

Module 1

GETTING STARTED

Session 1.1 Getting to know one another

Session 1.2 Building a shared vision

Session 1.3 Farming and market-oriented farm
management

Session 1.4 Possible roles of extension workers

Introduction

The purpose of the programme is to train you, via interactive learning, to help and support smallholder farmers who are beginning to sell or are already selling produce.

The aim is to increase the capability of farmers to manage their farm more effectively.

This module is intended to set the learning foundation for the duration of this programme.

Session 1.1
Getting to know one another

Welcome !

Getting to know one another

The purpose of this session is to prepare you to work and learn together, (group creation, unity and trust) and put you at ease with one another.

It will also help build participatory skills in preparation for shared learning experiences.

Session 1.2

Building a shared vision

Learning outcomes:

Establishing ground rules for the training

Identify expectations and concerns about the programme

Develop a common understanding about the process and outcome of the programme

Develop skills: interviewing, presentation, question formulation

Building a shared vision

The purpose of this session is to set ground rules, identify expectations and concerns, and develop a common understanding about the process and outcomes of the programme.

The 'programme guidelines' and exercise will help create unity of vision among you and outline the basic conceptual framework to be used throughout.

Programme guideline

1. You are 'collaborators' in this training programme; you all work together helping one another learn. The facilitator guides the learning process, but all of us, including the facilitator, will share the learning experience.

You are responsible for your own learning and are expected to share your experiences to enhance the learning opportunities.

Programme guideline

2. To participate in this programme no formal training and / or background in farm management is required.

Programme guideline

3. The programme is designed to better equip you in your efforts to help farmers improve the profitability of their farms. The focus is market-orientated farm management.

Farmers need to understand how to improve farm management, take informed decisions on producing food and generating income, become less vulnerable and more sustainable.

The conceptual framework

1. Farm management can be defined as planning and implementing activities on a farm for the purpose of sustainably supporting a farmer.

Market-oriented farm management focuses attention on efficient production of farm goods for profitable sale off farm.

The conceptual framework

2. The framework that will run throughout the programme is a simplified model of the basic elements to be explored in generating income and profits on a farm.

INPUTS → THE FARM & PRODUCTS → MARKET

The conceptual framework

3. Inputs are defined as those things, like seeds, fertilizers, knowledge, skills, etc, which are necessary for production on the farm.
4. The farm is defined as the place where crops and animals are raised for the purpose of producing certain goods including food and fiber products.
5. The market is the place where farm products are sold and / or consumed.

The learning approach

Learning means gaining understanding and insight about concepts, principles and building practical skills.

1. This programme uses experiential and participatory learning; you will learn by experiencing and doing things together.
2. The learning will take place mostly in interactive groups. These methods are used to ensure you acquire understanding, insight and skills needed to assist farmers.

The learning approach

3. Each session of the programme has specific learning outcomes for knowledge, understanding and/or skill. This enables you to track progress in learning throughout the programme.

Insight will come through personal and group reflection on both content and practice.

The learning approach

4. Each day you will receive some instruction, will participate in practical classroom exercises, group discussions and individual work.

Above all you will be given the opportunity to practise the tools you learn.

The learning approach

5. Tools are basically instruments to enable you to analyse the various aspects of farm management. The programme will help you understand tools and how and when to use them.
6. Some of the concepts will be new to you, hence one of the first things you need to do is to build your own glossary of terms and concepts.

The learning approach

7. Further throughout the programme make notes about how you can apply what you are learning. At the end of the programme you will be asked to develop a plan for applying what you have learned and practiced.
8. As you go through the programme, you are encouraged to participate as much as possible.

The learning approach

9. Tools can be number-based or symbol based. Using these visual expressions, you can help farmers learn.
10. With symbol-based tools you can also work with farmers who have difficulty with literacy and numeracy.

Learning outcomes

1. Understand the value and place of market-oriented farm management in an agricultural extension programme.
2. Understand the fundamentals of (i) how profits are made on the farm, (ii) the input-production-marketing relationships, (iii) the importance of these relationships to farm profitability.
3. Acquire specific skills to (i) analyse farming operations and propose plans, (ii) develop a basic whole-farm plan, (iii) develop and use a whole-farm cash flow.

Learning outcomes

4. Understand the value of using symbol-based tools and working with groups of farmers.
5. Acquire skills to apply a range of participatory tools to help farmers implement market-oriented farm management on their own farms.
6. Understand the importance of sustaining natural and other resources which are linked to the farm.

Session 1.3

Farming and market-oriented farm management

Learning outcomes:

A shared understanding of the issues.

Understand one another's perceptions about farming and market-oriented farm management.

An appreciation of the diversities and similarities of thought in the group.

Farming and market-oriented farm management

The objective of this session is to help you develop an understanding of one another's perceptions and beliefs about farm management.

We shall examine our shared views to discover diversities and similarities of thought in the group.

If we learn to appreciate the diversities and similarities in ourselves we will be more effective in our work in support of farmers.

Session 1.4

Possible roles of extension workers

Learning outcomes:

A shared understanding of the roles of extension workers, their relationships with farmers and various role players.

Understand the generation and dissemination of information.

Understand extension methodologies.

Self-awareness of one's knowledge and preferences relevant to extension in market-oriented farm management.

Possible roles of extension workers

The objective of this session is to broaden understanding of the possible roles you can have and methods of agricultural extension to use when engaging with farmers, particularly in reference to market-oriented farm management.

A range of methodologies will be explored and how they can be used. This will provide some insight into the organizational environment in which you operate.

Module 1 : Review

- Do you believe that the overall purpose of the module has been achieved ?
- Group creation, cohesion and trust
- Building a shared vision about the programme.
- A shared understanding of some of the issues and of one another's perceptions about farming and market-orientated farm management
- Possible roles of the extension worker