marketing committee will talk to traders and identify opportunities that are within their means. Traders are also more confident dealing with farmer groups that have a rough idea of what their productivity levels are. This activity will enable the group and the facilitator to find the right markets for their products.
2. Once every individual farmer's production estimate is determined, the marketing committee can use this to follow-up with farmers to ensure they are adopting the right practices that will get them to that level of productivity.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Preparation of checklist.** Before visiting farmers, work with the members of the marketing committee to generate a checklist that will be used to collect production estimation information off crops that are linked to the marketing objectives. Make sure to agree on units of measurements for product and size of land (e.g. acre, hectare, or other size of plots; kilograms or bags, etc).

▶ STEP 2. **Preparation of Community-Based Extension Agents (CBEAs).** In advance of the session, orient the CBEAs to the production estimation checklist and the rest of this tool.

▶ STEP 3. **Bringing the CBEAs and farmers together.** The field facilitator (CARE staff or partner NGOS staff) brings the CBEAs and farmers together for the FFBS session. Instruct the CBEAs to demonstrate the checklist concepts in mime/ acting.

STEP 4. Collecting checklist information for farmers. The facilitator should instruct the CBEAs to work with all the farmers to collect the information based on the checklist; this information should be gathered on a farmer-specific level.

STEP 5. Combining checklist information for group. Come together as a group and collect all of the checklists. You should aggregate the individual-level checklist for each farmer, inform the level of the quality in order to provide a total production estimate for the entire group per quality level. Make sure to keep this information as part of the general documentation of the group. You should also provide the documentation to the marketing committee, so they can use it to follow-up production and support farmers to ensure they are meeting their production estimates.

Make sure the marketing committee understands how to use the information gathered; they should utilize it to determine which traders to deal with and to remind farmers the volume of produce that is expected at the end of the season. The marketing committee should make arrangements to check in with farmers throughout the season to measure their progress towards production estimates and the quality.

5.10 Market Planning Part 2: Determining Income and Profit

SEASON	Pre-Sowing Stage
OBJECTIVE	To enable the farmers to list all costs they incur in producing and marketing a product and calculate the material costs of production and marketing
TIMEFRAME	3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Large flip charts, marker, and calculator Agriculture finance seasonal calendar, Mapping financial service providers, Profitability estimation table
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

For each of the farmer group's value chains, a simple and participatory gross margin analysis will be conducted in order to determine the level of profitability of each of the selected value chains.

The farmer group members (particularly the marketing committee) will take the lead in determining the approximate costs of each of the activities involved in producing and bringing the product to the market. The prices offered for the final product will be considered based on existing market information, results of earlier undertaken market studies, and/or cross checking with farmers based on existing information.

Based on the cost of production and prices offered, farmers will be able to tell the approximate level of profit for each of the products they are working on. This exercise can be repeated for individual farmers on their land. Throughout the season, actual costs should be collected, so that accurate costs and profitability of the selected value chains can be determined.

PART A. Calculating costs of production and marketing

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Calculate costs.** Explain to the participants that they will be calculating the costs of producing and marketing a particular product to determine that product's profitability and decide whether it is a good idea to produce that product. You should also explain that if they understand where the highest costs in their production and marketing are, they may be able to look at ways of minimizing costs, thereby increasing profitability. Finally, they must use the unit cost of the product to determine when, where to sell and better negotiate the sale price.

▶ STEP 2. **Determine standard.** Ask the farmers in your group to think about producing a "standard" amount of one product; this should be the amount produced in one season or over one year. The farmers should think of standard units of production that they are familiar with. For instance in some cases it may be a hectare, an acre, or any other standard production measurement.

▶ STEP 3. **List needs.** Ask the farmers to list all the items/activities they need to produce and market this product on a piece of flip chart paper– these will include material costs such as seed, fertilizer, agrochemicals, land rental, irrigation, and labor costs for plowing, sowing, weeding, harvesting, sorting. The costs should generally be listed under 3 phases of the process: pre-production, production, post harvest handling, and marketing. Prompt them to categorize by these phases if necessary. The list should look similar to the example below (although activities may vary):

Example: Sheet of paper detailing items/activities and costs of Tomato in Bamako during the dry season on 1 ha

ITEM/ACTIVITY	UNITS	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
Pre-production			
Rent land			
Buy tools			
Production			
Opening up land			
First weeding			
2nd weeding			
Seed			
Post harvest			
Transporting product to home			
Drying mats			
Marketing			
Hiring vehicle			
Communication expenses with buyer			
Market fees			
Overall Costs of Production (add all "total cost" lines):			

▶ STEP 4. For each of the items/activities listed, ask the farmers to list the quantity needed and the average cost for one unit of the item/activity. They should then list the total cost of that item throughout the season/year (this is calculated by multiplying the quantity with the average unit cost to get the total cost of that item in the season.)

- For items that last beyond the calculating period (1 season or 1 year, depending on the unit of time chosen), the facilitator should try to get the actual cost in that period by dividing the cost of the item by the number of years. For instance if a hoe cost 1,000 shillings and last for 5 years, then the cost of the hoe to the business in the one year where you are doing the gross margin analysis will be 1,000 divided by the 5 years which is 200 shillings for the season of calculation.
- For labor calculations, the facilitator should ask the farmers how much it would cost if they hired or were hired to carry out a specific activity, either on a daily or monthly basis depending on the activity. For instance, to get the cost of 1st weeding, the facilitator would ask how many days it takes to weed the plot type chosen and how much they would pay someone to do it. Typically, farmers know the costs of carrying out an activity based on experience. If they don't know these costs, the facilitator should guide them through a process of what they do know in order to calculate the cost of labor.

▶ **STEP 5. Calculate overall costs.** Once all of the individual item/activity's total costs are determined, add up each of the item/activities total cost to calculate the overall costs of production (i.e. add up each item/activity cost for all units).

PART B. Determining Income and profit

Having listed all the potential activities involved in producing and bringing the product to the market, the facilitator should now assist the farmers to determine the level of income and profit associated with this product. This will help demonstrate the level of profitability and is key for farmers to compare across different value chains they may be interested in.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 1. Estimate yields.** Using the same unit of measurement used to calculate the costs of production, ask the farmers to estimate what yields will come from this plot of land during a production season if all the listed activities are carried out. For example, if you use and do all the items/activities on a 1 acre groundnut field, what would be likely amount of groundnuts harvested?

▶ **STEP 2. Total income.** Because the farmers may give different units of measurement for the amount harvested, you can help standardize units to kilos (bring it down from bags or up from heaps). If the farmers say he/she would get 5 bags of groundnut from 1 acre, work with them to determine how many kilos one bag weighs. Use this information to generate the total amount of crop harvested (in units). You should then work the farmers to list the price per unit, and then calculate the total income amount for the entire harvest.

Example to calculate income:

CROP	A-NUMB OF UNITS	B-COST/UNIT	C-PRICE/UNIT	SALES	BENEFIT/ INCOME
Tomato				a*c	(c-b)*a

CROP	NUMBER OF UNITS (E.G. BAGS/ KILOS, HEAPS ETC.)	PRICE PER UNIT	TOTAL INCOME (UNITS X PRICE PER UNIT)
Groundnuts	300 kilos	30 shillings	9,000 shillings
Cassava	200 kilos	20 shillings	4,000 shillings
Overall Income (add all "total income" lines):			13,000 shillings

▶ **STEP 3. Factor in losses.** Remember to always factor in possible losses. Even when farmers have what they consider to be a realistic expectation of harvest amounts, it's good to subtract a 5–10% loss from their total, so that their expectations for profit remain reasonable.

STEP 4. Calculate crop profitability. Help the farmers subtract the overall costs of production from the overall income from their crops. The resulting number is the gross margin, or profit. In many cases the levels of profit are usually low because some listed costs may be overestimations or not actually used. Usually when labor costs are taken out or reduced (if the farmer is doing labor, for example), the levels of profitability increase.

Thank the participants for their time, and remind them that although they have estimated their profits, they should make sure to record actual expenditures and incomes throughout the season and update their estimates accordingly. The marketing committee should arrange to check in with farmers throughout the season to ensure this is done, and to aggregate the information collected by each farmer.

5.11 Market Planning Part 3: Agricultural finance planning calendar, including determining capacity to borrow in case of external credit

▶ STEP 1. **Identifying your goals.** Invite participants to reflect on their agribusiness goals, building on the visioning and goal setting sessions (reference) where short- and long-term goals were identified at group and individual levels.

Ask participants to develop a finance plan for their agricultural activities. It is important that you the facilitator, in preparation to this session have read through the whole session on the marketing tools including the agricultural value chain financing guidance notes. The agricultural finance planning is based on the seasonal crop or livestock production calendar developed at the beginning for the specific crop/livestock commodity.

▶ STEP 2. **Budget planning**

Using the table below, *agricultural finance in the crop seasonal calendar* also included as **Annex 3A.2** invite participants to form groups and identify using a chart what the expected costs are at each key stage of their farming calendar (pre-sowing, sowing, vegetative, and marketing). Please refer to **Annex 3A.4** on 'profitability estimation' template for further guidance, or use the estimates generated in PART [A] and [B] above. Summarize in this table the expected costs, broken down by calendar.

In a plenary, ask the groups to present what costs they generated and how they compare with other groups before moving to the next session. As each group may have generated something unique or different, use the session to develop one table with finance needs that are agreed as a must for majority of the producers –

Agricultural Finance in the crop seasonal calendar				
Key activities requiring finance	**Pre-sowing**	**Sowing**	**Vegetative stage/ Weeding**	**Marketing**
Quarters in a year	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Access to finance for land preparation activities (labor, machinery, etc.)				
Access to finance for purchase of quality inputs and technologies				
Labor/machinery services				
Access to finance for purchase of quality inputs/services for weed/ pest management				
access to finance for post-harvest handling and management technologies (such as crates, storage, packaging, hulling, milling, cold chain)				
access to agricultural pre-financing including through warehouse warrantee				

Agricultural Finance in the crop seasonal calendar				
Key activities requiring finance	**Pre-sowing**	**Sowing**	**Vegetative stage/ Weeding**	**Marketing**
Quarters in a year	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
access to finance for transport, market outlet				
Risk financing				
Natural disasters: droughts – (delay on-set, early cessation of rains, dry spells); floods resulting in loss of harvest				
Access of crop insurance				

▶ STEP 3. Financing your agribusiness

- In a large group ask participants, how they plan to finance these seasonal costs to reach their intended production goals?
- Using a chart write ideas brought forward by farmers:
  This discussion will also help with prioritization on, what must be financed in the short-term and what can be differed to a long-term plan that the farmers would grow into.
- The list may include their savings, their cooperatives input credits, government subsidy scheme, a buyer/contract farming with input/in-kind credit, formal financial institutions, informal loans, remittances, and/or others. This provides the facilitator with a good picture of potential sources of finance accessible to the producers. It will also highlight limitations or gaps in access to finance to inform the program planning.

It's important for the facilitator to note that individuals may not be open or transparent to list outsources as this exercise is held in a group. Ultimately, capacity to finance is an individual based decision.

- Summarize the discussion, **that the goal of the discussion is to instill in the producers financial planning as a key exercise throughout the course of the season, which is necessary when farming as a business. It will also identify by when this finance should be at hand to timely address the needed finance at these key stages.** inform participants in the following session the discussion will further detail the two main options for financing their agricultural finance needs.

▶ STEP 4. Develop a saving plan

- **Savings plan.** Ask participants to develop a finance plan for their goals set in ▶ STEP1. Participants estimate cumulative savings aligned to their goals as follows:
  - Amount to save per month/per week for a total of x number of months/weeks to meet the farming calendar generated costs before the planting season/pre-production, vegetative, marketing stages.
  - Ask them to identify the total amount they need to save to meet their agricultural goal.
  - Ask them to identify and decide to reduce from their current spending by a proportional amount.
  - Set a regular date for their saving coincidental their cashflow (may be weekly or monthly). To put away into their saving, as soon as the money comes in, toward their goal.
  - Decide where they would start saving (account in a bank, MFI, VSLA, at home).
  - Commit to not use the money until you reach your goal.

▶ STEP 5. **Accessing loans (bank/MFI, mobile money, VSLA, off takers input credit via a check-off system etc.)**

In preparation for this session, the facilitator should have completed a mapping of the financial service providers to gain a basic understanding of services accessible to producer groups. The Session may also be facilitated with the invitation of one or more finance providers to explain their products.

If the saving plans are not adequate participants may decide to take out a loan or access external financing.

Explain to the participants that they will be calculating the cost of taking out a loan and decide whether their product's gross sales (estimated in earlier session PART. [A] & [B]) still stands profitable to also service a loan's interest and associated fees. It will also be important to determine the repayment timing and its suitability aligned to the agricultural calendar above. There are several methods to determine profitability of investment or estimate the repayment required on loans, and this will vary between providers of financial services. This session, will focus on a simple practical calculation to determine whether to take a loan or not, follow the process below:

1. Calculate [loan + interest amount+ any other fees/charges [C]][4]
2. Calculate [B] – ([A] + [C])

NOTE: If this figure (#2 above) is negative, they shouldn't be taking a loan.

Example:

If a groundnut farmer decided to take out a loan of 2,000 shillings, with a total interest amount of 318 shillings and fees of 140 shillings and expects to generate total sales of 9,000 shillings from the sale of nuts and estimates that the total cost of production to be incurred is 3,500 shillings. Will the farmer be able to service the loan?

First, calculate total repayment [C] loan + interest amount+ any other fees/charges [C]

Loan	2000
Interest	318
Fees	140
[C] Add total repayment	2000+318+140= **2,458 shillings**

Second, calculate the capacity to meet loan repayment.

[B] Expected earnings / total sales revenue	9,000
[A] Total overall cost of production	3,500
[C] Total repayment	2,458
[B] – ([A] + [C])	**9000-(3500+2458) = 3,042 shillings**

4 Prior to the session ensure you have obtained this information from finance providers with agricultural loan products or willing to invest on agricultural production to be as accurate as possible.

▶ STEP 6. **What are the risks associated with taking out a loan?** Discuss what participants should consider:

a. Divide participants into groups to discuss risks associated with borrowing. Summarize using a table such as one below:

Risk	How to manage risk
Signing off on a high interest rate. Interest rates vary greatly between lenders and your financial situation	Compare rates and look for lenders that consider other aspects, such as credit history.
Taking out too large of a loan While it can be tempting to take out a large loan, be careful not to borrow too much.	Determine how interest can grow over the life of your loan and only borrow what you need.
Damaging your credit history. Any missed payments will result in delinquency, which could damage your credit score	Set up monthly payment plan for your loan to ensure you never miss a monthly payment.
Getting stuck with fees. A loan may seem perfect if it has a competitive interest rate and strong terms, but be sure to read the fine print to avoid hefty fees	Not all lenders disclose expected fees before you apply. Be on the lookout for them and ask about additional fees before submitting your application
Falling into a debt spiral. Borrowing money from any source is putting yourself at risk of a debt spiral if you don't have a plan	Only agree to loan terms that you can truly afford so you do not end up building more debt. Also avoid using other open forms of credit while you pay back your debt.

b. Decide who will present the information to the larger group of farmers. It will show what the perceived risks farmers identify and what mitigation risk management ideas they have.

▶ STEP 7. **What to do if you are unable to repay a loan?**

- Engage with the bank/lender to restructure a loan: explain that participants can avoid default, over indebtedness, and financial mental-stress with proper planning and utilization of loan for intended purposes. But if they find themselves struggling to repay a loan, another option is to act timely and sit down with the lender to adapt the loan terms and conditions.

▶ STEP 8. **Facilitate a discussion to reflect on the session and its implications.**

- Ask what they learnt from the exercise of agricultural finance?
- What did they find most interesting about external finance? About the saving plan?
- What was most surprising?
- How will what they learn impact them?

5.12 Selecting Best Products and Market Outlets Each Season

SEASON	Vegetative Stage
OBJECTIVE	To ensure that the farmer group is able to objectively select the right enterprise option and buyers to work with in pursuance of their business objective
TIMEFRAME	3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

When the Market Research Committee and the facilitator visit different market outlets, they prepare a report that is provided to the rest of the group members. The group analyzes the report and identifies possible relationships or changes to make, including buyers and alternative value chains. This exercise will allow farmers to identify which products and market contacts they would like to engage with for production and marketing relationships. This activity also helps the farmers agree on the criteria to set in selecting the best market outlets and products.

This tool may also be used by farmers on an individual basis to determine what crops to produce on their own. Ensure that each participant understands how to use the tool and apply it to his/her personal production.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Setting up criteria for inclusive selection of products.** Once the farmers are brought together in a meeting, the group should refer back to the report made after the Market Research Committee visited different market outlets (see "Conducting Market Research" tool). The facilitator should then ask the farmer group to brainstorm the reasons they would want to choose one product over the other; they should then list all the reasons/criteria they would use to choose a product.

Some of the criteria could include:

- Initial investment required to start, price offered in the market during the expected period of sale, time it takes to get first income, demand and supply factors, and transport and production costs of product, profitability, post-harvest handling requirements, production knowledge and land availability to produce this crop (above ground production/production hors sol)

STEP 2. Prioritize criteria. After the list has been generated, the facilitator should work with the farmers to prioritize the most important criteria and agree on how many criteria should be used in the selection. The facilitator should let the farmers know that there are 3 critical criteria that all options should be subjected to:

- Market demand
- Ability for the farmers to produce
- Level of profitability
- Time it takes to get first income,

However, the farmer group may declare that there are additional critical criteria; these should all be listed out. There should not be more than 6 criteria.

STEP 3. Rank criteria. Ask the farmers to rank each of these criteria.

STEP 4. Final selection of products. On a large sheet of paper, the facilitator and group should list all the enterprise options and ask them to discuss whether they:

- Have a high market demand (based on information from market study)
- Are profitable based on the cost benefit analysis done earlier
- Can be produced in the area by all farmers

Once these 3 basic criteria are met, then the other criteria that have been decided upon can be considered for the final selection. Using these criteria, the farmers should decide on one final product to pursue. Remind the farmers that they may also use this tool on an individual basis to determine what crops to grow (splitting their plot or intercropping their field), and ensure that all participants understand the decision-making process before ending the session.

5.13 Marketing as a Group

SEASON	Pre-sowing and Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To help farmers understand how their product can be marketed at the end of the season, specifically with a group
TIMEFRAME	One half-day (~4 hours)
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, Markers, Individual note books
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire "Marketing" section of the FFBS toolkit and be well versed with the marketing concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

Marketing together has many advantages: higher volumes, better quality, increased negotiation capacity, and increased profit. As part of their business plan, farmers will have decided to use a certain type of input and produce a certain amount of product for a specific market. This tool helps farmers effectively organize themselves to market their product. It helps address why marketing as a group is beneficial and provides guidance for determining retail prices.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ **STEP 1.** In the farmer group, **initiate a discussion around the benefits of collective input and output marketing.** You can define collective marketing as the marketing when several farmers, groups of farmers, or collections of groups undertake two activities 1) at pre-sowing stage determine type, quantity of inputs they require and use their position for aggregating their demand, collectively bargain through their purchase/input-market committee and 2) at the harvesting stages aggregate their produce of agreed amounts/quantities of their individual produce together and sell them as a batch to a buyer(s)/off-taker(s) again facilitated through their output marketing committee.

Depending on the sales opportunity, if it's important to proceed to a deferred sale, the farmers group must take into account to poor member, by given them for example a part of their amount to allow them to cover immediate needs (social capital). Alternately farmer groups may want to warehouse their produce and sale when the market price increases, especially if prices are lower than the profitability analysis had shown. In this case depending on the groups accumulated capital decisions might be shifted to warehouse, and use a differed payment system.

Be sure to have the group talk about the benefits for both the farmers and the traders. Some of the possible advantages include:

- **Bigger volumes:** Farmers can pool their output (this is called bulking) so traders can buy more at the same time and can fill up their vehicles or stores more easily. The traders can negotiate with the marketing committee as one seller – a representative of the farmers' group – rather than with lots of individual farmers. They make one payment – often via a bank – rather than lots of small cash transactions. That is more convenient and saves having to carry lots of cash around. In some instances where group cohesion is not strong (like in the first season of a collective sale), it may be beneficial to have the trader pay all the farmers at the same site individually, if possible.

- **Uniform quality.** Traders do not want big and small, ripe and unripe produce all mixed together. They want the produce they buy to be the same size and quality, and free of dirt, sticks and other impurities. With a larger volume, it is worthwhile for farmers to clean, sort, and grade their product (value add, which will fetch them extra money).
- **Reliable sellers.** Pests can attack a crop, the weather may spoil the harvest, and the farmer may fall ill. Many things can come in the way of a successful trade. But these things are more likely to happen to an individual farmer than to a group. If one farmer experiences a production problem, chances are that the other members of the group will be able to make up the shortfall. That reduces the risk that the trader will have to drive home with a half-empty pickup.
- **Reliable buyers.** Reliability works the other way too. If a trader knows there is a big purchase waiting, she/he will make sure to pick it up as promised and will pay the agreed price. By selling collectively, the farmers can be more confident that the buyer will be reliable.
- **Reliable access to quality inputs and services.** The aggregate demand for inputs represents a strong market opportunity for input suppliers, that will provide reasonable prices, provide quality and arrange for timely supply of the inputs and may include embedded services such as transport, training/orientation on input use/advisory to the producer groups.
- **Improved/efficient use of inputs and services:** when combined with the FFBS' orientation on appropriate and efficient use of inputs, and organized farm service demands would enable a more efficient use of inputs and achieve productivity targets making groups attractive for buyers.
- **Continuous supply.** Many traders want a continuous supply of a product throughout the season. Groups of farmers can organize staggered plantings and harvests, or store produce, so they can deliver several truckloads of the product over an extended marketing period.
- **Higher price.** Bulked, cleaned and graded produce is more valuable, so traders are usually more willing to pay a better price for it. But by organizing as a group, the farmers improve their bargaining position – for example by negotiating with several potential buyers for the best terms and conditions.
- **Organization.** Marketing collectively means that farmers have to get organized. But organizing brings other benefits: farmers can learn from one another, improve the quality of their produce, set-up savings-and-credit arrangements, and buy bulk inputs. Marketing collectively can be a good way to start a farmers' group or strengthen an existing group.

But remember, not all products and farmers benefit from collective marketing. Monitor the group's marketing performance and advise the farmers' group whether collective marketing is a good idea.

▶ **STEP 2.** The facilitator should let the farmers know that, **collective marketing *does not* mean collective production**! Farmers should still grow crops and raise animals as individuals. As a first step it is only at the time of sale that the product is brought together and offered for sale. However, this will change as farmers begin to commercialize further and achieve efficiencies also through collective production also known as land clustering to operate as a unit particularly where farms may be connected or adjacent. This process of clustering does not mean, individual land titles are dissolved, but rather farm services such as tillage or harvesting may organically become a more attractive option.

▶ **STEP 3.** Once the group agrees on the need to market as a group, the facilitator and the Market Committee need to **take the lead in the subsequent organization of activities involved in collective purchasing and/or selling**. In order to do this, the facilitator and the committee should have a discussion with the group to agree upon some of the costs that are likely to be involved in this collective activity; these may include communication expenses, storage, transportation, loading, travel, etc. These should be explained to the farmers so that farmers know that these costs will be recovered from their end of season sales.

▶ **STEP 4. The facilitator and marketing committee should contact the preferred buyers**, which should have been agreed upon after the market visits earlier in the season. The facilitator can call the potential buyers and ask for further meetings with the Market Committee members. These meetings should focus on the quantities available for sale and discuss purchase conditions, including payment terms and delivery terms. A sample letter seeking an appointment with a potential buyer is included below.

▶ **STEP 5.** Once the facilitator and Market Committee have met with and agreed upon a input supplier or buyer, they will need to **negotiate terms with the selected supplier or buyer**.

Some of the things that can be negotiated with **the buyer** and **the seller** (input supplier/agro-dealer) may include:

- **Price:** What price will the buyer pay? For the best-quality product? For second-best? Is there a premium for consistently top-quality produce, or for reliable deliveries? When will the price be fixed – at the start of the season, when the contract is signed, at the time of sale, or after the time of sale (for example, depending on the export price)?
- **Price:** What are the bulk prices, in order to gain an understanding of the offer?
- **Quantity:** What amount of the product will the buyer take? How will this be measured – by weight or volume? In kilograms, sacks, truckloads? Will each bag be weighed? Who will provide the scales? What if there is a surplus or shortfall?
- **Quantity:** What is the minimum amount that will provide bulk purchase cheaper price than retail? How are inputs packaged? Is there a need to repackage to make quantities align to demand?
- **Quality:** What quality requirements does the buyer specify? What production methods should the farmers use (for example, avoiding the use of pesticides, or drying for a certain period)? What are the grading specifications?
- **Quality:** What quality guarantees does the supplier offer? Especially, if inputs require repackaging? How is the storage condition of the agro-dealer shop / input supplier?
- **Place and transport:** Will the buyer pick the product up at each farm, or at a central location? Or do the farmers have to deliver it to a particular place? Who will pay for transport, loading and unloading and storage?
- **Accessibility/Distribution:** What is the supplier's ability to transport and meet the suppliers at a central sales outlet/point within reasonable proximity to farmers?
- **Packaging:** How should the product be packaged? In sacks, boxes, bags or crates, or loose? Who will supply the packaging?
- **Payment conditions:** When and how will the payment take place? Immediately on exchange of the product? After a delay (of how long)? In cash, by check, by bank transfer, or via mobile phone payment? Is the buyer will to pay all the farmers in one location, or can they be paid by cheque through an account?
- **Timing:** When will the sale take place? On what date and at what time will the buyer come to pick up the product? Is this a one-off sale, or does the buyer requires a regular supply throughout the season or over several years?
- **Formality:** Is there a written contract or agreement? Or is everything on the basis of mutual trust? A handshake? What happens if one side breaks the agreement – for example, if the farmers fail to deliver the right amount or quality, or if the trader fails to buy the agreed amount?

Once the facilitator and group have a basic agreement and understanding with the selected buyer, then the sale can take place. Ensure that what has been agreed to be understood by all the farmers, so that there is a smooth sale. The marketing committees are very crucial in this process and should facilitate activities of bulking, grading, storing, transportation and recording of sales. For a sample sales tracking form and a sample letter to potential buyers, see the **Annex 3A.6**.

5.14 Introducing Food Safety Concepts

SEASON	Pre-harvest/ year-round
OBJECTIVE	Developing an understanding of food safety systems, their role in the live and business of the farm, their connection to market-related activities
TIME FRAME	4–5 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, farm maps, food safety plan templates, and farms records.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing and sitting.
AUDIENCE	Participants that have gone through the basic marketing concepts and are interested in moving towards more lucrative markets. Certification and food safety modules for NOT for FFBS participants who are just starting their FFBS journey

Background

The facilitator should read through the entire Food Safety section of the FFBS toolkit, including the minimum standards and be well-versed with the food safety concepts and ideas before introducing the subject to the group. He/she should prepare for any questions asked and be sure to know who to contact if he/she has questions that he/she cannot answer.

As global markets become increasingly interconnected and market information flows more freely, consumers around the world – including in poorer countries – increasingly demand that the food they have on their table does not make them sick. Of course, the incidence of food-borne illnesses continues to be high, but there is evidence that consumers, even in the poorest countries, are ever more conscious of the link that exists between the lack of food safety and their illnesses.

Most of the food-borne illnesses have their roots in poor food safety practices throughout the supply chains that connect producers with consumers. There is an opportunity for food producers and post-harvest food handlers alike to improve their practices and, thus, improve their chances of getting access to the consumers that are more conscious about what food they eat and are willing to pay more for it.

In this module, the facilitator introduces the food safety concept and helps farmers understand that to successfully adopt a market focus, the group must pay close attention to food standards, including food safety standards, that are required by various markets, and adopt their production and, especially, post-harvest practices to those standards.

The focus of this session is not only to introduce food safety systems to the groups, but also gauge their interest and seriousness in adopting a different mentality and attitude regarding their post-harvest practices.

By the end of this session, the farmer group and all its members should have a clear understanding of what constitutes basic food safety, their importance in the marketing process, a group agreement to think of products they sell with specific markets in mind, and mindfulness of the change in post-harvest practices if they adopt a market orientation. This process should ensure that the group is committed and ready to change their post-harvest practices and adopt a market mentality for their work.

It is recommended to use this Food Safety module as a supplement to the Marketing module. It is also recommended to link the Food Safety module to the FFBS Certification module.

PART 3 – Food Safety

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss the importance of food safety for individual and family wellbeing.** Facilitators describe basic facts about the importance of food safety. Below are some of the points[5] that facilitators can make, but they are also encouraged to do their own research for each of the country's (or region's) specific situation:

- An estimated 600 million – almost 1 in 10 people in the world – fall ill after eating contaminated food and 420 000 die every year, resulting in the loss of 33 million healthy life years.
- US$ 110 billion is lost each year in productivity and medical expenses resulting from unsafe food in low- and middle-income countries.
- Children under 5 years of age carry 40% of the foodborne disease burden, with 125 000 deaths every year.

Brainstorming exercise: Facilitator asks the group to talk about food safety in their community. The group is invited to answer why and how do they think people can get sick from food. The facilitator puts the ideas and answers from the group on a board or a flipchart.

Next, the facilitator shares some myths and facts about food safety. For example,[6]

Food Safety Myth	Food Safety Fact
1. A food with enough pathogens to make you sick will look, smell, or taste bad.	1. A food with enough pathogens to make you sick *may* look, smell, or taste good.
2. Really fresh food cannot make people sick.	2. Really fresh food can cause food poisoning if it is not properly handled.
3. Only dirty kitchens can make people sick.	3. Even clean kitchens can make people sick.
4. Properly cooked food can never cause food poisoning.	4. Food poisoning can occur even when foods are properly cooked.

Next, the facilitator discusses some of the most common causes of food-borne illnesses that include:

5 The WHO Food Safety Factsheet, May 2022: https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/food-safety

6 Examples are from BC Campus Open Education Book on Food Safety, https://opentextbc.ca/foodsafety/chapter/causes-of-foodborne-illnesses/

Cause	Supply chain stage	How it occurs
Improper cooling	Storage	Lack of cold chain technologies leads food handles to keep food without cooling. This helps harmful bacteria develop. Protein products (meats, fish, dairy) are especially susceptible. For plant products the risk is more food waste.
Improper hot holding	Preparation	For food that requires re-heating as part of preparation, people responsible for food preparation can disregard the proper reheating requirements. Not bring food up to temperature can leave harmful parasites alive.
Cross-contamination	Food preparation and/or storage	Processing meat and fish using the same equipment as vegetables. Food waste from processing meats can spoil and contaminate vegetables that are consumed raw or undercooked.
Poor personal hygiene	Throughout	Poor personal hygiene may facilitate human waste to pass to foods about to be consumed.
Inadequate cooking	Food preparation	Not bringing food to temperature or not washing it while cooking will not kill the pathogens.
Unsafe source	Production	Some food can already be contaminated at the source. I.e. some livestock can be infected with parasites. Not cooking it properly can result in food-borne illnesses.
Improper use of leftovers	Food preparation and storage	Leftovers need to be stored properly before being consumed. Failure to do so and to use improper cooking can result in spoilage and contamination.

Then, briefly describe the main pathogens leading to food-borne illness:

- **Bacteria**: One-cell organisms that live in most foods. There are good bacteria and there are bacteria that make you sick. For example, good bacteria are present in fermented foods (yoghurt, pickled foods, etc.). Bad bacteria include E. coli, listeria, salmonella and others and contaminate food during improper preparation.
- **Viruses**: One-cell DNA that is not properly a living organism. Hepatitis A, Norovirus and others are transmitted by persons handling food.
- **Parasites**: Various types of organisms that live in other organisms (hosts) and use their resources, and can switch from one host to another when the food is not stored at cold enough temperatures or cooked at hot enough temperatures. Examples are roundworms and trichinella.
- **Protozoa**: More complex than bacteria, protozoa are one-cells organisms that can be transmitted with contaminated water. Giardia is one of the most common protozoans that cause food-borne illnesses.
- **Fungi:** Also known as molds. They grow on decaying organic matter, and some can be healthy (molds that grow on cheese for example), while others can be harmful.
- **Chemicals and toxins.** Non-biological pathogens that include harmful chemicals that on occasion or over time can cause illnesses, including chronical ones. Examples include PAHs and HCAs[7] that result from smoking/grilling meats at very high temperatures.

Results: People can get very sick, lose their productive time, or even die. And as mentioned above, children get affected the worst.

To conclude, ask the group to share some of their experiences and personal stories about food-borne illnesses.

7 Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and heterocyclic amines (HCAs)

STEP 2. Discuss how food safety systems relate to markets.

Share the following information with participants:

Even in poorer countries, consumers pay increasingly more attention to the quality of the products they buy and consume. Ever growing consumer segments – not only the rich but now also the middle class and even poorer consumers in urban centers – want to see better quality and safer foods as part of their daily menus. Unfortunately, it is not always easy for retailers to respond to this demand by buying foods (either raw or processed) in local markets, and thus they revert to imported foods: something that domestic producers could take advantage of with the right skills in convincing the consumer that their product is of equal or superior quality.

Food safety is an important (although not the unique) aspect of improving food product quality. Producers and processors can use improved food safety to signal their desire and ability to satisfy the demand for higher quality products. Improving food safety systems will require making certain investments and change production, storage and processing practices, but the payback can be a seal of approval from higher-paying markets, be it a certification or better shelf-space in local supermarkets.

The same goes for export markets. Compliance with food safety protocols is a fundamental prerequisite for accessing markets in a globalized food trade environment. It not only ensures regulatory compliance but also serves as a competitive advantage, enhances reputation and consumer trust, and helps navigate the complexities of international trade and diverse market requirements.

To connect food safety to marketing ideas, discuss the following:

- **Market Access Depends on Compliance with Food Safety Protocols:** For higher-paying markets, access is heavily influenced by the adherence to stringent food safety protocols. Many countries and international trading blocs impose strict regulations and standards on imported food products to protect public health and ensure the safety of their consumers. Exporters must demonstrate their compliance with these safety measures to gain entry into these lucrative markets. Failure to meet these requirements can result in trade barriers, import restrictions, or even outright bans on the affected products.
- **Food Safety Enhances Consumer Confidence:** Maintaining robust food safety protocols inspires confidence among consumers – even locally – and promotes trust in the food supply chain. Accessing new markets or expanding existing ones becomes more achievable for food producers and exporters when their products are associated with a strong reputation for safety and quality. With increased consumer trust, companies can develop brand loyalty and capture a larger market share in both domestic and international markets.
- **Certification and Quality Assurance Schemes Facilitate Market Entry:** Obtaining certifications and adhering to internationally recognized quality assurance schemes (such as ISO 22000, HACCP, or GlobalG.A.P.) significantly aid in the process of gaining access to various markets. These certifications provide evidence that a company's food safety management system meets global standards and is regularly audited to ensure ongoing compliance. Many importers require such certifications as a prerequisite for engaging in business with foreign suppliers, making them essential for market access.
- **Food Safety as a Competitive Advantage:** Compliance with food safety protocols can also serve as a competitive advantage in the marketplace. In today's consumer-driven economy, there is an increasing awareness and demand for safe and traceable food products. Companies that prioritize food safety throughout their supply chains can use this as a marketing tool to differentiate their products from competitors. This strategy can lead to increased market share and access to niche markets that prioritize food safety and sustainability. Moreover, with evolving consumer preferences, food safety can be a key factor in influencing purchasing decisions, enabling companies to command premium prices for their products.

Ask the group to provide examples of when and how food quality (and safety) was part of their discussions with buyers.

- What went right and why?
- What were some of the issues members of the group encountered?

STEP 3. Discuss the basic elements of food safety systems. The facilitator familiarizes the group with the basic elements of a food system. He/she notes that these elements apply to companies that follow international guidelines and may or may not be realistic for producer groups to follow. However, if the goal of producer groups is to connect to markets and / or earn certification, it is good for them to know what their buyers expect suppliers to comply with. Thus, the facilitator can briefly walk the group through these elements.

Although this course will not cover all of these elements, a comprehensive food safety system at a food firm typically includes:

- **Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP)**: HACCP is a systematic approach by **a food firm** to identify, evaluate, and control potential hazards in the food production process. It involves identifying critical control points (CCPs) where hazards can be controlled or eliminated to ensure food safety. This will include looking at their suppliers as potential hazard points. Even though this system is US-based, many domestic regulations for food safety are often similar or based on HACCP as an approach to ensuring food safety at enterprises.
- **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)**: GMP outlines the basic operational and environmental conditions necessary to produce safe food. It covers areas such as facility design, equipment maintenance, hygiene practices, and employee training.
- **Sanitation and Hygiene**: Proper sanitation and hygiene practices are crucial to prevent the contamination of food products. This includes cleaning and sanitizing equipment, facilities, and utensils, as well as maintaining personal hygiene of food handlers.
- **Traceability**: Traceability allows for the identification of the source of ingredients or raw materials used in food production. It helps in quickly identifying potentially unsafe products from the market in case of contamination or other safety issues.
- **Supplier Control**: Ensuring that suppliers meet specific safety and quality standards for ingredients and raw materials is essential for maintaining food safety throughout the supply chain.
- **Allergen Management**: Proper identification, handling, and labeling of allergens are essential to protect consumers with allergies from unintended exposure to allergenic substances in food products.
- **Training and Education**: Adequate training and education of food handlers and workers are necessary to ensure they understand food safety protocols and can implement them effectively.
- **Quality Management System (QMS)**: A QMS helps ensure that food safety standards are consistently met by establishing processes for documentation, monitoring, and continuous improvement. The FFBS training will cover the basic system that a farm can establish in the days that follow.
- **Food Testing and Analysis**: Regular testing and analysis of food products are conducted to detect potential contaminants, pathogens, and quality issues.
- **Regulatory Compliance**: Compliance with relevant food safety regulations and standards is vital to ensure that the food product meets legal requirements and is safe for consumers.
- **Auditing and Verification**: Regular internal and external audits are conducted to verify compliance with food safety procedures and standards. Certification schemes always include auditing and verification, usually on a regular basis.

STEP 4. Discuss the role of gender in food safety systems. There have been studies in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Senegal that have suggested that women and men may sometimes play different roles and/or approach food safety maintenance differently – either at household or food company levels. However, there is not much evidence about how, why and the degree to which this happens and may differ greatly depending on country and community context. The objective of this step is to initiate a discussion of gender roles for individual FFBS settings.

Divide the group into smaller subgroups that will discuss the roles women and men play in their contexts with regards to maintaining the safety of the food they produce, sell and consume. To the best of his/her ability, the facilitator will help create subgroups that include:

- Only women.
- Only men.
- Roughly equally men and women.

Ask the groups to discuss the gender roles in food safety for two types of food products:

1. the food that is consumed at home
2. the foods that they sell to the market.

The participants will document the results of their discussion on a flip chart. After the discussion, each group will make a short presentation of their discussion. The facilitator will help compare the answers groups gave to see whether they are different across groups.

STEP 5. Lay out the structure of the FFBS Food Safety module. Facilitators will then lay out the plan for the remainder of the food safety training. The remaining sessions will include:

- Establishing a Farm Food Safety Plan and Identification of Food Safety Hazards.
- Farmers and Workers Training on Health and Hygiene as Related to Food Safety.
- Storage and Maintenance of Food Products.
- Food Safety Practices to Manage Water for Production, Harvest, and Postharvest.
- Dealing with Animals: Wildlife, Livestock, Working Animals and Pets.
- Establishing a Food Traceability System

5.15 Establishing a Farm Food Safety Plan and Identification of Food Safety Hazards

SEASON	Harvest
OBJECTIVE	Identifying steps involved in developing a farm food safety plan and a traceability system to track produce one step forward to buyer and one step back to farm.
TIME FRAME	2–3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, farm maps, food safety plan templates, and farms records.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing and sitting.

Background

The ultimate food safety goal is to protect consumers from getting sick because of foodborne pathogens, allowing them to eat healthy, nutritious, and safe food.

A food safety plan is a written living document outlining what producers must do to establish a safety culture at the farm and at the same time protect public health.

The main reasons to write a farm food safety plan are to help producers to keep organized and focused on produce safety. Also, it is the strategy to be prepared to respond to market requirements, third-party audits and meet food safety requirements established by governments.

Remember, each farm is unique and has their own specific risks. Someone that knows well the farm is the person to lead the writing process of the Farm Food Safety Plan (Farm owner, farm manager).

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Identify a Farm Food Safety Plan Parts.** Facilitators help producers to identify plan parts based on their needs. Below are some plan referential parts.

- Farm name and address/ location.
- Farm description. Types of crops, farm size, markets.
- Food Safety responsible, name, phone, email address.
- Farm risk assessment of practices and environment that can impact food safety.
- Practices to reduce food safety risks.
- Resources to implement practices.
- Records that document practices.

Other aspects producers should include in the plan:

- Farm maps
- Policies
- Standard operation procedures (SOPs)
- Water test results

- List of suppliers and buyers
- Traceability and recall plans
- Info on service providers.

▶ STEP 2. **Assess Risk.** This is the first step to writing the plan. The key consists of revising practices, the farm environment, and adjacent land use to identify factors that can introduce or increase food safety risks.

There are many risks in farms and packing houses, being these associated with **humans** (hands, clothes, shoes, body fluids), **water** (irrigation, spray applications, harvest, post-harvest, washing fruits and vegetables, cleaning tools, and food contact surfaces), **soil amendments** (manure, compost, agricultural teas, etc.), **animals** (livestock, working animals, pets, wildlife) and **food contact surfaces** (equipment, tools, vehicles, harvests containers, sorting tables, etc.).

We are worried about risks posed by microorganisms/ human pathogens (viruses, bacteria, and parasites), but also chemicals (pesticides, lubricants, sanitizers) and physical (glasses, iron, stones, wood).

In order to guide the process, do the following:

- Do a brainstorming with producers.
- Identify risks that are most likely to occur.
- Focus on microbial, chemical, and physical risks.
- Prioritize risk 3–5 risks that are likely to occur.

▶ STEP 3. **Select Practices to Reduce Risks.**

Guide the process:

- Select practices that will reduce identified risks.
- Make a list of resources required to implement practices (money, time, people, equipment, tools, infrastructure, hand soap, paper towels, etc.) on flip charts.
- Make a list of tasks/steps to implement practices on flip charts.
- Designate people in charge of each task.

▶ STEP 4. **Write the plan and revise it when necessary.**

Guide the process:

- Use a template to write a plan.
- Define SOPs and farm policies outlining what needs to be done.
- Adapt recordkeeping templates.
- Review and update your plan at least annually, or when necessary.

Note: See in the annex the traceability system tool. Use that only if it is necessary.

5.16 Farmers' and Workers' Training on Health and Hygiene as Related to Food Safety

SEASON	Harvest and post-harvest
OBJECTIVE	Discuss the importance of being clean, wearing clean clothes and shoes, washing hands, handling injuries and illnesses, and training on food safety practices for reducing risk when handling fresh produce or touching food contact surfaces.
TIME FRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, washing hand videos, videos on microbial contamination, pictures on how to handle injuries and games.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing, sitting, and watching videos.

Background

This module makes sure producers and farm workers reinforce their knowledge and skills to identify food safety hazards and risks to prevent food contamination. Also, to select and implement food safety practices to reduce risk while they are working on the farm or in a packing house. All farm people working with fruit and vegetables must be able to identify and reduce risk when handling produce for fresh consumption or touching food contact surfaces. Having the right training and resources to implement food safety practices prevent direct pathogen contamination and cross-contamination.

The biggest food safety hazards in fresh produce are human pathogens that may cause foodborne illness outbreaks. The most important are:

- Bacteria are microorganisms that can multiply both inside and outside of a host. Examples are E. coli O157:H7, Salmonella, Listeria monocytogenes, Shigella, and others.
- Viruses are small particles of nucleic acid, and they need a host to reproduce. Viruses are spread by food handlers who have not washed their hands before touching fruits and vegetables or food. Examples are Norovirus and Hepatitis A.
- Parasites need a host to multiply, however, they also are stable in the environment and often transmitted through water contaminated with fecal material. Examples are Giardia, Toxoplasma gondii (often carried by cats), and Cyclospora.

In sum, an effective training program on personnel health, hygiene, and gender equity is fundamental to establishing a food safety culture at farms, packing houses, processing units, or any other value chain link to reduce foodborne illness outbreaks.

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Help farmers recognize what they do at their work.** Every person at the farm, packing house, or processing units such as workers, managers, and owners that handle produce for fresh consumption or touch food contact surfaces at packing or processing facilities must be trained in food safety to offer safe food for their families, communities, and consumers.

Remember, human pathogens (viruses, bacteria, and parasites) can contaminate fruit and vegetables through several routes.

STEP 2. Conduct a risk assessment at the workplace. A hazard is any biological, chemical, or physical agent that could cause illness or injury in consumers. Risk refers to the probability of a hazard causing serious or adverse health effects. In the risk assessments, we analyze the hazard and the probability that the hazard will on the safety of food for human or animal consumption.

Guide a discussion with participants on identifying only potential human hazards (farm owners, workers, visitors, managers, etc.) that may introduce risk on farms, packing houses, or processing units.

STEP 3. Identify risks associated with humans. Share with participants that food handlers must follow proper hygiene and health practices to avoid:

- Not washing hands with soap after using the toilet, eating, smoking, working with animals, or handling manure. As a result, human feces and other toxins contaminate food and field crops.
- Blood from Injuries or other body fluids contaminating food and food contact surfaces.
- Animal feces contaminating food handlers' clothing and shoes.
- Food handlers contaminate tools, equipment, sorting tables, and other food contact surfaces.
- *Remember* you don't always SEE dirty hands or feces – germs can be there without us seeing them. Always wash hands with soap before touching produce and after using the toilet, eating, smoking, working with animals, or handling manure.

STEP 3. Training Food Handlers. Discuss with participants all aspects to consider when implementing food safety trainings.

Identify who handles food at various production and post-harvest stages and ask participants to reflect on how they handle it. Recognize that food handlers are responsible for using food safety practices every day while they work. Training is key to protecting public health and food safety practices are learned. What to consider in a training:

Proper handwashing and when food handlers must wash their hands with soap	The training must be appropriate for the job
Principles of food hygiene and food safety	Never harvest fruits and vegetables for fresh consumption that are visibly contaminated with feces
Recognizing symptoms of foodborne illness	Never harvest dropped fruits and vegetables
Include refresher training at least annually or when a problem arises	Use of videos and figures to be easily understood.
Importance of personal hygiene for all personnel and visitors	Use of clean harvest and packing containers
Proper use of toilets	Growers must share the farm's food safety policies with visitors and provide them access to toilet and handwashing facilities.
How to conduct a risk assessment during harvest considering feces in the field, damaged crops, extensive animal tracks, or animal activity	Include a process for documenting the training
Use of appropriate protective equipment such as hand gloves, shoes, and gowns.	Appropriate cleaning of food when handling and storing

▶ **STEP 4. Identify resources for effective training.** Discuss the needed resources to implement the knowledge and skills learned during training. These resources must be toilets, toilet paper, soap, clean water, hand washing stations, hand drier, hand gloves, shoes, containers to catch wastewater, and garbage cans. Also, it could be useful to have a first aid kit, drinking water station, and break areas.

▶ **STEP 5. Identify corrective actions and record-keeping.** Consider corrective actions when monitoring identifies a problem, food safety policies are not followed, and when a food safety risk is present. Records must be taken to document worker training programs, and it's a good idea to have records of restocking toilet and handwashing facilities, illness and injuries, and restocking first aid kits.

5.17 Storage and Maintenance of Food Products

SEASON	Post-harvest
OBJECTIVE	Understand the role correct storage of food plays in preventing the growth of harmful bacteria, preserving the nutritional value, and maintain the quality of food items to safeguard consumer health.
TIME FRAME	2–3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, videos, and exercises to differentiate risks associated with agricultural
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing, sitting, and watching videos.

Background

Storing products correctly or incorrectly will greatly affect their longevity and safety. Although safe storage may differ depending on the product, there are general best practices that apply to all.

In this session, the participants will learn about some general food safety storage principles and will go in depth about some of the main ones. Although this session focuses on storage and maintenance, it will be relevant to all farmers, entrepreneurs and others who handle food, whether for their own consumption or for sale.

The facilitator should note that maintaining documenting storage practices is important as part of the overall farm food safety plan, as discussed in earlier sessions.

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Discuss main international best practices for ensuring safe foods.** Best food storage practices differ greatly across countries, types of businesses / farms and other contexts. Many are required by governments; many are simply recommended. However, there are some general practices that we can make note of. Discuss the following with the group.

- **Temperature Monitoring**: To avoid development of harmful bacteria, regularly monitor and record storage temperatures to ensure that they are within safe limits for each type of food product.
- **Preventing Cross-Contamination**: Store different types of food items separately to prevent cross-contamination and ensure proper cleaning and sanitization of storage areas and equipment.
- **Stock Rotation**: Implement a first-in, first-out (FIFO) system to use older stock before newer ones, reducing the risk of expired or spoiled products.
- **Proper Packaging**: Use suitable packaging materials to protect food items from physical and biological contamination.
- **Allergen Control**: Ensure that allergenic foods are appropriately segregated and labeled, preventing cross-contact and allergen-related issues.
- **Pest Control**: Implement measures to prevent and control pests, such as regular inspections and proper sealing of storage areas.
- **Traceability and Documentation**: Maintain detailed records of incoming and outgoing food products to facilitate traceability in case of a recall or contamination incident.

- **Hygiene and Sanitation**: Follow strict hygiene practices when handling and storing food items to prevent the growth and spread of harmful bacteria.
- **Employee Training**: Provide training to staff members involved in food storage to ensure they understand the importance of food safety and are aware of the proper procedures.
- **Compliance with Regulations**: Stay informed about food safety regulations and ensure that all storage practices align with relevant laws and guidelines.

This course will focus in more detail on only a few of these: the importance of temperature controls, avoiding cross-contamination, some packaging tips, and tips for rotating stock.

▶ STEP 2. **Learn about Temperature Controls.** The facilitators ask the participants to discuss current storage practices in their community, both at home and for commercial farming. The participants discuss what kinds of storage space they have, whether this storage has separate space for meat and vegetables, for ready-to-eat foods and for raw foods, whether there is any refrigeration and what kind, etc. The results of the discussion are put on the board on sticky cards.

Next, the facilitators discuss some of the best temperature control practices, as per below. The discussion should be focused on whether the participant community practices cold storage, at least partially (Community Type A) or not (Community Type B).

Discussion for Community Type A (Cold Storage Practices): Most food safety regulations recommend refrigeration temperatures to be at or below 4°C and freezer temperature at -18°C. These temperatures should be checked periodically. Some tips for the main product categories are below[8]:

Food	Refrigeration time	Time in the freezer
Raw chicken	1–2 days	9 months (pieces) to 1 year (whole)
Raw meats	3–5 days	4–12 months
Processed meats and fish (smoked, cured)	Up to 1 week if unopened	1–2 months
Fresh fish	1–3 days	2–3 months (fatty fish), 4–8 months (lean fish)
Shellfish	2–4 days or up to 10 (clams, mussels)	2–4 months, but not recommended for clams, mussels, crab, lobsters
Soups, stews and leftovers	3–4 days	Up to 4 months
Eggs	3 to 5 weeks	Do not freeze in shell

Some other tips:

- Put food in the refrigerator as soon as it gets home / the storage area. Food should be in cold storage within two hours of taking it from previous cold storage.
- Try to leave room in the refrigerator so that cold air can circulate.
- Eat ready-to-eat food as soon as possible.
- Remember that not all foods that smell, taste and look alright are safe. Don't rely on your senses and practice other food safety practices.
- Marinate food in the refrigerator**.** Bacteria can multiply rapidly in foods left to marinate at room temperature. Also, never reuse marinating liquid as a sauce unless you bring it to a rapid boil first.
- Wipe spills in the refrigerator/ cold storage space immediately, clean it regularly.
- Defrost freezers regularly (every few months).
- Do not freeze foods once they were defrosted.
- Keep food covered and packaged whenever possible.

8 Source is the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), but these guidelines are international.

- If food is labeled, make sure to read it and follow guidelines. If you are a food handler, label foods that you process to know when the food was created, processed and put into refrigeration. Even hand-written labels on containers is better than nothing.

Discussion for Community Type B (Little to No Cold Storage): Implementing food temperature controls without a cold chain can be challenging, but it is still possible to ensure food safety. Here are some top tips:

- **Shorter Storage Periods**: Reduce the storage time for perishable food items to minimize the risk of bacterial growth and spoilage. This means that products have to move quickly from production to consumption or to sale. Also, processing (fermentation, pickling, salting, drying, etc.) will help prolong the useful life of a product.
- **Room Temperature Monitoring**: Regularly monitor and record room temperatures in storage areas to ensure they stay within safe limits for the specific food products. Find the coldest place possible, with no sun access or use dark shades to make sure that the sun does not penetrate. Underground covered storage can also be used.
- **Shelf Stability**: Choose food items with longer shelf stability and lower moisture content, as they are less likely to spoil quickly.
- **Dry Storage**: Keep food items in a dry storage area, away from humidity and moisture, which can accelerate spoilage and mold growth.
- **Use Preservatives**: As mentioned above, for certain foods, consider using natural preservatives, such as salt, vinegar, or sugar, to extend their shelf life. This also helps differentiate products from other products in the market: you can have fun with your ingredients and create new flavors.
- **Air Circulation**: Ensure proper ventilation and air circulation in storage areas to prevent the buildup of heat and humidity. Regularly air your storage rooms but do it so it does not create hotter spaces (see above).
- **Proper Packaging**: Whenever possible, use airtight and moisture-resistant packaging to protect food items from external contaminants and maintain their quality.
- **Regular Inspections**: Conduct regular visual inspections of stored food items to identify any signs of spoilage or contamination.
- **Supplier Relations** (for retailers, traders, wholesalers): Work closely with suppliers to ensure that the food products received are of good quality and have an adequate shelf life.

▶ STEP 3. **Separate Raw and Ready-to-Eat Foods.** The facilitator will draw the attention of participants that will help food handlers avoid cross-contamination:

- **Use Separate Cutting Boards and Utensils**: Designate specific cutting boards and use separate utensils (knives, tongs, spatulas) for raw meats, poultry, and seafood, and separate ones for cooked foods and vegetables to prevent the transfer of harmful bacteria.
- **Storage Separation**: Store raw meats, poultry, seafood, and eggs in sealed containers or bags on the lower shelves of the refrigerator to prevent their juices from dripping onto other foods. Consider using color-coded containers or labels to clearly differentiate between containers holding raw and cooked foods.
- **Use Separate Areas**: If possible, use separate preparation areas for raw and cooked foods to minimize the risk of cross-contamination.
- **Food Preparation Sequence**: Prepare raw foods before handling cooked or ready-to-eat foods to avoid contaminating them during the cooking process.
- **Avoid Dripping**: When marinating raw meats or seafood, do so in a container within the refrigerator to prevent juices from dripping onto other foods.
- **Thorough Cleaning**: Clean and sanitize all surfaces, utensils, and cutting boards that come into contact with raw foods before using them for cooked foods.
- **Proper Handwashing**: Encourage proper handwashing among food handlers, especially after touching raw foods, to prevent the spread of bacteria.
- **Transparent Containers**: Use clear containers to store food in the refrigerator, so you can easily identify what's inside without opening them and risking cross-contamination.

- **Proper Sealing**: As much as possible, seal raw foods tightly before placing them in the refrigerator to prevent any accidental spillage or leakage.
- **Educate all food handlers**: If you're in a commercial setting, ensure that all kitchen staff are trained on proper food safety practices, including the importance of separating raw and cooked foods. If you are at home, all those who handle food should follow the above guidelines.

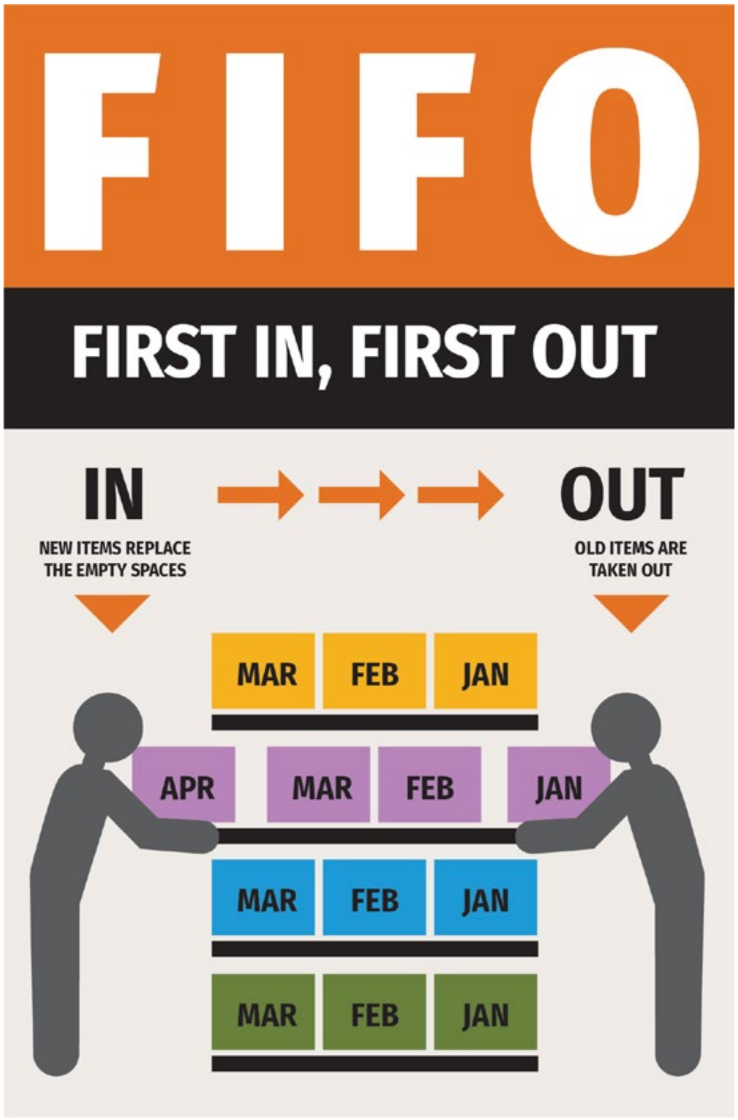
▶ STEP 4. **Ensure Proper Packaging and Storage Facilities.** Facilitators will ask participants to talk about some packaging practices in their community, both at home and commercially. Ask them about materials they use for containers, where they get them (buy vs. make themselves), any information they list on packaging, its design, and anything else they'd want to talk about. List those practices on sticky notes or draw them on flip chart. Finish the exercise by talking about some of internationally acceptable but locally appropriate practices such as:

- **Local Materials**: Use locally available and affordable packaging materials to minimize costs and support the local economy. Many containers can be recycled or made from recycled materials.
- **Simple Design**: Opt for packaging designs that are easy to produce and assemble, using basic tools and techniques, and avoid environmental impact.
- **Functional Structure**: Design packaging and storage facilities that protect food from physical damage, contamination, and pests, while allowing for efficient storage and transportation.
- **Portion Control**: For home use and at restaurants/cafes, package food in smaller portions to reduce waste and prevent spoilage, especially for products with short shelf lives.
- **Reusable Containers**: Encourage the use of reusable containers that farmers can return for refilling, reducing packaging waste and costs.
- **Airtight Sealing**: If possible, create airtight packaging to prolong the shelf life of food and reduce exposure to moisture and air.
- **Transparent Sections**: Incorporate transparent sections in packaging to allow consumers to see the contents without opening the package.
- **Simple Labeling**: Include clear labels with essential information such as product name, date of packaging, and any necessary storage instructions.
- **Local Expertise**: Tap into local knowledge and traditional packaging methods that have been effective for preserving foods in the area.
- **Adaptation to Climate**: Consider packaging that can withstand the local climate conditions, protecting food from heat, humidity, and other environmental factors.
- **Collaboration**: Work with local communities, private sector and government to develop packaging solutions that meet the needs and preferences of the target consumers.
- **Education**: Provide training and education to other farmers about proper packaging practices to ensure food safety and quality.
- **Bulk Packaging**: For larger quantities, use bulk packaging methods that allow for easier transport and distribution to markets or processing centers.
- **Pest Resistance**: Develop packaging that is resistant to pests, such as rodents and insects, to protect the food from contamination.
- **Market Considerations**: Understand the packaging preferences of local markets and consumers to ensure the packaged products are well-received.
- **Innovative Techniques**: Explore innovative low-cost packaging techniques, such as vacuum sealing with simple tools or repurposing materials.
- **Continual Improvement**: Regularly gather feedback from consumers, farmers, and retailers to make improvements to packaging designs and materials based on their experiences.

▶ STEP 5. **Implement Stock Rotation through First-in, First-out (FIFO) System.** First-in, first-out (FIFO) storage practices are essential for maintaining the quality and safety of food products. Here are the top 5 tips for implementing effective FIFO storage:

- **Clearly Mark Products**: Label each item with its production or expiration date, and arrange them in the order they were received, making it easy to identify which products should be used first.
- **Regularly Rotate Stock**: Regularly check inventory and move newer items to the back while bringing older items to the front. This practice ensures that older products are used before they expire.
- **Train Food Handlers**: Educate your staff and/or other food handlers in your family on the importance of FIFO and how to properly implement it. Ensure they understand the labeling system and the correct way to arrange products.
- **Regular Inspections**: Conduct routine inspections of storage areas to ensure that products are being rotated according to FIFO principles and that expired items are removed promptly.
- **Monitor Shelf Life**: Keep track of the shelf life of different products and set up alerts or reminders to use items before they expire. This helps prevent wastage and maintains product quality.

By consistently following these FIFO storage tips, you can reduce the risk of using expired or lower-quality products, minimize food waste, and ensure the safety of the items you serve or sell.



5.18 Food Safety Practices to Manage Water for Production, Harvest, and Post-Harvest

SEASON	Vegetative, Harvest, and Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	Understand the microbial risks associated with water, required water quality, and practices to reduce risks of water for production, harvest, and postharvest activities
TIME FRAME	2–3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, water videos, and exercises to differentiate risks associated with agricultural
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing, sitting, and watching videos.

Background

Agricultural water must be safe and have an adequate sanitary quality for its intended use. In this module, agricultural water refers to the water that is intended for fruits and vegetables for fresh consumption or to be used to clean food contact surfaces. This water falls under two categories:

Production Water: It is used during growing activities and touches the edible part of the crop, for example, water for irrigation, fertigation, crop sprays, cooling, frost protection, etc.

Harvest and Postharvest Water: It is used during and after harvest, for example, for packing and holding, rinsing/washing produce and food contact surfaces, produce movement (i.e., dump tanks/flumes), cooling to reduce field heat, ice making, application of fungicide and wax, handwashing, and cleaning and sanitizing of harvest containers, transport vehicle, equipment, and tools.

Pathogens/ microorganisms (viruses, bacteria, and parasites), pesticides, or other substances can contaminate water sources and be easily spread through water. Hence, farmers must understand the risks associated with water before using it.

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Recognize the types of agricultural water and risks associated with it.** The facilitator will develop an exercise with participants to analyze the types of water and associated risks with the water resources they have. Make sure participants understand that water can possess contaminants that can be easily spread on the farm, packing facility, coolers, water tanks, and any open space where water is stored.

Water sources should be categorized:

Category	Public water	Ground water	Surface water
Definition	Water supplied by municipalities that have been treated against microorganisms of public health concern	Water that is extracted from wells.	This includes rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, human-made reservoirs, and any source of water that is open to the environment.
Risk associated	Less risk if there is written evidence that the water has been treated. **LESS RISK**	It is safer than surface water when head wells are installed correctly, and septic tanks are not leaking. **INTERMEDIATE RISK**	Wildlife, domesticated animals, manure application, composting operations, septic tanks, wastewater discharge, flooding, runoff from upstream livestock operations, or wastewater discharge. **MAJOR RISK**
Uses	Production, harvest, and postharvest.	Production, harvest, and postharvest.	Production. Harvest, and postharvest if water has been treated.

Use the above table to explain to participants the types of water or use local pictures of water sources to facilitate engagement, interaction, and learning.

▶ STEP 2. **Select practices to prevent contamination in production water.** Once risks have been identified help farmers select food safety practices to reduce pathogens risks. Risks associated with chemicals and pesticides can be addressed from an integrated crop management perspective and following product label, which is defined by law in each country.

<table>
<tr><th>Practices for public water</th><th>Practices for ground water</th><th>Practices for surface water</th></tr>
<tr><td>Collect evidence the water has been treated/. If there is no proof or certificate of treatment, then manage the water as surface water.</td><td></td><td>Water assessment of the surrounding areas – land topography, animal activity, manure runoff, raw human and animal wastes, sewage water discharges, and other contaminants from adjacent land.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>If climate conditions allow bacteria die-off use sedimentation tanks before irrigation.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Irrigation method that avoids contact between the water and the edible part of the crop for fresh consumption – if the water does not touch the harvestable portion of the crop, the risk is lower.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Timing of water applications – more time between application and harvest reduces produce safety risks</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Keep water sources free of debris, trash, domesticated animals, and other hazards. Also protecting irrigation canals from the reach of animals if producers have the sources to do it.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Repairing damaged equipment: including backflow devices, hoses, pipes, sprinkler heads, and other distribution equipment</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Only if it is possible, testing to evaluate the microbial water quality – treat the water if needed. This varies from country to country and the type of water.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Treating water with sanitizer is an option to reduce risks at the point of use, but it is not required in most countries.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Inspect water sources and water distribution systems – at least annually. Also, applying a water safety approach to keep water health along the chain</td></tr>
</table>

▶ STEP 3. **Select practices to prevent contamination in harvest and postharvest water.** If farmers are using harvest and postharvest water, help them to select practices to reduce the risk associated with microorganisms. As a reminder, farmers can use surface water in harvest, postharvest, and washing hands only if this has been treated and tested to make sure it is free of pathogens. Use the table below to discuss practices based on farmers' needs.

Practices for public water	Practices for ground water
Get a copy of test results or current certificates of compliance	Testing untreated ground water. Look for testing requirements depending on the country of interest.
	Treating water with an antimicrobial product that must be labeled for use with fruits and vegetables. There are many sanitizers available, including organic options. Follow label.
Selecting a type of system to wash fruit and vegetables: Single pass water. This is running water through a pipe or hose. Recirculated and batch water. This water is held in a tank and it can be easily contaminated by produce coming from the field which could introduce pathogens. Having a plan for maintaining quality, monitoring, and changing water is critical.	
Testing water source, in some countries, use generic E. coli as an indicator of quality criterion. Water must not have detectable generic E. coli in a sample of 100 ml. This practice must be limited to countries that have lab infrastructure and also it is really expensive.	
Monitoring water temperature to reduce the risk of pathogen infiltration. It happens when produce is warmer than water, has longer contact time, wounded o bruised produce, and deep produce submersion in contaminated water. Tomatoes, cantaloupes, mangoes, papayas, and apples are susceptible to infiltration. Other produce may be susceptible too.	
If water is treated with a sanitizer, this can change the pH of the water. Sanitizers, such as chlorine, are most effective at specific pH ranges, farmers need to monitor and alter the water pH to maintain the effectiveness of the sanitizer. pH test strips are a cheap and common way to get a general understanding of pH levels in water.	
Turbidity or level of water cloudiness can be used as an indicator of when farmers should change the water used to wash fruits and vegetables. Some practice to monitor it is the use of a turbidity meter or a Secchi disk. Turbidity can affect the power of a sanitizer and pH readings.	
Applying a water changing schedule will depend on how much produce farmers are washing/cooling, type of produce, type of water tank (large scale vs. small scale), organic load (soil, leaves, damaged product), and type of sanitizer.	
Disposal of wastewater from produce washing or cooling must avoid contamination of produce fields and water sources.	
Selecting an antimicrobial or sanitizer. There are several options and it is easier to ask a postharvest specialist or follow carefully the product label.	
Avoid cross-contamination including food handlers' hands, clothing, containers, packing tables, conveyor belts, tools, and water.	
Helping the farmers to define Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as a tool to aid in postharvest water management, for example, for changing water, monitoring pH, or adding a sanitizer to postharvest water.	

Note: *There is a common misconception among farmers that a sanitizer added to water is meant to "wash" fruits and vegetables, but this is not true. The sanitizers are used to prevent cross-contamination via water. If a product is contaminated in a water tank this can be a source of pathogens contamination for uncontaminated produce.*

STEP 4. Discuss general management practices to keep the quality of production, harvest, and postharvest water. Emphasize with participants a summary of general recommendations to reduce risks associated with water.

Production water	Harvest and postharvest water
Testing ground and surface water. Not always available and it is expensive.	Testing groundwater. Not always available and it is expensive.
Define a water distribution map including water sources, holding tanks, pipes, adjacent lands, and degree of protection to identify risks associated with using water.	Make sure to use harvest and postharvest water that is potable which means free of generic E. Coli for washing and cooling fruits and vegetables, handwashing, ice-making, and cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces.
Make changes to reduce risks, for instance, in water application avoid contacting the harvestable crop portion, use drip irrigation instead of overhead irrigation, or extend the time between application and harvest.	Make changes to reduce risks when washing fruits and vegetables by using single-pass systems.
Use surface water to irrigate agronomic corps and crops that are not for fresh consumption.	Using sanitizer labeled for washing produce and follow label, do not use surface water unless it is treated. Sanitizers can help to reduce cross contamination.

Note: For specific practices about harvest and postharvest please see agricultural modules where you will find Good Agricultural Practices for production, harvest and postharvest water.

5.19 Dealing with Animals: Wildlife, Livestock, Working Animals and Pets

SEASON	Pre-production, Breeding, Production, and Marketing
OBJECTIVE	Identify food safety risks associated with wildlife and domesticated animals to apply practices to mitigate those risks.
TIME FRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, pictures, and videos.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing, sitting, animal track identification exercises, and watching videos.

Background

Wildlife and domesticated animals (livestock, working animals and pets) represent a food safety concern because they can carry zoonotic pathogens (pathogens that can be transferred to humans) in their feces and can spread contamination on fruits and vegetable fields as they move or when animal feces is used as manure in crops. Livestock, working animals and pets pose a greater risk because they are in contact with humans as well as wildlife; hence, they are more likely to harbor zoonotic pathogens.

Studies have shown that chicken and goat droppings and cow dung have germs and parasites that can damage the stomachs of young children and cause diarrhea, poor absorption of nutrients, stunted growth, and poor health such as anemia9. It is therefore important to regularly sweep and clean places where children play to reduce the chances of them touching or eating animal feces. Parents and care givers should also wash their hands properly after handling livestock and livestock products before handling children to protect them from contamination.

Livestock products such as milk, meat and eggs can also be a source of zoonotic pathogens if the products are not properly handled/cooked before consumption by humans. Animals are free in the environment and their presence does not necessarily represent a problem, but they can carry human pathogens representing a risk.

Dealing with wildlife is complex and may require multiple strategies. Also, some of them are beneficial to farm production, for example, raptors that reduce rodent populations. Endangered species must be protected by law.

In addition, butchering and handling animal products in the same facilities as fresh fruit and vegetable products presents a significant risk of cross-contamination, and is an important source of food-borne illnesses.

Last, but not least, improper storage of animal products can lead to their spoilage and, as a result, to food poisoning.

9 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5392649/

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ **STEP 1. Assess risks.** The key is to develop a risk assessment before planting of the field location, adjacent land uses and wildlife risks.

Conducting a risk assessment on the farm involves evaluating the practices producers implement and any risks that may be present on adjacent land that could impact food production. Farmers must be aware of:

- Wildlife movement patterns
- Migratory birds
- Animal population density
- Field topography
- Animal access to water sources on the farm
- Fecal material in production areas
- Surface runoff to the water sources
- Nearby cattle operations
- Farmers knowledge, skills and capacity for proper animal manure management (such as composting) before use in the farm
- And more

However, not all risks identified will require action to prevent food contamination. Also, it is fundamental to conduct a risk assessment right before harvesting to determine if a crop can be harvested safely.

▶ **STEP 2. Monitor wildlife and domestic animals.** Overall wildlife entering fields or packing areas is the most important concern. Suggest producers monitor the following:

- *Wildlife activity on production fields throughout the growing season* – This is to prevent crop contamination and loss, pay attention to feces and evidence of intrusion, feces on produce (think about tree fruits vs. root crop), consider past observations, wildlife attractants such as water, drought in the area, and post-wildfire conditions. Look for resident bird populations or migrating flocks in tree crops.
- *Domesticated animals* – Monitoring domesticated animals by checking fences and animals' stables to make sure those are in good condition, pastures, and water reservoirs, that are shared by both wildlife and domesticated animals. This interaction may represent an opportunity for the transfer of pathogens.
- *Working animals* – Question when and how often they are in the field. Is the crop present? Always consider the risk of fecal contamination on crops ready or close to being harvested.
- *Pets* – These animals might represent a food safety risk if they have free access to fields and packing areas. For example, cats in packing houses can carry *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a cause of blindness, miscarriage, and death. However, working animals like dogs controlling wildlife can be effective.

▶ **STEP 3. Discuss deterring wildlife.** Discuss with producers the most useful methods that work for them based on their experience deterring wildlife. The list of deterring methods below can help to start the conversation:

- Decoys such as plastic coyotes and swans might be an effective method for scaring away wildlife.
- Fencing and netting to protect high-value crops could be expensive.
- Visual deterrents such as reflective tape, inflatable air noodles, and balloons.
- Noise deterrents, such as air cannons and ultrasonic devices, are effective on birds or small rodents.
- Tactile repellents such as sticky substances and spikes might deter wildlife.
- Tramps for relocating wildlife must be done by a professional and with a permit.
- Falconry in produce fields to deter nuisance birds and rodents, this must be done by experts.
- Drones to deter birds on fields.
- Reporting to wildlife service officers when dealing with larger and dangerous animals.

STEP 4. Encouraging implementing practices to reduce risks. Producers and workers are responsible for implementing food safety practices to reduce risks and, in this step, we can discuss with them some alternatives to do it.

- Conducting a preharvest/preproduction assessment: Before harvesting crop and livestock products, look for fecal contamination, signs of animal activity (e.g., trampling, rooting, feeding, tracks). Fruits and vegetable with feces cannot be harvested. Assess risks and decide if the crop or a portion of the crop/livestock product can be safely harvested. If not, decide whether a not-harvest buffer zone around the contamination could be sufficient to reduce the risk to proceed to harvest the non-contaminated crops.
- Establishing a no-harvest buffer zone is a Good Agricultural Practice that could have a 0–8 meter radius, depending on the crop, climate, contamination event, and harvest equipment.
- Removing, leaving, burying, or putting a flag around the contamination. Make sure producers consider risks that could result from these actions, for cross-contamination of equipment or tools with feces, in this case, those tools must be cleaned and sanitized.
- Looking for alternative markets such as processing and heat treatment. These alternatives can be considered if there are concerns about the safety of the crop. However, never harvest or sell crops contaminated with feces.
- Training producers and workers to identify animal intrusion, the presence of feces that can contaminate produce and equipment, not harvesting contaminated fruits and vegetables, establishing a no-harvest buffer zone, correcting problems with harvest containers, no harvest dropped produce, handwashing after handling animal feces or any time hands may be contaminated.
- Training workers to keep animal products and fruit and vegetable products separate. This includes using separate facilities, equipment and clothes to avoid cross-contamination.
- Establish basic animal food storage facilities to avoid spoilage. This could include cold storage, pest control, packaging and treatment to prolong shelf-life, etc.
- Taking records is important because it allows producers to review past issues and evaluate if practices are working. People at farms must take records of training producers and workers. Other records could be pre-plant land assessments, monitoring animal activity, pre-harvest assessments, and animal intrusion.
- Properly clean crops and livestock products (such as eggs) with clean fresh water to remove any fecal contamination before packaging/storage or use.
- Milk from animals should be boiled before drinking.

5.20 Establishing a Food Traceability System

SEASON	Harvest
OBJECTIVE	Identifying steps do develop a traceability system to track produce one step forward to buyer and one step back to farm.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, farm maps of crops planted, farm food safety plan, record schedule of harvest, and list of crew harvesters.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing and sitting.

Background

Traceability is the ability to track product movement from production to distribution. In agricultural products, for example, fruits and vegetables, this includes back to the field where it was grown and forward to any stage in the value chain such as handling, storage, transportation, and sale. Traceability also means farmers can identify any relevant inputs used during production including soil amendments, fertilizers, any chemicals applied to the crop, source water, and who harvested the crop. In addition, traceability helps farmers to keep better track of what sells at specific markets and the money they should be making, follow quality issues, and responds to complaints because they know who picked, packed, and transported the products.

In food safety, traceability allows producers to perform a recall of a product if there is contamination or some other food safety issue. This is important to reduce the impact on consumers and the farm as much as possible.

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Trace Products.** Use the approach "One Step Forward, One Step Back." Discuss with producers that this means knowing the field where a product was grown (step back) and the buyer of the product (step forward).

Key ideas for this discussion:

- Step back also refers to what inputs were used during crop production.
- Farmers are not responsible for the entire system when there are multiple steps to reach the final consumer.
- Step forward means identifying the market where produce was sold and not how many consumers bought the product.
- Every participant in the food system is responsible for their part, for example, if producers wholesale to a grocery store, the retailer is responsible to know where they sold the products.

▶ STEP 2. **With participants, define what is a lot.** Overall, a lot is a distinct and limited portion of a crop. For example, for a small farm could be all peppers harvested the same day from the same field where the crop was grown using the same inputs.

Key ideas for this discussion:

- Biggert lot more difficulties to do a recall.
- Each producer needs to decide the size of the lot and the best system for their farm.

- Establishing a clean break in the packing house can help to define a lot. It means the quantity of the product has been washed and packed before starting another packing. In other words, a break to clean all the food contact surfaces before and after the packing of that lot to consider it separate from other production lots.

▶ STEP 3. **Develop a Lot Code.** It can be done using numbers or letters, a combination of both or even colors or symbols.

Key ideas for this discussion:

- A lot code might identify: Field location, field block, crop and variety, harvest date, harvest crew, packinghouse used, packing date, packing crew, etc.
- The lot code should be unique and specific and follow the lot attached with a label or sticker.
- Some farmers use Julian date in harvest date because it is not easily recognized by consumers. The first two digits are the last numbers of the year and the three digits after the hyphen are the day of that year, starting January first. For example, 03-16-2023 is 23-073, in labels producers use only the last 3 digit (073).

▶ STEP 4. **Create labels to identify a lot.** Make sure each lot leaving the farm should be identifiable.

Key ideas for this discussion:

- To track each lot, it is needed to attach the lot code to the lot, and there are some options such as stickers, stamps, bar codes, boxes, clamshells, or individual pieces.
- Labels can be simple or complex, from handwritten or bar codes. However, the important part is ensuring the lot number travels with the lot.

▶ STEP 5. **Simulate a recall with participants.** When the traceability system is in place, it should be tested with a mock recall. This will help producers to determine whether the system is working.

Key ideas for this discussion:

- Producers contact a buyer who knows they are conducting a mock recall. Make sure to alert buyers that they are conducting a mock recall and not a real recall, confusion can generate a serious problem for producers.

Steps to simulate a recall:

1. Producers select a product that has been sold with it lot code.
2. Producers call a buyer that received some or all the lot.
3. Producers make sure to explain detail to buyers they are conducting a mock recall.
4. Producers ask buyers how much of the product is in stock and how much has been sold. The response must be documented.
5. Producers trace the lot using records, for example, field, variety, harvest crew, etc.
6. If producers can trace it backward and forward, the system is working well! If not, producers need to figure out the problem.

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PART 4 – Certification

5.21 Roadmap to certify farms, producer groups, and processing units

SEASON	At any stage that allows a certification audit
OBJECTIVE	Guide producers to choose the best certification option for their products to access high-value markets that pay premium prices, regardless of market fluctuations.
TIME FRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, videos, pictures or available certification schemes.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing, sitting, and watching videos.
AUDIENCE	Participants that have gone through the basic marketing concepts and are interested in moving towards more lucrative markets. Certification and food safety modules for NOT for FFBS participants who are just starting their FFBS journey

Background

Certification is still a trend of consumers' interest because they want to buy products that are natural harvest, healthiest, environmentally friendly, organic, certified humane, welfare-certified animal products, etc. Farmers certified their products in a way that aligns with consumers' preferences and communicates attributes using product certification schemes represented by labels.

Consumers differentiate similar products by label, and growers can use the label by adopting specific certification standards that are verified in situ by a third party. Labels are used to inform the nature of the product, protect the product from uncertified products, and educate consumers.

Producers can find different types of certifications available, and some certifiers provide technical assistance and outreach for selling products to consumers and educating them about what their standards mean. Farmers can find different types of certification standards available, and some certifiers provide technical assistance and outreach for selling products to consumers and educating them about what their standards mean. Certification standards might be defined by governments, the industry, and partnerships between governments, the private sector, and NGOs. The certification scheme at the field level can certify individuals (farm/farmer), groups of farmers (associations) hired labor organizations (contract production) and processing units, of course, distributors, retailers, etc. can be also certified.

Producers with agricultural or livestock certification would get better prices and incomes, for example, a premium price that must be invested in women's empowerment, and community projects for traditionally marginalized human groups, such as women, youth, indigenous, and other disadvantaged community residents.

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Understand certified markets and consumers' preferences.** Facilitators should guide producers on how certified markets work, and when it has value to certify agricultural and livestock products. Below are points to help guide the conversation with farmers.

- Producers must certify their products when buyers are interested in purchasing their products. This is the key and purpose of certification, better prices.
- Motivations among consumers may be health, environment, animal welfare, social justice, culture, etc.
- Certification means adopting voluntary standards defined by a certifier organization. However, the certification has an economic cost for farmers. Make sure how much that costs before selecting it.
- Sometimes, consumer wants to purchase products with more than one label, which mean more than one certification. Let's say consumers' preferences are an organic product with fair trade labels. In this case, there are two certifications involved.
- Not all certifications ensure a premium price for farmers, in some cases, the certification is a requirement to access a specific market. Having a floor price that includes certification costs is important, so the producers' objective is to make sure that consumers will pay a product price that covers the certification costs and a premium.
- To get certified farms or processing units a voluntary audit that focuses on best agricultural practices, food safety, or other practices is needed. In some cases, an audit plan is needed, and time and dates could agree upon with farmers depending on the selected certifier and certification scheme.
- As a reminder, the audit is implemented by a third-party certification entity that may require payment of application, inspection, and/or certification fees.
- After getting the certificate, records of farms' and/or processing unit practices must be taken.

▶ STEP 2. **Select the most convenient certifier and certification scheme.** Based on the target market and farmers' products and interest a certification scheme would be selected. Help farmers to review different certification options, for example:

- Understanding domestic markets' regulatory environment is key to obtaining any certification – be it domestic or international. Almost all domestic regulations are based on international best practices that are governed by Codex Alimentarius. Thus, any training on certification must present a brief overview of the main steps that producers will have to take to comply with national regulations.
- Certifications about Environmental and food safety (Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP)), Animal welfare (Humane), Religious (Halal, Kosher), Social justice (Fairtrade), Sustainability (Biodynamic, organic), Multi-purpose (Global G.A.P. and Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA)), are some of the international regulations to be considered.
- Guide growers to define if they want to be certified as individual farms, groups of farms, hired labor organizations (contract production), processing units, or facilities.
- Determine where are located potential farmers' buyers and make a list of certifiers that can conduct certifications to trade products in the target market.
- Meet or call certifiers and ask for availability, requirements, fee, and standards to understand the whole process.
- Select a certifier that can accomodate producers' capabilities. Some certifiers have a social branch that allows producers to own or be part of the certifier organization. They also provide technical assistance to producers to implement Good Agricultural Practices.

- Select a certifier that has values connected with women's empowerment; rights at work; fair wages, equity in working conditions, access to services, that improve ecosystem function, and sustainable production; transparency and traceability, and an internal management system.

Use the flipcharts to organize the options presented to the producers and determine the benefits and risks of each for selection.

▶ **STEP 3. Plan the certification of agricultural or livestock products.** The key is to provide ideas to have farmers agree, organize, plan the certification, and select the certification services provider**.** Use some of these points for discussion:

- Know very well the voluntary certification standards and select the certification scheme.
- Determine if there is a need for a farm audit plan to define the third-party audit scope of work.
- Work on the certification timeline and ask for certification fees.
- Ask for necessary records to document practices.
- Define conditions for a corrective action plan in case some farmers, a group of farmers, or a processing unit does not meet the audit.
- Agree on defining Terms of Reference, Concept Notes, or Contract with the certification services provider and define how the third party will conduct the audit in situ.

▶ **STEP 4. Certify the farm, group of farms, and processing units.** Before the certification audit, farmers should implement worker training and Good Agricultural Practices, Food Safety Practices, and Certification Practices to meet compliance with the choosing certification scheme. Based on the audit date farmers will have time to implement some corrective actions and make sure practices are well implemented and documented. The facilitator can discuss with farmers:

- Reviewing and understanding the chosen certification standards.
- Producers know the practices to be implemented at farms or processing units.
- Producers implementing practices to meet certification scheme requirements.
- Producers documenting implemented practices and training.
- Producers know the date and plan of the third-party certifier audit. If it is an unannounced audit, make all arrangements on farms or processing units to get prepared before the audit.
- Have a responsible person to organize producers to get ready for the third-party audit.
- Having the auditors and the audit on farms.
- Revising the auditor's report.
- Getting certificates and paying fees.
- Implementing the corrective action plan if it is needed.
- Renewing certification, after 3 years, five years, or the time defined by the certification standards.

▶ **STEP 5. Trade Products and Educating Consumers.** Some certifiers also support producers in connecting with buyers and implementing educational campaigns.

- This is the best scenario for certification to encourage producers to take advantage of this.
- Revise what are the services that certifiers provide.
- If it is the case prepare a campaign to communicate product values to potential consumers.

▶ **STEP 6. Invest in Premium Price and Renewing Certification.**

Most of the time is defined as a community committee or producers association committee that is responsible for standards that promote sustainable livelihoods, safe working conditions, protection of the environment, transparent supply chains, and make collective decisions on how to invest premium price in the community.

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5.22 Designing a Business Model that Would Lead to a Certification

SEASON	At any stage that allows a certification audit
OBJECTIVE	Guide farmers to put together a production and exporting model to access high-value markets that secure premium prices for certified products.
TIME FRAME	1–2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip chart, marker pens, pictures or available certification schemes.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	There should be enough space for standing, sitting, and watching videos.

Background

We know that the ideal certification scheme depends on the buyer's decision to purchase producers' products, requirements, and consumers' needs. CARE is focused on putting in place an operational business model led by women through certifying small-scale women producers or facilitating third-party certification that can allow them to access stable markets, and premium prices in commercial markets, regardless of local market fluctuations. In addition, implementing campaigns or promoting the product based on its certification and differentiation attributes to communicate the specific value to consumers of these agricultural products planted, managed, harvested, packed, and distributed by women's businesses. These activities can take many forms, from labeling products to organizing advocacy events.

Designing the certificated business model guide farmers to define a target market (standards and certification scheme with the most advantages), product characteristics that are valued by consumers, costs-efficient of the certification process and maintenance, and key partnerships to increase the bargaining power of small-scale women producers. In sum, a business model refers to the way a business operates and its components.

The capacity of producers of articulating with certified markets depends on the quality of linkages with local and export buyers, relevant certified products for the target market, and the assurance to receive a price premium, to compensate for their investments to comply with the standards and certification costs.

Steps to Follow for the Activity

▶ STEP 1. **Implement key activities.** Guide the producers' group to define the planted area, the volume of product needed, and logistics for harvesting and collecting the product. Scheduling planting and harvesting. Important ideas to discuss:

- Needed training and technical assistance. The approach is FFBS.
- Inputs for production (seeds, fertilizer, irrigation materials, pesticides, etc.) year-round.
- Financial service support, credits, insurance, guarantees, working capital, and investment capital. CARE VSLA would be an initial consideration.
- Marketing information to support planning and scheduling prating and harvesting.

▶ **STEP 2. Discuss a business strategy and partners.** Facilitators can guide the conversation around the following ideas.

- Defining a target market determines the type of standards and certification scheme.
- Conducting a business assessment to determine the organization and the managerial skills needed in a grower association, financial and business skills need to be in place.
- Prioritize certification ownership if the certifier could be a partner. If farmers have ownership of the certification schemes this will allow diversifying of market opportunities and reducing market risk.
- Consider direct market promotion possibilities in international fairs, visits to buyers and markets provide farmers with opportunities to better understand consumers' preferences and market trends.
- Communicating product quality, product differentiation, social transformation behind the business model, equal opportunities for participants in the value chain, and women empowerment.
- Think about diversification. Having several certified products and extending supply through farmers' associations and partnerships.

▶ **STEP 3. Create value.** Discussing with farmers about getting and maintaining certification could be problematic to be able to reach it is fundamental to work in capacity building. That is why understanding adding-value attributes to their products can help target high-value markets. To do that farmers must know the specific attributes that add value and differentiate their products. You can find in the sustainable agriculture section some tools to guide producers in how they should add or create value to their agricultural and livestock products.

▶ **STEP 4. Understand the cost-benefit of certification.** If producers know real certification costs, they would be able to take informed decisions in managing their business model. Building producers' capacity implies a clear understanding of the cost-benefit ratio. Discuss with participants the price points of different certifications.

▶ **STEP 5. Understand buyers through access to market information**. Discuss with the producers:

- Market information, certification requirements, and consumer preferences.
- Implementing a participatory approach involving farmers and other value-chain stakeholders in the definition of certification procedures might help to set confidence, skills, and bargaining capabilities in general.
- Implementing win-win schemes with certifiers partners might support farmers' business models.

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Annex

5A.1 Conducting a Market Survey

Example Market Questionnaire/Interview Guide

BASICS	
Place and date of interview	
Type of product (e.g., Groundnuts, Soya)	
Interviewer(s)	
PERSON INTERVIEWED	
Name	
Type of activity in chain (e.g., trader)	
Position, name of company	
Phone number	
Address	
PURCHASES OF PRODUCT (GROUNDNUTS AND SOYBEAN SEPARATELY)	
How much of product X do you buy in all each day? Each week? Each year?	
How often do you buy product X?	
Who do you buy from?	
What is your main source of product X?	
TERMS OF PURCHASE	
What is the smallest amount of the product that you would buy? The largest amount?	
What varieties of the product do you need? What size? What quality grade?	

How do you want sellers to package the product?	
What are your terms of payment? (e.g., full or partial payment on delivery, payment after a delay, provision of credit)	
Would you be interested in buying from a farmers' group? What amounts? At what price?	

PRICES

What price do you pay? (per kilogram or sack)	
How does the price change from season to season?	
Do prices vary for different varieties, ripeness, size or class?	

THE VALUE CHAIN

What do you do with the product after you buy it? E.g., do you sell it, process, package it, etc?	
What price do you sell at?	
What are your main marketing costs?	
Who do you sell it to?	
What do they do with it?	
Who are the end users?	

THE MARKET FOR PRODUCT X

Is demand for the product growing, stable, or declining? Are sales this year higher, the same, or lower than last year? Why the changes?	
How many other traders are there like you in the market?	
How much of product X is bought and sold at this market each day? In the peak season? In the low season?	
Who is the largest trader in this market for product X?	

OTHER PRODUCTS

What products are in highest demand?	
What products are very scarce?	
What new products are being sold in this market?	
What would you advise farmers to grow to earn more money?	

5A.2 Sample Agricultural Finance Planning Calendar Harmonized with the Crop Seasonal Calendar

	PRE-SOWING	SOWING	VEGETATIVE STAGE/ WEEDING	MARKETING
QUARTERS IN A YEAR	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Access to finance for land preparation activities (labor, machinery, etc.)	$			
Access to finance for purchase of quality inputs and technologies	$			
Labor/machinery services		$		
Access to finance for purchase of quality inputs/services for weed/pest management			$	
access to finance for post-harvest handling and management technologies (such as crates, storage, packaging, hulling, milling, cold chain)				$
access to agricultural pre-financing including through warehouse warrantee				$
access to finance for transport, market outlet				$
Risk financing				
Natural disasters: droughts – (delay on-set, early cessation of rains, dry spells); floods resulting in loss of harvest			$	
Access of crop insurance			$	

5A.3 Mapping of Finance Providers

This template is to be used to map financial service providers. The information is to be generated after holding interviews/ meetings with financial service providers. It will be a useful resource to understand the supply side of finance in the operating context of your programs. It will help provide some level of comparison that will inform on the accessibility, appropriateness, affordability of services. This tool can be regularly updated to capture dynamics in the finance market. It is advisable to also gather information on informal service providers as well.

Information to be gathered	Provider 1	Provider 2	Provider 3
Name of entity & contact details			
Previous experience			
Coverage in the planned geographic areas			
Services provided/ products offered (loan products)			
Service costs (fixed, transaction, others)			
Support required			
Requirements for credit access – Know Your Customer (KYC)			
Average length of process # of days			
Account balance and transaction volume limitations (in local currency/USD equivalents)			
Security measures (insurance, safety measures, etc.)			

In addition, this mapping will contribute to your report on the ecosystem triangulated with the financial needs assessment gathered from your target participants/community.

5A.4 Sample Profitability Analysis

Expected costs, broken down by calendar [A]	Units	Unit cost	Total cost
Pre-production			
Land rent			0
Buy/rent tools			0
land preparation			0
seeds			0
staking/supports			0
Production			
Weeding (3 times)			0
fertilizer			0
Pestisides			0
			0
Harvest			
labor for harvesting			0
			0
Post harvest			
Transporting to home, storage			0
Drying mats			0
Crates, pics bags,			0
			0
Marketing			
Transport to market			0
Communication expenses with buyer			0
Market fees			0
Overall cost of production (add all 'total cost' lines)			0
Expected earnings [B]			
Expected volume of harvest (multiply harvest per unit in kgs/quintals/other with total units of hectare (Ha) /acre (Ac))			0
Market price per kg/Q/..			0
Total expected earnings /revenue (multiply 'volume of harvest' by 'market price')			0
Expected profit/net earnings [B-A] (subtract from 'total earnings/revenue [B]' the 'total cost of production [B]')			0
Expected gross margin (divide profit by total revenue & multiply by 100)			

NOTES
*some costs incurred such as machinary, equipment and tools may serve beyond a single season so costs may need to be adjusted here.
**1 Hectare is equal to 2.47 Acre, so hectare(Ha) unit is bigger than Acre(Ac)
***Other expenses such as loan repayment, interest payment and fees are reduced from the net profit

5A.5 Designing the Business Plan

Sample Business Plan Guide

TOPICS	SUB-SECTIONS SUBSECTIONS	GUIDANCE
Introduction	Project Name:	Name of the producer group and goal of the business?
	Address:	What is your contact address?
	Phone number:	What is your phone number?
1. Business organization	Vision and Sales Goal:	What is the Vision of the producer group? Goal = sales target
	Describe business:	How long has this group been in existence? Is the group registered?
	Name key positions in the group:	Chair, treasurer, secretary, lead farmer, market agent, other
	Number of members by gender:	Number of men and number of women
	Current savings/ bank statement:	Latest financial statement, savings levels,
2. Value Proposition (Product)	Product / Service name:	What product / service will you sell?
	Existing / new:	Is this an existing product/ service or new product / service being offered by your group?
	Benefits to buyer:	Why is the buyer(s) interested in product / service? What is unique? Is it cheaper, better quality, local, or have another benefit or advantage?
3. Marketing strategy Introduction	Define target market:	Define target market (local, district, national, supermarket)
	Location:	How far is this market from the production site (km)?
	Market type:	Is this an existing market or a new market for your group?
	Describe customers:	Type of trader, processor, and/or buyer?
4. Product	Describe key product attributes:	Explain attributes of the product (variety, quality, packaging, etc.)?
Price	Describe price setting:	How will the price be established? Offer price/contract price.
Place	How will you get product to market:	Sales team, street vending, carry, pick up, cycle, lorry, donkey

Promotion	How will you promote your product:	Voice, phone, through trader, person to person contacts, other
5. Market risks	Identify key risks to plan:	Indicate key risks to the action plan? And how can they be overcome?
	What risk mitigation plans:	Are there ways of minimizing the risks?
6. Business operation plan	Describe your business flow:	Describe the stepwise activities from production to sale
	Pre-production activities:	Pre-production: input procurement, nursery,
	Production activities:	Production activities: plowing, sowing, weeding,
	Post-harvest activities:	Postharvest activities: drying, sorting storage etc..
	Marketing activities:	Marketing activities: buyer linkage, negotiation, transport
	Key partners:	Partners may include extension, input supplier, transporter
	Key resources	Key assets include land, labor, staff, crops, processing methods
7. Production costs	**Total material costs**	Calculate costs / season / year
	Total labor costs	Calculate costs / season / year
8. Income streams	Project sales volumes	Planned Sales volumes / Give clear units of sale bag – 100kg
	Project sales price	Selling price of product Give dollar conversion, 250 MK /Kg $1 =
	Estimate season income:	Estimate seasonal sales
9. Profitability	Gross Margin:	Calculate Gross Margin and Net Income
Fine tuning	Strategies to increase profit:	What changes can be made to increase Gross Margin?
10. Financial requirements	Startup capital requirements:	How much capital do you need to start the business?
	Capital funds available:	How much capital do you and your members/partners have?
	Capital funds required:	How much capital are you lacking?
	Method to raise funds:	How can raise the funds that you are lacking?

5A.6 Marketing as a Group

Example Sales Tracking Form

SN	NAME OF FARMER	VILLAGE NAME	COLLECTIVE NAME	SEX M/F	SALES RECORD				Name and phone number of trader / buyer / coop
					Sales Date	*TOTAL harvested (Sesame)*	*Total sold (Kgs)*	*Total sales Income (MK)*	
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									

5A.7 Sample Letter

Example of letter seeking appointment to visit formal buyers

Director/ Manager
Name of Enterprise

Dear Sir/ Madam

RE: Market Opportunity Identification for CARE supported farmer groups in Malawi

CARE International works in over 80 countries around the world to alleviate extreme poverty by supporting the poorest people particularly women, to improve their production techniques, improve access to and control of resources through better decision making, and developing better market linkages between the producers and consumers.

CARE International has been working in ______________ regions for _______ number of years.

One of the new CARE initiatives is a Pathways a program that aims to improve the productivity and market access of poor women and their families through adoption of better marketing practices and linking to better market opportunities for these women. The program has supported the women to form over producer groups focusing on the production of selected food crops. Through this support it is anticipated that these groups will produce and be able to market higher quantity of produce this year. With improved adoption of better practices, better organization and increased value from production, it is anticipated that these groups will further increase their productivity in the coming seasons.

As part of the market access activities, CARE is supporting the groups to identify and link with the most viable market options with potential for long term partnership. The program would like to expose the farmers to market practices, outlets and ensure that they interact directly with traders so that they can better appreciate and build good relationships with potential buyers of their produce.

The purpose of this letter is therefore to request you for a for a meeting between you and a group of 5–6 farmer representatives to come to your premises and hold discussion to explore the potential to develop a long term buying relationship with your company.

We would like to suggest that this meeting takes place on ______________ and your premises at _______ (time). It is anticipated that the discussion should last no more than 45 minutes.

We thank you for your support and look forward to meeting you.

6. Nutrition Tools

6.1 Problem Tree: Understanding Undernutrition[1] (Part I)

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To identify immediate, underlying and root causes of undernutrition. To develop an understanding about nutrition in relation to other everyday practices and decisions
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Large sheets of flipchart paper, markers or pens
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to stay in groups of 4-5

Background

Undernutrition is a complex condition, with a variety of factors that include agriculture, women's empowerment, and access to food. Understanding the underlying causes of undernutrition will help individuals address prevention and treatment. This tool can be adapted for any specific problem that arises from undernutrition (see examples below).

Steps to follow for the activity

PART I: But Why?

▶ STEP 1. **Explain to the group that we will start with an exercise to practice determining the root causes of a problem.**

Divide the group into sub-groups of three or four people.

▶ STEP 2. **Give each group a simple nutrition question**, such as:

- Why do women think they do not have enough breastmilk to feed their babies?
- Why do women feel they do not have enough time to breastfeed their baby as much as is suggested by health workers (10 times per day)?
- Why are mothers responsible for the health of their children?

1 Adapted from "Understanding Nutrition" in *Nutrition Family Community*. Helen Keller International in Bangladesh and Save the Children, USA. Pp. 51-53. ISBN 978-984-33-1706

- Why do fathers make the decisions about what the family eats?
- Why do some women have “low blood?”
- Why do some babies get sick easily?
- Why are there “lean” months each year?

Make sure that the same statement is given to at least two groups, and that the groups that have the same question cannot hear each other.

Tell the groups that they must determine the **real cause** of the observation by continuing to ask, “But why?” until a satisfactory answer is found. It may be useful to do one example as a group before dividing into sub-groups.

▶ STEP 3. **Bring the participants back together and ask them to discuss their experience.** Were they surprised by their findings? Did groups with the same question have similar explanations?

Explain to participants that we will now use this technique to determine the underlying causes of nutrition problems they experience in their communities.

PART II: Creating a Problem Tree

▶ STEP 1. **Have participants look around or think about a tree.** Then, ask them the following questions:

- What makes trees strong?
- How do they become strong?
- Which parts of the tree do we see?
- Which are invisible?
- Why are the roots of the tree important?

Point out that the roots of the tree give it strength & nutrients, and help it grow. But if the tree has weak roots, the tree may not grow well. Explain that *this session will be about identifying and explaining the root causes of malnutrition. We will create a tree to find out the roots of undernutrition, or a more specific, contextually relevant nutrition problem, which could include anemia, low birth weight, or vitamin deficiency.*

▶ STEP 2. **Draw the trees.** Divide the participants into groups of 4-5 participants and give each a piece of paper and markers. Ask the participants to complete the following tasks, allotting them a total of 20 minutes and guiding them with sub-questions:

1) Draw a tree and label the trunk of the tree “undernutrition” (or a more specific, contextually appropriate nutrition issue such as those listed above in Step 1)

2) Draw the branches and leaves (the parts we can see). Label the branches with the signs of undernutrition.

- What are the signs that a child or adult is undernourished?
- What are the results of such undernourishment?

3) Draw in the roots of the tree: Label the roots with the “Causes” of undernutrition.

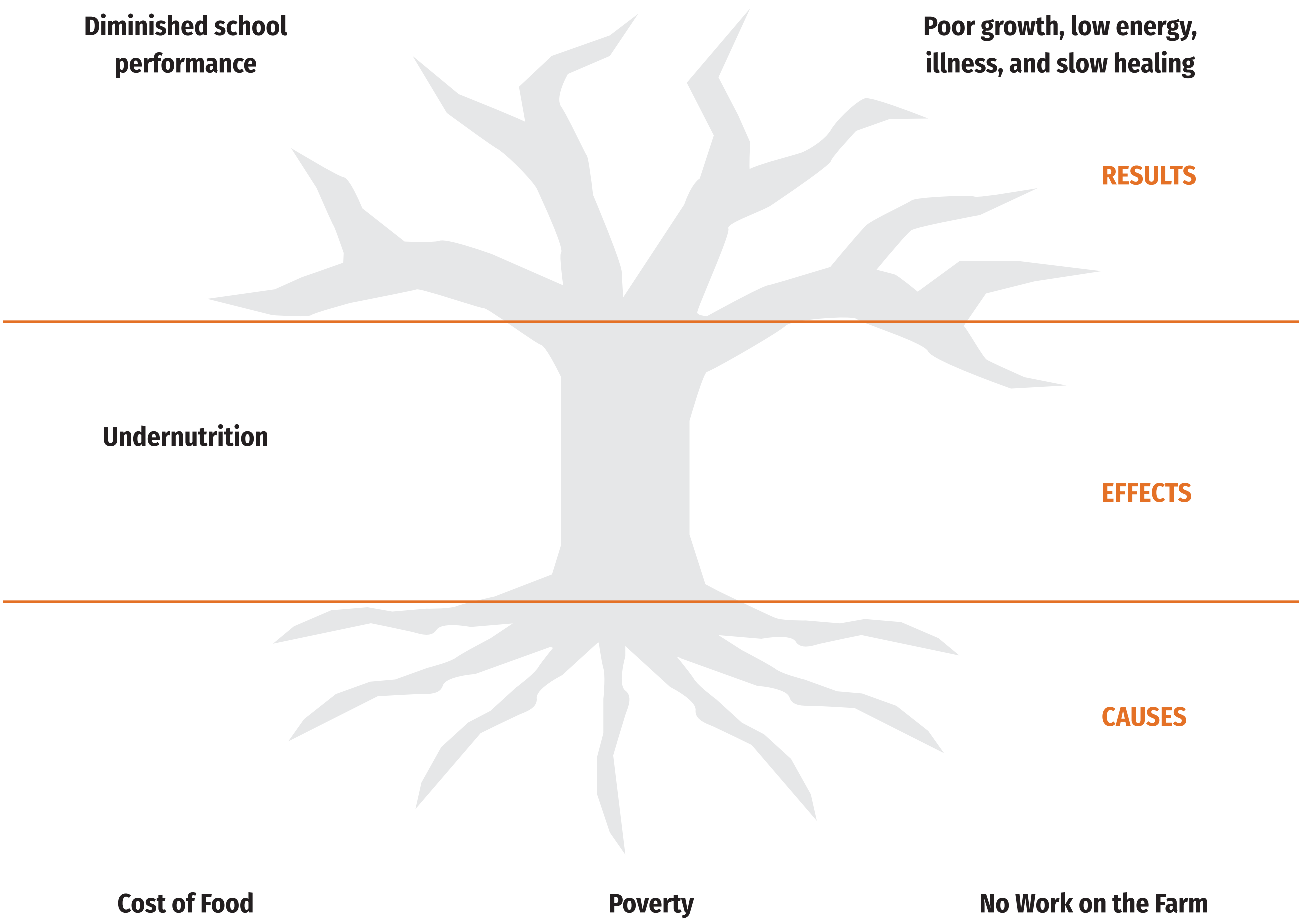
- What are the causes of undernutrition? Causes answer the question why does it happen?

4) Bring the groups together and review:

- What are the signs and signals of malnutrition that are common to all the drawings?
- What are the causes of malnutrition? (Add any details that might be missing.)

▶ **STEP 3. Reflection.** Summarize the key points:

- Undernutrition is complex. There are basic and root causes that we often don't see. We can use the "But why?" technique to determine these basic and root causes.
- Undernutrition is dangerous, because a weak body cannot easily fight infections and can fall sick more easily. Once a person gets sick, she or he may become even more malnourished.
- To address undernutrition, we need to look at household level, community level, and even beyond.
    - Ask participants to see if they can pick the root causes that are present at the different levels. Which ones can they address? Which can be addressed through households? Which roots are tied to the community or could be helped through communal action?



6.2 Problem Tree: Understanding Undernutrition[2] (Part II)

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To identify immediate, underlying and root causes of undernutrition. To develop an understanding about nutrition in relation to other everyday practices and decisions
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Large sheets of flipchart paper, markers, or pens
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to stay in groups of 4-5

Background

Undernutrition is a multifaceted condition, with a variety of root causes that can be addressed through multiple levels, including the household, community and beyond. The root causes identified in Part I: Creating the Problem Tree can help communities and individuals address the presence of undernutrition.

Therefore, this exercise should be done *after* participants have completed Part I, Creating the problem tree. This exercise will help participants link the immediate causes of a nutrition problem discussed in Part I with everyday practices and decisions.

Steps to follow for the activity:

▶ STEP 1. **Review and Adding New Material.** Show participants the last session. Remind them of the signs and causes of undernutrition (or whatever nutrition issue they choose to address) and ask them if they have any additional signs or causes to add to the tree.

▶ STEP 2. **Discussion.** Working with the drawings from Part I, look at each cause and ask, "But why" to help participants identify the underlying and root causes. For example:

> *A child is terribly thin, her bones stick out, and she looks like an old woman. Her hair is thin, her stomach sticks out, and she is sick most of the time. Point to the drawings and indicate how the trees have sub-roots and deepest roots. Ask participants to label these levels.*

Why is she undernourished?	*She does not eat enough*	*Poor diet = Immediate cause*
***But why** does she not eat enough?*	*There is not enough food in the home*	*Food shortage = Underlying cause*
***But why** is there a shortage of food?*	*The family has not enough land*	*Insufficient land = root cause*

Rearrange the root labels, so that the root causes are the lowest on the drawing.

2 Adapted from "Understanding Nutrition" in *Nutrition Family Community*. Helen Keller International in Bangladesh and Save the Children, USA. Pp. 51-53. ISBN 978-984-33-1706.

For example:

Cause: Aisha is undernourished because she does not eat right.

- *Why does she eat poorly?*
    - Because of limited crop diversity
- *Why is there a limited variety of crops?*
    - Because there are no seeds available
- *Why are there no seeds for other crops?*
    - Because there is no seed supplier
- *Why is there no local seed supplier?*
    - Because the community is not organized

▶ STEP 3. **Determine the nutrition inputs.** Using the diagrams below, talk through the following key points.

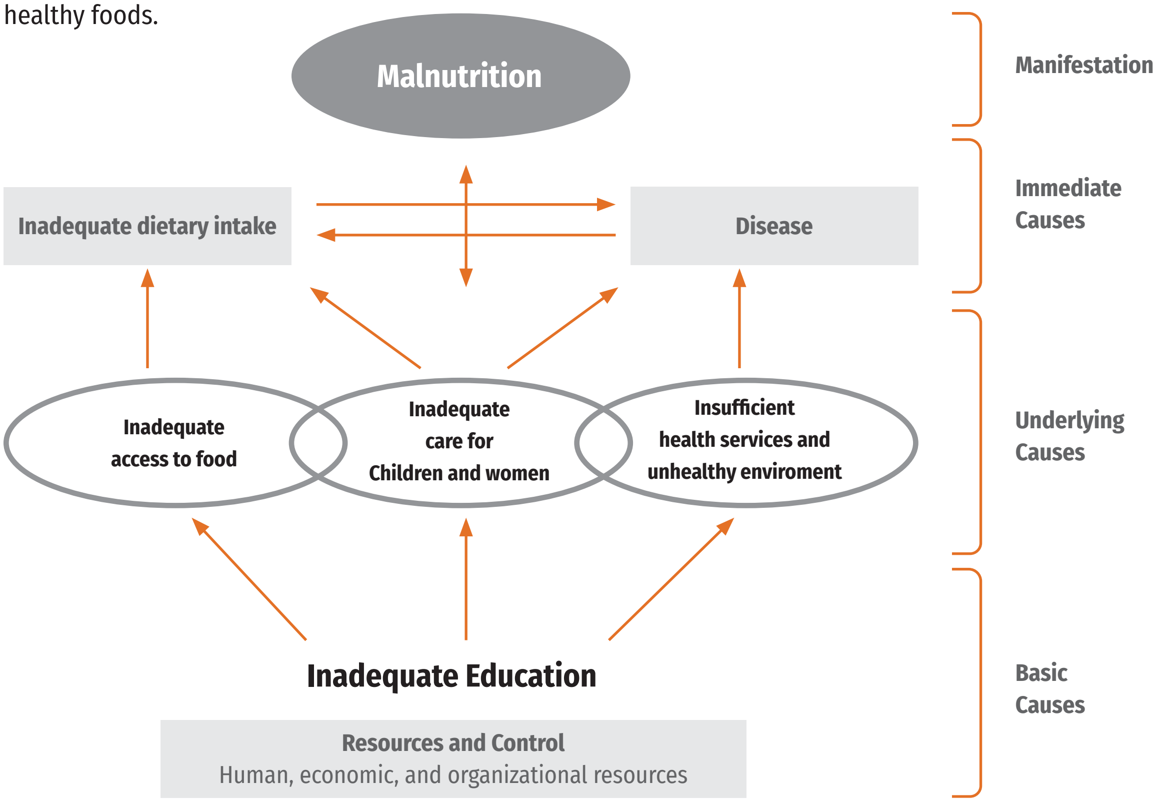
1. Good nutrition

Good nutrition means eating the right quantity, quality and diversity of foods and getting the care we need to keep our bodies strong and healthy and prevent us from getting sick. When a person is undernourished, there are usually numerous reasons. Often, these reasons are connected. If a child is malnourished, the father may blame the mother for not feeding the child enough. Yet the father may not be giving the mother the right variety of foods to cook or letting the mother also decide on food choices. Maybe others in the family eat first so there is not much food left for the child. Maybe the family cannot afford food or does not have enough land.

It is important to do a proper analysis and not blame one person. In many cases, the solution to one person's malnutrition will involve the whole family and the whole community.

2. Impact of malnutrition:

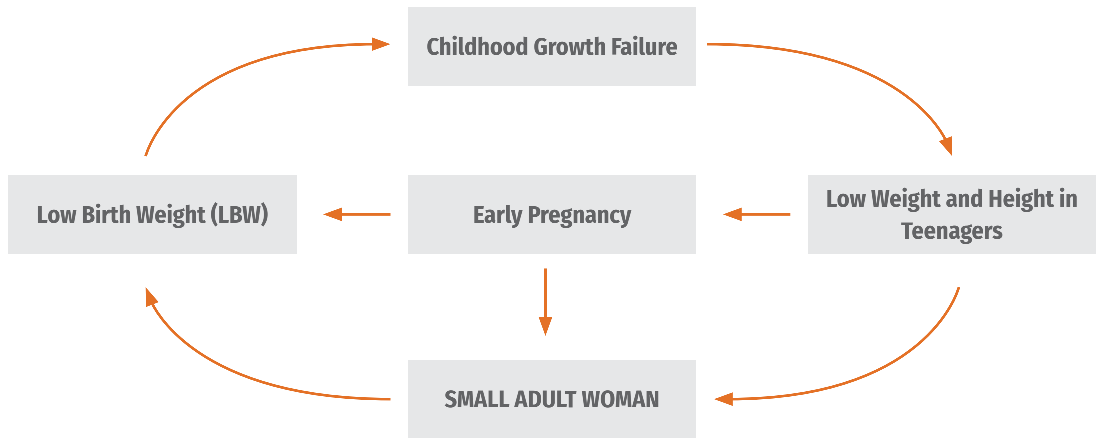
Malnourished children have slow mental and physical development that affects their thinking and their physical growth. Malnutrition also weakens the body's ability to fight illness and infection. When malnourished adults are sick, they cannot perform their daily work, which decreases their productivity and incomes, which can lead to less ability to buy or grow healthy foods.



3. Undernutrition cycle[3]:

Malnutrition is a vicious cycle. Young girls who are poorly nourished are more likely to give birth to low-birth-weight babies, who are also more likely to be undernourished, stunted, or to die in infancy. Girls who are married at a young age are also more likely to have low-birthweight babies. Good nutrition—especially for girls and women--needs support in all stages of the lifecycle.

The Undernutrition Cycle



4. Agriculture and nutrition:

Agriculture and nutrition are very closely interrelated. Well-nourished farmers can be more productive. Intercropping nutrient-rich vegetables or rearing small animals can improve the variety and quality of foods that are produced and eaten at the household level, saving incomes. Using good agriculture practices increases yields and improving access to markets results in more income which can be invested in growing and purchasing quality food.

Good agricultural production alone does not lead to good nutrition, however. Both parents and caregivers need information on good nutrition to discuss the importance of investing in good food and care to nourish productive and healthy families.

▶ STEP 4. **Reflection.** Summarize the key points while asking participants to reflect on the session:

- Undernutrition is complex. There are basic or root causes that we often do not see.
    - Were there any root causes the group identified that are not seen every day?
- Undernutrition is dangerous, because a weak body cannot easily fight infections and can fall sick more easily. Once a person gets sick, she or he may become even more malnourished.
- To address undernutrition, we need to look at household level, community level, and even beyond.
    - What are some reasons that addressing these root causes is difficult?

Looking at the problem trees, ask the participants:

- How can we address some of the underlying causes of malnutrition?
- Where on the problem tree can we, as farmers, intervene?
- What resources do we have to address some of the problems?

3 Adapted from: *Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture. Participant Manual for Agriculture Development Agents.* (2012.) Produced by Save the Children USA, through USAID Agreement Number AID-663-A-11-00017.

6.3 Food Groups and Nutrition[4]

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To understand the different food groups and the importance of having a diverse diet. To understand how to put together a balanced meal
TIMEFRAME	1 hour (can also be divided into two 30-minute sessions)
MATERIALS NEEDED	Food cards (cards or pieces of paper with names or pictures of local foods) or poster with pictures of local foods A list of the foods that grow in the area and significant amount of any nutrients they contain Small pieces of paper, with the names of diverse foods written on them (one for every participant) Flip-chart and markers A picture of a local fire or cook stove
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for the participants to stay in groups of five

Background

A nutritious diet is made up of foods from each of the different food groups: carbohydrates, fats, proteins, and vitamins and minerals. To be healthy and for children to grow well, a family needs to understand what each of these food groups is so that they can do their best to eat appropriate amounts of each group. Each group plays a very important role in how our bodies work, so eating nutritious meals is key to supporting overall health.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** Ask the group:

- What do you like to eat best in different seasons?

Take a few examples, until people are excited about food and eating. Taste is important to enjoy what we eat, but to be healthy we also need to eat food that gives our bodies the nutrients to keep going.

- Ask: What do you need to make a fire for cooking lunch?

Take a few responses and point out that for the stove, you need kindling, a match, fuel, and air. When the fire has lots of dry wood and air, it burns well and makes coal. When it runs out of fuel, or has poor-quality fuel it burns down. Our bodies are the same: They need fuel to keep going, and if the food we eat is not enough or not right for us, we get tired and weak. The fuel for people is in the nutrients in the different foods we eat.

4 Adapted from "Understanding Nutrition" in *Nutrition Family Community.* Helen Keller International in Bangladesh and Save the Children, USA. Pp. 51-53. ISBN 978-984-33-1706.

STEP 2. Input on nutrients. Remind the group that:

- Our bodies require a variety of nutrients to stay healthy, grow, and fight off sickness.
- All foods contain a mixture of nutrients. Each food has a different amount of each nutrient. To stay healthy, people must eat a variety of different foods every day so that they get some of each nutrient.
- Each type of nutrient has a different function for the body: For example, carbohydrates and fats give us energy; proteins help us build muscles, skin, blood, and bones; and vitamins and minerals protect us from infection and sickness. Show the group the drawing included in the **Annex 6A. 3** entitled "Diagram of Food Benefits on Body."

STEP 3. Input on food groups. Using food cards (names or pictures of local foods on cards or pieces of paper) or a food poster created for the local context, introduce the different food groups. Illustrate your talk by holding up/pointing out pictures and asking participants to name other examples of food belonging to that group.

- *Carbohydrates:* These are sometimes called "Go" foods. These foods give our body energy to move, work and think. We get most of our carbohydrates from grain crops such as rice, wheat, maize, millet, cassava, potatoes and sweet potatoes. We get the greatest portion of our daily meals from carbohydrates.
  - Ask: What are some of the foods you eat every day to give us energy?
- *Proteins:* Proteins can be called, "Grow foods," or body-building foods, because they help our bodies grow, build muscle, & repair themselves. They are found in animal foods (meat, eggs, milk, fish) but they also are found in foods like beans, lentils, & peas.
  - Ask: What are some of the foods you eat every day to help us grow and build your bodies?
- *Vitamins and minerals:* Vitamins and minerals are also called micronutrients. They are protective foods that help our bodies "glow." Our bodies need small amounts of these to help our bodies work properly. These fight infections and protect our skin & eyesight. We become sick if we do not get enough vitamins and minerals. Vitamins and minerals are concentrated in deep-colored vegetables and fruits (dark-green leafy vegetables, mango, papaya, orange carrots, or sweet potatoes and pumpkin – depending on the local context), and also in egg yolks and liver. We need to eat as many diverse protective foods as we can.
  - Ask: What are all the different types of protective foods you eat every day?
- *Fats:* Fats and oils provide a lot of concentrated energy that we can store. Fats are also very important because they help the body store some of the vitamins and minerals you eat. Fats are important for the development of young children.
  - Ask: What are the foods you eat that contain fats?

STEP 4. Energizer game – Food Stew.[5] This is a short exercise designed to help participants practice identifying which food groups certain items belong to and creating a healthy meal using foods from each food group.

- Invite participants to stand in a circle, then distribute the food cards so that each participant has one. Tell them that they should not show anybody else their card.
- Walk around the circle and call out different food group names.
- All participants holding a card belonging to that food group should stand together inside of the circle.
- Repeat with other food groups until all categories have been called.
- When you call out "nutritious meal," ask participants to form groups in which all of the food groups are represented. Ask one participant to explain how their group makes up a "nutritious meal."

STEP 5. Discuss

- What have you learned today?
- What foods do you eat that are most nutritious?
- What changes might you make to your diet to ensure you eat more nutritious foods?

5 Adapted from: Welbourn, Alice. *Body Language.* (1995). Stepping Stones. Pp .58.

6.4 The Healthy Meal[6]

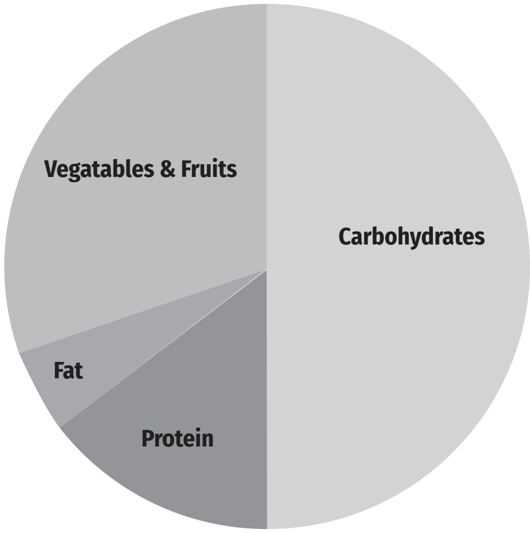
SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To understand the different food groups and the importance of having a diverse diet. To understand how to put together a diverse meal
TIMEFRAME	1 hour (can also be divided into two 30-minute sessions)
MATERIALS NEEDED	Food cards (cards or pieces of paper with names or pictures of local foods) or poster with pictures of local foods If you don't have food cards, use small pieces of paper, with the names of diverse foods written on them (one for every participant) A list of the foods that grow in the area and their nutrient content Flip-chart and markers
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for the participants to stay in groups of five

NOTE: *Not everyone eats the same way. This lesson refers to the "circle", but this could be a plate, a bowl, or a family cooking pot, or some other way that people consume meals. Use the terminology that fits best with the local context.*

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** Review key messages from the previous session. Tell participants that our bodies and families need many different types of nutrients, which are found in different quantities in the foods we grow and cook with. The way we group, harvest, and prepare foods also affects the amount of nutrients we get from the foods we eat.

▶ STEP 2. **Making a balanced meal.** Explain that the amount we need to eat depends on our age and time of life. In general, a healthy meal should be about half "go foods" (carbohydrates), some protein, a little fat, and all the rest of the circle should be different vegetables and fruits. (Draw a circle or image to illustrate the proportions.)



Divide the participants into smaller groups of 4-5 participants. Using the food-cards or pieces of paper from the previous exercises, have the participants draw the circle illustrated on a flipchart. In groups, have them sort the cards they are holding into the appropriate segments on the circle, until they have created a balanced meal. If they do not have enough cards, they can create their own cards or swap with other groups.

6 From, *Healthy Harvest, A training manual for community workers in growing, preparing, and processing healthy food*. Produced by Food and Nutrition Council of Zimbabwe, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). ISBN: 0–7974–3209–4.

Bring the groups together to discuss:

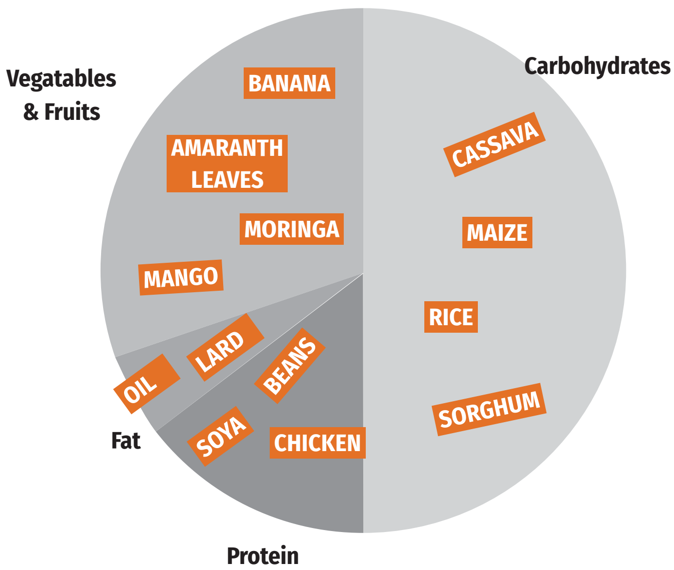
- Was everyone able to create a balanced, tasty meal?
- How many meals did we create?
- Were they meals that you would like to eat?
- Were they meals that you eat every day?

Explain that it is not necessary to eat all nutrients in one meal, but if we eat a variety of foods in on day, we can get the nutrients that the body needs.

STEP 3. Discuss the local availability of foods.

- Why do some families eat the same type of food every day?
- Which of these foods (in our balanced circles) do you grow? In which season?
- Which of these foods do you eat, but not cultivate?
- What problems arise if we do not have different types of ingredients in our meals?
- How can we encourage families to get a more varied diet to get more of these nutrients?
- What can we grow to be able to prepare a more diverse diet?
- What food habits can we change to get a more nutritious meal?

Mixed Meal Game



Repeat the key points:

- Good health starts with eating properly, which means getting enough of the right kinds of foods. What we eat and drink every day makes up our food habits. We learn most of our habits from our families.
- Different foods contain different nutrients that our bodies need to stay healthy.
- Nutritious foods in a healthy diet are important because
  - They protect against diseases
  - They keep us full
  - They help us grow well
  - They give us energy and thinking power

STEP 4. Homework. Ask participants to think up a nutritious recipe to share and bring in for the next session.

6.5 Growing Nutritious Food: Planning a Home Garden[7,8]

SEASON	Sowing/Weeding
OBJECTIVE	To understand the benefits of growing a home garden; to identify nutritious crops and when they can be planted; to design, plan, and implement sustainable gardens
TIMEFRAME	1 hour per session
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipchart and markers. A contextualized list of the nutrients in local crops. If possible, illustrations of intercropping and various home gardens
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space to form circles & for participants to stay in groups of 4-5

Background

As participants have learned, eating a variety of food groups is key to having a healthy body and carrying out all bodily functions. To have access to these foods, a family or community may specifically plant a variety of foods in a garden to be able to grow and eat them in addition to keeping livestock as a source for protein and iron rich foods. To plan this garden, it is important to understand the benefits of such a home garden, as well as understand how sustainable gardens work. To ensure a successful garden, please see the Agriculture Tools for skill building on the best technical practices. These tools can be adapted to support home gardens of any size. It is also helpful to work with local experts, who have experience in small-scale growing.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** Spend a few minutes reviewing the previous session. Remind participants that there are foods that make us "go," others that make our bodies "grow," and some that protect our bodies, making them "glow." Ask participants if they remember examples of which foods fall into which category.

▶ STEP 2. **Explain.** Tell the participants that today we will be learning about how to set up a nutrition garden to be able to grow and consume more nutritious family meals.

Growing our own healthy food can help us to make sure that our families have healthy, balanced diets for optimum health and growth. Having our own garden can help us save money and generate an income from selling surplus produce.

Ask the group:

- What are some of the factors you must consider for planning a garden?

7 From, *Healthy Harvest, A training manual for community workers in growing, preparing, and processing healthy food.* Produced by Food and Nutrition Council of Zimbabwe, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).ISBN: 0–7974–3209–4

8 From CRS (2008), *Homestead Gardening: A Manual for Program Managers, Implementers, and Practitioners. Baltimore: CRS, 2008.*

Collect answers from the participants and summarize some of these, below:

Space. The amount of space around a house will determine what techniques can be used and how many vegetables can be produced. Even houses with small plots can build homestead gardens. With careful planning, you can make good use of the space available by alternating rows of vegetables that need a lot of space with crops that do not. Additionally, you can use old tires cut open and flipped inside out. Fill them with nutrient rich soil to grow certain crops.

Shade versus full sun. All plants need sunlight to grow, but too much sun and heat can dry out the soil and burn plants. Some crops like shade, while others prefer full sun. Knowing how much sun and shade your plot has can help you select the right seeds for your land conditions.

Access to water. Water is a vital ingredient for any garden. Plants need to be watered regularly, especially in dry areas. Therefore, access to water must be considered when planning a homestead garden. Water that you use in the home can be good for garden use – like water from washing dishes or other water that is **not** high in soap or chemicals can be used in gardens. Good drainage is important for areas that might receive heavy rain.

Household labor capacity. Building and maintaining a garden requires additional work. For busy women farmers, it is important that family members help with the workloand and understand the importance of the garden for improving the nutrition and resilience of the entire family.

STEP 3. **Mapping the space.** Explain: Planning is an important step for a successful garden. Drawing a map is one easy way to visualize the potential of our land resources and the types of crops and techniques that will be appropriate.

Show a sample of a garden map, such as the one below. Explain that the maps are not works of art, but they should use symbols to show all the existing resources around the house, including:

- Water sources, trees
- Existing crops or cropping space
- Fences
- Slopes
- Animals
- Sunny and shady areas

Divide the participants into small groups of 4-5. If the group is planning to make a community-based demonstration farm, some can work on a map of the collective space. Other groups can do individual maps, using one of their group member's homes as an example.

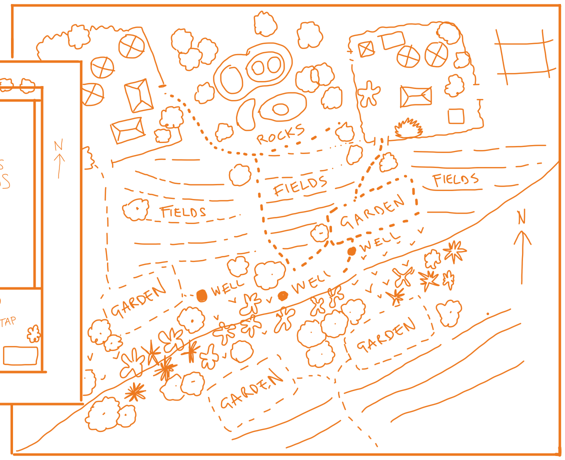
Provide each group with markers and flip-chart paper and allow 20 minutes for the mapping. Example maps are below:

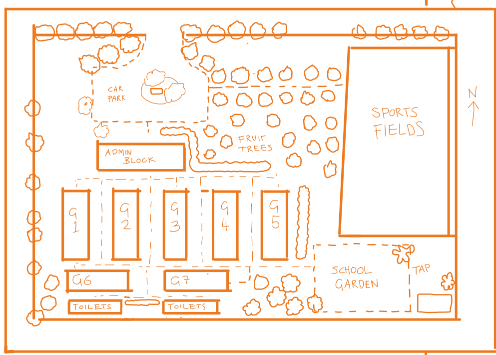
STEP 4. **Summarize goals, resources, and constraints.** At the end of the mapping, ask each group to explain the specific goals for their garden, and write them on the map, (if possible).

Examples of production goals:

- To improve my family's nutrition
- To protect soil and water resources through good growing
- To generate income from selling surplus
- To have food all year round and in the lean season, by drying and preserving

Map of a rural village





Map of a school garden

Have each group present the maps, and help each group to summarize the *resources* and *constraints* that their land has, thinking about:

- Space– how much land is available to garden? Is it available all year round?
- Water access—where would water come from? Is it available all year round?
- Soil type and quality—what grows best here?
- Shade and sun—how much sun/shade does the space get?
- Ridges, slopes, fencing
- Input supply – access, quality and quantity
- Family support – Who is likely to support with the garden?
- Pests or animals – is the space protected from chickens, animals, children? Is fencing needed?

STEP 5. Brainstorm different techniques for making the most of your land.

Explain to the participants that every garden will be different, depending on the particular goals, the quality of the land and resources, the time you have, and the nutrients that you want to incorporate into the diet.

Lead a plenary discussion using the following questions:

- What do you plan to plant in your home garden and why?
- How can you make the best use of your space and to grow the most nutrient-rich diet possible?

CONSTRAINTS	RESOURCES/OPPORTUNITIES

6.6 Cooking Demonstrations: How to Cook Nutritious Food for Your Family[9]

SEASON	Vegetative Stage
OBJECTIVE	To gain skill in cooking nutritious foods; To incorporate lessons learned in how to cook a meal with diverse food groups; To develop recipe options for complementary feeding for children 6 – 24 months
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Recipes (see sample recipe 6A.1), Cooking utensils, Ingredients for demo recipe, List of diverse foods by group, food cards to explain different food groups you are using in the recipe
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for both standing and sitting

Background

Cooking demonstrations are practical sessions where community members, particularly mothers and fathers and other caregivers, learn how to prepare a diversified diet.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Instructions for Facilitator.** When cooking demos are planned consider the following:

- Conduct the demo where farmers can convene (Farmer Field School, mothers groups, production groups, etc.)
- Invite and encourage men to attend the demo and tell female group members to bring their husbands. Have key messages in mind that are specific to fathers and husbands that relate to their responsibility for helping their children be healthy and strong.
- With male participants, encourage their participation by giving them a job during the demonstration: place the spoon in their hand to add ingredients or stir, ask them what they do and do not like eating, or have them bring an ingredient
- To encourage community members for this practice, ask participants to share how they prepare a certain dish (name the dish based on local foods)
- Encourage participants to ask questions during the practice
- When the food is cooked, encourage everyone to wash hands with soap before trying the food. Feed it to their accompanied young children.

▶ STEP 2. **Inform participants.** While babies should be exclusively breastfed up to 6 months, children 6 up to 24 months need to slowly adjust to the incorporation of family foods into their diet, known as complementary feeding. When introducing babies to food, the frequency, amount, texture, and variety needs to be appropriate for the child's age and needs. All other children and adults need to eat a healthy, diversified diet every day. Handwashing with soap is essential for reducing disease. Washing hands with soap after using the toilet or changing a nappy as well as before meal preparation and before eating. It is also good to wash hands with soap when coming from the fields or doing any chores. Remember hands can be dirty even when dirt is not seen on the hands.

9 Adapted from: Healthy Harvest: A training manual for community workers in growing, preparing, and processing healthy food. FAO and UNICEF. ISBN: 0-7974-3209-4. Available from http://motherchildnutrition.org/healthy-nutrition/pdf/mcn-healthy-harvest.pdf

Ask the participants:

- *What types of food can you feed young children?* Mention the recipe below for porridge as a complementary food to breast milk.
- *What types of food should you feed your family daily?* [Discuss the different food groups again here, referring to session 6.4 The Healthy Meal]
- Ask male participants which of these foods they like and do not like

Conduct a cooking demonstration mentioning the different food groups as you prepare and why they are important. You can use the food cards from the previous sessions to highlight how many different food groups you are using. Follow the sample recipe below or create your own using local foods. Make sure to emphasize:

- Use different food groups in one meal.
- Wash your hands with soap before food preparation
- Wash foods before preparation.
- Cooking foods can kill bacteria and improved tast, but cook vegetables for less than 8 minutes to preserve vitamins.
- Eat plenty of fruit (uncooked but washed) each day.
- Drink enough water (boiled, treated or filtered) to quench thirst each day. Avoid soda and sugary drinks.
- Avoid eating too much salt or sugar.

▶ STEP 3. **Discussion.** Ask:

- Can you prepare this kind of food at home?
- Can you tell me the importance of consuming this kind of food for children and adults?
- What are the difficulties/barriers to preparing nutritious meals?

Preparing healthy meals with a budget. Ask:

- What are some of the most expensive foods to buy? (meat, milk, dairy products, fruit)
- How can you save money but eat healthily?
- What are the cheapest sources of protein? (beans, groundnuts, soya, kapenta, caterpillars, etc)

Discuss the following:

- Eating staple foods only may be cheaper, but you may end up spending more money on medicine for sick children later; if children don't get enough diverse nutrients, they are more prone to illness.
- Avoid trying to save money by buying food that is old or smells bad or that is processed.
- Grow as much as you can in a home garden or produce protein with your own livestock.
- Do you have any other questions to ask?

▶ STEP 4. **Reflection.** How can you plan meals for tomorrow? What do you need to think about?

- What food is ripe in the garden?
- What ingredients do you have? Can you trade with neighbors?
- How much money do you have to buy extra ingredients?
- Is there water, fuel or electricity to cook the food?

▶ STEP 5. **Summarize the key points.**

- Babies, young children 6 – 24 months, and older children/adults need to eat different foods.
- 6–24-month-old children need a diverse diet in differing amounts, frequency, and consistency over this period. Enriched porridge can be an important complementary food during this stage.
- All other family members need to eat a diverse diet of foods.
- Budgeting for healthy meals can be done: grow your own, have livestock, trade with neighbors, save money for meat and eggs. Everyone, including pregnant women and children over 6 months can eat eggs and benefit from the nutrients.

6.7 Exclusive Breastfeeding and Workload Challenge[10]

SEASON	Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To draw attention to women's many responsibilities working in the field, caring for their families, and trying to keep their babies healthy by exclusively breastfeeding for the first 6 months. To explore how responsibilities within a household may be shared amongst household members.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	• Prepared flip chart paper divided into blocks or columns with headings of duties such as 'household maintenance,' 'child care,' 'food production and preparation,' 'farming' • The case study or your own story • Small pieces of paper or post-its • Markers/crayons • Handout: 6A.2 Benefits of exclusive breastfeeding

Background

Many activities are required daily to keep a household functioning. Often times exclusive breastfeeding of a child is sacrificed because a mother goes to fetch water or prepare food. What if men or others in the household collect water or prepare food? When babies are exclusively breastfed they are healthier babies that grow into larger, smarter adults. Realizing the importance of exclusive breastfeeding should encourage a dialogue between families to better equalize the household workloads.

Steps to follow for the activity:

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction.** Discuss workloads of family members. If participants have completed the Pile Sort activity (found in the Gender section of this handbook), remind them of the different workloads that each family member has. Ask participants:

(For farmers)

- Please describe the activities of a female farmer.
- What roles and responsibilities does she have daily? [Examples: farming, home-gardening, caring for small livestock, taking care of family members, making healthy meals, laundry, etc.]

10 Adapted from "Exclusive Breastfeeding" in *Nutrition Family Community*. Helen Keller International in Bangladesh and Save the Children, USA. Pp. 73-75. ISBN 978-984-33-1706

Tell participants: this activity will look at women's many roles and responsibilities and explore how household members can share them.

STEP 2. Tell a Story with Gaps. Tell a story that describes a woman's day with all her roles and responsibilities. You can either create this story, or read the stories included in this guide.

Make the storytelling interesting and entertaining by acting out some of the actions and by changing your voice when the characters in the story speak. You may also want to substitute character names and locations for local names and places. At times, stop and ask participants a question. In this way they become part of the storytelling.

The story of [female name from country – Arafa in this example]. Use appropriate country names.

> *Arafa woke up when the baby cried again. When she heard the birds singing she knew the night was over. The baby had woken a lot during the night and she was tired. As she fed the baby, she was thinking: baby Jamil was 3 months old and growing, maybe he needed more than breast milk? Later when the counselor came, she would have to ask her about this.*

Ask the group:

- How long should you exclusively breastfeed a baby?

Use this opportunity to define and discuss the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for infants up to 6 months of age. Use the "Benefits of Breastfeeding" guide found in the **Annex 6A.2** to help participants understand the benefits to the baby7, the mother, and the family. For groups of women-only participants, go over the key messages for mothers. For men-only groups, discuss the messages for fathers.

For both groups, reinforce the messages about exclusive breastfeeding:

- Breast milk fortifies babies against sickness
- Babies need ONLY breast milk for the first 6 months. For a baby to get water, the mother should drink plenty of water. The baby will get what it needs through breastmilk.
- Mothers should breastfeed whenever their baby wants to feed (at least 10 times a day) during the day and night.
- Babies need complementary food such as porridge from 6 months onward

Continue the story of Arafa.

> *"Next to her, Arafa could feel her daughter Damisi stirring. If she got up quietly now she could get a start on the day before everyone made demands on her. At least the rain had stopped so maybe the kindling was dry. As Jamil drifted off to sleep again she put him next to his father and slipped out."*

Ask the group:

- What activities do you think Arafa did while everyone was still asleep?

Collect suggestions. Ensure the list includes the many 'invisible tasks' that women perform and that are not recognized by others as 'work.' (For example, fetching water, attending to the household garden, lighting the fire, preparing take-away lunches.)

Continue the story of Arafa.

> *"Arafa just had the fire going and was busy preparing the morning meal for the children when the baby woke up again and cried. He needed to be cleaned and changed. Just then Damisi arrived and wailed that she could not find her clothes for school. Arafa gave her [local food meal] and promised to help find her school clothes as soon as she had cleaned up Jamil. She realized that there was little water left and she would have to go fetch some as soon as possible. But before she could go her husband wanted his breakfast as well....*

She barely had time to take a bath herself before the counselor came to visit. Arafa told her about Jamil and how hungry he seemed. The counselor told her she must feed him at least 10 times a day. Arafa tried to listen carefully but her mind began to wander. She had to bring water to the fields and complete the weeding. She had to cook lunch for her daughter and herself. How was she going to find the time to breastfeed Jamil more often? In her mind she thought of all the things she still had to do until the day was done."

Ask the group:

- What are all the activities that Arafa still had to do during the rest of the day? Ask each of the participants to name one activity.
- Some examples might include: seasonal agricultural tasks, breastfeeding, preparing nutritious food for the family, feeding small children or the sick/elderly, caring for other children, dealing with markets, home gardening, rearing poultry, collecting water, personal hygiene, cleaning the house, washing clothes, washing dishes.

▶ STEP 3. **Drawing Activity.** Distribute pieces of paper or post-its and crayons or markers and give the following instruction:

- Draw a picture of one (or more) of the activities women like Arafa engage in every day. Assist participants as necessary and be sure they have a variety of pictures.

▶ STEP 4. **Sorting and Reviewing Activities.** Collect the drawings and ask participants to help you sort them into categories on the flipchart. Ask questions such as:

- Which activities have to do with food growing and preparation?
- Which activities have to do with agriculture/livestock rearing-related work?
- Which activities have to do with childcare?

Review the lists and ask:

- Which activities are the most energy and time consuming? How/why?
- Which activities are 'invisible' or taken for granted – no one acknowledges them?
- Which activities are often difficult to fit in and sometimes are left out?

Look at the lists and ask:

- Which activities could someone else in the home do?

Collect those pictures that display activities that someone else could do and lay them out in a row.

▶ STEP 4. **Story Telling.** Resume the story of Arafa.

"Arafa was feeling very tired. When baby Jamil smiled at her, she smiled back, feeling guilty; she needed to talk to him more and play with him. But when she got sick she was exhausted and took care of him without joy. She wondered if she should even breastfeed him when she was sick. She also remembered that yesterday, when Damisi wanted to help her do the washing, she had chased her out of the way, even shouted at her. It was not the children's fault that she was so tired. If only someone would help her with the many tasks!"

Make a dramatic pause and act out what happened:

"At that moment there was a great flash of light and a big wind blew into her face forcing her to close her eyes – when she opened them again..."

Pause (if necessary, tell participants to suspend reality for a moment and dream...) then say:

"...the magic wind had blown away the old and in the new, and all the people living in her home shared her responsibilities. "

▶ **STEP 6. Discussion.** One by one, pick up the pictures laid out in the row and hold them up.

Ask the group:

- Who in the household took over this activity?

▶ **STEP 7. Reflection.** Ask the group:

- How could you begin to ask members of your family for help?
- With which activities could you ask your husband to start helping?
- What could your other children help with?

Summarize the key points:

- Exclusively breast feeding your infant is necessary for his/her health for the first 6 months. This means you ONLY give breastmilk and as often as your baby wants it.
- Households require lots of activities – and women are often expected to do the majority of these HH tasks. Exclusively breastfeeding babies 0-6months can mean breastfeeding up to 10 times a day. Families can work together to share the workload so that women have time to breastfeed and sothat all the work for the household can get done with the help of everyone.

Annex

6A.1 Cooking Demonstrations

Sample Recipes

(These samples can be changed depending on the staple food in the area)

SNOW BALLS

INGREDIENTS	METHOD
1 cup soya flour 3 cups mashed ripe bananas 1 cup mgaiwa Pinch of salt Cooking oil	1. Mix 3 cups of mashed bananas, 1 cup mgaiwa and 1 cup of Soya flour in a bowl. The mixture should form a thick batter. If the mixture is too stiff add water. 2. Heat cooking oil in a frying pan and drop batter by table spoon into the oil. 3. Fry until both sides are golden brown. 4. Remove from oil. 5. Serve with tea or give it to school children as a packed meal.

SOYA MILK

INGREDIENTS	METHOD
Soya beans 2 cups Water 6 cups	1. Inspect soya beans thoroughly, discard bad ones and remove foreign matter. 2. Wash at least 4 times or until the water is clean. 3. Boil enough water to cover the beans for 20-25 minutes. 4. Drain the hot water and cold water, then remove from water and dehull. 5. Put beans into a blender immediately grind using part of the drinking water. 6. Mix paste with remaining water, put in clean white cloth bag and fold. 7. Squeeze out as much filtrate as possible, leaving a lump cake in the cloth. 8. Cook filtrate milk for 15-20 minutes and add salt and sugar. 9. Remove from fire and use.

How to get a diversified diet

All food groups below are important and should be eaten in combination in order for them to complement each other in increasing dietary intake and utilization of various nutrients by the body.

One should eat a variety of foods at every meal for a diversified diet. You should eat at least 4 food groups every day to stay healthy. For example:

STAPLES +	LEGUMES, NUTS, SEEDS +	VEGETABLES +	ANIMAL FOODS +	FATS +	FRUITS
Rice	Lentils	Kale	Egg	Cooking oil	Mango
Millet	Peas	Spinach	Fish	Butter	Banana
Sorghum	Ground nuts	Cabbage	Meat (beef, lamb, poultry)	Lard	Papaya
Maize	Chick peas	Lettuce	Milk and dairy products		Guava
Barley	Broad beans	Mushroom			Pineapple
Wheat	Sesame seeds	Pumpkin			Orange
Cassava	Sunflower seeds	Eggplant			Lemon
Yam	Pumpkin seeds	Broccoli			Avocado
		Sweet potato			
		Carrot			
		Moringa			

6A.2 Benefits of Exclusive Breastfeeding

FOR BABY	Saves infants' lives
	When baby is put to breast immediately after birth, it gets the yellowish milk (colostrum) that helps protect baby from many diseases.
	Is everything baby needs for first 6 months of life
	Protects baby against illness and disease
	Is always clean and does not need to be prepared
FOR MOTHERS	Helps mother recover after delivery. When baby is put immediately to breast after birth, it helps to expel the placenta and reduces bleeding.
	Frequent suckling prevents engorgement
	Is economical
	Reduces the mother's workload (does not need to prepare)
	Healthy for mother
FOR FAMILY	No expenses for buying formula
	Mothers and children are healthier so fewer medical expenses
	Time is saved
	Births are spaced thanks to the contraceptive effect

SAMPLE COUNSELING MESSAGES FOR MOTHERS

1. Mothers, please give breastmilk as soon as the baby is born to make it healthy and not cry too much. Make sure to give ONLY breastmilk to stop baby from getting sick.
2. Mothers, give the baby only breastmilk for the first 6 months, NOTHING else to drink (not even water) or eat, for it to grow strong, healthy, and smart.
3. Mothers, please give breastmilk to your baby anytime the child wants it (at least 10 times each day) to produce enough milk and provide your baby enough food to grow healthy and strong. Please empty one breast before offering the other one for the baby to be satisfied and grow big and strong.

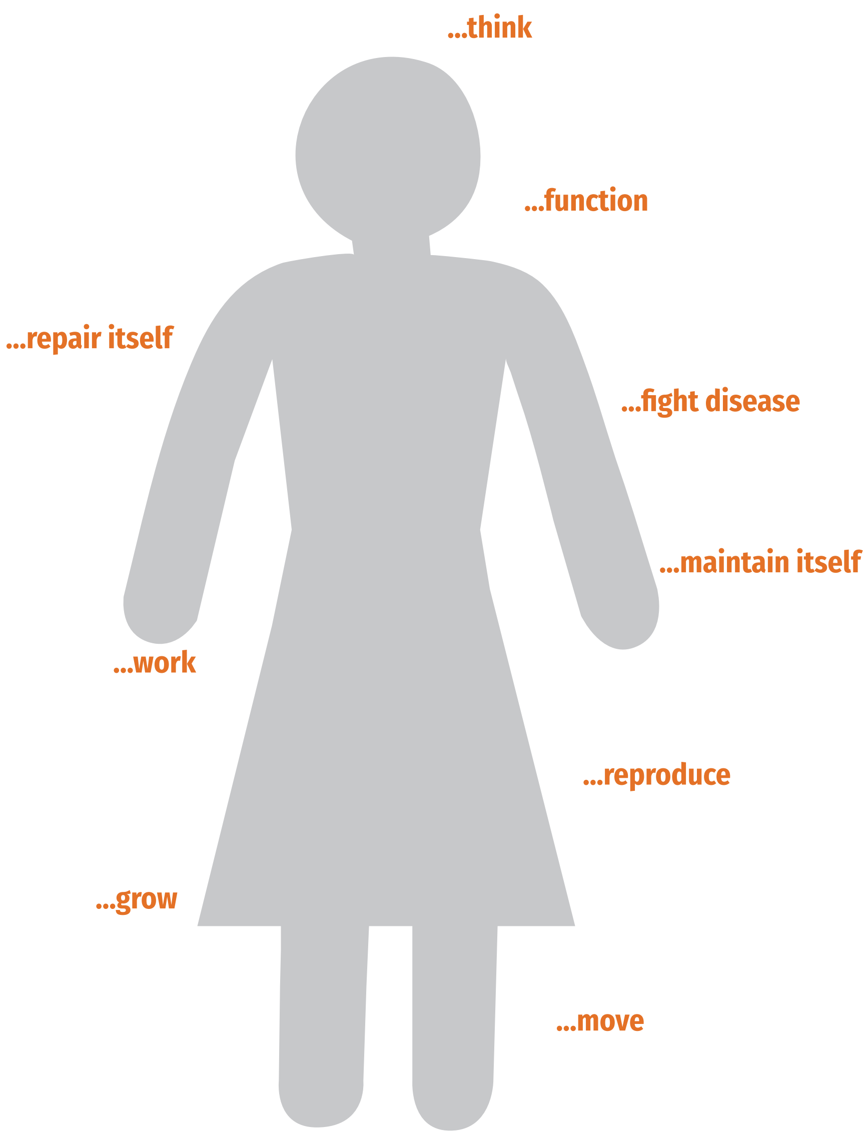
SAMPLE COUNSELING MESSAGES FOR FATHERS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

1. Father, encourage your wife to put the baby on breast immediately after birth to stimulate her milk production. Ensure that your wife gives the yellowish milk to the baby, as it is God's gift of butter to the new born.
2. Father, ensure that your wife who is breastfeeding has one or two additional meals every day to maintain her health and the health of the baby.
3. Father, encourage your wife to breastfeed on demand, day and night, so she can produce enough milk.
4. Father, give your wife enough time to breastfeed, don't rush her, so that the baby can get all the milk s/he needs.

6A.3 Food Groups & Nutrition

Diagram of Nutritional Benefits on Body[1]

Nutritious food gives our body the energy and substances to. . .



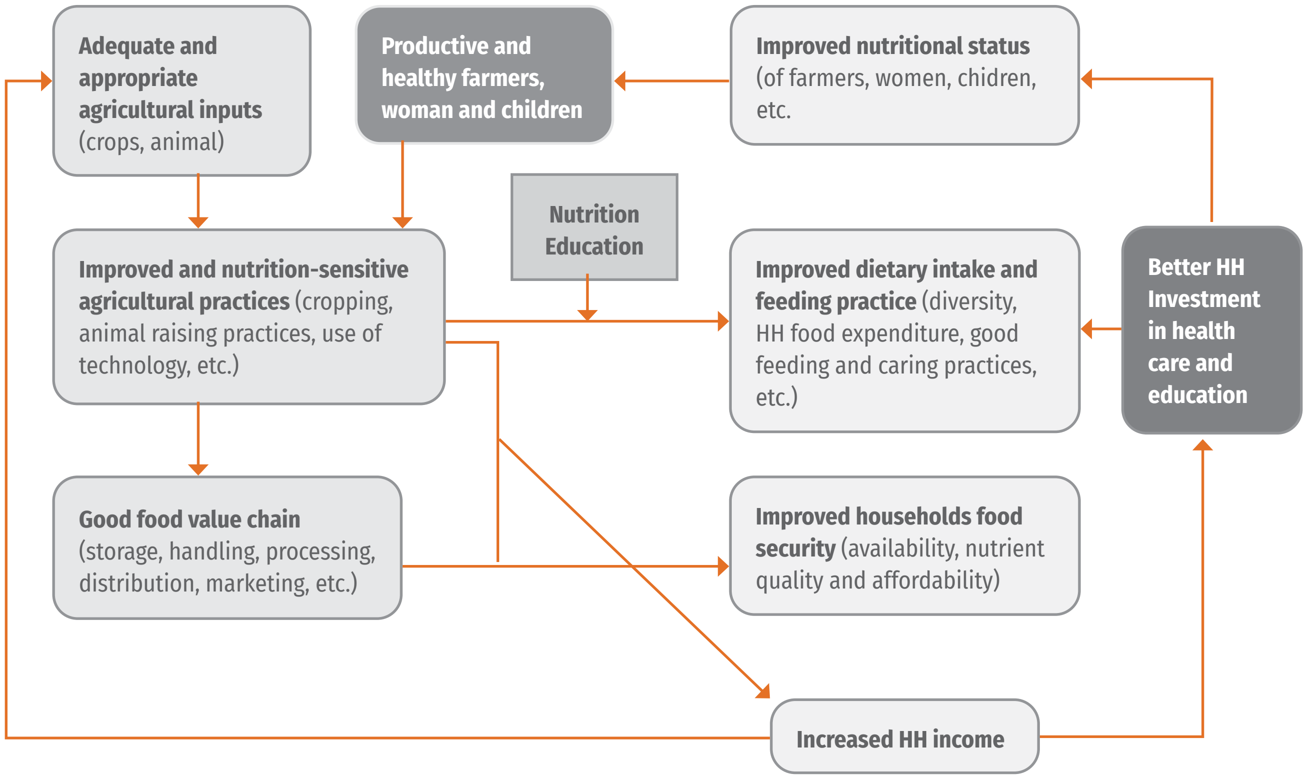
1. Reproduced from **Healthy Harvest: A training manual for community workers in good nutrition, and the growing, processing, and preparing of healthy food**. Produced by FAO, UNICEF, and Nutrition Council of Zimbabwe ISBN: 0–7974–3209–4.

6A.4 Problem Tree: Understanding Nutrition[2]

2. Relationship between agriculture and nutrition

Agriculture and nutrition are interrelated. For consumption of adequate and diversified foods, the process starts with agricultural inputs. Adequate and appropriate agricultural inputs are necessary to apply improved agricultural practices which increase agricultural productivity and ensure household food security. Increased production of foods, both in amount and quality, eventually improves nutritional status of households. On the other hand, improved nutrition practices and consumption of diversified foods is necessary to maintain healthy and productive citizens who can produce adequate amounts of nutritious foods. The figure below illustrates how nutrition and agriculture are interrelated. The explanation of each piece is described in the table that follows the figure.

Fig.1. One possible option that shows the relationship between agriculture and nutrition



2 Reproduced from Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture Trainer Manual for Department of Agriculture Agents. Published by Save the Children, 2012 under USAID Agreement Number AID-663-A-11-00017

Table: Explanation of the ten pieces of the relationship between agriculture and nutrition

1	**Adequate and appropriate agricultural inputs** (crops, animal)	Producing adequate and diversified food starts with agricultural inputs. Agricultural inputs include crops, animals, fertilizer and other technology.
2	**Improved and nutrition-sensitive agricultural practices** (cropping, animal raising practices, use of technology, etc.)	Having adequate and appropriate agricultural inputs improves agricultural practices. Cropping and farming systems that produce a variety of foods helps to improve the consumption of diversified foods at the HH level. Food grown without synthetic pesticides is healthier
3	**Good food value chain** (storage, handling, processing, distribution, marketing, etc.)	Good agricultural practices result in better production, but only with improved harvesting, storage and proper marketing. Proper processing and storage is necessary to maintain the nutrient content of the food. The better the food value chain, the better the availability and quality of food.
4	**Increased HH food security and income**	Increased production and yield will increase HH income through selling surplus products which improves food consumption.
5	**Better HH Investment in health care and education**	When households have better income, they have the capacity for investments in health care and education for their children and other family members.
6	**Good access to food** (availability, nutrient quality and affordability)	For consumption of adequate and diversified foods there should be good access to food (both amount and quality). Better access is determined by good value chain practices .
7	**Improved dietary intake and feeding practice** (diversity, HH food expenditure, good feeding and caring practices, etc.)	When households have good access to adequate and diversified foods, the consumption of such foods will be improved. Note that good agricultural practices that yield good production are also important for improved consumption. Increased investments in health care and education will also improve the feeding practices.
8	**Improved nutritional status** (of farmers, women, chidren, etc.	Better consumption and feeding practices will result in improved nutritional status. The investment in health care and education will also contribute to improved nutritional status.
9	**Productive and healthy farmers, woman and children**	The final outcome of improved nutritional status is productive and healthy farmers. This is an important input for establishing improved agricultural practices.
10	**Nutrition Education**	Good agricultural practices alone may not result in improved consumption and feeding practices. HHs should also have access to nutrition information.

6A.5 Safe water, sanitation and hygiene

Drinking safe water

Briefly discuss: What does drinking unclean water cause?

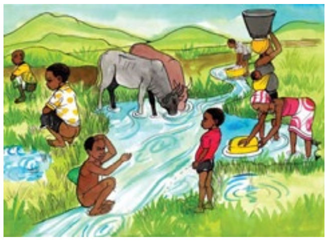
After group members share perspectives, read the following:

Drinking unclean water can cause stomach upset or diarrhea. In small children drinking unclean water can prevent using all the nutrients in food, and the children might not be as strong and healthy.

Water can become unclean in many ways – and *clear water* does not mean *clean water*.

Briefly discuss: What are ways that water can become contaminated?

Transmission Routes



Blocking Transmission Routes

After group members share perspectives, read the following: Water can become contaminated either *before collection* (humans or animals defecating in the water) or *after collection* (humans putting dirty hands in the water container / water jug).

It is important to treat water, filter water or boil water in order to ensure it is safe for drinking. If water is collected from a water pump or borehole that you know for certain has high quality (for example if the government shares the water quality test results) – then you need to focus on good household water storage. Water should be kept in a clean container with a lid. To remove water there should be a tap at the bottom or a cup with a handle that prevents unclean hands from touching the water.

Sanitation

Households have different types of latrines and toilets – some are inside the house, some are outside the house, some have doors for privacy; others have curtains or cloth. Some have mud around the hole, some have plastic or cement or porcelain. The features or type of toilet at your household does not matter – what matters is that everyone uses it and is comfortable.

Use a toilet or latrine

Families that use a toilet or latrine for defecation (followed by handwashing with soap) have stronger and healthier babies and children.

Cleaning and sweeping inside and outside the house reduces any animal fecal contamination from being near babies/children

Families that regularly sweep and maintain their compound, and reduce animals feces and prevent animals from coming in the house, also have strong and healthier babies and children.

Briefly discuss: What are things you and your family members do to maintain a clean home and compound? What are things that others mention that you want to do in your home? What are things that you wish you had time for?

Men and Boys can help with household tasks.

Briefly discuss: In your home what are things your family members do to help with water, hygiene and sanitation?

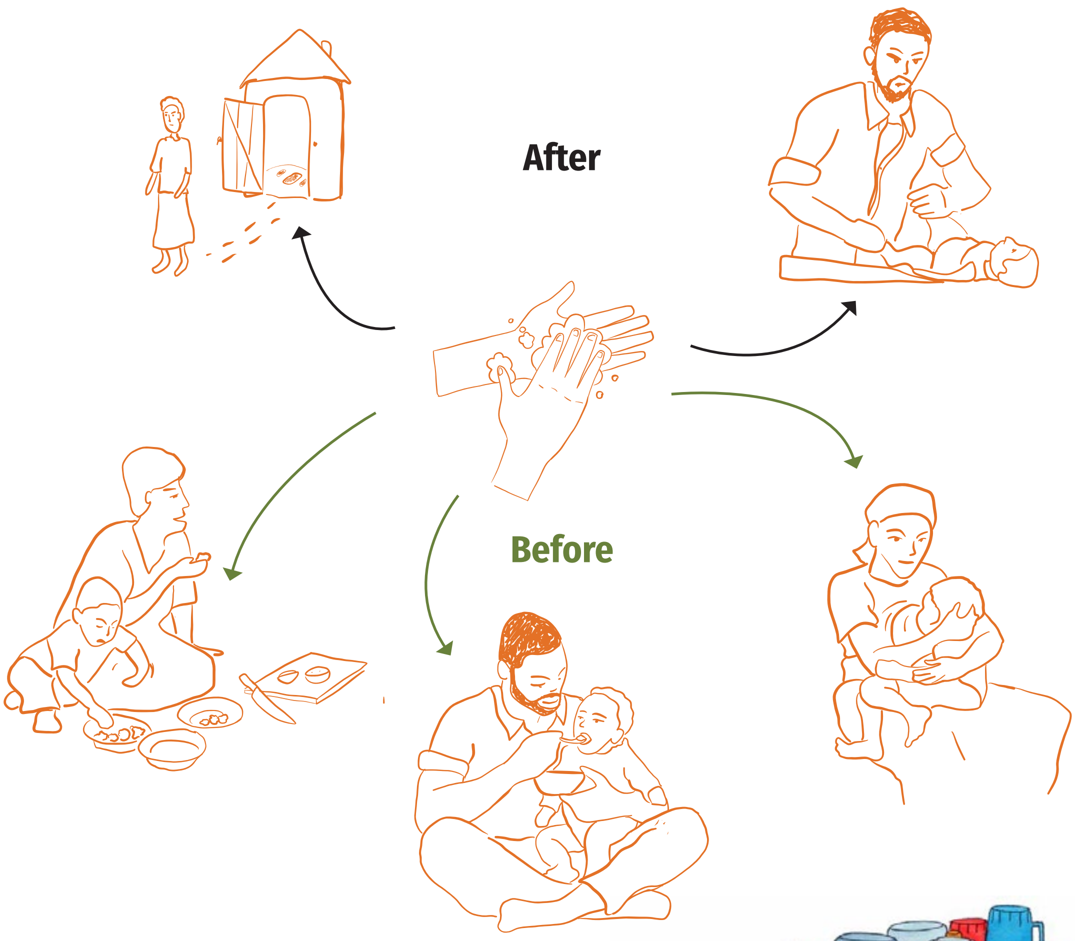
Key messages hygiene

Handwashing with soap is one of the most important things you and family members can do to promote good health. Handwashing with soap not only prevents COVID and flu, it can also reduce diarrhea, pneumonia, and other diseases that are spread from one person to another.

Even when hands do not appear dirty – they can still spread disease.

Briefly discuss: When are the times when you are most likely to wash your hands? What are barriers or things that prevent you from washing your hands with soap? Do others have any suggestions or advice?

One idea is making soapy water in a small plastic bottle. Use a capful of laundry soap and water to fill a small bottle. Puncture a hole in the lid to release soapy water for washing (instead of bar soap or liquid soap).



What do you see in these pictures?

Does anyone conduct these practices at home?

6A.6 Menstrual hygiene

Menstruation is a normal occurrence: it is needed for women to make babies.

- Some people have their periods for 2-3 days and some have it for 5-7 days. Any number of days 1-8 is normal, but start noticing what is normal for you. That way you know if something is "not right."
- Some have days when their blood flow is quite heavy, and other days it is quite light. Start to pay attention to what is normal for you.
- Mood changes are normal. Be aware that sometimes it is your monthly hormones that are changing your mood or behavior.
- Stomach pains are normal before and during your period. To help the pain, do some exercise, relaxing breathing, stretch, rest, or put a warm cloth on where you have cramps.

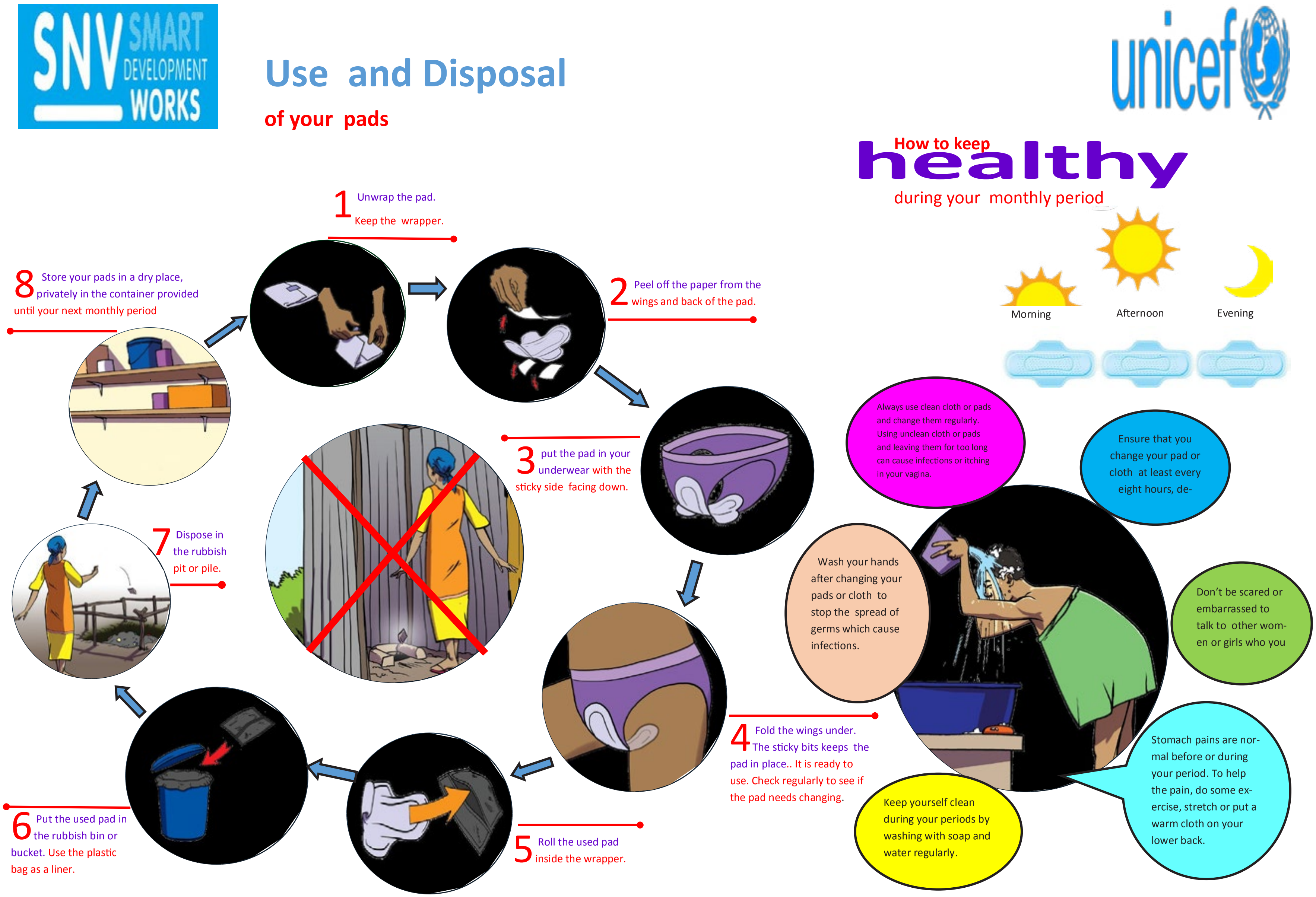
Menstruation starts in young girls and women: but this does not mean they are ready to have babies.

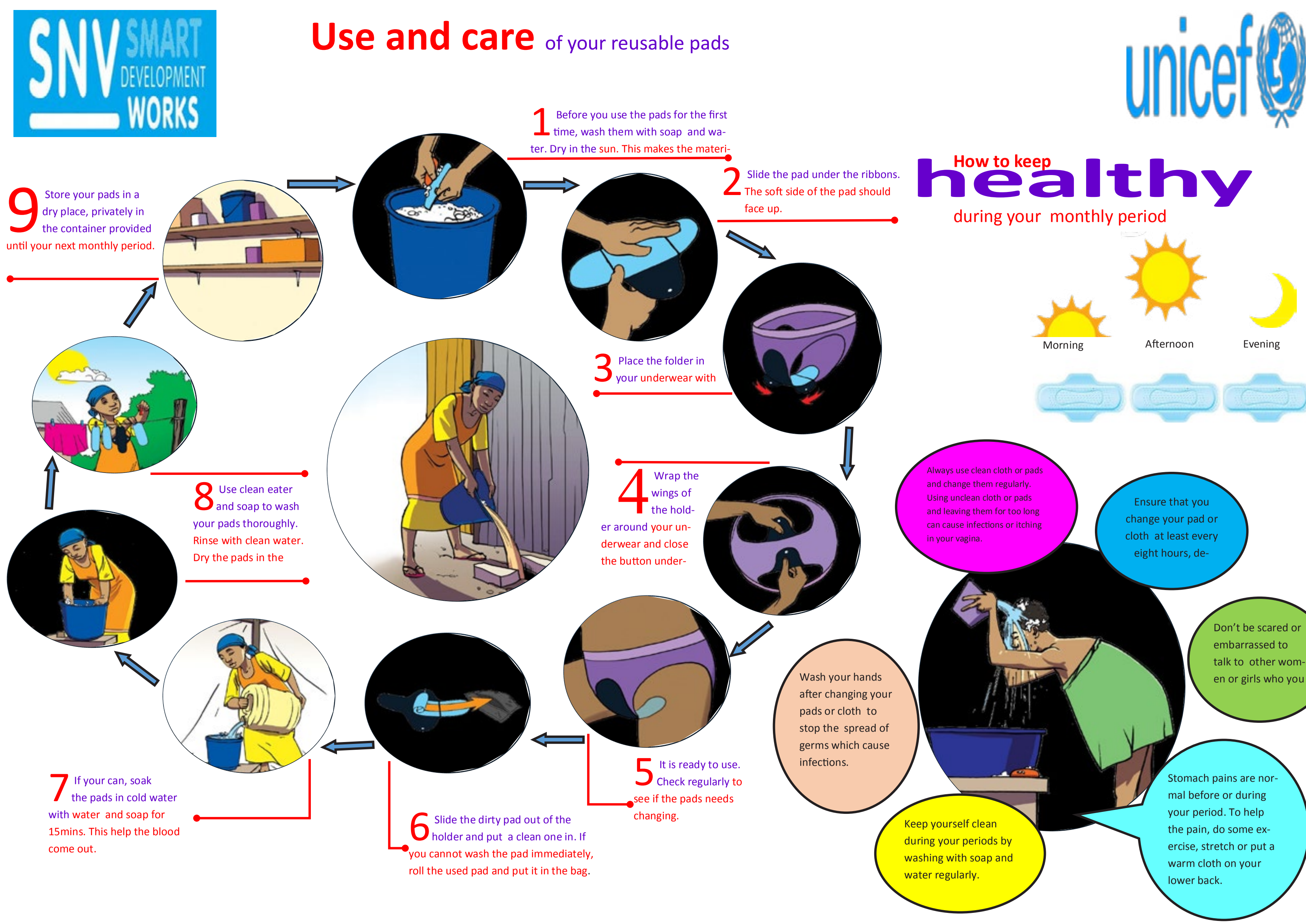
- It is best for girls to finish secondary school before thinking of having children.
- Don't be scared or embarrassed to talk to other women or girls about menstruation and hygiene practices. Whether you are asking advice or giving advice it helps for people to talk about experiences and good "tips" for managing menstruation—whether pads, water, pain or emotions.

Take rest: some days you will need more rest.

Use a clean, dry material for absorption:

- Always use clean cloth or pads and change them regularly (at least every 8 hours).
- Cloths or pads that are washed and reused should be dried in the sun to help sterilize and reduce infection.
- Using unclean cloth or pads can cause infections or itching in your vagina.
- Keep yourself clean during your periods by washing regularly. Do not use soap directly on or inside your vagina.
- Wash your hands with soap after changing your pads or cloth.


SNV SMART DEVELOPMENT WORKS
Use and Disposal
of your pads
unicef
How to keep
healthy
during your monthly period
Morning
Afternoon
Evening
1 Unwrap the pad.
Keep the wrapper.
2 Peel off the paper from the wings and back of the pad.
3 put the pad in your underwear with the sticky side facing down.
4 Fold the wings under. The sticky bits keeps the pad in place.. It is ready to use. Check regularly to see if the pad needs changing.
5 Roll the used pad inside the wrapper.
6 Put the used pad in the rubbish bin or bucket. Use the plastic bag as a liner.
7 Dispose in the rubbish pit or pile.
8 Store your pads in a dry place, privately in the container provided until your next monthly period
Always use clean cloth or pads and change them regularly. Using unclean cloth or pads and leaving them for too long can cause infections or itching in your vagina.
Ensure that you change your pad or cloth at least every eight hours, de-
Wash your hands after changing your pads or cloth to stop the spread of germs which cause infections.
Don't be scared or embarrassed to talk to other wom-en or girls who you
Keep yourself clean during your periods by washing with soap and water regularly.
Stomach pains are nor-mal before or during your period. To help the pain, do some ex-ercise, stretch or put a warm cloth on your lower back.



Use and care of your reusable pads
1 Before you use the pads for the first time, wash them with soap and water. Dry in the sun. This makes the materi-
2 Slide the pad under the ribbons. The soft side of the pad should face up.
3 Place the folder in your underwear with
4 Wrap the wings of the holder around your underwear and close the button under-
5 It is ready to use. Check regularly to see if the pads needs changing.
6 Slide the dirty pad out of the holder and put a clean one in. If you cannot wash the pad immediately, roll the used pad and put it in the bag.
7 If your can, soak the pads in cold water with water and soap for 15mins. This help the blood come out.
8 Use clean eater and soap to wash your pads thoroughly. Rinse with clean water. Dry the pads in the
9 Store your pads in a dry place, privately in the container provided until your next monthly period.
How to keep healthy during your monthly period
Morning
Afternoon
Evening
Always use clean cloth or pads and change them regularly. Using unclean cloth or pads and leaving them for too long can cause infections or itching in your vagina.
Ensure that you change your pad or cloth at least every eight hours, de-
Don't be scared or embarrassed to talk to other women or girls who you
Wash your hands after changing your pads or cloth to stop the spread of germs which cause infections.
Keep yourself clean during your periods by washing with soap and water regularly.
Stomach pains are normal before or during your period. To help the pain, do some exercise, stretch or put a warm cloth on your lower back.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Tools

FFBS Scaling Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Introduction

Purpose of this introductory note is to ensure that there is a clarity across all levels of the project team on what focus should PME have, what principles one should follow in the conduct of any PME, how will the PME managed and utilised, and how we need to plan its operationalisation. PME must be undertaken in FFBS to enhance project's performance, impact, learning for improving the programme quality and effectiveness of the project. It is to set in motion standards and norms around institutional accountability, continuous learning, and transparent sharing of project and programme performance both internally and externally.

The main purposes of the PME are, firstly, to gather insights to improve programme implementation practices; secondly, to contribute to strengthen relationship with multiple stakeholders including community; thirdly, to contribute to streamline system and process; fourthly, to serve as both accountability and learning; and fifthly, to ascertain effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of the project. The learning lens arises from our own requirement to generate a solid body of knowledge for improving quality of interventions and for sharing with others to multiply impact.

Process to be followed:

1. Development of Theory of Change and MEAL framework:

    Every project must review the proposal and its commitment, ascertain the specific context of participants, review global MEAL framework and develop a country specific menu of outcome, impact and monitoring indicators.

2. Rollout monitoring and evaluation system in a timebound manner:

    Every project needs to create a mechanism for undertaking and completing the routine monitoring and evaluation using the participatory tools (such as Participatory Performance Tracking Tool, Outcome Mapping, Gender Dialogue Monitoring Tool, Life-End of Season Reflection, Agroecosystem Analysis), within stipulated time frame of the project life span. It is, therefore, incumbent on the part of project management to ensure the completion of process is complete within planned project cycle.

3. Promote staff capacities for implementation:

    Project shall provide adequate orientation and develop capacities to use every tool required to manage the routine data collection and analysis to ensure that it is clearly understood and implemented. As appropriate, project shall earmark budget for staff capacity building.

4. Carry out internal stakeholder review and communicate key findings:

    Every Project shall develop strategies to communicate findings of the reviews and monitoring results in ways that will promote accountability and learning among internal and external stakeholders. The communication plan can have many forms that help build credibility of the programme for multiplying impact, visibility and branding of the lessons for wider use through publication and dissemination.

5. Ensure data quality:

Every data collected must ensure that there is adequate quality control mechanism for ensuring quality data. A proper system for monitoring of data collected should be put in place to check the validity and reliability of data collected.

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in FFBS: Minimum standards

Introduction/Rationale:

Performance Monitoring in FFBS is aimed at gathering project performance information on outcomes in five critical areas of change, including yields, income, gender equality, resilience and nutrition. Monitoring on these impact areas will allow the team to analyze the current situation, identify problems and trends, measure progress, and formulate solutions. This process enables program staff to shift or retain human, financial and material resources for course correction.

Timely and effective management of the monitoring function should lead towards sustainable and significant improvements in FFBS producers conditions or well-being, reflecting enhancement in income, productivity, gender equality, resilience, and nutrition. FFBS has eight major interrelated components: Facilitation, Gender, Agriculture, Marketing, Nutrition, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning, and Service Systems Strengthening & Social Accountability. Adherence to high quality monitoring and evaluation standards creates clear and actionable results. To facilitate management of the above, PME encompasses aset of nine tools:

1. ***Participatory Performance Tracking Self-Assessment Tool:*** This tool helps to track individual FFBS member adoption of key improved agriculture practices and group performance as promoted through the project and develop action plan to address areas of concern.
2. ***Gender Dialogue Monitoring Tool:*** To identify emerging trends and leanings from the gender dialogues to track impact on group members, spouses, and other session participants' level of behaviour change.
3. ***Life–End of Season Reflection:*** This tool helps to identify the different challenges and achievements that group members feel they have experienced during the season.
4. ***Focus Group Discussion:*** To track social and behavior changes of project's direct participants. It helps understand relationships, underlying reasons, challenges and risks in the attainment of results.
5. ***Outcome Mapping-Gender Progress Marker Monitoring tool:*** This tool helps to track social and behavior changes of project's direct participants. It serves to monitor how relationships are changing, what risks or negative changes may be surfacing, and how to respond to them.
6. ***Personal Transformation Tracker:*** This tool promotes self-reflection among staff, supports them to critically examine their own gender biases, power relations, and privileges and develop action plan to address those.
7. ***FFBS Cost-Benefit logbook:*** To be used as a monitoring tool during the season/production cycle to obtain an indication of the financial benefits. (Can be found in the agriculture section of this manual)
8. ***Data Quality Audit :*** To assess the quality of data submitted by the project in terms of the validity, integrity, precision, reliability, and timeliness of the data and to identify the areas of potential vulnerability that affect the general credibility and usefulness of the data.
9. ***AIIR Tool:*** Complete Advocacy, Influencing and Impact Reporting (AIIR) Tool to ensure constructive use of the lessons for capturing scaling up practice at multiple levels.

Minimum standards (must have) – Monitoring and Evaluation

1: Develop the performance monitoring and evaluation system of FFBS with a robust MEAL Framework looking into the expectation of all key stakeholders – participants, donors, government, private players or other community-based groups. The MEAL framework should cover indicators related to all relevant impact areas of interventions covering (**nutrition** – diversified crop and vegetable production and consumption, nutrition SBC education; **agriculture/livestock/fisheries/forestry** – sustainable and climate smart practices, **market** – access to inputs and output market local/global, access to finance, value addition and collective marketing, **gender** – access and control over information, resources, decision-making, **facilitation** – completeness, attendance and feedback knowledge/skill transfer).

2: Conduct the baseline that aligns to the project's results framework.

3: Adapt and contextualize array of tools for performance monitoring, evaluation and learning based on the crops/livestock/fishery/forestry such as Participatory Performance Tracking tool (individual practice tracking sheet and group maturity performance tracker), Gender Progress Marker Monitoring Tool, Gender Dialogue Monitoring Tool, End of Season Reflection, Post-harvest Evaluative Focused Group Discussion and the AIIR tool.

4: Establish a system for periodic review of achievements based on sound data analysis and sensemaking with reports of on track, off track and recommendations for actions.

5: Develop action planning-matrix with priorities for next month with clear accountability.

6. Ensure data validation for quality of data by verifying validity, reliability, integrity, timelines and precision.

Minimum standards – (nice to have) Monitoring and Evaluation.

1. Define a meaningful and manageable set of qualitative/quantitative indicators for feedback and accountability mechanisms to assess effectiveness and efficiency.
2. Hold annual reviews to capture lessons, challenges and issues to be acted upon for improvement and to support identification of potential for scale.
3. Document stories of success and make of collective learning for continuous improvement and adaptation.
4. Complete Advocacy, Influencing and Impact Reporting Tool to ensure constructive use of the lessons for capturing scaling up practice at multiple levels.
5. Use CARE markers – Gender Marker; Resilience Marker; Governance Marker.

MEL Principles

Following are the MEL principles:

- **Participatory monitoring and evaluation**: FFBS adopts participatory approaches for MEL for ensuring accountability. This also facilitates behavior change as we put project participants in charge of assessing themselves, identifying their own gaps, and finding solutions. FFBS uses simple tools that producers and community members can use easily for their own assessment and course corrections. These participatory tools also help management teams to generate and analyze data at various levels to identify gaps and adapt accordingly.
- **Conducive to learning and action planning**: Generating performance trends can help enable dialogue and reflection amongst participants, creating a richer experience and greater impact.
- **Conducive to adaptation**: Data collection and analysis of key programmatic insights allows us to constantly adapt and improve. These insights include changes in income, productivity, gender equality, resilience, and nutrition.
- **Consider ethical implications**: All MEL practices and methods must promote honesty, consent, and integrity while respecting the confidentiality and dignity of stakeholders.
- **Dynamic and lead to action**: Adaptable monitoring, evaluation and learning processes allow us to instill accountability and learning moments throughout the cycle of a project or initiative. These learning moments inform future changes in policy, strategy, or implementation.

- **Conducive to accountability**: By prioritizing transparency and clarity, project data can clearly communicate what we do, where we work, and how effective we are. This include accountability to participants, donors, and other stakeholders.

Reference/Guidance Documents

Minimum Set of Tools for FFBS 2.0

Must Have (non-negotiable) – what we currently have in the toolkit, and additional as in the proposal e.g.,

- PPT tool
- Gender dialogue monitoring tool
- Lifeline: End of Season Reflection tool
- FGD with FFBS producers and their household members
- Gender Progress Marker monitoring tool
- Personal Transformation Tracker tool
- AIIR Tool

Nice to Have (more added value) – Tools within thematic area that FFBS Scale-Up Program, other FWS Program

- Feedback and Accountability Mechanism
- Annual reviews
- Story collections
- CARE Markers

7.1 Participatory Performance Tracker (PPT) Tool: Self-Assessment

SEASON	Vegetative and Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To track individual member use of key improved agriculture practices and group performance as promoted through the project and develop action plan to address areas of concern.
USED TO	This exercise allows the individual farmers and groups to monitor their own progress against collectively set targets and to identify any problem areas. This also enables the Facilitator to easily understand how groups are performing. This exercise is conducted always in a group setting and includes farmers belonging to a producer group of a particular value chain or who grew a particular crop that the project is engaging with.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour and 30 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	PPT tool: print-outs of the tool with pictorial version of each targeted practice, markers, string.
IDEAL WORKSPACE:	A centrally located space within the community/village where all participants can reach easily and sit comfortably in a semicircular manner. This can be conducted in a room or in an open space for example, under a tree where participants can sit. Bringing all participants (members/farmers of a particular group) to this space to begin the group exercise is crucial.

Background

The Participatory Performance Tracker (PPT) is a participatory self-assessment tool that allows farmers belonging to a particular group to monitor their progress against collectively set targets and recommended practices. This exercise helps farmers of a producer group to discuss which practices they are using and the benefits, constraints and limitation they may be experiencing from such new practices. This also provides a platform for farmers to discuss any challenges that they may be facing in adopting certain practices. This participatory discussion creates an environment where farmers those with lower adoption rates may be encouraged by their peers to try out the improved practices in the next crop season, and groups together with their field officers can make plans to address challenges the farmers are facing.

The Formats: Individual Practice Tracking Sheet and Group Maturity Sheet

The PPT is comprised of two forms. The first is an **Individual Practice Tracking Sheet,** which captures the use of a series of good agricultural and management practices by individual group members. The basic Individual Practice Tracking Sheet consists of a few performance areas and the individual performance criteria within these. The Individual Practice Tracking Sheet has two parts, monitoring different practices at different times of the season. **PPT 1** and **PPT 2**. **PPT 1** is administered at the end of the vegetative stage, whereas **PPT 2** is administered at the end of the crop cycle (i.e. the post-harvest stage).

The second element of the PPT is a **Group Maturity Sheet (Group PPT)**. This supports group-level analysis to help groups assess how well they are working together as a group and to assess the group's readiness to take on new functions. Group PPT is administered twice in a crop cycle – the first Group PPT is conducted along with PPT 1 at the end of the vegetative stage. The same Group PPT is again administered during PPT 2.

The results of both PPT assessments can be used for internal course corrections, such as linkages to partners (private sector, government, etc.) to provide additional support in particular areas.

Part 1. Administering the Individual Practice Tracking Sheet

The practices being monitored in each PPT are specific to a particular value chain and context, and should be selected with the technical input of the team. PPT practices may include locally appropriate market, agriculture, gender, and nutrition practices. Before starting the PPT process, make yourself familiar with the tool and the practices included in each of the sections. This will help you to initiate the discussion in a more organized manner.

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction and attendance.** Start by noting down the names of the farmers present during the meeting on the PPT format. The farmers who are not present on the day of PPT administration will be marked as absent. It is important to start the PPT data collection with all farmers of the group assembled in the room/space. A farmer should not turn up in the middle of the meeting, as that would disrupt the process and that farmer's name would have already been marked as absent.

Make sure the farmers are seated in a circle or semi-circle so that it is easy for you to see which farmers raised their hands for a particular practice. Another advantage of having the farmers sit in a circle is that you can easily know the last person you asked the question to and record their responses. If you have farmers scattered across the room, it is harder to keep of track of who you might have missed.

It is also important to clearly communicate to the farmers the amount of time it will take for the PPT meeting. This will hopefully ensure that group members do not leave midway through the PPT.

▶ STEP 2. **Individual Practice Tracking.** Start the session by briefly explaining the purpose. Help farmers recall the practices they have learned over the last crop cycle through different trainings provided by the project. This will refresh farmers' mind of those practices that you will be asking about during the PPT session. Start with PPT 1 Individual Practice Tracking Sheet.

Following the format, start by asking which of the farmers adopted a particular practice last crop season. For example, ask "Who adopted the 'seed germination test' in the last crop cycle?" Or "Who practiced 'line sowing' in the last cropping cycle?" When speaking with farmers, do not read out the questions from the form exactly as it is written. Rather, be sure you understand the question and then ask the group, using their local language and terms they understand. Repeating the question more than once may help farmers better understand.

Show an image/picture associated with the practice to the farmers as this enhances better understanding and recall of the practice. It would be also good to stand up and show each farmer the image/picture.

Request farmers who adopted the practice to raise their hands –and keep their hands raised-until you have recorded their responses in the tracking form. This is very important and must be followed to ensure accurate data collection. Record the answer next to the name of each farmer.

▶ STEP 3. **Trouble-shooting.** The PPT is not simply a performance checklist; it is a tool for discussion and an opportunity to provide technical support in areas where farmers are struggling. While taking note of the responses, you should also provide advice and guidance on different farming practices as needed. In a case where half or more of the farmers in a group are not adopting a particular agriculture practice that the project is promoting, it may be that they have not understood the practice – or there may be a structural challenge (i.e. lack of certified seed) that needs to be addressed or it might not be appropriate or useful in that given context of implementation. Discuss that practice briefly so that the farmers are reoriented to do so during the next crop cycle.

In cases some few farmers have not adopted a practice, ask them why, and help them understand the advantages of adopting that practice and also proviude farmers with choice and understanding of practices that can improve the environmental, social and financial sustainability of their livelihoods. This can be achieved by asking some of the farmers who did adopt the practice to share their experience and what advantages they have perceived adopting that improved practice. This would create peer support and may possibly motivate some farmers to adopt the practices that the project is promoting during the next crop season.

Step 4. Scoring

At the end of the Individual Practice Tracking session (PPT 1) help the farmers group understand where they stand in their efforts to adopt new improved agriculture practices. Looking at the number of practices adopted by the individual farmers give a score/grade to the group by using the following table:

Grade A: if group has adopted 76–100% of all recommended practices
Grade B: if group has adopted 51–75%, of all recommended practices
Grade C: if group has adopted 26–50%of all recommended practices
Grade D: if group has adopted 0–25%, of all recommended practices

Discuss with the farmers how they can improve. Encourage farmers to learn from each other and adopt most/all of the improved practices promoted by the program. Help the group to set a target for themselves for next time they do this exercise, for example moving from grade "C" to "B". Emphasize to the farmers that this will be possible when individual farmers practice the promoted agriculture practices. Also, highlight the importance of adopting these practices.

Part 2. Administering the Group PPT

This tool is designed to help groups to assess their own performance as a collective – how they govern, how well they access resources and markets, how inclusive they are. The Group PPT helps collectives to identify gaps and challenges and plan next steps toward "graduation" and group maturity. The objective of the Group PPT is to encourage the collective to rank how well they have performed in a given area (i.e. group governance) within the previous six months.

STEP 1. Self-assessment. Sitting in the group (and this is the same group that you conducted PPT 1), explain the farmers that after assessing their individual practice adoption rate, now they are going to self-assess how they are performing as a group, in certain areas. Group-level questions are framed in a statement mode for which there could be four levels (poor, average, good, excellent) of answers. Pick one indicator/statement and read it out to the group. Initiate a discussion around that statement to get group members'/farmers' view. Ask them to decide – collectively – on the answer that best fits their group.

It is important to get the consensus of the whole group before selecting a choice – as opposed to going by what just a handful of members believe. If the group is unsure or torn between two choices, read out all choices again, so that the group can decide effectively. If required, ask the group to vote by raising their hands in support and/or against and give a score based on the majority vote (poor = 1; average = 2; good = 3; and excellent = 4).

Discuss with the group *why* they think they are at the selected level for that indicator/statement and how they would improve from there. This would help group to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan for addressing those. Try to involve everyone in the group (present during the meeting) and do not allow one or two persons dominate the discussion.

STEP 2. Group Maturity Score and Reflection. Facilitate a discussion among the group about the results of the PPT exercise, both **individual practices** and the **group maturity**. Capturing the results on the PPT sheet would help you to discuss with the group their strengths and the areas where they are struggling.

Allow the group to discuss and reflect on the reasons for low adoption rate and or low performance. Ask group members:

- What practices are easy to adhere to?
- What helps to facilitate/enable this?
- What practices most of the farmers are struggling with? Why?
- What prevents them from completing these practices?
- What were the challenges adopting the particular improved practices?
- What could the group do to address those challenges?
- What supports the group need to overcome the identified challenges?
- What does this teach the group moving forward?

▶ STEP 3. **Action planning.** Plan how they would overcome the challenges and priorities course corrections for the next period. The group to prioritize those actions achievable and doable by themselves in the short-term on their own and those require long-term with support from others for example, the project staff. This would lead the group develop an action plan to areas of concern. Congratulate the group for their successes and encourage for further improvement.

▶ STEP 4. **Close.** Thank farmers for their time and close. As a good practice you should share the results of the PPT exercise with the group for them to keep record of the assessment. This can be done by sharing a copy of the PPT form/ sheet (with the results) with the group. Make sure to carry a copy of the PPT form/sheet for the group next time you visit them. This will help the group to keep record and to return during PPT 2 at the end of the post-harvest stage. If the group has created a flip-chart or other hard-copy version with visual photographs, leave that flip-chart version with the group for their own record; remind them they will need to store the chart carefully, because they will use it again during PPT 2, at the end of the post-harvest stage.

Sample Individual PPT for Paddy in India

INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATORY PERFOMANCE TRACKER

FOR PADDY PRODUCTION (KHARIF)

District:____________________ Block:______________________ GP_____________________________________ Village_____________________________________

Collective Name:____

Collective Code:			Date		
Country: India			Value Chain Product	PADDY (Kharif)	
Number of women members	SC –	ST –	Number of Men members	SC –	ST –
Dropouts Since Last Meeting	SC –	ST –	Total Number of Members	SC –	ST –

					PPT 1: Beginning of Season: Crop Production																							PPT 2: End of Season – Post Harvest Production																			
General Information					Pre-sowing						Sowing										Vegetative Stage							Harvest					Post Harvest												Gender		
					Soil and Water Management			Input and Land Selec-tion			Soil and Water	Use of Inputs					Planting				Pest & disease management			Soil and Water	Savings			Harvest			Yield		Post Harvest Management				Marketing					Record Keeping and Finanace			Gender		
Farmer Name	Farmer ID	Farmer Sex (M/F)	Farmer Social Category (SC/ST)	Group Leader (Y/N)	Summer/deep ploughing (6–9") once in every year	Repairing of field bunds	Application of Farm Yard Manure	Broadcasting of "Dhaincha" seeds	Selection of right variety of seed as per land type (short/medium/long duration veriety)	Germination test of seeds	Ploughing and leveling of land	Adding right quantity of chemical fertilizer in 3 phases	Using bio-fertilizers sucha as azospirillum, phosphoculture for enhanced plant growth	Seed treatment with fungicides (bavistin/theram)	Using a mix of organic manure and chemical fertilizer for nursery bed	Adding themet before uprooting seedlings from nursery	Priming	Line sowing	Broadcasting seeds behind the plough	Area planted of paddy this season (in acres)	Weeding at least twice at an interval of 25 to 30 days	Spraying of organic pesticides	Erecting bird perches / Pheromone traps	Adopting any one of the following irrigation measures: boarder/furrow/drip/sprinkler/strip*	Value of individual saving in this crop cycle (in Rs.)	Value of loans taken (in Rs.)	Value of loans outstanding (in Rs.)	Timely harvesting the crop when 80% of the seeds are matured	Threshing paddy in the field itself	Drying paddy until moisture percentage comes down to 13 per cent, or lower	Total yield in Kg.	Income earned from sale of paddy (in Rs.)	Selecting intact grains for seed purpose	Cleaning and drying produce for FAQ standard	Grading and standard packing	Packaging and storage of seeds to avoid moisture contact	Processing for commercial purpose	Using marketing information for decision-making	Access to Information on MSP and FAQ	Collecting token from RI for selling surplus produce	Engagement in market for selling produce	Maintaining records on farm expenses	Maintaining production records	Calculating profit and loss	My spouse and other men in HH support with household work and child care	Discussed with my spouse which crops to grow	My spouse and I discuss how to spend the HH income

Sample Group PPT for India

Collective Code:		Date: ______________	Country: India	FOR PADDY PRODUCTION (KHARIF)	
Number of Active Women:	SC: _______ ST: _______	Number of Active Men:	SC: _______ ST: _______	Total Number of Active Members	
Number of Women at Meeting:	SC: _______ ST: _______	Number of Men at Meeting:	SC: _______ ST: _______	Number of Members at Meeting	
Number of Women Group Leaders:	SC: _______ ST: _______	Number of Men Group Leaders:	SC: _______ ST: _______	Number of Dropouts Since Last Meeting	

Performance Area	1 / Poor	2 / Average	3 / Good	4 / Excellent	Score
INCLUSIVENESS					
1. Group Gender and Social Equity	There are no explicit bylaws or practices that ensure SC & ST women can participate equally; SC & ST women have limited to no influence over decisions.	Group bylaws exist but are not clearly supportive of SC & ST women's participation; SC & ST women have limited influence over decisions, not visible in the community	Group bylaws promote SC & ST women's membership; SC & ST women have clear influence over group decisions, and visible in the community	Group bylaws promote SC & ST women's membership; SC & ST women have equal influence with men over decisions, within the group and in the community	
EFFICIENCY					
2. Group Rules and Policies	Group has no clear rules and/or policies	Group has clear rules and policies. These are non-discriminatory against SC & ST women	Group can point to concrete examples when rules and policies have guided decisions	Group regularly reviews rules and policies and can point to changes made based on member input and group learning	
3. Group Record Keeping	Group does not maintain any records	Group maintains some records but accuracy is low and records are only for some activities	Group maintains records of all activities (financial & non-financial). Accuracy of records is generally good, records are available to members	Group maintains excellent records on all activities (financial & non-financial) with very high accuracy and consistency of records. Records are available to all members	
4. Group Cohesion & Leadership	Group is led by elites with little input from other members	Group elects its leaders on a regular basis	Group elects its leaders on a regular basis; past leaders step down regularly upon completing their term; at least one group leader is from CS/ST community (in case of a mixed group)	Group leadership is elected on a regular basis; past leaders step down regularly upon completing their term; at least 2/3 of group leaders are from SC/ST community (in case of a mixed group)	
EFFECTIVENESS					
5. Group Access to Inputs	Group has not made an effort to collectively procure inputs	Group has identified an input dealer who is willing to sell inputs to the group collectively but members have not yet purchased inputs	Group has an agreement with an input dealer and collectively purchased inputs once.	Group has purchased inputs collectively and have an on-going relationship with identified input dealers.	
6. Group Access to and Use of Extension Services	Group is not facilitating access to extension services	Group provides some linkages to extension services but quality and/or frequency is inadequate; Group members are not satisfied with level of access to service through the group	Group provides members with linkages to quality services on a regular basis; Group members are somewhat satisfied with service provider performance	Group members are fully satisfied with level of service provision and trust provider's inputs	
7. Group's access to and management of demonstration plot	Group members do not have access to demonstration plot and are not able to learn improved skills through demo	Demo plot exists but is poorly maintained, with low participation of group members	Demo plot is maintained well, but managed by a few expert farmers and medium level engagement and ownership of group members	Group members have gained knowledge and skills from demo plots for improving farming practices and have strong participation in plot management	
8. Group members' individual practice-adoption status	An average of less than 25% of all promoted practices have been adopted	An average of less than 50% but more than 25% of all promoted practices have been adopted	An average of less than 75% but more than 50% of all promoted practices have been adopted	An average of more than 75% of all promoted practices have been adopted	
9. Links with other groups	Group stands alone, and does not have any links with other collectives for accessing inputs, market, finance, other govt services	Group has links with other groups for accessing inputs and sale of produce, but little else for other collective action	Group has links with many other collectives and taking up collective activities but has low participation and influence	Group is linked with other groups and have a strong positive relationship, for accessing inputs, sale collectively, and link with other external agencies	
SUSTANABILITY					
10. Links with NGO/ agencies	Group is highly dependent on local NGOs and agencies to function	Group can perform basic functions on its own, but relies heavily for external links	Group is self-sufficient institutionally and financially, but needs external support for linkages	Group is quite independent in all aspects, and relates with the promoting agency as a partner	
11. Group's access to Finance	Group has no formal access to finance or informal savings	Group has initiated and is actively expanding thrift and credit activities; Savings has increased since previous cycle	Group is operating as a mature thrift and credit institution and is saving with a formal financial institution	Group has access to credit via formal financial institutions (MFIs, COOPs, banks, etc)	

Sample Individual PPT for Soy Bean in Ghana

All fields are responses of yes/no, or numeric.

Group #		Date	
Country		Value Chain	Soy
Number of Active Women		Number of Active Men	
Dropouts Since Last Meeting		Total Number of Members	

				PPT 1: Beginning of Season: Crop Production																				PPT 2: End of Season – Post Harvest Production													
			Seasonal Stage	Pre-Sowing					Sowing/Weeding										Vegetative					Harvest			Post Harvest										
			Domain	Input and Land Selection		Soil and Water Management			Use of Inputs		Planting				Pest and Disease Management				Spraying / Pest and Disease Management		Savings			Harvest	Yield		Post harvest management			Mar-keting		Record Keeping and Finance			Gender		
Member Name	Member ID	Member Sex (M/F)	Group Leader (Y/N)	Land identified	Selection of seeds	Use Crop rotation/intercropping	Organic fertilizers and/or in combination	Soil and water conservation structures*	Use of improved/recommended seed varieties	Use of Sustainable agriculture equipment	My spouse supports me with household work while I plant	Early, timely, and uniform planting	Seed spacing	Total Area Planted this season (Acres)	Use of low risk pesticides (or no pesticides)	Scouting, rouging, and destruction of infected plants	Timely and appropriate weeding	My spouse supports me with household work while I weed	Spraying crops for pests	Use of scare-crow to protect crops	Value of savings this cycle	Number of loans taken in the cycle	Value of loans outstanding	Cutting, to leave nodules in the ground	Total Yield of Harvest in KGs	How much money did you realize from the sale?	Seed treatment	Use of improved processing techniques	Using dry and ventilated storage	Household participating in group-based marketing	Using marketing information for decision-making	Individual tracking of production practices**	Individual tracking of production and sales records	Calculating profit and loss	Sat down with spouse and had a discussion ("cash-flow tree") on the family budget and my contributions to it	Purchased a household asset for myself with my own money	I speak up comfortably in group meetings

*Soil and water conservation structures include things such as: ridges, mounds, mulches, irrigation, and drainage

**Includes tracking the timing of planting, weeding, etc.

7.2 Gender Dialogue Monitoring Tool

Facilitator Name: ______________________

Group Number/Identification: ______________________

Session Date: ______________________

TA/District/Commune/Village/Sector: ______________________

Purpose:

- To identify emerging trends and leanings from the gender dialogue sessions
- To track activity outputs and participation of impact group members, spouses, and other session participants
- To allow supervisors to monitor facilitators during observations

Notes/Instructions:

- Facilitators should feel comfortable with "Facilitator Guidebook" before beginning group session
- Facilitators should take notes during introductions or have co-facilitator fill out "Background Questions" during session
- Facilitators should complete this tool immediately after each reflection group session

Part I. Facilitation Questions

1. How many people attended this session (fill out table)?

a. Impact group (IG) members:	
b. Male partners of IG members:	
c. Female partners of IG members:	
d. Community leaders:	
e. Others (specify):	
f. Total number of participants:	

2. How long (in minutes) was the session?
3. Have you discussed gender dialogues with this group before?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. a) Did all participants stay until the end of the session? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   b) If no, how many participants left?
   c) If no, why did they leave?

5. What topics and activities did you present today (check)?

a. ☐ Harmony in the home	f. ☐ Acting Like a Man
b. ☐ Affirmations and Commitments	g. ☐ Affirmations and commitments
c. ☐ Daily Clock	h. ☐ Persons and Things
d. Agricultural Group Case Study d1. ☐ Land and input access d2. ☐ Nutritional decision making d3. ☐ Distribution of tasks d4. ☐ Financial decision making d5. ☐ Engaging men in household tasks	i. ☐ Cash-Flow Tree j. ☐ Joint budgeting k. ☐ Envisioning Empowerment l. ☐ Others (specify):
e. ☐ Learning to Listen	

6. What key ideas/messages did you promote in today's session?
   a)
   b)
   c)

Part 2. Gender Dialogue Monitoring Tool

1. What are three key ideas that participants discussed during this session?

   a. ____________________

   b. ____________________

   c. ____________________

What were some questions that participants asked?

____

____

2. Were there any issues that the participants disagreed on amongst themselves? Describe up to three:

   a. ____________________

   b. ____________________

   c. ____________________

3. What are some things participants said they would like to see done differently in their households/communities?

____

____

4. What are some of the participants' obstacles to making changes in their own lives?

____

____

5. What actions did the participants commit to try in their own homes?

____

____

6. Are there any gender risks, concerns, or opportunities that need to be communicated to the rest of the team? If so, please list:

____

____

7.3 Lifeline: End of Season Reflection

SEASON	Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To identify the different challenges and achievements that group members feel they have experienced during the season.
USED TO	This exercise allows the participants to understand the practices that have been most beneficial or most difficult to adopt; how group/project participation has shaped household dynamics and participation in community spaces; and what unexpected changes the participants have experienced. It can be conducted as a group or individual exercise.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour and 30 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip-chart paper, markers, colored paper, or string and available materials. Use a digital camera to capture the drawings so that they can be revisited the following season.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space both for drawing on flip-chart or on the ground.

Background

The lifeline is a participatory tool that allows individuals or groups to reflect over a given period on the achievements and challenges faced. This is an open-ended exploration that helps bring out unanticipated changes and challenges that may not otherwise come up in monitoring or discussions. It allows faciliator to explore how participants are using (new) resources to cope with challenges, and to identify areas where the project could address some of them.

Choose the timeline period you are going to focus on (one year, or the past crop season). Ask the respondents to draw a timeline of his/her/their life in that period, and mark on it the highlights and the low points or challenges – these may not necessarily be project-specific. Choose one symbol to mark the highlights and achievements, and a different symbol to mark the difficult points or challenges.

Have some open-ended questions ready to probe around their work in agriculture, involvement in the project, work in the house, and the relationship with their spouse or family members (if applicable). For challenges, ask about resources or skills that enabled (or would enable) the participant to cope with the issue. For successes, ask about what brought them about and how it has changed their life.

This exercise can also be conducted over a lifetime; in probing, you can use it to explore gender-specific obstacles faced by men and women of different groups.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Preparation.** Choose a timeline period for this activity (one year, or the past crop season). You will be asking the participants to draw a timeline of his/her/their life over the timeline period (i.e. 12 months or crop season), marking on it the highlights and the low points of their work in agriculture, involvement in the project, work in the house, and the relationship with their spouse (if applicable).

After the participants draw their timeline, you will initiate a discussion around what they have illustrated.

▶ STEP 2. **Introduction to Participants.** Remind the participants that, "In everyone's life, there are high points and low points, successes and disappointments. You have been part of the project for [amount of time]. In addition to your agricultural changes, you've probably seen some changes in your personal life, in your family life, in your work, and in your relationships with your groups."

- Ask participants to close their eyes for a minute and think back on some of the big changes (ups and downs) of the [time] since they've been part of the program.
- Ask participants to open their eyes. Tell them that what you'd like to do now is go over the history of this last year and record those high points and low points. Tell them that you will all draw symbols of these events on a timeline.

▶ STEP 3. **Draw the Lifeline.** Ask the participants to draw a line representing the duration of the project last year on an individual piece of paper, or if you choose to draw one timeline for the whole group, on one sheet of paper. They should mark the start of the project/season/year at one end of the chart, and the finish at the other.

▶ STEP 4. **Brainstorm Events.** To help participants, you may want to first brainstorm the highlights and challenges before you plot them on the timeline. If you are creating one timeline for the whole group, discuss each issue to come to agreement on when they happened, and which are the most important to plot on the timeline.

▶ STEP 5. **Plot Events.** The participants should then mark down the occurrence of the high points and low points on their timeline. In order to best facilitate the interpretation of the timelines, choose one symbol to mark the highlights and achievements, and a different symbol to mark the difficult points or challenges.

Start with the **most exciting/important** moments and the **most challenging/difficult** moments, and plot those on the timeline first.

Fill in the other points in order of significance. As they plot each point on the timeline, discuss the questions below.

▶ STEP 6. **Probe the Lifeline.**

1. To start with, tell me about some of the **happiest and proudest moments** of this year/season since you've been part of the program.

- Why were they important? Who did you share those moments with?
- How did you feel in these moments? Did you have any other feelings (besides happiness) at the same time? Why?
- How did other people look at you or think about you in those times?
- What led up to this moment?
- Did your life change in any way after this moment?

2. Tell me about some of the most **difficult times/challenges** in the past year since you've been part of the program.

- What were some of the biggest challenges you have faced in this past year, since you've been part of the program? Why caused these challenges? What put you in that difficult position?
- How did you cope with difficulties? Who helped you through those times? How?
- Did any program activities or partners help you cope?
- What would have made it easier to cope during these times?
- How did your life change because of these difficult moments?

STEP 7. Summary and Reflection. After plotting the events, help the participants to look back at the overall timeline, and follow up with some broad reflection questions.

1. Summary:

- Looking back on the past year, what are your thoughts about this timeline?
- How would you characterize the biggest changes you experienced while you were part of this program?

Probe around:

- Skills, capacity, confidence
- Family and household relationships
- Group relationships
- Mobility, community participation
- Economic changes and improvements
- Negative changes

2. Concerns:

- Looking forward in the next year, what are you most concerned or worried about, regarding your involvement in this project and your crops?
- Why is this a concern? What is your plan to address this issue? How can the group, family, spouse, program, and community support?

3. Hopes:

- Looking forward to the next year, what is one change that you would like to see for yourself, your group, your family in the next year? Why is this important to you?
- How do you think you can make this change happen? How can the group, program, spouse, community help?

STEP 8. Close. Thanks participants and close. If possible, photograph, label, and document the lifeline, but leave the original with the participant(s). Record to return to the following year.

7.4 Focus Group Discussion Outline

SEASON	Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To understand the changes that have taken place over the course of the season/ year; To understand how the project can further support positive changes and address some of the challenges.
USED TO	This exercise serves as a reflection opportunity to identify the progress that has occurred over the course of the season/year.
TIMEFRAME	2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Question guide, paper and pen for note taking, and recording device if needed.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space both for standing and sitting in groups.

Background

Focus group discussions (FGDs) are a great way to hear from program participants and their household members about their experiences and reflections with the program. The sections below provide suggested sections to address with single gender focus groups; the team may have additional sections or questions to ask. Refer to Chapter 1, Facilitation tools, for further guidance on conducting group discussions.

Steps to follow for the activity

The questions below are not meant to be asked directly word-for-word. They are meant to be suggestions and a memory aid that will help the interviewer to think of important gender equality questions depending on the direction of the interview. Note that FGDs should be conducted with women and men groups separately.

▶ STEP 1. **Introduction**

Inform participants of the purpose of the exercise and approximately how long it will take. As a general rule, the FGD should not be more than one hour. To keep it to the time limit, focus on the most important topics or divide it into two sessions. Record the identification information of the group, and the name of the interviewer.

Date:	Facilitator:
Site:	Group name/number:

▶ STEP 2. **Agriculture**

- What have been the most significant changes in your agriculture practices in the past 12 months/season? What makes these the most significant?
- In what ways has your participation in this program affected other areas of your life?
- Currently, what do you think are the main challenges to women farmers?

▶ STEP 3: **Marketing**

- What have been the most significant changes in the way that you plan for and do your marketing of your crop? What makes this the most significant?
- What tools, lessons, information have been challenging to apply? Why?
- What changes have you not seen that you had hoped to see?
- In what ways has your marketing training affected other areas of your life?
- In this community, do you think women are respected as capable of managing businesses and market transactions in the way that men are? Why/why not?
- Currently, what do you think are the main challenges to women engaged in business and marketing?

▶ STEP 4. **Household Relationships**

- What messages have you heard in the last six months about the relations between men and women? Have you put them into practice? How easy/hard was it to make these changes?
- Have you seen any change to the workload-sharing in your household? What about in the community? How does the community react when you or your family members wants to take on a non-traditional role?
- What has been the most important change in your household relationships in the past 12 months? What accounts for this change?
- Can you tell me about a time you tried to make a change in the household in the last six months and it hasn't worked?
- In what ways have you and your spouse (and other family members) changed the way you make decisions in the last 12 months?
- Currently, what are the most important changes you would *like* to see, in household relationships and women's influence in the household?

▶ STEP 5. **Gender-Based Violence**

- Do women in this community experience any forms of violence? How does the community view violence against women?
- Have you observed any trends or changes over the last 12 months in gender-based violence in this community? (increased, decreased, no change). What accounts for the change?
- Has your own perception of gender-based violence changed in the past 12 months? How so?
- Have you or a member of your group spoken up about violence in the past 12 months?

▶ STEP 6. **Group Membership, Leadership, & Influence in a Community**

- What have been the most significant changes to your group in the past year/season (how you work together, group rules, cooperation, areas of interest)? How did these changes come about? Why are they important?
- What have been some of the biggest challenges you faced within your group? How have you resolved these difficulties?
- (If a mixed group) What changes, if any, are there in how men (including youths) and women (including youths) in this group participate? Do you feel that women participate as actively as men? Why/why not?
- Have members of your group taken action on any social or community issues in this year? Tell about it.
- Have you observed any changes in the way women and youths are speaking out (in public or in the community) in the past year? What are the changes and what do you think has brought them about? How do people in the community respond to women and youths who speak out?
- Has group membership changed or influenced the way others in the household or community see and respond to you? How so?

Questions for husbands/male group members

1. Program Perceptions

- (For husbands) What has been the most significant outcome of your wife's participation in the project in the past year? What makes this significant?
- What changes/improvements do you see in agricultural activities as a result of wife participation?
- How have you yourselves participated in the project activities in the past year?
- What do you think of the project?

2. Decision-Making

- In your households, have there been any changes to how decisions are made within the household in the last 12 months?
- Can you think of a type of decision where your wife and you often disagree on the solution? What are the issue and how do you usually resolve the discussion? (Probe for example)
- How would you describe ideal communication and decision-making between couples?

3. Household and Gender Relationships

- What messages have you heard in the last six months about the relations between men and women? What do you think of these messages?
- Have you put them into practice? How easy/hard has it been to make these changes?
- Have you observed or made any change to the workload sharing in your own households or in the community?
- What challenges do men encounter as they take on new roles? How does the community respond when men want to take on a non-traditional role?
- What prompts or encourages men to take on new roles?
- What has been the biggest change in your household relationships in the past 12 months? What accounts for this change?

4. Gender-Based Violence

- Do you think that women in this community experience any forms of violence? How does the community generally view violence against women? When is violence justified?
- Have you or a member of your group heard about or spoken up about violence in the past 12 months?
- Have you observed any changes in the trends over the last 12 months on gender-based violence in this community? (increased, decreased, no change). What accounts for these changes?

7.5 Outcome Mapping – Gender Progress Marker Monitoring Tool

SEASON	Post-Harvest
OBJECTIVE	To track social and behavior changes of project's direct participants. Also to monitor how relationships are changing, what risks or negative changes may be surfacing, and how to respond to them.
USED TO	This exercise allows the project staff to monitor changes in behaviors of project participants. Monitoring the Progress Markers with the communities is a way of celebrating baby steps toward change, monitoring risks, and keeping our eyes focused on the transformative change outlined in the project's outcomes. participating in the project.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Gender Progress Marker tool: print-out of the tool with progress markers, pen/ pencil, notebook
IDEAL WORKSPACE	A centrally located space within the community/village where all participants can reach easily and sit comfortably in a semicircular manner. This can be conducted in a room or in an open space for example, under a tree where participants can sit. Bringing all participants (members/farmers of a particular group) to this space to begin the group exercise is crucial.

Background

Outcome Mapping (OM) is a participatory method and tool which can be used for monitoring, evaluation, planning and designing of the project. The OM emphasizes outcomes as changes in behavior of an intervention's direct participants. OM recognizes the importance of impact but focuses on outcomes that lead to impact. OM could also be used as a tool for adaptive management as it promotes learning.

Steps to follow for developing the tool

The tool needs to be developed by the project team including MEL and gender staff.

▶ **STEP 1.** First step would be to develop the vision describing the large-scale development changes that the project is aspiring for. Vision is about the big picture – what are we aspiring to achieve at the systems level. The vision statement would guide the interventions, keep the implementors motivated as they would be able to see the tangible changes happening. The project might not achieve all that mentioned in the vision in the limited period of implementation. The project is not accountable to achieve the full vision. The project would contribute to the vision if not achieving it fully. That is why it's an accountability free zone.

STEP 2. The next thing is to develop a mission statement that spells out how the project interventions will contribute to the overall vision and the sections of the vision on which the project is focusing. The mission statement is all about what the project would do, with whom the project would work and how. In other words, mission statement would identify the interventions and strategies that the project would implement.

STEP 3. Identify the boundary partners. OM considers the project participants as 'boundary partners' and focuses on behavior changes of those boundary partners. It could be individuals that the project is working with. OM tool helps identify what outcome or change in behavior of the boundary partner has resulted because of the project interventions. Identify the boundary partners with whom the project engages directly and with whom it anticipates opportunities to influence and change. It could be women producers and men producers.

STEP 4. The next step is to develop the 'outcome challenge' statement. This statement would describe the desired changes in the behavior, relationships, and actions of the boundary partner. The outcome challenge statement should describe the ideal behaviors of each of boundary partners that the project has identified. The identified ideal behaviors should be linked to the vision that developed in **step 1.**

Example of an outcome challenge:

An empowered woman is visionary and therefore uses skills and capabilities to make her food secure at a household level. She utilizes her skills to negotiate with spouses, household members and general community members to maintain a healthy status and financial stability. She actively contributes to community agendas and decision-making processes by her leadership in various structures. She speaks publicly voicing out her concerns and influences like-minded people to advocate around issues that contribute towards complete women's empowerment.

Malawi – Outcome Challenge – Women

STEP 5. After developing the outcome challenge, develop the 'progress markers'. The progress markers could be gradual progression of changed behavior in the boundary partner leading to the ideal outcome challenge. In other words, outcome challenge is the ideal scenario whereas, the progress markers are the behavior changes that need to happen to reach or achieve that ideal scenario. The project would monitor these progress markers over the project period and should adjust those over the implementation process. Progress markers represent a change model and provide a graduated pathway – 'expect to see', 'like to see' and 'love to see'.

- 'Expect to see' are the immediate changes in behavior that happens as a result of the project interventions which are relatively easy to achieve.
- 'Like to see' represents changes in behavior that would require more active engagement.
- 'Love to see' are the truly and really transformative changes which might take time but would bring sustainable change.

Example of list of progress markers:

PROGRESS MARKERS FOR WOMEN (Malawi)					
	Category 1 Gender division of labor / workload	**Category 2** Intra-household negotiation, communication, decision-making	**Category 3** Contorl of productive assets & resources	**Category 4** Self-confidence, autonomy & leadership	**Category 5** Intimacy and Harmony in household
EXPECT TO SEE	Women ask husbands for support with household tasks (cooking, fetching firewood & water, childcare)	Women ask husbands to allocate a plot for them to grow groundnut and soya	Women purchase small household items (soap, food, clothes), and pay maize milling service	Women travel outside of villages by themselves	
LIKE TO SEE	Women cultivate together with husbands in *all* crops	Women independently decide what crop variety to plant/business to start Women negotiate collectively with community leaders for fertile land to grow own crops Women make suggestions to husbands with regard to HH decisions (education, children, school fee's, clothers, marriage, food)	Women invset in productive assets and inputs (livestock, seeds, fertilizer) and pay for school Women manage their own piece of land (family, rented, owned, etc.) Women manage their own income (& avoid conflict) Women diversify their enterprises and income sources	Women dress nicely and look good (have bathed, combed hair, put lotion, clean clothes) Widowed/divorced women freely choose not to remarry (to maintain financial independence and make their own decisions) Women negotiate for better marketing terms for agriculture crops Women stop doing casual labour	Women communicate with husbands about sexual needs
LOVE TO SEE		Women make their own production decisions around soya and groundnuts	Women decide independently how to spend their own money	Women publically speak out against GBV Married women consult local leaders for advice on their relationship and problem solving	Women resolve conflicts amicably and in a non-violent way

Who should monitor?

The analysis process should be led by a joint M&E and Gender staff of the project, while data collection should be conducted by implementing field staff with knowledge of the communities.

What sample to monitor?

Randomly select a sample of group of producers from the FFBS to monitor. This could comprise of 10 to 15% of the total producers you are working with.

When to monitor?

The ideal frequency of monitoring is semi-annually. Integrate the gender progress marker monitoring into already-planned events and activities – including the gender dialogues, community meetings, or any such events.

How to collect data/information?

This gender monitoring process should be a conversation and not a survey. Use an open-ended interview, structured around the domains of change to guide discussion and for data collection.

- In the focus group discussion, ask for the most significant changes that the group mentions in each category and listen for the progress markers that they mention. When a progress marker is mentioned, probe further with the group to get a sense (from the group) of the extent of that practice. The categories that could be used are Nil (no change), Low, Medium, and High. If you are having difficulty assessing the extent of the practice, you can ask the group to vote on it.
- Use this process to listen for and probe around the specific progress markers (PM) mentioned – although you may not get an answer for each one.
- Mark the response (Nil, L, M, H) on the PM template, and include remarks about the changes. If a PM was not mentioned, leave it blank but make a note in the remarks so that is clear that the PM was not skipped.
    - "Nil" – No one in the group has practiced this
    - "Low" – Less than half of the participants practiced this
    - "Medium" – Approximately half of the participants practiced this
    - "High" – Almost all of the participants practiced this

Sample tool for data collection:

Progress Markers (Women)		Level of Progression (indicate with a "X")				Comments (write the main positive and negative changes that happened during the period
		NIL (none of the participants affirm)	**LOW** (less than half of the participants affirm)	**MEDIUM** (around half of the participants affirm)	**HIGH** (almost all paricipants affirm)	
1	Women participate in planting, weedimg and harvesting crops such as maize, millet, sorghum etc. on family farms					
2	Women share new knowledge on proper food preparation and utilization with their households					
3	Co-wives in polygamous marriages jointly decide with husband on sharing of food grains throughout the year					
4	Women decide together with husbands about site selection, crop varieties, plant spacing, etc. on their family farms					
5	Women participate in household decision on how to use family income					
6	Women make autonomous decisions on when and where to sell their own farm produce					
7	Women sell and trade own farm produce for income					

- If a progress marker is not spontaneously brought up by the participants, probe into it with the group: is it not being mentioned because it's not a relevant progress marker? Or because it's a particularly challenging change? Or because everyone is doing it already?
- Make a note in your response sheet about adjustments that may need to be made to the overall Progress Marker map; discuss with your team.
- There may be many significant changes in practice that are not on your PM sheet. Listen also for these behavior changes and include them in the narrative section of your notes.

7.6 Personal Transformation Tracker Tool – Monitoring Staff Transformation

SEASON	Pre-sowing and Post-harvest
OBJECTIVE	To promote, among staff, self-reflection, to critically examine their own gender biases, power relations, and privileges and plan actions to address those.
USED TO	This exercise allows the project staff to engage in the very same processes of self-reflection, critical analysis, and action that they promote in the programs and communities.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Personal Transformation Tracker Tool: print-out of the tool with indicators, marker pens, white board/flip chart
IDEAL WORKSPACE	CARE/CARE partner office space/room where all staff can accommodate easily and sit comfortably. This session could be incorporated as part of the monthly/quarterly review meetings of the program/project.

Background

Recognizing gender inequality as a root cause of food and nutrition insecurity, CARE puts transformation of harmful gender norms at the heart of its programming. Gender-transformative approaches encourage project participants to question biased belief systems that are internalized, normalized, and entrenched in institutional structures and personal relationships. A fundamental principle of gender-transformative work is that change begins from within. To implement gender transformative interventions, organizations and the individuals within them need to be ready to critically examine their own gender biases, power relations, and privileges. In practice, many people delivering gender interventions may be telling others to make changes that they do not themselves practice in their own lives, often due to social pressure from peers and family. This "do as I say, not as I do" approach is hardly convincing to the communities with whom CARE works. This exercise allows the project staff to engage in the very same processes of self-reflection, critical analysis, and action that they promote in the programs and communities.

Steps to follow for developing and transacting the tool

The tool needs to be developed by the project team with active participation of the entire program staff. The MEL and gender staff could support and lead the tool development process.

▸ STEP 1. **Develop behavior change indicators for each category of gender change** they are promoting in their programs (e.g., workload-sharing, joint decision-making). The team identifies and agrees on the specific behavior change indicators that they themselves will be accountable to try in their own households. These indicators should match the key "messages" and actions they are promoting in their programs in the communities.

▶ STEP 2. **Divide the indicators into easier to more transformative changes** – "expect-to-see" changes as well as some more profound transformations i.e., "like to see" and "love to see".

▶ STEP 3. **Ensure developing different set of indicators for men and women** as usually they have different behaviors to work on. For example, women might practice asking for support with household work, while men might practice doing household tasks. Both men and women might practice active listening or encouraging a colleague in social transformation.

▶ STEP 4. **During staff meetings, program teams take few minutes to self-reflect and score their own practices and behaviors**. They would use the white board or flip chart to enter their scores for each of the indicators. The score could follow three or five scale rating. The M&E point person of the team could enter the scores in an Excel spreadsheet, so that the team can track their trends over time.

▶ STEP 5. **One of the staff facilitates the discussion and the facilitator could be rotated as per requirement.** Based on the entries on different behaviors/indicators staff discuss the findings and go through the processes of critical analysis to identify the actions that are still challenging for them to adopt and actions they need to take for promoting those. The tool does not only provide the score for each of the indicators/behaviors, but it encourages discussion among staff and leads to problem-solving. When a colleague reports that he shared his finances with his spouse for the first time, or a staff member admits that she is uncomfortable to ask for support from her family, other staff members can share their experiences, encouragement, and strategies for tackling some of these difficult norms.

Staff, along with the facilitator identify and celebrate some of the early changes emerged out of the discussion. They also identify the areas for improvement still maintaining high aspirations for social transformation.

▶ STEP 6. **At the end of the meeting each staff should have a clear understanding of their own progress and plan of action** for practicing and adopting the behaviors that they had not achieved. This should be the basis for analysis and discussion when staff meet the next time.

Examples of domains and indicators of change:

Workload sharing

- Share household tasks with my spouse
- Ask my spouse for support
- Ask girl and boy children (equally) to help with chores

Communication

- Practice active listening with my spouse
- Speak up confidently on issues that are important to me

Decision making

- Include my spouse in a decision that I usually make alone
- Discuss my income and finances with my spouse
- Manage important household issues jointly with my spouse

Act as a role model

- Demonstrate in public a behavior that's non-typical for my gender

Encourage my colleagues in social transformation

7.7 Data Quality Audit Checklist and Recommended Procedures

SEASON	Data quality audit can be done after any data collection period like quarterly, half-yearly, mid-term and endline reporting done during Vegetative and Post-Harvest stage.
OBJECTIVE	To assess the quality of data submitted by the project in terms of the validity, integrity, precision, reliability, and timeliness of the data to ensure that the data collected from the field is properly administered and all the collected data are thoroughly checked and validated to hold us accountable for its authenticity and reliability.
USED TO	To ascertain the internal systems used by the project to collect data in order to streamline and ensure the flow of information is timely and consistent from the point of collection to project management team and donor; To identify the areas of potential vulnerability that affect the general credibility and usefulness of the data; To recommend measures to address any identified weaknesses in the data submitted by the project.
TIMEFRAME	Validation exercise per respondent 30 to 45 minutes; Validation in groups 1 hour.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Print-outs of the Data Quality Tool.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	For group focused validation a centrally located space within the community/ village where all participants can reach easily and sit comfortably in a semicircular manner. For individual respondent focused validation can be conducted in a private and safe space. It can be in room or in an open space for example, under a tree where participants can sit.

1. Introduction

Data Quality Audit (DQA) forms an integral part of Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MLE) operations. It implies that the data which is collected from the field is properly collected and all the collected data are properly checked and validated to ensure its authenticity.

2. Objectives of Data Quality Audit

- To assess the quality of data submitted by the project in terms of the validity, integrity, precision, reliability, and timeliness of the data;
- To assess the internal systems used by the project to collect and analyze data;
- To assess the flow of information and feedback mechanism of data from the point of collection to project management team and donor;
- To identify the areas of potential vulnerability that affect the general credibility and usefulness of the data;
- To recommend measures to address any identified weaknesses in the data submitted by the project.

3. Parameters of Assessment

Collection of high-quality data is crucial to ensure that inferences made are correct and what it depicts is true picture representative of the ground reality. Data Quality Audit is a method to ascertain quality of data reported and there are five parameters on which DQA[1] focus.

Validity

Validity concerns whether the data presented is an accurate representation of the activities of the project. It also examines the link of the activities to the anticipated higher-level outcomes of the project. Validity is most important at the source and at collection. Validity is demonstrated through comprehensive definitions and a solid link to the source of the data. It must be demonstrated that data maintains validity throughout the data management cycle.

Reliability

Reliability of data examines the processes and procedures through which the data is collected during the data management cycle. It examines the consistency of data management processes across both time and location, the adherence to uniform/ standard processes in securing the same data. Documentation and audit trails are key to ensuring and monitoring the reliability of data. Training in the correct processes for data management greatly assists the reliability of data.

Integrity

Data integrity is primarily related to coherence of the correctness of data at all levels of sourcing and analysing data. Integrity of data refers to conformity to facts or fidelity which means the data protected from manipulation for personal or political reasons and it is consistent across the source of data and end points. Key to the integrity of data is the security of data, the monitoring of data from one stage in the data management cycle to the next to ensure that no manipulation has taken place. Data integrity is backstopped by ensuring that proper documentation of process demonstrating the source is available for audit.

Precision

Precision is related to the extent of error in the data. Precision is particularly important to maintain in collation processes (manual and electronic collation). In this area we examine the precision of applied definitions as demonstrated by existing data as well as the general understanding of an indicator and the numeric precision. In the context of various challenges of collecting and reporting data, it would be important to determine tolerable level of error/ margin of error realistically. Anything falling short of that should be rejected and data should be recomputed or collected again.

Timeliness

Timeliness relates to the real-time usefulness of data at all points in the data management cycle; The focus is on the utility of data at a time or period for the point of data use. To ensure timeliness data process timing should be specified in M&E documentation and it should be demonstrated that this timing is adhered to.

4. Process of Data Quality Audit

The process of data quality assessment includes following:

1. Data Quality (DQ) assessor should make sure that everyone auditing the data understands the precise definition of the indicator by checking the Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS). Please address any issues of ambiguity before the DQA is conducted.
2. DQ assessor should have a copy of the methodology for data collection in hand before assessing the indicator. The M&E Plan/M&E strategy of the project should be made available to the assessor for reference. Each indicator should have a written description of how the data being assessed are supposed to be collected.
3. Each implementing project team should have a copy of the method of data collection accessible to them about the data that they are collecting according to the methodology.

1 The Data Quality Assessment parameters and tool has been adopted from USAID's DQA process.

4. DQ assessor should record the names and titles of all individuals involved in the assessment.
5. The assessor should verify whether he/she has documented evidence about the verification of data that has been reported.
6. The DQ assessor should be able to review the implementing project team files/records against the methodology for data collection laid out in the M&E Plan/M&E Strategy. Any data quality concerns should be documented.
7. The DQ report should include a summary of significant limitations found. A plan of action, including timelines and responsibilities for addressing the limitations.

The specific roles to be paid at different levels are as follows.

Items	Description
Data Quality Assessor	Brief note needs to be developed by respective Assessor about: i. Geographical area of activity; ii. Geographical area wise intervention focusses like type of health interventions, pre-school etc.; iii. List of Performance Indicators reported by the organization; iv. Consultation with implementing project team about dates and requirements; v. Project Manager need to share all monthly quantitative reporting with the team who will be conducting DQA for review and consistency check at all levels.
Project Management level	During DQA, following points to be discussed in detail with project management team: i. Review of reporting indicator at different levels – state, district and facility level (soft and hard); ii. Procedures followed by project team to ensure Data Quality in recording and reporting mechanism; iii. Procedure for data management like monthly and half yearly MIS etc. iv. Data flow and feedback mechanism from top to bottom and bottom to top; v. How data is collated and who does it; vi. Capacity building procedures followed for collecting and reporting data; vii. What capacity building conducted on DQA prior to this exercise viii. Monitoring mechanism followed; ix. Data analysis followed; x. Data utilization and learning mechanism; xi. What process followed to ensure: a. Data Integrity; b. Data Accuracy; c. Data Consistency; d. Timeliness; e. Data Precision; Data authenticity: Discussion with beneficiaries
Staff presence during DQA	1. Project Manager 2. Monitoring and Evaluation officials and Technical teams 3. Responsible person who collects, collates and reports data

5. Methods for Undertaking data quality assessment (DQA)

1. **Orientation on DQA.** First, orient and familiarise the Data quality Assessment team on DQA process and tool and techniques of DQA. The orientation and discussion on the above can be for half-day agenda including planning for the field visit. One can select site for validation either purposively or randomly. Depending on the time and team, one can select the number of sites to be visited. It would be useful to visit at least 10 sites to arrive at some conclusive pattern. During field visit, one should follow spot check, and back check procedures. Given below are the details of spot-check and back-check process.
2. **Spot Check.** The objective of spot-check is to observe what is exactly happening on the day and time of visit. Review all the record maintained for the day and examine its correctness. Make note of all accuracies and inaccuracies and create evidence.

3. **Back Check.** The back check is instrumental to ensure that data fudging is not happening. The assessor carries all the data reported from the location and verifies the current and past data reported. The data reported from the location has to be collected from the project office before field visit. He/she make house visit and hold interview participants to verify correctness of data recorded and reported. Checking consistency on both record and reported is essential.

The checklist below is intended to assist in assessing each of the five aspects of data quality and provide a convenient manner to document the DQA findings.

Parameters		Yes	No	Comments
VALIDITY – Data should clearly and adequately represent the intended result.				
1	Does the information collected measure what it is supposed to measure?			
2	Do results collected fall within a plausible range?			
3	Is there reasonable assurance that the data collection methods being used do not produce systematically biased data (e.g. consistently over- or under-counting)?			
4	Are sound methods being used to collect and compute data?			
RELIABILITY – Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes and analysis methods over time.				
1	When the same data collection method is used to measure/ observe the same thing multiple times, is the same result produced each time? (E.g. A ruler used over and over always indicates the same length for an inch)			
2	Are data collection and analysis methods documented in writing and being used to ensure the same procedures are followed each time?			
TIMELINESS – Data should be available at a useful frequency, should be current, and should be timely enough to influence management decision making.				
1	Are data available frequently enough to inform program management decisions?			
2	Are the data reported, the most current practically available?			
3	Are the data reported as soon as possible after collection?			
PRECISION – Data have a sufficient level of detail to permit management decision making, e.g. the margin of error is less than the anticipated change.				
1	Is the margin of error less than the expected change being measured? (E.g. If a change of only 2% is expected and the margin of error in a survey used to collect the data is +/-5%, then the tool is not precise enough to detect the change)			
2	Has the margin of error been reported along with the data?			
3	Is the data collection method/tool being used to collect the data fine-tuned or exact enough to register the expected change? (E.g. A yardstick may not be a precise enough tool to measure a change of a few millimeters)			

Parameters		Yes	No	Comments
INTEGRITY – Data collected should have safeguards to minimize the risk of transcription error or data manipulation.				
1	Are procedures or safeguards in place to minimize data transcription errors?			
2	Is there independence in key data collection, management, and assessment procedures?			
3	Are mechanisms in place to prevent unauthorized changes to the data?			
Summary				
Based on the assessment relative to the five standards, what is the overall conclusion regarding the quality of the data?				
Significance of limitations (if any):				
Actions needed to address limitations prior to the next DQA.				

After any field visit, the debriefing of the visit should be planned, and it is recommended to come up with a concrete action plan to address the gaps related to data quality and including programme operations.

8. Service Systems Strengthening and Social Accountability in FFBS

8.1 Community Score Card Tools

8.2 Advocacy Tools

CARE's unwavering commitment transcends local boundaries, as we tirelessly strive to drive systemic change that reaches well beyond the communities directly within our purview. This dedication is underscored by our resolute pursuit of six strategic pathways: sustainably scaling solutions, advocacy, systems strengthening and social accountability, supporting social movements, fostering social norms change, and embracing inclusive market-based approaches. As we forge ahead with the FFBS Program's expansion, we recognize the indispensable role that each of these six pathways plays in our quest for meaningful and sustainable impact.

In previous iterations of our toolkit, we conducted comprehensive explorations and showcased practical applications of a diverse range of tools, including facilitation tools, gender tools, sustainable agricultural tools, marketing tools, nutrition tools, and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Tools. These tools have been instrumental in our mission to empower farmer groups and communities to drive positive change in agriculture.

In this concluding section of our toolkit, we shift our focus to provide a succinct introduction and practical guidelines for a select few tools, of the many, drawn from the Advocacy, Service Systems Strengthening, and Social Accountability (4SA) pathways. These pathways operate in harmony, fostering citizen empowerment and how farmer can demand social accountability from the duty bearers (government). Our overarching aim is not only to scale up our efforts but also to amplify the voices of farmers, especially women and girls to enable them to shape policies that affect them in and be part the decision-making process. Most critical, tools from the advocacy and service systems and social accountability pathways empower farmers to hold decision-makers accountable for their commitments regarding resource allocation and the delivery of high-quality, equitable, and inclusive public service delivery, especially but not limited to agriculture.

Guided by our Sustainable Program Framework for Transformational Work; She Feeds the World (SFtW), our program recognizes the power of advocacy in effecting systemic change. That when farmers strategically advocatee for policy reforms and best practices, they will contribute to create an environment conducive to sustainable agriculture and that helps to strengthen government systems at various levels.

Recognizing the intricate and ever-evolving nature of systems serving CARE's target populations, we humbly acknowledge that a one-size-fits-all approach to systems strengthening is unrealistic. At CARE, we have a rich history of success in both systems strengthening and social accountability, viewing them as interdependent facets of a larger whole.

Society and governance systems are inherently complex, marked by dynamic interactions among individuals, power dynamics, norms, political and financial institutions, private enterprises, technologies, markets, and regulations. To ensure services are accountable and responsive to people's needs and rights, we employ a specially designed mechanism, the Community Score Card (CSC). The CSC promotes dialogue between service providers and citizens, leading to action plans that address community-identified issues systematically.

When the CSC is integrated into local and national programs, frameworks, or strategies, or linked to community-level and national advocacy efforts, it holds immense potential for impact at scale. We understand that meaningful change requires tailored approaches, and our commitment to systems strengthening and social accountability is our pledge to drive transformative change for the communities we serve.

8.1 Community Score Card Tools

PHASE ONE: Preparatory work and planning

8.1.1 Planning Matrix

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	To establish the basis for a CSC process in the FFBS and align the CSC process withing the FFBS seasonal calendar.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for facilitators and participants anticipated

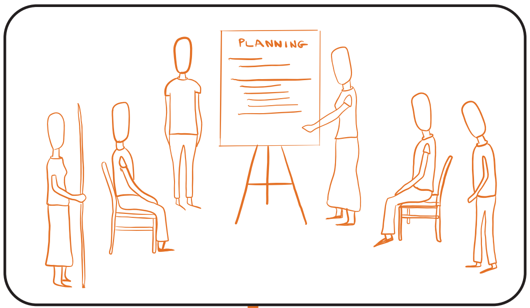
Background

Rural farmers should consider using social accountability mechanisms, such as the Community Score Card (CSC), to improve agriculture extension and nutrition services work in their areas. The CSC is a simple and inclusive social accountability approach that allows farmers and community members to actively participate in assessing, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluating the provision of services in the agriculture sector. By using the CSC, farmers can engage in a two-way dialogue with public servants responsible for allocating and utilizing resources in agriculture extension and nutrition services work. This human rights-based and person-driven approach recognizes that both farmers (service users) and public officials (service providers) play important roles in the process. CSC creates open, inclusive and safe spaces to ensure farmers have an open platform to voice their needs, concerns, and suggestions, while public officials can understand the realities on the ground and collaborate with farmers to make informed decisions. By fostering dialogue and active participation, the CSC empowers farmers and public officials to work together towards the improvement of agriculture extension and nutrition services in a transparent and inclusive manner.

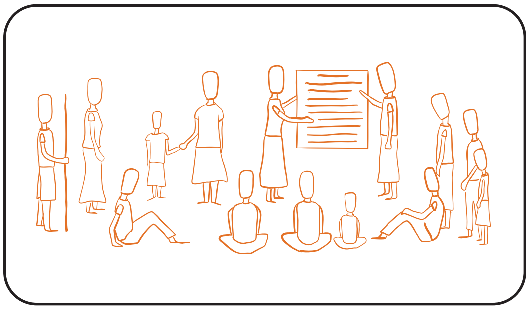
> **"The main goal of the Community Score Card being to positively influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are accessed, provided and utilized at different levels. The concerns of farmers, service users and public servants as service providers are aggregated into a list of indicators that can be rated or scored over time to track service change delivery after engaging in dialogues and agreeing on steps to improve shortfalls identified in the list of indicators presented as score card."**

Previous Community Score Card Process

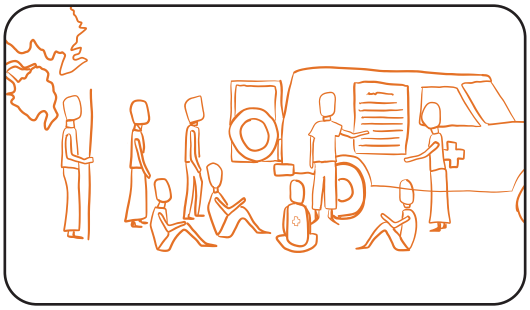
PHASE 1
Planning and preparation



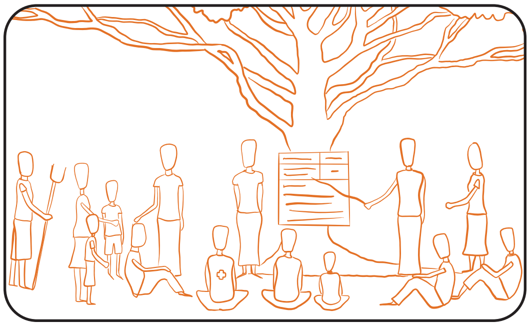
PHASE 2
Conducting the Score Card with the Community



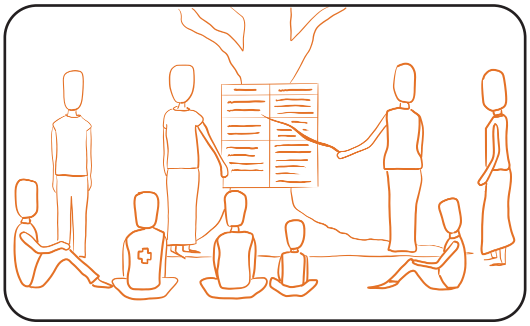
PHASE 3
Conducting the Score Card with Service Providers



PHASE 4
Interface Meeting Action Planning



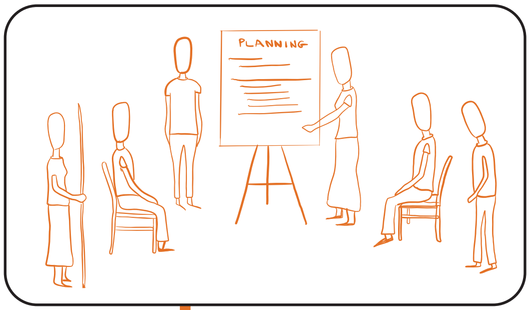
PHASE 5
Action Plan Impementation & Monitoring



Adapted Community Score Card Process

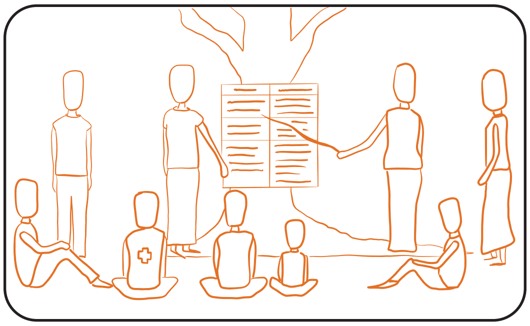
PHASE 1

Preparatory Work and Planning



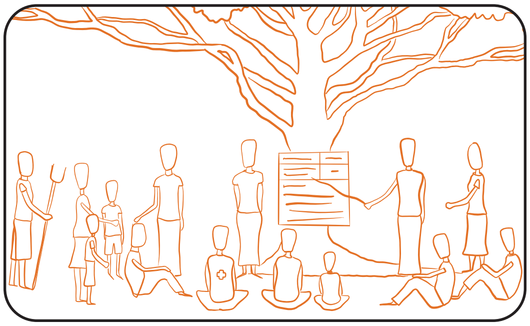
PHASE 2

Implement the Community Score Card



PHASE 3

Interface Meeting and Action Planning



Tips to facilitators:

In a classroom/under the tree training session, this session is necessary for practice. After undergoing training for all the tools in this Toolkit, Tool 8.1.11 Creating a Master Plan for Community Roll Out on CSC Tools, is created to guide community roll that necessitates thorough preparation for a CSC process. This is crucial and should begin preferably a month prior to mobilizing a community gathering. First will be general preparations to establish the basis for a CSC program in an area.

The planning will involve the field staff and lead facilitators in the unit of analysis which can be several FFBS sites which are in proximity.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Identify who is going to be leading the facilitation.** Field staff and the Master Trainers and FFBS lead facilitators mobilise participants to the planning process which include all cadres of community-based facilitators that contribute to FFBS outcomes (nutrition, CSA, Agriculture, etc) such as lead farmers, care group lead mothers and community development workers and extension officers if present in your context.

▶ STEP 2. **Introduction.**

- As opening, ask participants the question: **Have you ever been engaged in any Community Score Card (CSC) work?**
    - Get responses by participants raising hands.
- Ask the second question: **What are the main features of the Community Score Card?**
    - Get responses from as many as 8–10 participants allowing if you got lot of people saying they have been engaged in CSC.
    - Summarize points coming from the group and add that the **Community Score Card** is a participatory approach that:
        - Is conducted at micro/local level and uses the community as the unit of analysis.
        - Generates information through focus group interactions and enables maximum participation of the local community.
        - Provides immediate feedback to service providers and emphasizes immediate response and joint decision making.
        - Allows for mutual dialogue between users and providers, followed by joint action planning and monitoring and accounting for the agreed actions.
        - Main feature involves steps such as issue generation, scoring, interface meetings and joint action planning and monitoring.
- Ask the third question: **Who can participate in the process?**
    - Get responses from as many as 8–10 participants allowing for debate if you got lot of people saying they have been engaged in CSC.
    - Summarize points coming from the group and add that:
        - *Government institutions on various levels, from central ministries to local assemblies, district staff, Extension Planning Areas, Farmer Training Centers, and government agencies.*
        - *Nongovernmental organizations (national and international) operating in various sectors such as agriculture, nutrition, education, governance, gender and rights.*
        - *Community-based structures such as Cooperatives, Associations, producer groups;*
        - *Community-based organizations such as women led groups and home-based care groups. Youth groups*

        - *Community committees whose responsibility it is to represent their constituents in the community (e.g., Market Committees, village health committees, village development committees, village protection committees, village forest committees, etc.)*

- **Pair participants and let them quickly discuss advantages on engaging in CSC process:**
    - Get responses from 3–4 participants, summarize and add that in Agriculture development, The Community Score Card (CSC) offers several advantages.
        - *It brings together diverse groups with different levels of social power, creating an inclusive and safe space for everyone to participate. Through the CSC, farmers, women, youth, and other marginalized groups in society can share their unique experiences and express their specific needs. This mechanism goes beyond simply providing a platform for individual voices; it mobilizes entire communities towards collective action. Additionally, the CSC empowers marginalized groups by offering them an opportunity to challenge social norms and discriminatory behaviors that may hinder the provision of services. By addressing these issues, the CSC fosters a more equitable and inclusive environment for agriculture development, ensuring that the voices of all community members are heard, and their needs are met.*

STEP 3. Wrap up and feedback.

- Ask participants, how useful was the session?
    - Summarize this session by pointing out that CSC is a simple and inclusive approach that allows farmers and community members to actively participate in assessing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating the provision of services in agriculture. By using the CSC, farmers can engage in a two-way dialogue with public servants responsible for allocating and utilizing resources in agriculture extension and nutrition services work. This human rights-based and person-driven approach recognizes that both farmers (service users) and public officials (service providers) play important roles in the process. Through the CSC, farmers have an open platform to voice their needs, concerns, and suggestions, while public officials can understand the realities on the ground and collaborate with farmers to make informed decisions. By fostering dialogue and active participation, the CSC empowers farmers and public officials to work together towards the improvement of agriculture extension and nutrition services in a transparent and inclusive manner.
    - *"The main goal of the Community Score Card being to positively influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are accessed, provided and utilized at different levels."*
    - What is NOT part of the Community Score Card?
        - It is NOT about finger-pointing or blaming.
        - It is NOT designed to settle personal scores.
        - It is NOT supposed to create conflict.

8.1.2 Mapping of Agriculture Extension and Nutrition Services

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	To establish the basis for a CDC process in FFBS. To align the CSC process within the FFBS calendar. To increase participants' understanding about spaces for negotiation with service provides to improve public service delivery.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Tool 1.1 summary report or table Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for facilitators and participants anticipated

Background

An effective CSC implementation will require:

- An understanding of the local administrative setting, including decentralized governance and management at this level.
- A strong awareness raising process to ensure maximum participation from the community and other local stakeholders.
- An understanding of agriculture extension and nutrition services, as well as service standards.

Tips to facilitators:

The agriculture extension and nutrition service offers technical advice on agriculture to farmers, and also supplies them with the necessary inputs and services to support their agricultural production and marketing. It provides information to farmers and passes to the farmers new ideas developed by agricultural research stations. It is complex in that it coordinates all technical departments of the ministry of agriculture, irrigation and water development, rural development and nutrition and extends its mandate to ministries such as gender, youth, health, and trade in the delivery of agricultural extension services, nutrition specific and sensitive agriculture. Mapping of the mainstream provider, agriculture extension and nutrition services, will help us identify available capacities and gaps that will need to be strengthen by other support systems addressing similar issues.

In addition, our main focus is the agriculture extension and nutrition services system, however depending on context private sector providers (inputs supplies and commodity buyers), might be working with the FFBS. Therefore, within the extension service providers, context by context and country by country, others might be private and mandated by government to operate and complement. Say the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) country nodes- these provide services at a fee, if they are relevant provide a separate mapping document for them.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **Identify volunteer to lead session.** Refresh participants by summarising outcomes report from CSC Toolkit 8.1.1. It is recommended to always have agriculture extension and nutrition services as default sector to start with.

▶ STEP 2. **Map all the potential players** that contribute to the functioning of the agriculture extension and nutrition services systems and the FFBS**.**

- Split the group into 3 sub-groups and give each group a sheet of paper and writing materials
- Assign each of the groups a table of the planed tools to cover and give them 30 minutes to discuss the question:
    - o Who are the providers of the service at input, during production, integrated pest management experts, during postharvest handling, transporters, marketers, and consumers starting from closer to where they are community, then district and National
        - At each stage the groups should fill in the table as below.

Government		
Organisation	**Sector Focus/Skills Focus**	**Contact Name and phone number/email**
Community/Local Extension Planning Area		
Ag Extension Officer		
Senior Ag Extension Officer		
District		
Ag Extension District Officer	Extension	
District Community Development Office		
District Gender Office	Social Welfare, GBV,	
Provincial or National Level		
Regional Extension Office		

- In a plenary, let each group present their outcomes and the reasons why same spaces are blank.
- At this state remind participants that listing down positions of officers will do in the interim as during the *Tool 1.3 Introductory and buy in engagements* we might visit some of the offices and it will be an opportunity to get their full details.
- In plenary, agree on way forward and how to fully populate each table aided by the Tool 1.4 Resource tracking matrix and subsequent steps.

8.1.3 Introductory and Buy in Meetings at Community, District and National Level

Relevant Government Agencies and Development Actors that Would Impact Outcomes of Agricultural Extension and Nutrition Services

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	To establish the basis for a CSC process in the FFBS and align the CSC process withing the FFBS seasonal calendar. To introduce the CSC process and have buy from **community, district and national Level stakeholders**
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Tool 1.1 and 1.2 summary reports or tables Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for facilitators and participants anticipated

Background

Prior to actual implementation, it is important to meet and buy in with the community as FFBS users and extension service providers in all the areas where the process will be conducted to have the anticipated turnout of participants during the CSC process. This involves introductory and buy in meetings with community, district and/or national agriculture extension and nutrition services actors that would impact outcomes of agricultural extension service. These meetings are the time to explain, inform and negotiate the purpose of the upcoming CSC process and other arrangements, such as:

- A suitable date for the process
- The duration of the process
- How and where the community and leadership will gather when commencing the process

Steps to follow for the activity

STEP 1. **Call meeting to assign tasks.**

- Using the Toolkit 1.2 as a guide, refresh participants on what was gathered during the mapping exercise.
- Put each stakeholder on piece of paper and using pile sorting, put similar stakeholders on one pile and so forth. Assing each pile to specific people and inform them that, once they go through the CSC process in training sessions, they will be given a week to engage the stakeholders. This should be first conducted in a training session so that participants are well versed with the process, hence participants should engage in a mock exercise for 30 minutes.
- In their respective stakeholder group, participants should agree on standard message or purpose to relay to the targeted stakeholder by each member tasked to conduct buy in.
  Explain the blow process to participants so that they are aware of the process for securing buy in.

- To secure buy in mainly from ag extension workers, the meetings might be one on one or small group meetings, and this is the time to explain, inform and negotiate the purpose of the upcoming CSC process (Toolkit 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2 and 4.1) and other arrangements, such as:
    - A suitable date for the process. The CSC process is a bit involving and it will be ideal to align to the times in the seasonal calendar when agricultural production activities are low such as conducting CSC cycles during pre-sowing or vegetative and marketing season.
    - The duration of the process per day and to cover the whole CSC Toolkit
    - How and where the community and leadership will gather when commencing the process
    - Decisions should be made on the venue and materials.
- During the one on or small meetings probe more on who can be recommended to participate in the CSC processes from the list you anticipated.

STEP 2. Securing authorisation and willingness to participate from community partners.

- This involves one on one meetings with local chiefs, FFBS members and community members at large.
- For community member buying, if possible, utilise all gatherings during regular FFBS meetings to announce on the need for stakeholder participation.
- In this step, ensure that all community structures relating to agriculture extension and nutrition services such as Climate Smart Ag, nutrition, marketing/producer group committees and other FFBS related committees) are contacted and participate.

STEP 3. Contact and secure cooperation of the relevant service providers.

- Using the pile sorting results in Step 1 contact and secure the cooperation of the agriculture extension and nutrition services providers that you have mapped.
    - Divide participants into groups of two.
    - Each assign or let them pick preferred office/s) from the consolidated pile to contact.
    - Give each other a week to visit/contact and secure the cooperation of the agriculture extension and nutrition service providers.

STEP 4. Fill in all engagements done using the matrix below:

Purpose	Stakeholder Engaged	Who present	Commitment Secured (who will be present when CSC happens and which steps/tools facilitation session they will be present ; IG, ID, Scoring, IM, JAP)
Introducing CSC in agriculture extension and nutrition services and getting commitment to participate as provider	The Agriculture Extension District Coordinator	The EPA Staff and The Agriculture Extension District Coordinator (AEDC)	The AEDC agreed to be present during Tool 8.1.8: Interface Meeting, but will allow delegate EPA staff to participate although Toolkit 14 both during training and during community engagement.

STEP 6. Wrap up and feedback.

- Inform participants that, they will engage an exercise to develop resource tracking matrix in the next training session.

8.1.4 Resource Tracking Matrix

SEASON	Pre-sowing
OBJECTIVE	To gather all national standards or charters governing service delivery in the extension service To fill in the Resource Tracking Matrix.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for facilitators to stay in

Background

The Resource Tracking Matrix provides an overview of citizens' entitlements and current gaps in addressing these entitlements based on national standards and mandates for the sector being scored, in our context it is the **government extension service**. In the context of FFBS, inputs are the resources allocated to a service delivery point, agriculture extension and nutrition service office, to ensure the efficient delivery of that particular service. The purpose of this matrix will need to be explained to the groups during the validation of issues and scoring.

Tip to facilitators:

Collect all national, provincial and district standards and mandates that contribute to FFBS operations in your context in advance. This can be filled during the one on one buy in meetings or small group meetings with Agriculture Extension and Nutrition Service Office during mapping or during CSC Toolkit 8.1.3.

Steps to follow for the activity

▶ STEP 1. **In Plenary:**

- **Identifying relevant inputs to be tracked** focusing on agricultural extension and nutrition services by reading out loud the service charter, standard or strategy of the agriculture extension and nutrition services area where the FFBS is taking place to provide information on resource entitlements relevant to the context. Use matrix below as guide to capture discussion results.
- These resources may include the number of staff who should be employed, numbers of equipment, types of services offered, number of houses for staff, etc. Provide information on input entitlements of a particular service before discussion and reaching agreements on resource indicators. Each country has got standard on how extension services are provided and how other service providers are leveraged. All that needs to be accounted for. See example below:

Resource Tracking Matrix

Key Issues	Indicators	Resource Entitlement (as specified by service mandate)	Actual (community perception, what is really happening in community, or at ag extension office or Extension Planning Area)	Remarks/evidence
Service providers capacity to support extension service	Availability and numbers of service provider staff	4 providers with certification or qualification for this level of extension work	2 qualified providers available (1 Ag extension worker and 1 crop protection officer) 2 interns And 10 Community Based Facilitators	Understaffing of qualified staff against population but complemented by CBF. Assess capacity
Population demanding service	Program participants targeting and participation response	100 per village/group village head against 5 employed staff	1,000 per village/ group village head against 5 employed staff	High ratio of Pop against number of Staff Population growth will worsen the numbers.
Targeting of participants for agricultural extension and advisory services	Types of participants targeted	Men, women in male headed households, women in female headed households, youth, Persons with Disabilities	Target heads of households only usually men	Male dominated ag extension service recipients
Facilitation techniques	Adult learning techniques employed			
Quality of agriculture services	Sustainable, climate-resilient, regenerative agricultural and livestock practices promoted	Ag extension experts on crops, natural resource management, livestock are available, and sessions are facilitated including through demonstration plots and based on crop/livestock production calendars for tailored advisory service per season. Prevention of food waste and loss is integrated in each phase of the production cycle.	Only a crop expert is available and no demo-plot sessions, and training isn't structures per production calendars	The quality of ag extension service is compromised
Gender Equality	Gender transformative approaches integrated, gender awareness sessions conducted, affirmative measures taken to involve women in ag extension and advisory services provisions, women's access to productive resources including land promoted	Gender equality is promoted through ag extension services and affirmative measures are taken to support women's access to productive resources and services	The ag extension service is gender-neutral	Discriminatory social and gender norms and policies resulted in gender gap in agricultural productivity

Key Issues	Indicators	Resource Entitlement (as specified by service mandate)	Actual (community perception, what is really happening in community, or at ag extension office or Extension Planning Area)	Remarks/evidence
Markets	Extension is market-Based, Participants are linked to markets, Input markets are made accessible to participants	Extension service is provided on commodities with higher demand for market and input and output market linkages are facilitated by the ag extension services. Food safety and certification is promoted to enable linkages up to global markets.	The ag extension is production focused, and no market information is provided to small-scale producers	There is a mismatch between demand and supply
Nutrition	Nutrition-sensitive agriculture is promoted, home-gardens are promoted, poultry and diary are promoted for both commercial and household consumption.	Extension services promote good nutrition practices through the promotion of nutrition-sensitive enterprise development, mitigation of food loss and waste, and household dietary diversity	The ag extension promotes enterprises without any consideration to nutrition outcomes	The agriculture sector failed to contribute towards the malnutrition mitigation efforts
Accountability mechanism	Producers can hold service providers accountable	The extension service has feedback mechanism to allow small-scale producers hold service providers accountable and advocate for better service provisions	There is no feedback mechanism that small-scale producers can use to hold service providers accountable and advocate for better service provision	The extension service has no opportunity to learn from its success and gaps
Participatory monitoring and evaluation	Producers are engaged in participatory monitoring and evaluation to measure adoption of good practices	The extension service undertakes regular participatory monitoring and evaluation to check the level of adoption on promoted practices and behaviors	There is no participatory monitoring and evaluation for small-scale producers to learn from one another and get motivated to adopt best practices and behaviors	The impact of the extension service remains unknown

▶ STEP 2. **In plenary, identify the main group of communities that frequently use the extension service**. e.g. men, or women

▶ STEP 3. **Validate the Resource Tracking Matrix.**

- Break participants into smaller groups of 3–5 depending on the number of people present
- In the smaller groups, chose facilitators and rapporteurs
- Discuss the Prefilled Resource tracking matrix above to contextualize
- Cross reference with the extension service charter for your area
- Populate issues and indicators that will apply in your extension service area.

▶ STEP 6. **Wrap up and feedback.**

- Finish the exercise by coming up with a master Resource Tracking matrix and update it as more knowledge is being gathered on Agriculture Extension and Nutrition Services.

PHASE TWO:
Implement the Community Score Card

The following steps in implementing the CSC are the core of developing the Score Card and prior invites are needed to have successful participation. Using the Master Plan on Engagements Scheduled and who to invite, reminders need to be sent by FFBS facilitators.

8.1.5 Issue and Indicator Validation and Prioritisation of Indicators

SEASON	Pre-sowing or Vegetative
OBJECTIVE	To agree on indicators and corresponding issues to focus on
TIME FRAME	1 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Prefilled Resource Tracking Matrix printed/written on A4 Proposed Indicators and its corresponding Issues written/printed on A4. Make copies to give to each of the focus groups when you meet with them for the scoring. Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for facilitators to stay in
PARTICIPANTS	FFBS Community Based Facilitators, Master trainers, field officers and Extension workers

Background

Having finished all the planning, actual engagement of FFBS communities and service providers will be a process needed to actualise the plans.

Tips to facilitators:

After resource tracking matrix have been identified and prefilled with corresponding indicators from, groups need to prioritise indicators and corresponding service-related issues to be scored and followed upon as joint action planning/ accountable manner.

The proposed list of indicators in Tool 8.1.5 are generic. Depending on the FFBS country context, the facilitator guides the session by working with the team to agree which indicators apply to them as far as demand for agriculture extension service is concerned. The aim is to have an integrated, gender transformative, market-based and nutrition-sensitive service provision and the indicators prioritized are setting an accountability mechanism to track responsiveness using the CSC.

Steps to follow for the activity

STEP 1. Recap on work done in Toolkit One.

In a plenary session, participants recall what these tools are for: Tool 8.1.1; Tool 8.1.2; Tool 8.1.3; and Tool 8.1.4.

STEP 2. Introduce intent of the meeting and CSC overview.

1. Leading facilitator leads the session to explain purpose of gathering and the CSC methodology.

- Remind audience of page 1, Introduction to CSC.
- that CSC is a simple and inclusive approach that allows farmers and community members to actively participate in assessing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating the provision of services in agriculture. By using the CSC, farmers can engage in a two-way dialogue with public servants responsible for allocating and utilizing resources in agriculture extension and nutrition services work. This human rights-based and person-driven approach recognizes that both farmers (service users) and public officials (service providers) play important roles in the process. Through the CSC, farmers have an open platform to voice their needs, concerns, and suggestions, while public officials can understand the realities on the ground and collaborate with farmers to make informed decisions. By fostering dialogue and active participation, the CSC empowers farmers and public officials to work together towards the improvement of agriculture extension and nutrition services in a transparent and inclusive manner.
- "The main goal of the Community Score Card being to positively influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are accessed, provided and utilized at different levels."
- WHAT is NOT part of the Community Score Card?
- It is NOT about finger-pointing or blaming.
- It is NOT designed to settle personal scores.
- It is NOT supposed to create conflict.

2. Explain the laundry list of indicators and corresponding issues and how they have been derived.

- Explain source of the issues and how the indicators were derived.

3. Leading facilitator will read out loud one proposed indicator and its Corresponding Issues

Indicators	Issues Identified	Score (0–100)	Remarks
Availability and numbers of service provider staff	Understaffing of qualified staff against population but complemented by CBF. Assess capacity	30%	*We only have one extension office who is not trained on FFBS.* *We do not have gender expert but have CBF who sometimes fail to close GBV cases.*
Program participants targeting and participation response.	High ratio of Pop against number of Staff Population growth will worsen the numbers.		

Indicators	Issues Identified	Score (0–100)	Remarks
Types of participants targeted	Male dominated ag extension service recipients		
Adult learning techniques employed			
Sustainable, climate-resilient, regenerative agricultural and livestock practices promoted	The quality of agriculture extension and nutrition service is compromised		
Gender transformative approaches integrated, gender awareness sessions conducted, affirmative measures taken to involve women in ag extension and advisory services provisions, women's access to productive resources including land promoted	Discriminatory social and gender norms and policies resulted in gender gap in agricultural productivity		
Extension is market-Based, Participants are linked to markets, Input markets are made accessible to participants	There is a mismatch between demand and supply		
Nutrition-sensitive agriculture is promoted, home-gardens are promoted, poultry and diary are promoted for both commercial and household consumption.	The agriculture sector failed to contribute towards the malnutrition mitigation efforts		
Producers can hold service providers accountable	The extension service has no opportunity to learn from its success and gaps		
Producers are engaged in participatory monitoring and evaluation to measure adoption of good practices	The impact of the extension service remains unknown		

4. Ask participants to reflect on the example given and agree if it fits within their context as something that needs to be strengthened by engaging with service providers.

- Ensure this process is participatory.

5. Taking turns with co-facilitators, repeat points bullets 1 to 4 until you exhaust the list of the indicators that have been listed and validate with FFBS members and service providers present that they represent the issues generated from the context

6. Prioritise indicators to focus on:

- Ask the group to agree on the most important and urgent relevant indicators and issues to deal with first. Let the groups give reasons for their choice
- Make it clear that the indicators are the same for all the groups in this village, as well as other villages from the same catchment area (being serviced by the same service delivery point, e.g. agricultural office, school).

7. At the end of list of the vetting process summarise prioritized indicators and corresponding issues.

8.1.6 Scoring

SEASON	Presowing or Vegetative
OBJECTIVE	To assess and score service availability, provision, access and utilisation using the agreed community indicators
TIME FRAME	1.30 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Prefilled Resource Tracking Matrix printed/written on A4 Context Specific Indicators and its corresponding Issues written/printed on A4. Make copies to give to each of the focus groups when you meet with them for the scoring. Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for facilitators to stay in
PARTICIPANTS	All Service Providers as listed during mapping including: • FFBS Community Based Facilitators, • Master trainers, • field officers and Extension workers • Service provider staff and district officials responsible for delivering the service • Local politicians (if possible) • Local NGOs and CBOs concerned with the service Service Users as listed during mapping including • Local chiefs • FFBS Participants • Community development committees concerned with the scored service • As many community people as can be mobilized
PARTICIPANTS	All Service Providers and Service Users as listed during mapping.

Tip to facilitators:

The Toolkit is designed for both classroom training and actual CSC implementation. Note that during training, a representative sample can be used for practice which can be drawn from training participants.

▶ STEP 1. **Recap on intent of the meeting and CSC overview.**

1. **Leading facilitator leads the session to explain purpose and the CSC methodology.** Open the session by ensuring everyone is clear about the process and what has been done so far and what the next steps are.
    - Ask participants: Why do we need to score?
    - Allow for two or three more responses.
    - Read out loud:

      Community Score Card is a human rights-based person-driven two-way and ongoing participatory approach for assessing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating service provision and access which presents a platform *for community members to actively engage resource allocation and service systems strengthening. Within the service provision, it has to be recognised that there are two players, the user and the provider. The core implementation strategy of CSC to achieve its goal is using dialogue in a participatory forum that engages both service users and service providers.*

> *"The main goal of the Community Score Card being to positively influence the quality, efficiency and accountability with which services are accessed, provided and utilized at different levels."*

The main aim of the meeting is to generate information through interactions and allow maximum participation of the local community and to provide a platform for immediate feedback from and to service providers and emphasizes immediate response and joint decision making.

At the end of this session do joint action plan and monitoring and accounting for the mutually agreed actions. **It needs to be emphasized that Community Score Card is looking and improving the office performance and not the individual. It is**

- **NOT** about finger-pointing or blaming.
- **NOT** designed to settle personal scores.
- **NOT** supposed to create conflict.

2. **Recall and retell the Context Specific Scoring Sheet list of indicators and corresponding issues** and how they have been derived. Inform and explain to the community that the facilitation teams have transformed issues as generated by the different groups during the FFBS seasonal calendar discussions and consolidated into common indicators for all the groups – these indicators are aimed at the provision of gender, transformative, market-based, nutrition-sensitive ag extension, and advisory services. And that these now need to be scored to identify the extent of availability, access, utilisation and provision of agriculture extension and nutrition services.

3. **Agree on scoring system**-Facilitator informs the types of scoring system numbers or symbols and how they rank from lowest to highest and leads group on agreeing on which system to adopt before going smaller FGDs. Each is suitable depending on the type and level of literacy of the people you are working with.

4. **Scoring with Communities.** Divide the community into interest groups for participatory focus group discussions (FGDs) such as: women, men, youth, children, community leaders, CBF, etc. To ensure the vulnerable households and poorest of the poor are also represented in the groups, use the social map to identify female headed households (FHHs), HHs with orphans, child headed HHs, etc., and invite these people to the FGDs. Make sure each group is a manageable size to allow for individual participation.

   - Note that during training, a representative sample can be used for practice, but the case said above is for actual CSC scoring on the ground.

5. **Scoring with Providers.** Put service providers in separate one group as they might likely be of a smaller number already.

6. **Give copies of score cards and prefilled resource tracking matrix** to each of the focus groups.

7. **Assign a two-person team of facilitators for each group** and let the groups meet in separate areas (at least one of the facilitator will have a relationship of trust with the community). One facilitator leads the exercise and the other should provide support and take notes of all discussions in a notebook.

8. **In the breakaway groups, each nominated facilitator should have a copy of the indicators and read one, along with its corresponding issues, out loud.**

Example 1 of scoring system using numbers

FFBS name: .... Village:............................... Catchment area:............................... Date: ....

Indicators	Issues Identified	Score (0–100)	Remarks
Availability and numbers of service provider staff	Understaffing of qualified staff against population but complemented by CBF. Assess capacity	30%	*We only have one extension office who is not trained on FFBS.* *We do not have gender expert but have CBF who sometimes fail to close GBV cases.*
Program participants targeting and participation response.	High ratio of population against number of Staff Population growth will worsen the numbers.	*60%*	*Most FFBS conduct gender dialogues to address this, and men are present during this time but still are not active. In subsequent activities* *Married women are supported by their spouses*
Types of participants targeted	Male dominated ag extension service recipients		
Adult learning techniques employed			
Sustainable, climate-resilient, regenerative agricultural and livestock practices promoted	The quality of agriculture extension and nutrition service is compromised		
Gender transformative approaches integrated, gender awareness sessions conducted, affirmative measures taken to involve women in ag extension and advisory services provisions, women's access to productive resources including land promoted	Discriminatory social and gender norms and policies resulted in gender gap in agricultural productivity		
Extension is market-Based, Participants are linked to markets, Input markets are made accessible to participants	There is a mismatch between demand and supply		
Nutrition-sensitive agriculture is promoted, home-gardens are promoted, poultry and diary are promoted for both commercial and household consumption.	The agriculture sector failed to contribute towards the malnutrition mitigation efforts		
Producers can hold service providers accountable	The extension service has no opportunity to learn from its success and gaps		
Producers are engaged in participatory monitoring and evaluation to measure adoption of good practices	The impact of the extension service remains unknown		

Example 2 of Scoring System using Symbols

FFBS name: .... Village:............................... Catchment area:............................... Date:			
Indicators	**Issues Identified**	**Score**	**Remarks**
Availability and numbers of service provider staff	Understaffing of qualified staff against population but complemented by CBF. Assess capacity		*We only have one extension office who is not trained on FFBS.* *We do not have gender expert but have CBF who sometimes fail to close GBV cases.*
Program participants targeting and participation response.	High ratio of population against number of Staff Population growth will worsen the numbers.		*Most FFBS conduct gender dialogues to address this, and men are present during this time but still are not active. In subsequent activities* *Married women are supported by their spouses*
Types of participants targeted	Male dominated ag extension service recipients		

Example 3 of Scoring system using Colors

The scoring using colours works in context where literacy levels are very low and visualisation is the aim. Colours used will ned to be correspond with a performance category and is based on the percentile of the score. Universally the colours used, and scores assigned to each color are as follows Green: 76–100%; Yellow: 51–75%; Orange: 26–50%; Red: 0–25% and the Meanings are red for poor performance.

FFBS name: .... Village:............................... Catchment area:............................... Date:			
Indicators	**Issues Identified**	**Score**	**Remarks**
Availability and numbers of service provider staff	Understaffing of qualified staff against population but complemented by CBF. Assess capacity		*We only have one extension office who is not trained on FFBS.* *We do not have gender expert but have CBF who sometimes fail to close GBV cases.*
Program participants targeting and participation response.	High ratio of population against number of Staff Population growth will worsen the numbers.		*Most FFBS conduct gender dialogues to address this, and men are present during this time but still are not active. In subsequent activities* *Married women are supported by their spouses*
Types of participants targeted	Male dominated ag extension service recipients		

A womens group during scoring.

9. **Ask the question,** "How are things going with related indicator in the community? What works well? What does not work well?" and What needs to be done. The rapporteur will capture emerging issues, related to the indicator pertaining to what's working and not working and what needs to be done.

10. **Allow for 3–5 minutes debate** on each indicator on issues.

11. **Ask participants to assign score as per agreed format** for instance, using numbers from 0 to 100: 0 representing very poor and 100 Excellent.

12. **Allow inputs and ask for reason for score**, allow group participants to debate until a consensus is reached. Allowance for debate on score gives should be 2–3 minutes depending on list of indicators to be covered. Provide guidance using prefilled *Tool 1.4 Resource tracking matrix* where the group is not clear what are standards versus what is the actual situation in the context within which the FFBS operates.

13. **Capture score** given on sheet and reasons for final score.

14. **Repeat steps 9 through 13** until each group exhaust the whole list of prioritised indicators.

15. **Summarize the scored list of indicators,** along with their corresponding issues. Include remarks on the justification for each score.

16. **Request homogeneous group to nominate 2 representatives** to stay for consolidation meeting.

17. **The service provider score card** will be final. Only the CSC from the homogeneous focus groups will need to be consolidated.

8.1.7 Consolidating the Community Score Card

SEASON	Presowing or Vegetative
OBJECTIVE	To consolidate scores from community focus group so as to come with one Community Score Card
TIME FRAME	1.30 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Prefilled Resource Tracking Matrix printed/written on A4 Context Specific Indicators and its corresponding Issues written/printed on A4. Make copies to give to each of the focus groups when you meet with them for the scoring. Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for facilitators to stay in
PARTICIPANTS	Nominated members during Scoring

Tip to facilitators:

During training, a representative sample can be used for practice, but the case outlined below is for actual CSC scoring on the ground. This mean during training, mock practice of what the process will look like on the ground will need to be replicated.

1. Lead Facilitator recaps process from previous meeting.
2. Read out indicator and issues captured.
3. Ask representative participants to give scores and reasons for such score.
4. Allow participants to debate on scores given until a consensus is reached. Allowance for debate on score gives should be 2–3 minutes depending on list of indicators to be covered.
5. The facilitators guide the discussions by asking questions such as; "Looking at the different scores, what is the real picture? Which score can represent all scores and the real situation?" to come up with representative scores. Key point – The representatives should speak on behalf of their own groups.
6. When the big group has agreed on a consolidated score for that indicator, fill it into the matrix for consolidated scores, Facilitators should challenge the groups to be clear about their reasons for the scores and to write these reasons down on the matrix. Guide group discussion using the Tool 1.4 Resource Tracking Matrix.
7. Be on the look-out for indicators with very different scores in one group to the next and find out from the representatives why that is the case. The final consolidated score can be a different score after probing and agreeing on the realistic situation OR it can be an average score agreed upon to represent all concerns, if the scores are varying and each of the groups seem to be convinced of their scores and are backing them up with valid reasons.
8. Capture score given on consolidation Score Card sheet and reasons for final score.
9. Repeat steps 2 through 8 until we exhaust the whole list of prioritised indicators.
10. Summarize the scored list of indicators, along with their corresponding issues. Include remarks on the justification for each score.

Consolidated Score Card

FFBS name: .... Village:.............................. Catchment area:.............................. Date: ....

Indicators	Issues Identified	Score	Remarks
Availability and numbers of service provider staff	Understaffing of qualified staff against population but complemented by CBF. Assess capacity	35%	*We only have one extension office who is not trained on FFBS.* *We do not have gender expert but have CBF who sometimes fail to close GBV cases.*
Program participants targeting and participation response.	High ratio of Pop against number of Staff Population growth will worsen the numbers.	*60%*	*Most FFBS conduct gender dialogues to address this, and men are present during this time but still are not active. In subsequent activities* *Married women are supported by their spouses*
Types of participants targeted	Male dominated ag extension service recipients		
Adult learning techniques employed			
Sustainable, climate-resilient, regenerative agricultural and livestock practices promoted	The quality of agriculture extension and nutrition service is compromised		
Gender transformative approaches integrated, gender awareness sessions conducted, affirmative measures taken to involve women in ag extension and advisory services provisions, women's access to productive resources including land promoted	Discriminatory social and gender norms and policies resulted in gender gap in agricultural productivity		
Extension is market-Based, Participants are linked to markets, Input markets are made accessible to participants	There is a mismatch between demand and supply		
Nutrition-sensitive agriculture is promoted, home-gardens are promoted, poultry and diary are promoted for both commercial and household consumption.	The agriculture sector failed to contribute towards the malnutrition mitigation efforts		
Producers can hold service providers accountable	The extension service has no opportunity to learn from its success and gaps		
Producers are engaged in participatory monitoring and evaluation to measure adoption of good practices	The impact of the extension service remains unknown		

PHASE THREE:
Interface Meeting and Action Planning

8.1.8 Interface Meeting

SEASON	Presowing or Vegetative
OBJECTIVE	To provide a platform where service users and providers share and discuss the matrices, their scores and the reasons for the scores.
TIME FRAME	2–3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Community Score Card on flipcharts or chalkboard Service Provider Score Card on flipcharts or chalkboard Resource Tracking Matrix Extra Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk Invitations to ensure good attendance to listed participants
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for community meeting and guided dialogue
PARTICIPANTS	All Service Providers as listed during mapping including. • FFBS Community Based Facilitators, • Master trainers, • field officers and Extension workers • Service provider staff and district officials responsible for delivering the service • Local politicians (if possible) • Local NGOs and CBOs concerned with the service Service Users as listed during mapping including. • Local chiefs • FFBS Participants • Community development committees concerned with the scored service • As many community people as can be mobilized

Background

Preparing for joint dialogue (the “interface meeting”) is necessary as this culminates the accountability part of the service being scored. Refer Generic Community Score Card Toolkit Phase II Stage 4. When all the previous steps are completed, there will be scores from the service users, as well as the scores from service providers. The interface meeting is where the service users and providers share and discuss the matrices, their scores and the reasons for the scores. This is also where a locally led joint action plan (including district-level meetings, feedback and dialogue, consolidation of findings across communities) will be developed. The action plan has to capture who is responsible for what delivery and by when, taking into account the FFBS seasonal calendar.

Tip to facilitators:

- The interface meeting brings service users, service providers and other interested/relevant parties together. It is important that key decision makers (chiefs, group village headmen, district officials, ministry officials, local politicians, etc.) are present to ensure instant feedback on the issues and responsibility to take issues and the plan of action forward.
- The interface meeting might become confrontational if not handled carefully and correctly. It is important that a skilled facilitator with negotiation skills and a strong personality oversees this meeting. Make sure that service users, as well as service providers, are well prepared for this meeting and understand its purpose. Avoid personal confrontations.
- Prior to the meeting, assign two members from the community who will read out the Community Score Card and two from Users to read their Score Card
- Reorient the gathering on the whole process followed and how this day was arrived at.
- Environment should be conducive for community to negotiate agreements on improving the service with Service Providers
- During training, a representative sample can be used for practice, but the case outlined below is for actual CSC scoring on the ground. This mean during training, mock practice of what the process will look like on the ground will need to be replicated.

Steps to follow for the activity

1. Open the meeting and welcome everyone.
2. Explain the purpose of the meeting and expected duration for the meeting.
3. Explain the methodology – this will be a participatory dialogue between service users and providers. (Refer the tips from Toolbox 2.1 Scoring process for important points to emphasize in the introduction to the meeting).
4. Call the representatives of community service users to present the consolidated scores for that catchment area. Let them SU scorecard and the resource tracking matrix followed by their prioritized list of suggestions for improvement and how to maintain the high scores
5. Presentations should include recommendations for how to improve where there were low scores and
6. suggestions about how to maintain the high scores.
7. Next, the service providers will present their scores and suggestions for improvement or sustaining performance, as well as their recommendations based on the suggestions for improvement made by the service users.
    - Service Provider makes recommendation based on the suggestions for improvement made by Service Users
    - Allow for an open and participatory discussion and questions for clarity.
    - Ensure that personal attacks are avoided by from time to time, explaining the objective of the process.
    - Facilitate open and positive dialogue between SP and SU and help them come up with realistic changes and action
8. At this point, allow for an open and participatory dialogue/discussion and questions for clarity with each side given ample time to respond to and question the other. Out of the discussions, identify burning issues to resolve and prioritize into action for change.

Community representatives reading scores during interface meetings.

8.1.9 Joint Action Planning

SEASON	Presowing or Vegetative
OBJECTIVE	To provide a platform where service users and providers share and discuss the matrices, their scores and the reasons for the scores. To develop concrete measures to improve low scores and maintain good services
TIME FRAME	2–3 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Community Score Card on flipcharts or chalkboard Service Provider Score Card on flipcharts or chalkboard Resource Tracking Matrix Extra Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk Invitations to ensure good attendance to listed participants
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for community meeting and guided dialogue
PARTICIPANTS	All Service Providers as listed during mapping including. • FFBS Community Based Facilitators, • Master trainers, • field officers and Extension workers • Service provider staff and district officials responsible for delivering the service • Local politicians (if possible) • Local NGOs and CBOs concerned with the service Service Users as listed during mapping including. • Local chiefs • FFBS Participants • Community development committees concerned with the scored service • As many community people as can be mobilized

Background

After the interface meeting, let the members jointly decide the order in which the indicators/issues should be dealt with, and list them in order of priority on a separate flipchart with their suggestions for improvement.

Adequate attendance and participation from communities concerned with the scored service and the SP including key decision makers for the service will lead to ownership of process. Prepare for the interface meeting by sensitizing both sides about the purpose of the meeting.

When Reviewing recommendations, the following has to be kept in mind:

Be responsible & accountable: Service providers, especially government, have a constitutional responsibility to provide services in a manner that is respectful of the service users and will facilitate equal access for all. Similarly, communities have responsibilities in addition to their rights and should take responsibility and be accountable as well.

Be realistic: The community should be encouraged to think about "services" and not to have unrealistic demands on service delivery staff.

Tips to facilitators:

During training, a representative sample can be used for practice, but the case outlined below is for actual CSC scoring on the ground. This mean during training, mock practice of what the process will look like on the ground will need to be replicated.

It is advisable to prioritise Action plans the same day interface meeting has happened based on recall accuracy. Again, it will be challenging to mobilise stakeholders in subsequent days to address the issues raised as they will fear to be held accountable.

It is best to keep the duration of the action plan to a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of one year for proper follow up and evaluation.

For each of the suggestions:

- Define action steps that will be taken in order to address the issue.
- Define realistic deadlines for implementing the action steps.
- Define who will take the leading role, who else will be involved and what they will do in implementing the actions, what external support they will need.
- Keep the duration of implementing the action plan to a maximum of 6–12 months.

Steps to follow for the activity:

1. Reorient the gathering on the whole process followed and how this day was arrived at.
2. Explain the purpose of the meeting and the methodology
3. Environment should be conducive for community to negotiate agreements on improving the service with SP
4. Ask facilitator to read out the indicators and work with participants to Group similar priorities together and agree on an overall theme or name/heading for group.
5. Allow for an open and participatory discussion and questions for clarity.
6. Ensure that personal attacks are avoided by from time to time, explaining the objective of the process.
7. Facilitate open and positive dialogue between SP and SU and help them come up with realistic changes and action
8. For each of the suggestions:
    a. Define action steps that will be taken in order to address the issue
    b. Define realistic deadlines for implementing the action steps
    c. Define who will take the leading role, who else will be involved and what they will do in implementing the actions, what external support they will need
    d. Keep the duration of implementing the action plan to a maximum of 6–12 months.

Action Item	Process	Resources	Responsible	Time frame
1. Extension Agents provide community-based nutrition sessions	Train extension service providers in nutrition sensitive technologies	Training (NGO, or government extension services board or unit)	extension services unit	2 months (Feb 2023)
2. Set more demo plots	Gather donated materials Set building day Build waiting home	In kind	Community (FFBS Community Based Facilitators	5 months (May 2023)
3. Youth ambassadors for FFBS and Male Champions	Youth ambassadors trained	Training	NGO	3 months (March 2023)

9. Assign a JAP Follow up committee and most instances will be the FFBS lead trainers who will facilitating working on Advocacy Toolkit using the JAP
10. Wrap up and Thank participants for their commitment and assigned tasks

8.1.10 Monitoring of Implementation Plans

SEASON	Monthly or Bi monthly or Quarterly
OBJECTIVE	To assess progress on jointly agreed plans so we ensure plans are being implemented and members are collectively monitoring the outcomes. To address challenges being met and strategise on how to address them. To engage with other players on the agreed joint action plans set and set up advocacy drive. To understand the importance of evidence collection to highlight impact of social accountability as well as generation of evidence for national and sub-national level advocacy. To understand the importance of monitoring through the use of different tools such as the Participatory Performance Tracker and Outcome Mapping Harvester tools.
TIME FRAME	Half a day
MATERIALS NEEDED	Joint Action Plans Community Score Card on flipcharts or chalkboard Service Provider Score Card on flipcharts or chalkboard Resource Tracking Matrix Extra Flip charts, paper or colored stickers or chalkboard, markers, or chalk Invitations to ensure good attendance to listed participants
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for community meeting and guided dialogue
PARTICIPANTS	Joint Action Plan Teams Representatives of the Ag Extension Service Providers Representatives of community groups (chairs or secretaries)

Background

Measuring the impact of social accountability in interventions such as in agriculture and nutrition sector requires tools and methods that will measure impact on government transparency, accountability and responsiveness of the duty bearers. The M&E processes and tools should be designed to learn from successes, challenges and failures throughout a intervention. The 4SA interventions also try to increase citizens' participation in public decision making not just monitoring the services and provision of feedback on public services.

It is important to recognize that the Score Card process does not stop immediately after generating a first round of scores and joint action plan. Follow-up steps are required to jointly ensure implementation of plans and collectively monitor the outcomes. Repeated cycles of the Score Card are needed to institutionalize the practice – the information collected needs to be used on a sustained basis, i.e., to be fed back into the service providers current decision-making processes as well as its M&E system. The Score Card tool generates issues which can be used in advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the problems and push for solutions. These advocacy efforts can also help integrate the solutions into local policies and systems for the sustainability of results.

Instructions

It is the responsibility of the service providers and community to implement the plan – they have to own it.

▶ STEP 1. **Plenary Discussion**

The first thing, the facilitator introduces the topic and explains 'monitoring' and its 'purpose' in the particular context. The facilitator uses a flip chart to list all the keywords followed by a discussion.

Discuss the following questions:

What is monitoring?
Why do we monitor and evaluate?

- o To understand the progress made
- o To identify challenges and how to seek a solution
- o It allows us to continuously improve our plan

▶ Step 2. **Group work**

- Having discussed the questions in step 1, divide the participants into groups
- Ask them to draw the plan on a flip chart
- Ask each group to fill in the boxes of the JAP monitoring tool with progress made and steps needed to adjust plans and reasons using the Checklist provided.

- Checklist of ensuring Action are followed through
  - o *Is the issue still relevant to our members?*
  - o *Has the issue changed in any way?*
  - o *Is there any further research required?*
  - o *Are our plans still achievable?*
  - o *Have our timelines changed?*
  - o *Are we up to date with our realization and follow up?*
  - o *Are we targeting the right people?*
  - o *Are we reaching the right targets?*
  - o *Do we have sufficient resources needed for this action?*
  - o *Are we taking advantage of opportunities around and all stakeholders in the area?*
  - o *Is there a reason for us to evolve our issue to an advocacy ask?*
  - o *What steps can we take?*

- Ask each group to present their work. Allow time for questions and discussion.

▶ STEP 3. Assign teams to do further follow up or use advocacy FFBS Toolkit to link up to district and National governments intervention.

8.1.11 Creating a Master Plan for Community Roll Out on CSC Tools

SEASON	Presowing
OBJECTIVE	To allocate time for community rollout for the CSC Tollkit and align the CSC process withing the FFBS seasonal calendar.
TIME FRAME	2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for community meeting and guided dialogue
PARTICIPANTS	Training Participants

Tips to facilitators:

Thorough preparation for a community engagement on the CSC process is crucial and should begin preferably a month prior to mobilizing a community gathering. First will be general preparations to establish the basis for a CSC program in an area.

The planning will involve the field staff and lead facilitators in the unit of analysis which can be several FFBS sites which are in proximity.

▶ STEP 1. **Create a Master Plan on Engagements Scheduled and who to invite**;

- In order to track the toolkit engagements schedules and who the facilitators are supposed to invite, populate table on the following page.
- Split group into 4–5 participants
- Share two or 3 tasks from table below e.g.
    - o Group 1: Assign rows for Tool 1.2 and Tool 1.3: introductory meetings and Mapping of Ag Ext
    - o Group 2: Assign rows for Tool 1.4 and Tool 2.1: Resource Tracking and Prioritization of Indicators
    - o Group 3: Assign rows for Tool 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2Scoring, Interface and Joint Action Planning
    - o Group 4: Assign rows for Tool 4.1: Quarterly and Monthly Review.
- In groups, fill in the table below as per assigned activity.
- In plenary, consolidate to come up with Master Plan of engagements scheduled and who to invite.
- Update as necessary during plenary to accommodate input from other groups

▶ STEP 3. **Wrap up and feedback**

- In plenary, finalise the exercise by coming up with a master workplan and who will be leading team during community meetigns
- Ask participants, how useful was the session?

Note: it is important that facilitators and other project team members follow-up on the implementation of the master action plan . It is important to note that, the implementation of the CSC is a pre-requisite for farmers' engagement in advocacy for enhanced agriculture advisory services .

Tool Session	Who to invite/participate	Who will be option in case first priority fails to attend	Tentative and suitable dates and Duration for the meeting	Venue for community meetings	Materials needed	Leading facilitatitors
Tool 1.2 Mapping of Ag Extension Services	e.g. FFBS Community Based Trainers (CBTs)	Field Staff and govt extension workers in case we do not have CBTs				
Tool 1.3 Introductory and buy in Meetings						
Tool 1.4 Resource Tracking Matrix Participants						
Tool 2.1 Validation and Prioritising of Indicators						
Tool 2.2 Scoring						
Tool 3.1 Interface Meeting						
Tool 3.2 Joint Action Planning						
Tool 4.1 Monitoring Monthly Meetings/ Joint Quarterly Review Meetings						

8.2 Advocacy Tools

PHASE ONE: Define Your Problem

8.2.1 What is Advocacy?

SEASON	Year-round, but participants should have already completed the CSC tools and decided upon an advocacy objective based on the outcomes of the CSC.
OBJECTIVE	To explore the purpose and meaning of advocacy so producer groups understand the outcomes of the advocacy tools.
TIME FRAME	1.5 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to stay in groups of 4–5

Tips to facilitators:
The facilitator asks for volunteers from the group to lead group discussions. The volunteer is responsible for assisting the groups to follow the exercise instructions, keeping time, and calling on participants who wish to speak. The volunteer records participants' findings on a large piece of paper or chalkboard that is visible to all.

STEP 1. Plenary Discussion

1. Have the full group come together and ask participants to recall the outcomes from the Community Scorecard (CSC) tool sessions to decide upon the main advocacy related issues they'd like to focus on for the rest of this tool set. All the tools moving forward, will be focused on building advocacy approaches around this mutually agreed upon issue.
2. Once one main advocacy objective has been decided upon, which most likely will have a focus on influencing extension service providers in your local context, have a volunteer write out this goal somewhere everyone in the producer group can see.
3. Now, the facilitator should ask the producer group "what do you think advocacy is?"
    a. Encourage the group to recall what the outcomes of the CSC tools were and how that process helped them decide on their advocacy issue, this may help the group brainstorm what they think advocacy is.
4. Give time for a few participants to respond. If the group doesn't know, that is alright and assure them that we will all learn together.
5. After participants have replied, tell them the following definition:
    a. Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make decisions about developing, changing, and implementing policies, practices, and structures to reduce poverty and achieve social justice. Advocacy

is made up of various activities undertaken to gain access to and influence decision-makers on matters of importance to a particular group or to society in general. Advocacy as a deliberate process involves intentional actions aimed at a specific outcome based on evidence and/or good practices.

STEP 2. Group Work

1. Divide the participants into groups of four or five.
2. As a full team, recall what their chosen advocacy initiative is again.
3. Give each team 15–20 minutes to produce a short skit (1–2 minutes) that they will present to the full team on the chosen advocacy issue and how it impacts their life.
4. Have each team present their skit and give time after each presentation for the other teams to give feedback if they have any.

STEP 3. Plenary Discussion

1. Now, come back together as a full group and ask the participants, "why do you want to engage in advocacy on this issue?" Have a volunteer record the responses.
2. Once all the responses have been recorded, the facilitator should share with the team that there are many reasons to engage in advocacy, including:
   a. The need to solve specific problems through a process of engaging policy makers to bring about change in public programs or policies or create them where they do not exist.
   b. To ensure the need for participation of the people in decision making about policies and programs for the people.
   c. To strengthen and empower organised groups in society[1]
   d. To elevate the voices of women in communities for decision makers to support their needs and priorities
3. Give space for questions or feedback from participants, if they have any.
4. Then, ask participants "what do you think are different advocacy activities we could undertake to achieve the changes we are working towards?" Have a volunteer record the responses.
5. Once all the responses have been recorded, the facilitator should share there are many ways to engage in advocacy, some of the most common ways are:
   a. Holding conversations and dialogues with extension service providers, local governments, and other powerholders (such as traditional authorities, religious leaders, village council members)
   b. public campaigning
   c. engaging with the media, such as local newspapers or radio

STEP 4. Group Work

1. Have the participants get back into their small group.
2. Give each team 10–15 minutes to update their original skit to now include an advocacy activity they think could be used to address their advocacy issue based on what they just learned.
3. Have each team present their skit and give time after each presentation for the other teams to give feedback if they have any.

STEP 5. Wrap up and Feedback

1. Have the participants come back together as a full group.
2. Tell them that throughout these tools, they will learn more detailed ways to engage in advocacy to solve their advocacy issue and by the end, they should feel comfortable engaging in advocacy initiatives with the other participants in the FFBS producer group.

1 Manual para (wola.org) *Manual for Facilitators of Advocacy training* pg 13

8.2.2 Defining and Engaging in Advocacy

SEASON	Year-round, but participants should have already completed the CSC tools before using the advocacy tools.
OBJECTIVE	To explore the purpose and meaning of advocacy and develop a shared definition of advocacy.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to stay in groups of 4–5

Tips to facilitators:

The facilitator asks for volunteers from the group to lead group discussion. The volunteer is responsible for assisting the groups to follow the exercise instructions, keeping time, and calling on participants who wish to speak. The volunteer records participants' findings on a large piece of paper or chalkboard that is visible to all.

▶ STEP 1. **Group Work**

1. Divide the participants into groups of four or five, these can be the same groups as the previous exercise. As review, share both the advocacy issue the team has decided on based on the outcomes of the CSC tools and CARE's definition of advocacy with the full group.
    a. **Advocacy Definition:** Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make decisions about developing, changing, and implementing policies, practices, and structures to reduce poverty and achieve social justice. Advocacy is made up of various activities undertaken to gain access to and influence decision-makers on matters of importance to a particular group or to society in general. Advocacy as a deliberate process involves intentional actions aimed at a specific outcome based on evidence and/or good practices.
2. Within the small groups, discuss the following questions and have a volunteer record the answers:
    a. From your experience, who begins advocacy?
    b. Who carries out advocacy? Who should not?
    c. What kinds of activities does advocacy involve?
    d. What are some challenges to doing advocacy?
    e. What are the advantages to including diverse opinions in advocacy?
    f. What are some obstacles for diverse groups in advocacy efforts (such as gender, age, ethnicity, class, religion, profession)? how can these obstacles be overcome?
3. Come back together as a full plenary and have each group present on their responses to the above questions.
4. Give time for other teams to input their thoughts, if they have any, to each team's review of their responses.
5. Have one volunteer record all of the team's responses so that this information is readily available to look back on during future activities.

STEP 2. Wrap up and Feedback

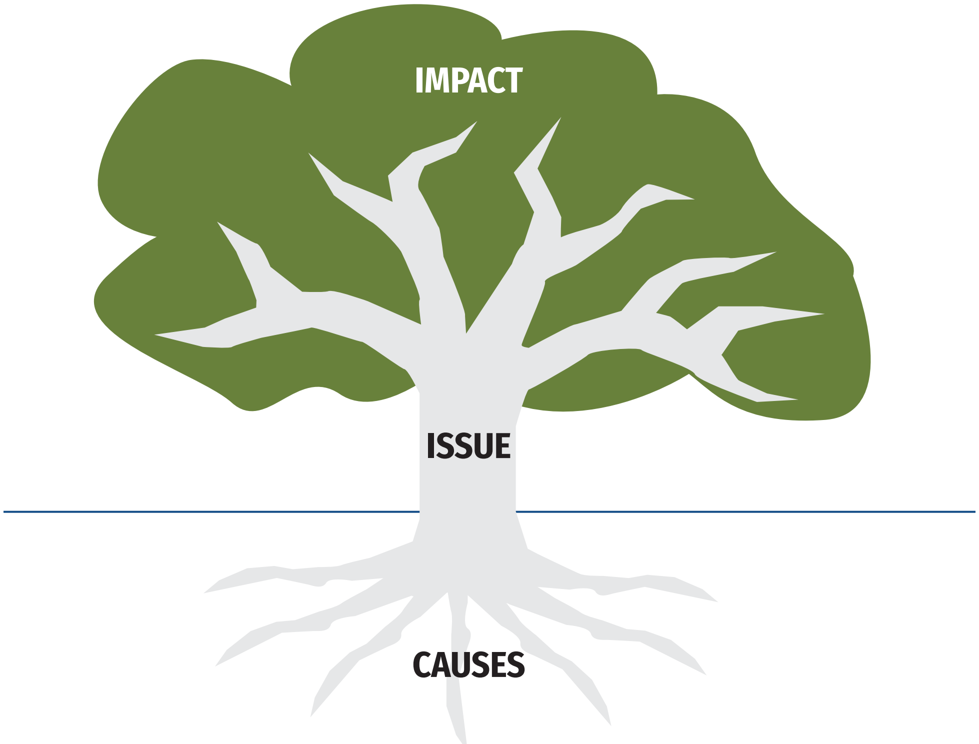
1. After the discussions, the facilitator asks the groups to think of their biggest strengths and have a volunteer record all the responses.
2. Based on the identified strengths, have the full group come up with what advocacy approaches they think would be the best for them to use based on their strengths and have a volunteer record the responses.
   - Explain to the group that they will go into more depth on advocacy approaches during later in the advocacy tools process so they can update these decisions after those exercises as well.

8.2.3 Identify Problems, Root Causes, and Find Solutions

SEASON	Year-round, but participants should have already completed the CSC tools before using the advocacy tools.
OBJECTIVE	To enable the FFBS producer group participants to think about and reflect on the challenges around their advocacy initiative, address the challenges, and to identify root causes of problems affecting their advocacy initiative.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, Paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk Image of a problem Tree, and Solution Tree Coloured stickers/cards (**Red**-Problem, **Blue**-Result/consequences**, Purple**-Cause and 2 shades of **Green-**Solution). Facilitator can decide on colours.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for entire FFBS group to participate

Tips for facilitators:

- Facilitator starts session by recapping on key points in the last 2 tools.
- Explain what the goal and learning objective of this module is and display the pre-created image of a tree (as seen below).
- Explain to the group that the image of the tree is to help them discuss and understand how **problems** are **caused** and what the **consequences** could be and how they can identify **solutions.** This process will be similar to the problem tree presented in the nutrition toolkit.
- Using the tree image, the facilitator should explain to participants that the **roots** symbolize the **causes** and the branches the **consequences/result** of the **problem** they have all agreed to focus on based on the outcomes of the CSC scoring sheet.
- This problem can be represented through a related image pasted at the trunk of the tree.
- Highlight that a problem may have multiple consequences, root causes and solutions.
- *Facilitator can develop a wide range of picture cards for the problem/solution trees. The overall goal comes from by start identifying your advocacy priorities, where you identify the power holders and collaborators.*



Problem Tree Image Example

STEP 1. Plenary Discussion

1. Using already prepared images of a tree facilitator asks participants to think about their advocacy issue as identified from the CSC process.
2. Write this issue on the trunk of the tree.
3. Ask participants why this is a problem and facilitator or assistant writes this on a lighter red card and sticks it on a branch. Repeat this several times and stick answers on the branches. Explain this is what happens as a result/ consequence of problems.
4. Ask what the causes of the problem are. Write answers on purple colored sticky card and stick on the root. Repeat this several times to identify multiple causes.
5. After listing root causes, ask what the solutions are and do the same for consequences. Write answers on two shades of green sticky card and stick on the tree next to the corresponding cause and consequence.
6. Finally ask participants which of these solutions they would like to advocate on?
7. List them in order of priority decided by the participants.
8. The participants pick one solution to advocate on.

STEP 2. Wrap Up and Questions

1. Finish by giving an overview of the last activity – from identifying a problem to identifying possible solutions using the problem tree tool.
2. Once solutions requiring advocacy action are identified, tell participants this begins to give then a guide on setting the goal for their advocacy action.
3. In the next session the group will look at how to set a goal for the advocacy action they have identified.
4. Ask if they have any questions.

8.2.4 Define Your Goal

SEASON	Year-round, but participants should have already completed the CSC tools before using the advocacy tools.
OBJECTIVE	This activity demonstrates how goal setting and teamwork relate. Deciding on what they can finish, coming up with a tactic and creating new ways if they are not getting their objective are all valuable aspects for realizing goals as a team. We can also use this example to monitor and evaluate our advocacy strategy/plan.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, Paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk Image of Solution tree, image of ball and a Goal post A ball which can be easily thrown and hit (such as a soccer ball or beach ball)
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for small groups to toss a ball, can be done outside

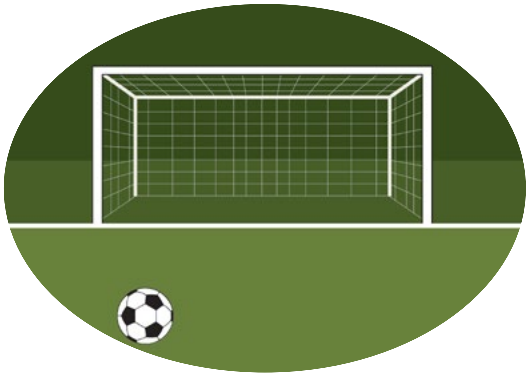
Background

Now, the goals and objectives to tackle the identified advocacy issue should be set. Any advocacy effort must begin with a sense of its goals. Think of a long term or short-term goal. These goals need to be defined at the start, in a way that can launch an effort, draw people to it, and sustain it over time.

- Have an already prepared image of the problem tree from the previous exercise, an image of ball, and a goal post; these tools will be used to clearly explain the meaning of how to set an advocacy goal.
- In developing a goal with FFBS, you should spend time developing steppingstone actions that will help them identify the goal.

STEP 1. Plenary Discussion

1. Display the images of a Ball and Goal Post
2. Ask them to explain what comes to their mind when they see a ball and goal post?
3. Record the answers on a flipchart.



STEP 2. Team Activity

Goal: Keep the ball in the air[2]

1. Split the participants into two to three small groups.
2. Tell the groups their task is to keep the ball in the air for a specified number of hits without letting it touch the ground and that no one should touch the ball twice in a row.
3. Ask each group how many hits they think they can manage to keep the ball in the air
4. Give the groups two minutes to come up with a strategy/plan to keep the ball in the air.
5. Have the groups go one at a time and keep track of their number of hits.
6. Each group will go three times and has an opportunity to reorganize their strategy/plan before each attempt.
7. The group with the highest number of hits in one single attempt wins. Feel free to award them with a prize, but this isn't required.

STEP 3. Plenary Discussion and Questions

1. Now ask them to define what they think makes a good goal.
2. Write down key words on the flipchart.
3. Now, write out the acronym SMART on a flip chart and ask the group if they are familiar with the acronym and if they are, what it stands for.
4. Once participants have had a chance to respond, explain that successful goals must be "SMART" and that stands for: *specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.*
5. Reflect on the advocacy goal decided based on the CSC process against the SMART model, does your advocacy goal fit this acronym? If not, how can the team improve upon the goal?
6. Based on this discussion, modify your goal as needed.

STEP 4. Group Work

1. Have the teams get back into their small groups
2. Ask a participant to write the advocacy goal on the top of a flipchart.
3. Ask the participant group each of the following questions on the flipchart, and have a volunteer record the responses to each question on a separate flip chart:
   - What do you want to change?
   - When do we want to do it, what is the timeline for addressing this advocacy issue?
   - How do we want to do it?
   - What approaches do we want to use?
   - Who were the stakeholders we identified during the CSC tools?
4. Now have the group come back together and each team shares their responses and give time for feedback from the other teams.
5. Have one volunteer capturing all the group presentations on one flipchart, showing what areas the teams agreed on in the questions.

2 Adapted from A Guide to Goal-Setting Training Games in the Workplace – https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/goal-setting-training-games

8.2.5 Identify Who Can Make the Change

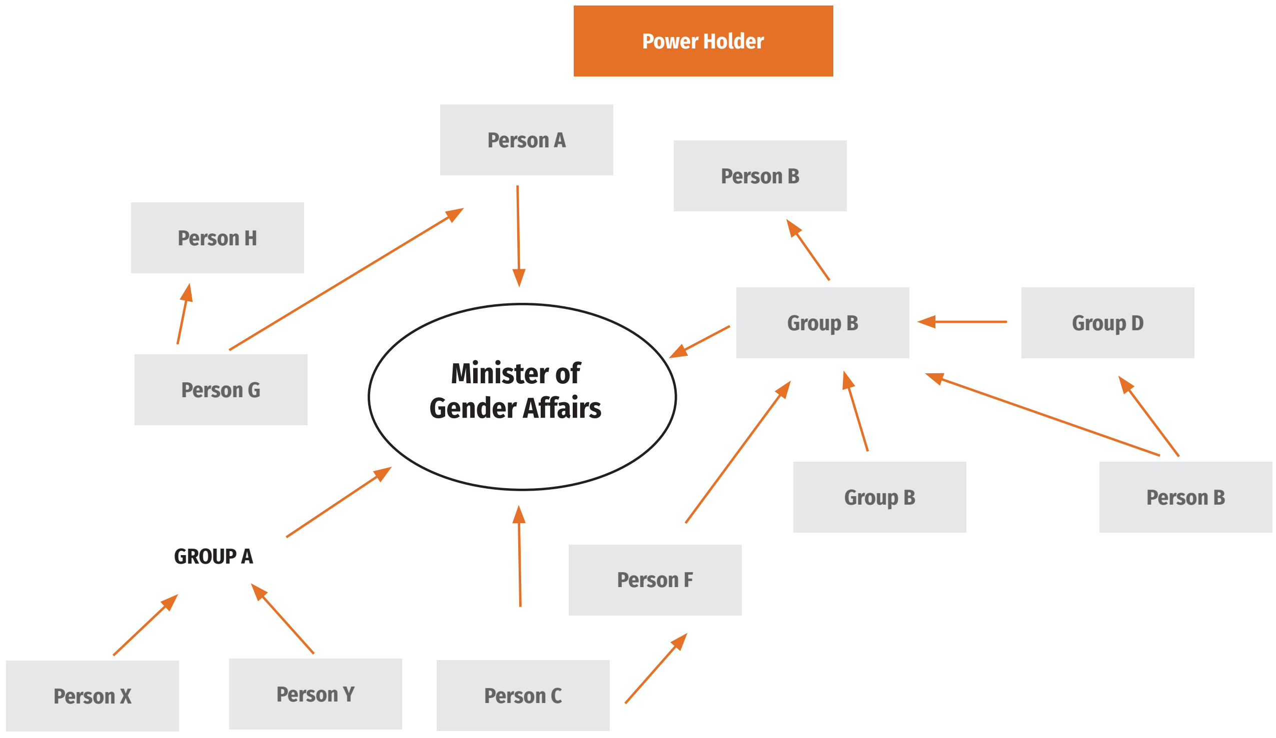
SEASON	Year-round, but participants should have already completed the CSC tools before using the advocacy tools.
OBJECTIVE	To enable participants to think about and reflect on their understanding of key decision makers in society, especially agriculture extension agents and local government officials.
TIME FRAME	45 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	Picture cards depicting some characteristics of key stakeholders in their community... Iman, Pastor, Chiefs, Lawyer, Police, Parliamentarian, President, CSOs etc. 2 Flip charts, Paper or chalkboard, markers or chalk Coloured stickers.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for 3–4 groups

Tips to facilitators:

The examples of picture cards may vary depending on the area of advocacy and location. The facilitator should prepare enough to gather relevant pictures cards before doing this session as this will allow participants to grasp the concept. The purpose of this exercise is to identify individuals and groups who have influence on key stakeholders in their surrounding who can help them achieve their goal.

STEP 1. Group Work

1. Ask someone from the group to recall the chosen advocacy issue that they are focusing on and any stakeholders they have already identified during the CSC process and previous advocacy activities. You can pull out previous flipcharts or recorded responses to help remind participants if needed.
2. Split participants into three to four groups
3. Now, ask the groups to answer the following questions (and have a volunteer in each group record the answers):
    a. Who are the key stakeholders you think can help you solve this problem?
    b. What existing group/networks do you like to work with in solving the problem?
    c. What resources or information would you need from them?
4. Put the main target/key decision maker in the middle of a large circle and those that can influence him/her on the surrounding of the circle (for example, agriculture extension agents, farmer training centre heads, development agents, etc.) as seen in the image below.
5. Use an arrow to link people who can influence the power holder in your society.



▶ STEP 2. **Group work presentation**

1. Ask group leaders to present their findings from the discussion session
2. Allow for questions and feedback from wider group
3. Now, create another powerholder map with the full group based on each small groups responses. This will decide on the main stakeholders the group decides they will target to solve their advocacy issue.

8.2.6 Identify the Advocacy Asks and Core Messages

SEASON	Year-round, but should have the CSC tools completed and an advocacy issue to focus on identified.
OBJECTIVE	To help participants identify the most important things they want to say. Help distinguish key messages from pieces of information that are facts. Understand the importance of a clear message and communications plan. Develop and deliver your message.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, one with an image of a man and the other with the image of a woman Coloured stickers.
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for the full group to be in a circle together.

Tips to facilitators:

Designing the asks for extension service access and quality is very important. Often, advocates fail to accomplish their asks because the primary audience they are targeting does not have the capacity or resources to take the action. Key messages are the most important things you want to say, applying the KISS principle (Keep It Simple and Short). The purpose of this exercise is to help you identify the most important things you want to say, i.e., your key messages. It also helps you understanding clear and effective way of communication and how it can help in advocacy drive.

STEP 1. Recap Session

1. Recall that they have already discussed key decision makers in the community who impact the outcomes of their advocacy issue. If helpful, show the stakeholder mapping done during the last activity.
2. Tell them that the exercise will help participants to practice tailoring messages to their audience and will reflect on the various channels they can use to reach the targets.

STEP 2. Role play

Round 1

1. Ask the participants to form a circle.
2. Ask one person in the circle to be a volunteer.
3. Tell the volunteer to think of a simple message – but do not say the message out loud. (for example, "today I fetched cold water from the river")
4. Ask the volunteer to quietly say/whisper the message to the person sitting next to them in the circle (no one else in the circle should hear the message so be sure to whisper it directly into their ear).
5. The person who received the message should whisper it to the person sitting next to them (softly so that no one else hears the message).
6. Repeat the process until the last person in the circle has the message whispered to them.
7. The last person should say what she/he heard aloud to the group.
8. Was the message the same as the original message? Tell the group they will repeat the process again.

Round 2

1. Repeat the activity but choose a new volunteer to decide on the message.
2. Now have the group reflect on both rounds. Were the starting and final messages the same? Why do you think they may have been different? Did the group modify their approach in the second round?
3. Now, ask them to give feedback on lesson learned from the two activities and record them on a flip chart.
4. Tell them that the essence of the exercises was geared towards understanding clear and effective ways of communication and how it can help in advocacy drive. It is important to tailor your messaging to the audience so that it does not get misinterpreted, like they may have experienced during the activity.

STEP 3. Group Work

1. Divide participants into groups of at least 6 and ask for volunteers to lead each group.
2. In each small group, split the participants into two groups, one being "Decision Makers" and the other "Advocates".
3. Ask the full group together to recall the main advocacy goal set after the CSC sessions.
4. Now have the advocates and decision maker groups split up and meet separately.
5. Ask the advocates the following:
   a. Imagine a situation where they will meet a decision-maker for their identified advocacy ask.
   b. Spend 10 min thinking about what they would say to the decision-maker, consider:
      i. What are the most important things you would like the decision maker to know?
      ii. How will you reach the decision maker? (Channels of communication)
      iii. What recommendation would you like to provide to the decision-makers?
6. Ask the decision-makers:
   a. Decide amongst themselves who they would like to represent (such as extension agents, agricultural bureau heads, farmer trainings centre heads, etc.). The advocate group will not know which decision maker this group has identified.
   b. Based on the teams chosen identified representative from part a., prepare the viewpoint they'd like to hold when hearing from the advocates.
7. Once both teams are ready, have the advocates present for 3 minutes to the decision-maker on their advocacy message and to convince him/her to consider their position.
8. When the three minutes ends, have each decision maker respond based on their chosen identity (give each person 1 minute to respond)
9. Now, come back together as a full team and discuss how it went, what worked well, what could be improved upon and how it could be improved. During this exercise, the advocates did not know which decision maker they were talking to, was this a challenge when developing your advocacy asks?
10. Try again, switching the roles, but this time tell the advocacy group which stakeholder the decision maker group is representing and repeat the process.
11. Have the small group come together after the second round and discuss what went well, was it easier to create your messaging when you knew the decision maker? How did this compare to the first round?

STEP 4. Wrap up and feedback

1. Have the full group come back together in plenary
2. Give around 10 minutes to discuss the activity together and have the team reflect on why it is important to know your stakeholder audience when developing your advocacy asks.
3. Have a volunteer record responses, specifically what went well and what challenges the teams faced.

8.2.7 Advocacy Tactics to Consider

SEASON	Year-round, but should have the CSC tools completed and an advocacy issue to focus on identified.
OBJECTIVE	To empower farmers as effective advocates for agriculture extension services and enable them to influence policymakers, extension service providers, and other relevant stakeholders with the authority, power, and means to address challenges in the delivery systems.
TIME FRAME	45 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for groups of 5–6

Tips to facilitators:

Absolutely, engaging with government decision-makers, administrators, and political representatives is crucial for farmers to seek support and address the problems affecting agriculture extension services. By actively involving these key stakeholders, farmers can voice their concerns, present their needs, and advocate for necessary changes in agricultural policies and service delivery. This engagement can lead to better allocation of resources, improved extension services, and the implementation of farmer-centric solutions that benefit the entire agricultural community.

Advocacy tactics are the actions or activities that one/group conducts to push toward an advocacy goal or desired change. Determining what tactics to choose is an important strategic decision that depends on several factors, including timing, risk, resources, and the external environment.

Recap at the beginning to review previous modules and establish connection between sections on problem identification, how they'll engage in advocacy, who the main stakeholders are, and how these are relevant in choosing the appropriate tactic and timing that is suitable for the context.

In this activity, participants will be introduced to two broad categories of advocacy approaches – constructive and confrontational. Participants will reflect on the types of advocacy tactics that others have used and share their experiences. The purpose of this activity is to introduce a framework for planning strategic action. Participants will begin to think about which tactics would best serve their advocacy goal.

STEP 1. Group Work

The facilitator asks for a volunteer to lead the group discussion. The volunteer is responsible for assisting the groups to follow the exercise instructions, keeping time, and calling on participants who wish to speak. Make sure that each group has at least a volunteer who can read or write. The volunteer records participants' findings on a large piece of paper or chalkboard that is visible to all.

1. Explain to the group that there are two broad categories of advocacy approaches – confrontational and constructive. Within each of these approaches are a wide range of tactics.
    a. A constructive approach uses collaborative means to get your point across. Tactics that could be used in this approach include working with policymakers and awareness raising, such as holding an event to share FFBS progress with policymakers or directly holding dialogues with stakeholders to share ideas and develop mutually agreed upon points for action.
    b. A confrontational approach uses adversarial means to get your point across. Tactics that could be used in this approach include strikes, protests, sit-ins, and petition drives.
2. Split the participants into three groups and assign each group one of the following topics:
    a. Communicating directly with the government (also known as lobbying)
    b. Media Campaigns – this can happen through local media sources or spaces in your community where messages are easily shared with a wide audience such as through local markets, newspapers, radio, WhatsApp, or other social media.
    c. Protesting and holding a rally or event

STEP 2. Plenary Discussion

1. Have each group identify a volunteer who can read or write in each group. *Make sure that each group has at least a volunteer who can read or write*
2. Ask each group to think of the advocacy approach they were assigned and respond to the following questions with this activity in mind:
    a. Who is their target?
    b. What the activity or approach is and what it will require?
    c. When is the best time to do this advocacy approach?
    d. Where will it take place?
    e. Why this is the best identified activity (think about your strengths and interests of the stakeholders)?
    f. How the group plans on realizing this activity based on the above responses?
3. Once the groups are finished, have each present to the full group and allow for time for feedback.
4. After comparing, they will finally list down the main advocacy tactics and emphasize why choosing the right tactic and timing for implementing it is important.
5. As a group decide which advocacy tactics would be the most achievable for the group to focus on.
6. How do these responses and tactics compare to the approaches the group identified during the "Defining and Engaging in Advocacy" activity, has your focus changed? Why has the response changed?

STEP 3. Wrap up and Feedback

1. The choice of advocacy tactic that the group will use may depend on the environment surrounding the change you want to achieve. Such tactics or activities should align with the chosen approach. For example, if you choose a constructive approach, you may want to plan for activities/tactics like preparing policy briefs and arranging meetings.
2. When thinking about your advocacy strategy and choosing between different types of advocacy tactics, there are several factors to consider, including strategic timing, the operational environment, the level of risk, and the organizational capacity.

3. Emphasise that when thinking about your advocacy strategy and choosing between different types of advocacy tactics, there are a number of factors to consider, including strategic timing. The timing of your advocacy activities can have a significant impact – if the timing isn't right, your advocacy tactics could go unnoticed or not have the intended impact. But, if the timing is well placed, then your advocacy tactics could succeed in getting the attention of key policymakers.
4. Based on this information, make any final updates to the team's identified advocacy approaches (if any).
5. In the next sessions, we will learn more about different nonconfrontational approaches.

8.2.8 Lobbying as an Advocacy Approach

SEASON	Year-round, but should have the CSC tools completed and an advocacy issue to focus on identified.
OBJECTIVE	To locate and understand lobbying as a specialized form of advocacy that is used for influencing decision makers and service providers
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to split into 2 groups and perform a skit

Tips to facilitators:

Lobbying can take various forms, including in-person meetings, sending letters and information, or leveraging social media platforms to reach decision-makers. It is a planned and organized approach that aims to create a favourable environment for change by engaging with key stakeholders.

In the context of addressing problems in agriculture extension services, lobbying is a powerful advocacy tactic that farmers can utilize to influence decision-makers and seek support for changes in service delivery, funding, and or other barriers that stand against improved service delivery. Lobbying involves the deliberate and strategic efforts of individuals or groups to persuade decision-makers to act in favour of their cause or identified extension service problem.

Through lobbying, farmers can effectively advocate for the improvement of agriculture extension services by highlighting the challenges they face and proposing solutions. By engaging decision-makers and presenting compelling arguments, farmers can influence policy decisions and secure the necessary support to address the problems in agriculture extension services.

▶ STEP 1. Group Work

1. Start the training by explaining advocacy can empower farmers to address challenges in agriculture services, as we've witnessed in previous activities. Emphasize that advocacy tactics can be influential tools for bringing about positive change.
2. Explain to the group a few simple steps to impactful lobbying:
   a. Identify a group, an Institution, or a key Influencer for your advocacy initiative and make an appointment stating the issues that will be presented for discussion.
   b. Make a follow-up on your appointment regarding the time, place and key message or topic to be discussed. *Note, this will help you and the decision-makers to prepare well in time.*
   c. Select a team to meet with key decision-makers or influencers. *Note in this selection make sure to select the main speakers and supplementary speakers to allow the flow of effective communication. The team should be moderately respectable and not have issues that may make it impossible to focus on the issues.*
   d. Prepare a brief message. *Make sure that the message captures what you want to communicate to the decision-marker. These messages can be bullet points on a piece of paper, can be delivered as testimonies by farmers who are affected by the lack or poor extension services, a short video which shows the state of the situation/issue, etc. that can be handed over to the decision-maker after your presentation.*
   e. Do your presentation. *Try to establish mutual trust and respect and be bold in your presentation. Also, try to present a win-win situation; explain what the decision maker stands to gain from your goal.*

   f. Finally, try to agree on follow-up action points.
   g. After the meeting, ensure that there is a follow up to thank the decision maker for their time by the lead speaker or an appointed person by the group.
3. Divide the participants into three groups, each focusing on a specific advocacy tactic.
   a. Group 1: Conducting an in-person meeting with stakeholders
   b. Group 2: Writing a letter to the stakeholder
   c. Group 3: Using social media, radio, and/or newspapers to advocate to stakeholders
4. Give each group 30 minutes to prepare a short (5 minutes) skit or overview on their identified advocacy tactic, giving the corresponding teams the following information:
   a. **Group 1 - Preparation for an In-Person Meeting with an identified key stakeholder:**
      i. What are the priorities of your stakeholder?
      ii. What key issues will you discuss during the meeting?
      iii. How will you craft your messaging so that it is clear and concise and effectively raises your concerns?
      iv. What types of communication and listening skills will you use?
   b. **Group 2 - Drafting a letter to an identified stakeholder to convey the key challenges faced and changes you'd like to see:**
      i. How will the letter be structured?
      ii. What are the main issues you'd like to address?
      iii. What evidence do you have to support your claims?
      iv. What specific actions would you like that stakeholder to take?
   c. **Group 3 - Using social media, radio, and/or newspapers to advocate to stakeholders:**
      i. What communication platform makes the most sense to use (and you can choose multiple, such as WhatsApp and local radio)
      ii. What type of content will you need to develop (script, pictures, written post, etc.)
      iii. Can you use hashtags or tag relevant decision makers to amplify your message? Can you use influencers to help you?
      iv. What is the main action your want your targeted stakeholder to do, this is also referred to as a "Call to Action."

▶ STEP 2. **Plenary Discussion**

1. Have the whole group come back together and allow time for each team to present their skit or presentation.
2. Allow time for feedback and guidance from the whole group after each presentation.
3. As a full group, discuss their thoughts on each of these tactics, which one seems the most achievable for the group? Are there multiple tactics they can pursue?
4. Recall back to the previous activity, has their idea of which advocacy activities the group would like to pursue changed? If yes, why? Record these answers on a flip chart.

8.2.9 Mobilization as an Advocacy Approach

SEASON	Year-round, but should have the CSC tools completed and an advocacy issue to focus on identified.
OBJECTIVE	To understand mobilization as an advocacy tactic, focusing on its use in organizing farmer groups, fostering community participation, building alliances with like-minded organizations, and enabling effective communication to enhance a deeper understanding of challenges and opportunities in agricultural extension services.
TIME FRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to split into 3 groups

Tips to facilitators:

Mobilization is a crucial advocacy tactic for agricultural producers. It involves uniting and organizing to collectively address common needs and concerns. By mobilizing, producers can strengthen their voices, increase the likelihood of their demands being heard, and advocate for improved access to extension services, better training programs, technical support, and appropriate resources.

STEP 1. Plenary Discussion

1. Opening the session by asking the group what they think "mobilization" means in reference to advocacy.
2. When finished, give the participants the definition of mobilization, as defined in the facilitator tips.
3. Ask the participants for examples of mobilization activities that could support their advocacy goal and record their responses. These could be pulled directly from previous exercises that have discussed mobilization tactics.
4. Explain to the group a few simple steps to impactful mobilization:
    a. Include those who are affected by the problem. The most powerful advocates are those experiencing the consequences.
    b. Clarify what you want to achieve by mobilizing people, making it a strategic action.
    c. Choose your methods carefully. It should be effective, appropriate, and realistic.
    d. Have a clear message, use slogans if appropriate.
    e. Encourage easy actions, so that people involved will go into action.
    f. Make events fun. Inspiring activities will build solidarity and support.
    g. Avoid violence, as it will discredit your message and not be in line with peaceful advocacy.

STEP 2. Group Work

1. Divide the participants into three groups, each focusing on a specific advocacy tactic.
    a. Group 1: Organizing and Mobilizing for Advocacy
    b. Group 2: Engaging the Community and Local Authorities
    c. Group 3: Building Alliances with Like-Minded Groups/ Organizations

2. Give each group 30 minutes to prepare a short (5 minutes) skit or overview on their identified advocacy tactic, giving the corresponding teams the following information:
    a. **Group 1 - Organizing and Mobilizing for Advocacy:**
        i. Explain that an effective tactic could be organizing producers into thematic groups (such as by area, by value chain, gender etc.) and the benefits they will each get by engaging in collective action for advocacy.
        ii. How can these groups unite their voices to demand improvements in public services, particularly agricultural extension services, infrastructure like roads and marketplaces.
        iii. What are your specific advocacy objectives and what is your planned activities to achieve them?
        iv. What types of events or forums could be used to effectively advocate for your issue?
    b. **Group 2 - Engaging the Community and Local Authorities:**
        i. Why is community participation in advocacy efforts important and how can the producer group engage their community members around your advocacy ask?
        ii. What types of community members should be engaged? What strengths do they bring to your advocacy goals?
        iii. How can the producer group sensitize the community about agricultural extension challenges and what role they can play in seeking improvements?
        iv. Using advocacy tactics learned in previous sessions, indicate how you can involve local authorities, political representatives, and decision-makers in advocacy activities and what these activities could look like.
        v. What are your advocacy asks and how can these demands be framed to build a mutually beneficial relationship with local authorities?
    c. **Group 3 - Building Alliances with Like-Minded Groups/ Organizations:**
        i. What is the significance of forming alliances with other organizations and stakeholders to strengthen advocacy efforts? What types of alliances or organizations exist in your community?
        ii. When and where do these organizations meet? What are some mutually shared goals between this group and those organizations/alliances?
        iii. What messaging could you use to approaches these organizations/alliances?
        iv. What types of advocacy activities could be performed with these organizations/alliances?
        v. How can you leverage partnerships for resource-sharing, joint campaigns, and increased advocacy impact?

STEP 3. Plenary Discussion

1. Have the whole group come back together and allow time for each team to present their skit or presentation.
2. Allow time for feedback and guidance from the whole group after each presentation.
3. As a full group, discuss their thoughts on each of these tactics, which one seems the most achievable for the group? Are there multiple tactics they can pursue? Are there external organizations/alliances the group should target?
4. Recall back to the previous activity, has their idea of which advocacy activities the group would like to pursue changed? If yes, why? Record these answers on a flip chart.
5. Emphasize to the group that mobilization revolves around effective communication, which enhances a deeper understanding of challenges and opportunities in agricultural extension services.
6. Reinforce the importance of collective action and community engagement in advocacy efforts to drive positive change in agricultural extension services.

8.2.10 Media Engagement as an Advocacy Tactic

SEASON	Year-round, but should have the CSC tools completed and an advocacy issue to focus on identified.
OBJECTIVE	Enhance farmers' understanding of the influence of media in advocacy and equip them with practical strategies to prepare for and engage with the media effectively to promote their advocacy efforts.
TIME FRAME	1.5 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flip charts, paper or chalkboard, markers, or chalk
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to stay in groups of 4–5

Tips to facilitators:

This session should be linked to previous sessions that revealed ways of identifying a problem, and service delivery challenges as could have been identified in CSC. The facilitator should use practical examples from previous sessions (problem identification, Community Score Card sessions) to help effective farmers with communication skills that can be used to plan for their advocacy.

The media, in its diverse forms, plays a crucial role in advocating for change and influencing decision-makers, especially in the context of agriculture extension services. Through various channels like television, radio, newspapers, social media, and online platforms, the media acts as a powerful tool for informing, educating, exposing, and disseminating messages that can impact policy and decision-making.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to media engagement, so producers need to be clear about which parts of the public they wish to reach and why they wish to reach them. They must identify which mix of channels (media) will help reach the people they want with the messages they want to get across and in the most cost-effective way.

▶ STEP 1. **Plenary Discussion**

1. Opening the session by asking the group what they think "media" means in reference to advocacy and different examples of media.
2. When finished, give the participants the definition of media, as defined in the facilitator tips.
3. Ask the participants for examples of activities using media that could support their advocacy goal and record their responses. These could be pulled directly from previous exercises that have discussed advocacy tactics.
4. Explain to the group a few advantages and tips for successfully engaging media for advocacy:
    a. Advantages:
        i. Wide Reach: Television, radio, and social media platforms allow advocacy messages to reach policymakers, stakeholders, and the public.
        ii. Information Dissemination: Media effectively informs and educates the public about farmers' issues, raising awareness and fostering understanding.
        iii. Credibility and Influence: Media coverage lends credibility to advocacy efforts, making decision-makers take farmers' concerns seriously.

        iv. Mobilizing Support: Media exposure mobilizes support from communities, farmers, and like-minded organizations, creating a unified voice that demands action.
        v. Immediate Impact: Media reports bring attention to urgent issues, pressuring decision-makers for prompt responses.
    b. Tips:
        i. Preparation: Thoroughly prepare key messages, talking points, and advocacy objectives for clear and consistent messaging.
        ii. Authenticity: Share real stories and experiences for genuine impact on audiences and decision-makers.
        iii. Engagement with Local Media: Build relationships with local journalists for continuous communication.
        iv. Diversification of Media Platforms: Utilize traditional and social media for wider outreach.
        v. Strategic Timing: Seize the right moments to highlight agricultural extension challenges for increased attention and support.
5. Explain to the group that even though media can be an effective way to conduct advocacy, there are disadvantages to be aware of:
    a. Misrepresentation: Miscommunication or misrepresentation of farmers' messages can lead to misunderstandings.
    b. Media Bias: Some media outlets may prioritize certain issues or portray them with bias.
    c. Media Sensationalism: Overemphasis on sensationalism may overlook the complexity of farmers' challenges.

▶ STEP 2. **Group Work**

1. Divide the participants into four groups, each focusing on a specific advocacy tactic.
    a. Group 1: Understanding Media Influence
    b. Group 2: Preparing for Media Engagement
    c. Group 3: Engaging the Media in Advocacy Efforts
    d. Group 4: Role of Social Media
2. Give each group 20 minutes to prepare a short (5 minutes) skit or overview on their identified advocacy tactic, giving the corresponding teams the following information:
    a. **Group 1 - Understanding Media Influence:**
        i. What forms of media are available in your community, including television, radio, newspapers, social media platforms, and online channels?
        ii. What role does media play in influencing public opinion, shaping narratives, and influencing authorities to act of things that are not working, especially regarding agricultural issues?
        iii. Can you think of examples of how media has been used in advocacy to raise awareness and bring about change in your community?
        iv. Share your experiences using media and its impact on your community.
    b. **Group 2 - Preparing for Media Engagement:**
        i. How can you engage the media?
        ii. What key messages could your media campaign focus on that address your concerns, talking points, and what you hope to achieve through the use of the media for advocacy?
        iii. You could conduct a role-play skit where a producer is interviewed on the radio about your advocacy message. What types of tough questions might the interviewer ask? How can you be prepared with your key messages to respond?
    c. **Group 3 - Engaging the Media in Advocacy Efforts:**
        i. How can you engage the media?
        ii. What are the specific spaces, such as local newspapers, radio stations, events where you could share your messages via press releases, media interviews, opinion pieces, or feature stories that highlight agricultural extension challenges and proposed solutions.
        iii. What are the potential benefits and risks of media engagement and how can you navigate any negative outcomes effectively?

d. **Group 4:** Role of Social Media:
   i. What role does social media play in your community and what types of audiences could you reach through locally used social media?
   ii. What types of content could be created that would be engaging on locally used social media platforms that would raise awareness on your advocacy asks?
   Encourage the use of messages, videos, visual content, and storytelling to make advocacy messages more impactful.
   iii. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using social media for advocacy purposes.

STEP 3. Plenary Discussion

1. Have the whole group come back together and allow time for each team to present their skit or presentation.
2. Allow time for feedback and guidance from the whole group after each presentation.
3. As a full group, discuss their thoughts on each of these tactics, which one seems the most achievable for the group? Are their multiple tactics they can pursue? What are the best options to engage media for advocacy?
4. Recall back to the previous activity, has their idea of which advocacy activities the group would like the pursues changed? If yes, why? Record these answers on a flip chart.
5. Emphasize that media is a powerful tool in amplifying your voice to influence decision-makers. Media serves as a bridge, connecting producers to a broader audience and drawing attention to your challenges, but it should be used with care as it has advantages and disadvantages.
6. Now, the participants should have identified an advocacy issue, the main stakeholders involved, and various activities that can be used for effective advocacy.